

Obituary

JOHN ARTHUR CLARK, Consultant Psychiatrist, Crichton Royal Hospital, Dumfries, Scotland.

Dr John A. Clark, Consultant Psychiatrist at Crichton Royal Hospital, Dumfries, died suddenly on 22 October 1983, aged 57. He had been a Consultant at Crichton Royal since 1958, coming from the Maudsley and Bethlem Hospital, London, where he was a Senior Registrar to the late Professor Sir Aubrey Lewis.

John Clark, a St Andrews University graduate, was deputy Physician Superintendent from 1966 to 1978, and Medical Administrator from 1978 to 1979. From 1978 until his death he was psychiatric tutor to the hospital, and was held in very high regard by the many junior doctors who owe him a great debt by his most painstaking and methodical work in putting together a comprehensive teaching programme.

John Clark was a member of many important working parties. He was on the Executive Committee of the Scottish Division, a regional adviser in psychiatry for the West of Scotland, and a member of the Area Health Board.

He was a very popular and most invaluable colleague, who was held in great esteem by everyone, not only as a skilful and devoted doctor, but as a most caring and compassionate person who will be greatly missed.

GSS

NATALIE COBBING, Secretary of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, 17 Belgrave Square, London SW1.

Miss Natalie Cobbing died at her home in Petersfield on 20 January 1984. She was Secretary of the RMPA since 1958, and continued as Secretary of the new Royal College from 1971 to the time of her death.

She was born in London in 1926, and was educated in Convent Schools in London and Aberystwyth. She saw wartime service in the WRNS and on return to civilian life, worked at the Regent Street Polytechnic until her appointment to the RMPA.

A colleague of mine observing Miss Cobbing walking along the street in the early 60s remarked to me, 'There goes the RMPA!' Having caught the atmosphere and seen the life of the Association at its Chandos Street headquarters in those days, I knew what he meant. Miss Cobbing, with one assistant, carried the work of Council, the Standing Committees, the Annual and Quarterly meetings, and kept an eye on the activities of Sections and Divisions. Here was no detached administrator, but a person of great energy and devotion who entered into the life of the professional body and made it her own. This close identification and single mindedness demands courage and toughness in an organization which is governed by a shifting population of Honorary Officers and a Council.

The mid 60s were dominated by the issue of the future of

the Association. Should we continue unchanged, or become a faculty of the RCP London, or become a Royal College? The arguments were intense, and at times bitter. There was an air of popular revolution and a need for cool steady guidance. Miss Cobbing helped to provide just that, and after many difficulties and setbacks the College was born.

Problems crowded in to do with finance; the new MRCPsych. Diploma; the anger of many who felt disenfranchised; the need to expand the Secretariat to deal with the rapidly growing responsibilities and functions of a Royal College.

Termination of our lease at Chandos House demanded an urgent search for a permanent home, followed by the immense task of moving and making the new house in Belgrave Square habitable and shipshape. The set-up today is a far cry from those early years in Chandos Street: a staff of 30; several departments; an organization fulfilling all the manifold responsibilities of a Royal College and respected by its peers.

Behind the professional devotion and organizational prowess which has made all this possible, there lay a burning, passionate concern for the welfare of the mentally disordered, the elderly, and the disadvantaged. This found expression, not only in her work, but in her private life where many acts of selfless kindness to friends and acquaintances may be recorded. Her appointment as Secretary to the All Party Parliamentary Mental Health Group was a facet of this concern.

Her earlier private life was full of energetic pursuits with an air of challenge: mountaineering, skiing, crossing steep glaciers on ropes. Stamp collecting provided a restful contrast.

I have known Natalie Cobbing almost since the time of her appointment to the RMPA. My involvement with that body, and with the College in various capacities, gave me the privilege of a close working relationship with her over many years. One came to take her for granted, the 'continuity girl' with her conscientious, relentless hard work, her immense knowledge of the organization, her eye both for detail and for grand strategy, her sensitive and kindly response to members who sought her help and advice.

Her unexpected death at 57 has cruelly deprived the psychiatric profession in this country of a most loyal and devoted champion and friend. We extend our condolences to her cousins living in the UK and the USA.

KR

FRANCIS LEO McLAUGHLIN, retired, formerly Consultant Psychiatrist, St Vincent's Hospital, Dublin, Eire.

Frank McLaughlin died at the age of 83 on 29 October 1983.

Frank, as he was affectionately known to his many friends and colleagues, studied medicine in the National University of Ireland. He was born in Glasgow of Irish parents and was educated in Letterkenny, Co. Donegal. He qualified MB, BCh, BAO, in 1922. He was a medical student during a time of great political upheaval in Ireland. Shortly after qualifying he went to study in England where he worked in one of the best postgraduate training programmes available in psychiatry and neurology. He studied at Guy's Hospital with R. D. Gillespie and at the University College Hospital with Bernard Hart. Later he studied in the West End Hospital for Nervous Diseases and in the Maudsley Hospital and Institute of Psychiatry.

At the beginning of the last war he joined the Allied Forces and held a senior position in psychiatry in the Middle East and was demobbed with the Rank of Lieutenant Colonel. Frank was very pleased that after the war the late Professor James Meenan, Professor of Medicine at University College, Dublin, encouraged him to return to St. Vincent's Hospital, Elm Park. He was one of the first to develop in Ireland the concept of treating psychiatric patients in an out-patient setting, and was in the forefront of recognizing the importance of the General Hospital in this field. In this regard he saw the importance of breaking down the stigma and isolation of the mental hospital, and was one of those who laid the foundation for modern developments in psychiatry. He was a founder member of the Medico-Legal Society, Dublin, and read the first paper on psychiatry to that learned body in November 1957. He received recognition for fifty years' membership of the British Medical Association in 1974.

During his years in St Vincent's Hospital he had a deep respect and admiration for its values and traditions and a great admiration for the Sisters of Charity and their contribution to Irish Medicine. After his retirement he continued his interest as Consultant Neuro-Psychiatrist in the DHSS and also continued to attend the academic meetings of the Irish Division of the Royal College of Psychiatrists.

He was firmly convinced that life had a deep spiritual meaning and it was this conviction that made him conscious that in good times life was to be appreciated and enjoyed, and in times of sorrow and disappointment to be accepted without bitterness, cynicism or grudge. He was never heard to speak harmfully of others and where possible he tried to heal and reconcile. This was his philosophy of life, and in his personal relationships he was always kind and sympathetic. He was unhurried, good humoured and, above all, non-judgemental. It was these qualities which endeared him to his family, his colleagues, his students, to his patients and to his friends, and, indeed, to all those who had the privilege of knowing him.

We would wish to extend our deepest sympathy to his wife, Mary, his son, Anthony, his sister, Peggy and other members of his family.

Ar dheis De ins na Flaithis imeasc na N-Aingeal go raibh

se. Ni bheichimid a leith eid aris. ('He is at God's right hand in Heaven among the Angels. We will not see his like again'.)

TL

ARTHUR SPENCER PATERSON, retired, formerly Physician in Psychological Medicine, West London Hospital, London.

Dr Arthur Spencer Paterson, a founding father of contemporary British psychiatry and a Foundation Fellow of the College, died on 27 December 1983 at the age of 83.

Spencer Paterson, as he was invariably known in psychiatric circles, was the son of W. D. Paterson, Professor of Divinity at Aberdeen, and he was, therefore, cradled and raised in an atmosphere of scholarship to whose traditions he remained faithful all the days of his life. He was educated at Fettes College and Oriel College, Oxford, where he read Greats. After taking his degree he turned his attention to medicine and qualified MB, ChB, Edinburgh in 1928, taking his MD with honours in 1934. He was elected MRCP Ed in 1930 and proceeded to the Fellowship in 1933. In 1935 he was elected MRCP London.

Psychiatry became his declared vocation soon after qualifying in medicine and in 1930 he gained the Diploma in Psychiatry. A Rockefeller Travelling Fellowship took him to Johns Hopkins, Baltimore, where he worked with Dr C. P. Richter. He did further postgraduate research in Munich.

In England he held appointments at the Maudsley, Cassel and Middlesex hospitals. In 1946 he was appointed Consultant Psychiatrist at the West London Hospital, an appointment he filled with distinction until his retirement from the NHS in 1966.

1946 was for Spencer Paterson something of an *annus mirabilis*, for in that year he was to meet Professor Ugo Cerletti of Rome, one of the outstanding pioneers of ECT. Spencer Paterson was in turn responsible in large measure for the introduction of ECT into this country and in so doing brought fame to himself and the West London. But his interests were by no means confined to physical methods of treatment. He was an acknowledged authority on hypnosis, behaviour therapy, psychotherapy and in the treatment of alcoholism. His contributions to the literature reflected the catholicity of his interests.

He remained intellectually alert to the end and old as he was, he regularly attended meetings of the Section of the History of Medicine of the Royal Society of Medicine of which he was a member.

BERNARD FREDERICK WHITEHEAD, retired, formerly Consultant Psychiatrist, Peterborough District Hospital, Peterborough, Cheshire.

Bernard Whitehead was born on 24 February 1926, and died suddenly, aged 58, whilst on holiday in the United States on 21 October 1983.

Bernard graduated from Downing College, Cambridge, and the Middlesex in 1949. After two years as a Medical Officer in the RAF, Bernard did his psychiatric training at