

at of new drugs and saved the lives of thousands



left, at work. He was a keen rugby player

parents' understandable relief. The decision was made irrevocable by his first significant rugby injury: a shattered tibia and fibula that put him out of action for four months. In this, if not his choice of sport, he followed his father, who was known as "the most injured man in football", with one spectacular leg break putting him out for two seasons. Stan's rugby career would be punctuated with similar injuries, including a cracked vertebra in his neck.

In 1941 Peart started his clinical course and his work with Fleming. These were the very earliest days of antibiotics. Penicillin was not yet available and sulphonamide could be hit-and-miss at best. Wound sepsis and gangrene were everywhere. It was around this point that he met Peggy Parkes, a "sweet and pretty" staff nurse. It took him some time to pluck up the courage to speak to her and his opening line was: "Can I borrow your scissors?" A romance nevertheless blossomed.

At the urging of his mentor, George Pickering, Peart moved to Edinburgh with Peggy, whom he married in 1947. Fuel rationing was still in place, so heating was impossible. He would wear his overcoat in the lab and one winter his saline solutions froze solid overnight. It was a strange mix of ancient and modern medicine: he undertook his groundbreaking work on the chemical

transmission of sympathetic nerve pulses while also making his own pills from powdered foxglove in a lab that had leeches, which "weren't for show", in beakers.

He was earning £300 a year (about £13,500 today), but still sometimes had to make use of the charity food kitchens that offered a meal for a shilling. He and Peggy had to move several times because landlords kept letting their apartments to new tenants for more money. On one occasion he was stopped by police while hauling a sack of coal between flats in the middle of the night. Eventually the couple settled in a flat in George Square that had been unoccupied for 14 years, save for the mummified dead bird in the sink.

After Edinburgh — and another serious injury, a broken jaw on the frozen Murrayfield turf while playing for Wanderers — he moved to Ely in Cambridgeshire, where he joined the RAF Medical Services, but returned to

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St Mary's in London after two years. Apart from a stint in Mill Hill in north-west London, Peart spent the rest of his career at St Mary's, where he created a world-leading kidney transplant scheme. He also took up important roles in the Wellcome Trust and the Medical Research Council, and was vice-president of the Royal Society during the presidency of Michael Atiyah. He was knighted in 1985. He remained with the NHS throughout his career, refusing to take private fees, although he would occasionally accept a bottle of wine. He was witty and never pompous; always "Stan", never "Sir Stanley".

Pickering, his early mentor, had advised him not to start a family until he had made his name, so it was not until 1953 that Celia, his daughter, was born; Robert followed in 1955. She was a midwife, he became an IT consultant. In later life Peggy suffered from dementia, so Peart cared for her for 13 years until her death in 2002. The arrival of four grandchildren was a joy. He lived in Highgate, north London, and would play with them in Waterlow Park. To keep pace, he took up a new sport at the age of 70: inline skating. He was still skiing on his 88th birthday.

Peart loved research, but insisted throughout his career on maintaining the clinical side of his work; it was easier to be a generalist in those days. "I felt an allegiance to patients," he said. "I felt very satisfied when I did something for them. I liked talking to them and dissecting the problem."

He enjoyed reminiscing about his early days and how he would be elbow-deep in it, often literally: taking blood and urine and faeces from patients. He recalled how he had loved the close contact with patients and would say regretfully that modern medical students are deprived of it, adding: "The only faeces students ever see are their own."

Sir Stanley Peart, FRS, renal physician, was born on March 31, 1922. He died on March 14, 2019, aged 96