Ian Donald was born in Lisgeard, Cornwall, United Kingdom on 27 December 1910. His father was a general practitioner. In 1925 his family moved to South Africa where he attended Cape Town University. He returned to study medicine at St Thomas' Hospital where he qualified in 1937. In 1955 he published his classic 'Practical Obstetric Problems' which continued through several editions even after his death. Later life. The many honours he received included