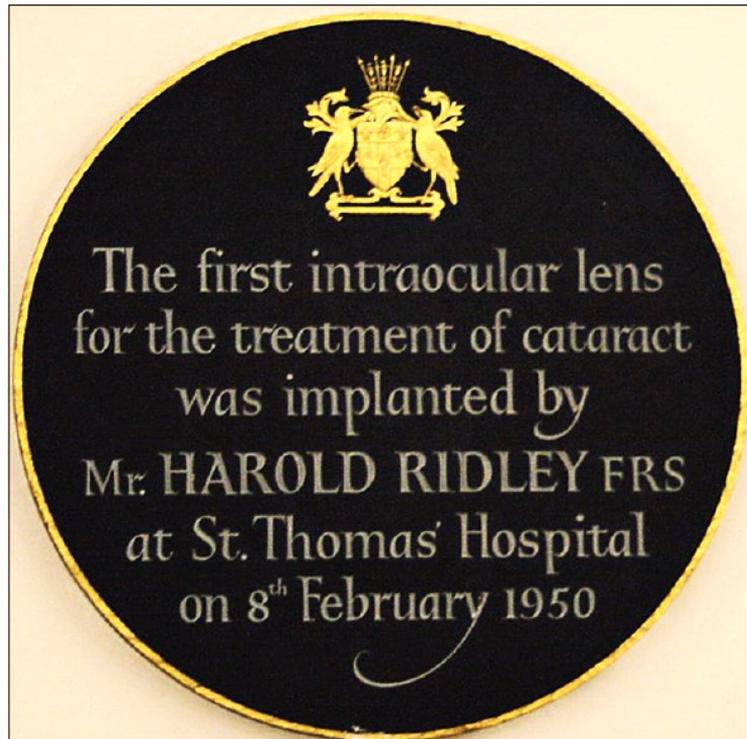


The plaque at STH and further details with an amendment to 'The early Days'



But first, to the earliest known pilot retaining plastic splinters in his eyes: this was one Gordon (mouse) Cleaver, serving with 601 Squadron at Tangmere. In 1940 he had already struck down several of the Luftwaffe heavy fighters (at least 7 confirmed) and on 15th August made another sortie in the morning. On his return, almost immediately he was told to scramble again: his hurricane had gone for servicing and in his rush to another he forgot his goggles. That very day he was shot down and with the shattering of Perspex into his face, was blinded in the right eye and nearly so in the left. However he did manage to parachute down to Lower Upton (near Southampton). Subsequently he underwent no less than 18 operations to his face and eyes and was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. At some stage he came under the hands of Harold Ridley at Moorfields, where repeated examination afforded Ridley with an 8 year follow up of intra-ocular Perspex without any sign of inflammation or rejection.

Next, to clarify the date of the first implantation, Ridley did insert an implant on 29.11.49 but then removed it because of instability.¹ The theatre register records 'Mr Ridley: Extra Capsular Extn: Elizabeth Attfield' (aged 45). This lens was re-implanted as a secondary procedure on 8.2.50 and recorded as 'Lenticular graft'. 17 months later Harold described it at the Oxford Congress as being his first.² However this had resulted in very high myopia and with known material³ he revised the optics, shape and refractive index. The image in 'The Early Days', power +24, therefore refers not to the first intra-ocular lens but to the second and subsequent Ridley lenses.

Piers Percival, June 2021

¹ D Spalton *Harold Ridley's first patient* J Cat Ref Surg 1999, **25** p156; P Choyce *ibid* p731

² H Ridley, *Intra-Ocular Acrylic Lenses* Trans OS, July 1951, pp617-621

³ A Percival, *Periscopic Lenses* BJO, July 1926, pp369-379