

Obituary

Editor: Henry R. Rollin

CECIL CLEE BERESFORD, formerly Physician Superintendent of The Retreat, York

Cecil Beresford, a Foundation Fellow of the College, enjoyed a long and distinguished career in psychiatry. This began when, after qualifying from the London in 1931, he commenced work at Netherne. Thereafter he joined the staff of The Retreat in 1934, where he subsequently became Clinical Director and, from 1956 to 1962, Physician Superintendent. During the war he served in the RAMC with the rank of Lieut. Colonel as Adviser in Psychiatry to the Middle East Forces, a post of considerable responsibility. He returned to The Retreat after the war.

When he retired in 1962 the Management Committee of that Hospital commented on the outstanding services he had given since 1934, and observed that to his work as a consultant he brought great gifts which earned the warm appreciation of all those who came under his care. They added that The Retreat had benefited greatly from his administrative ability, a tribute which was well deserved. The Retreat, as a Registered Hospital at the time, catered for clinical and social-psychiatric problems of often more than usual complexity, drawn from a wide area, not only from the North of England. Cecil was a quiet and utterly understanding psychiatrist, quite at home in the most demanding of psychiatric problems, and, in addition, he had the ability to defuse even the most potentially disturbing of such situations.

By the same token he was a shrewdly effective administrator. His undemonstrative approach enabled him to do more work with less fuss than many.

He was a self-effacing man, always tolerant and sympathetic, but who nevertheless saw people and their problems very clearly indeed. Many such, whether patients or colleagues, sought his advice, and their problems were resolved as often as not by his quiet understanding and gentle humour.

Away from psychiatry one of his enduring pleasures was to drive his cars with skill and enthusiasm around his beloved Yorkshire countryside, its villages – and inns (he was something of an expert on Specific Gravity).

He was also a connoisseur and collector of porcelain, but this one found out only as it were by accident – he was a private man and not one to talk about himself.

He was always a most cheerful companion, never complaining, even in his last long illness wherein he was sustained not only by his insatiable appetite for books, but more particularly by the support of his wife, his two daughters and his son.

AB

S. L. LAST, formerly Consultant Psychiatrist to the London Hospital



Dr Last, a foundation Fellow of the College, was one of a considerable number of middle European refugees to Britain who arrived in the pre-war decade and distinguished themselves in medicine. Psychiatry had the good luck to absorb several, Last among them.

He was born in Romania, and his father, an Austrian, was a prosperous corn merchant. His mother, whose parents were Russian refugees, was educated in a French convent. The household was multilingual, therefore, and the children were familiar with French, German and English literature. The family moved to France intending to settle there, but the outbreak of World War I entailed their internment, luckily living with friends. They went to Spain for three months and then repatriated themselves by stages in Italy, Switzerland and Austria to Berlin and then to Hamburg.

Last was medically trained in Berlin, Bonn, Heidelberg and Paris. He later qualified in neurology and psychiatry. In Paris he met his wife Sonia, a Russian emigrée studying piano at the conservatoire. His father died in 1933 and Last, together with his mother and sister, came to England where they were later joined by Sonia.

After requalifying in Cardiff, Last took an appointment at Whitchurch Hospital, which distinguished itself by training many leading psychiatric medical superintendents of the period. In 1936 he joined Runwell, a newly built psychiatric hospital in Essex, which, unusually for a county hospital,

undertook considerable research. Last contributed to this by opening an EEG department which provided a service for the area. He became responsible for the EEG department at the London Hospital also, as well as the secretary of the newly-formed EEG society. In 1951 he was appointed medical superintendent of St John's Hospital, Aylesbury. An extensive upgrading and extension of this hospital had been prepared and agreed but was frustrated by World War II. The hospital was well used during the War under Ian Skottowe, Last's predecessor, but in the early '50s it was an overcrowded, overstretched institution. The advent of the National Health Service, however, began to make itself felt and with his wide knowledge and experience it enabled Last to co-operate with and guide the Regional Board's plans for considerable upgrading and extension of the hospital's services, which included the establishment of an EEG department and district service.

He made a considerable contribution to the legislative reform consummated in the Mental Health Act (1959). This he did by organising an all-party parliamentary Mental Health Committee which provided competent, responsible exponents of the differing viewpoints in psychiatry.

In 1962 Last was appointed consultant at London Hospital and gave more time to the extended work of the EEG department, particularly in co-operation with the neurosurgery department. On his retirement he became an Open University student and later graduated in *litterae humaniores*.

He is survived by his daughter, Judith.

DCW

**JOHN (JOCK) D. SUTHERLAND, CBE, formerly
Medical Director, Tavistock Clinic, London**



John Sutherland, a foundation Fellow of the College, died on 14 June 1991, aged 86. He first read Chemistry and then Psychology at Edinburgh University and later studied medicine at Glasgow where he qualified in 1937.

As a student, he came under the influence of Ronald Fairbairn and as a result was determined on becoming a psychoanalyst himself. At the outbreak of War, he joined the staff of a hospital for the expected psychiatric war casualties, and in 1942, joined a team of colleagues, predominantly from the Tavistock Clinic, to develop the War Office Selection Boards for Officers. Here he played a prominent part, in the design, planning and

methodology, but also in demonstrating a significant leadership and influence within the professional/military group itself. This later led to his being chosen as Director of the Tavistock Clinic, a post he held from 1947–1968. With his war-time colleagues, among whom were Henry Dicks, John Bowlby and Wilfred Bion, he led the Clinic into its pre-eminent national and international position in psychoanalytically oriented psychotherapy and related health endeavours. In 1948, he and his colleagues decided that the Clinic should play its part in the new National Health Service, and until his retirement he strove successfully to establish the Clinic in its unique combination of post-graduate training and clinic practice for children, adolescents, families and adults in group as well as individual treatment.

In 1968, in recognition of these services, he was appointed CBE.

After the War he continued his psycho-analytic training while fulfilling his leadership role and conducting clinical work himself both for individuals and groups. As a member of the British Psycho-Analytical Society, he played an equally prominent part, and edited the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* from 1960 to 1968.

On his retirement from the Tavistock Clinic, Sutherland returned to Edinburgh and, from a clinical base in the Royal Edinburgh Hospital, taught psychotherapy, psychopathology and the elements of community psychiatry to the University Department of Psychiatry.

In 1970, along with a number of colleagues, including the late Professor John Spencer, Sutherland, bent on integrating the psycho-social professions by providing them with opportunities not available elsewhere in Scotland for advanced education and training, founded the Scottish Institute of Human Relations, which now has centres both in Edinburgh and in Glasgow.

"Working is fun", he used to say as he devoted himself to furthering the development of the Scottish Institute, using his great skills, as an educator and facilitator, to make psycho-dynamic insights available to doctors, nurses, social workers, educationalists, voluntary workers, religious leaders and others.

More recently, besides his many articles and papers on psycho-analytic matters and health affairs, Sutherland fulfilled a life-long determination to pay tribute and acknowledgement to the work and fundamental ideas of Fairbairn. His book, *Fairbairn's Journey into the Interior* (1989) reflected Sutherland's own lifelong exploration of those fateful inner and outer influences whose interaction shapes our development as human beings.

Jock is survived by his staunchly supportive and ever-gracious wife, Molly, by his daughter Anne, and by four grandchildren.

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