

Obituary: Cyril Jacob Kaplan, MD, MBChB(Cape), MChOrth(Liv), FRCS(Eng), FACS (1917–2012)

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Dr. Cyril Kaplan died July 11, 2012 at the age 95 from pneumonia. Born in Durban, South Africa in 1917, while a medical student at the University of Cape Town, Cyril Kaplan joined the Cape Garrison Artillery as a volunteer gunner on the outbreak of World War II in 1939. Following graduation, he enlisted in the South African Medical Corps in 1942, where he was exposed to war injuries and became interested in orthopaedics (Fig. 1).

Following his discharge from the Army in 1946, Dr. Kaplan worked in Liverpool and Guy's Hospital in London. With the newly proclaimed State of Israel at war in 1948, Dr. Kaplan joined the military in Israel, leading an orthopaedic department in Haifa. There, he met Sylvia, his future wife. He returned to Durban, South Africa following 14 months of service. In Durban, Dr. Kaplan started an orthopaedic practice and worked in leprosy and tuberculosis hospitals.



Fig. 1 In 1942, Dr. Kaplan enlisted in the South African Medical Corps, where he was exposed to war injuries and became interested in orthopaedics.

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In 1976, Dr. Kaplan (Fig. 2) accepted an invitation to work in the department of orthopaedic surgery at Montefiore Medical Center, a teaching hospital affiliated with Albert Einstein College of Medicine in the Bronx, New York. One of his close colleagues at Montefiore Medical Center was Dr. Edward T. Habermann, an Association of Bone and Joint Surgeons member, who died in 2009. Kaplan previously worked with Dr. Haberman at the Hadassah Medical Center in Jerusalem during the Yom Kippur War in 1973.

Dr. Kaplan's interests included hip and extremity surgery, and colleagues would often consult with him regarding bone tuberculosis management, a significant



Fig. 2 Colleagues often consulted with Dr. Kaplan on bone tuberculosis management, a significant pathology among the immigrant population in the Bronx.

pathology among the immigrant population in the Bronx. Kaplan remained in New York until 1980, when he returned to South Africa. He practiced there until 1989, then moved back to New York to work at Montefiore Medical Center once again before retiring in 2002.

In 2008, Dr. Kaplan published his memoir, *In Three Wars: a Personal and Orthopaedic Prospective* [1] at the age of 91.

His nonmedical interests included European and African history. Dr. Kaplan also collected old maps and Persian miniature paintings, and after retirement, sculpted in bronze.

Cyril Kaplan is survived by his wife, three sons, a daughter, and two grandchildren.

References

1. Kaplan CJ. *In Three Wars: A Personal and Orthopaedic Perspective*. New York, NY: Xlibris Corporation; 2008:1–174.