

researchers, reminisced about his life, and gave autographs.

And it was truly memorable when he came to the University of Toronto in October 1990, for the unveiling of an historical display about the discovery of insulin. It featured his own 'before' and 'after' pictures, and there he was in the flesh.

I last saw Ted when he and his girlfriend (he had been a bachelor all his life, a bit under his mother's thumb, but had a wonderful late-life romance after she died) came to Toronto on that visit, and for a few months after that we would talk on the phone. It felt like I was literally calling up history.

Ted suffered congestive heart failure last summer [1992/3] and gradually wound down. He never lost his affection for the city where, as a child, he had been treated

Theodore Ryder as an old man



by the Canadian doctors. In the last letter I got from Ted, he said he had been cheering for the Blue Jays in the World Series.

The last of the discoverers of insulin, Charles Best, died in 1978. Ted Ryder, the last patient, outlived all the physicians. We have lost our last living link with the great events of 1922 in Toronto. But the discovery itself lives on daily, in about 10 million diabetics around the world.

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The Elizabeth Evans Hughes Insulin Medal

The discovery of insulin by Banting and Best in 1922 led to a deluge of requests from patients and their doctors to come to Toronto to receive treatment. Most were to be disappointed due to the extremely limited supplies of insulin available at the time. However, one of the lucky ones was Elizabeth Evans Hughes, daughter of Charles Evans Hughes — an unsuccessful candidate in the USA presidential elections of 1916, but who subsequently became Secretary of State and one of the most distinguished Chief Justices of the Supreme Court of the USA.

In August 1922, Elizabeth was clinging on to life and in a very emaciated state. On arrival in Toronto she became one of the first children to be treated with insulin. This treatment almost immediately transformed her existence. As she graphically described it in her diaries "Oh, it is simply too wonderful for words, this stuff".

Elizabeth Evans Hughes died in 1981 having married, raised a family and lived a full and active life. It is estimated that she had taken over 40,000 insulin injections during her life.

The Evans Hughes family has close connections with Wales. Charles Evans Hughes' father emigrated to the USA in 1857 having been born in Tredegar. There are close connections with both North and South Wales and especially with the community founded by Howell Harris in Trefecca. Both father and son returned to Wales in the 1870s for a visit and Charles

subsequently revisited 14 years later as a fully qualified solicitor.

The Elizabeth Evans Hughes Insulin Medal is to commemorate the Welsh connection with the discovery of insulin, and in particular the transformation of Elizabeth Evans Hughes from a skeleton-like waif weighing only 55 pounds to a fulfilled young woman who eventually received insulin therapy for nearly 60 years.

It is intended that this medal be presented to all diabetics who have been treated with insulin for 50 years or more who either live in or have connections with Wales. If any patient/friend/family knows of individuals who may qualify for this medal, please contact:

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Front and back of the golden Elizabeth Evans Hughes Insulin Medal

