

# Obituary

**PERCY LAVERN BACKUS, retired, formerly Consultant Psychiatrist, St Mary's Hospital, Harrow Road, London.**

Percy Lavern Backus died peacefully at home on 3 August 1983. He was born on 26 October 1892 in Ontario, a son of the manse, of Yorkshire and Scottish descent. His forefathers went to Canada in pre-Confederation days.

He went to the University of Alberta and McGill University where he graduated MD, CM in 1919, being the Prizeman of his final year.

He had planned a career in surgery, and came to England in 1930 to study for the FRCS; but with a young family the industrial depression compelled him to turn to general practice. Here his interest in and concern for his patients led in 1937 to training in psychiatry at the Maudsley Hospital and the Tavistock Clinic. He took the DPM in 1939. Surgery's loss was psychiatry's gain.

At the onset of World War II he joined the RAMC as a specialist psychiatrist and went to France, being evacuated in May, 1940 in the retreat to the beaches. He returned to France as a Lieutenant Colonel with the psychiatric hospital which went there after D-day.

On release from the army he resumed consultant practice in Harley Street and for a short time at the Tavistock Clinic. In 1946 he was invited by Dr G. W. B. James to join him at St Mary's Hospital in the grade of consultant, where he remained until the age of retirement. Thereafter he continued for many years in private practice. He was always a very good doctor. His psychiatric work was wideranging, but his main interest was in psychotherapy, where he was unusually effective.

Percy Backus had many interests apart from medicine. For example, he was President of the Canadian University Club in the UK and President in Britain of the Graduates Society of McGill, and a governor of London House for Overseas Graduates. He was a Rotarian, a Freemason and Master of Canada Lodge.

But it is as a practising Christian that he will be most widely remembered. He held many Offices in the Methodist Church, and his work was rewarded in 1967 when he became Vice-President of the Methodist Conference, the highest honour that can be bestowed upon a methodist layman. This involved much overseas travel. He was truly a good man.

His first wife died in 1952. Their two sons are doctors in Canada. His second wife survives him. Both marriages were supremely happy.

JDWP

**MARY JENNY LAKE ELLIS, Senior Medical Officer, HM Borstal Institution, Bedfont Road, Feltham, Middlesex.**

Dr Mary Ellis (née Taylor) died on 19 April 1983, aged 62.

Mary, as she was simply and affectionately called by a host of friends and colleagues, read medicine at the Royal Free Hospital and qualified MRCS, LRCP in 1944 and graduated MB, BS (London) in 1946.

Having decided on a career in psychiatry, she held appointments at Powick Hospital, Worcester and at Horton Hospital, Epsom. She gained the DPM (England) in 1965, was elected to the foundation membership of the College in 1971 and proceeded to the fellowship in 1977.

Mary opted for the Prison Medical Service almost 20 years ago, and was posted to HM Borstal, Feltham, Middlesex, where she remained for the duration of her service, attaining the rank of Senior Medical Officer. Her appointment to Feltham was particularly felicitous; her personality, combining as it did firmness and kindness, made her the ideal person to deal with the manifold problems which abound in the care of adolescent delinquents. Her unique and long experience, both as clinician and administrator, stood her in good stead when she was called upon to advise on the plans for the new Feltham.

For two periods, from 1971–75 and from 1978–82, Mary edited the *Prison Medical Journal*, an excellent journal which, because of restrictions on its circulation imposed by the Home Office, is far too little known. Mary's request for a paper for her journal, no matter from whom, carried with it something of the imperative of a royal command. There must have been few who had the temerity to refuse.

**FREDERICK PATERSON HALDANE, retired, formerly Consultant Psychiatrist, West Middlesex Hospital, Isleworth.**

Ricky Haldane, for many years Consultant Psychiatrist at the West Middlesex Hospital, died on 15 September 1983 at the age of 71.

He qualified MB, ChB in 1936 at the University of Glasgow, having previously been educated at Edinburgh Academy. He passed his DPM (Eng) in 1939 and was elected Foundation Fellow of the Royal College of Psychiatrists in 1971. He had taken a keen interest in the foundation of the College.

Professionally he started his psychiatry as Assistant Physician under Dr R. Ström-Olsen at Runwell Hospital in Essex in 1937, and in 1945 was appointed Deputy Physician Superintendent of Glasgow Royal Mental Hospital, Gartnavel. After a year he joined the army and saw much overseas service as Specialist Psychiatrist, becoming a temporary Lieutenant Colonel as Officer commanding a Military Psychiatric Hospital and adviser in psychiatry to GHQ Central Mediterranean Forces. On returning to civilian life after a brief spell at Menston Hospital near Leeds, he was appointed Consultant Psychiatrist at West Middlesex

Hospital in August 1948.

His main interests lay in the field of psychopathology and psychotherapy, and this was reflected in the way that he built up the unit at the West Middlesex Hospital from an old observation ward into a unit with strong psychotherapy leanings. He played a large part in its conversion to a district general hospital psychiatric unit, now serving a catchment area. On his retirement in 1977 he was appointed Honorary Consultant Psychiatrist to the West Middlesex University Hospital.

He had a keen sense of humour and was deeply involved in all the activities of the hospital, where his kindness and friendliness to all his colleagues were deeply appreciated. He was also unstinting in the care which he gave to his patients.

Ricky Haldane is survived by a wife and two sons, as well as by a son and daughter of a previous marriage.

CFH

**DAVID GEORGE ARTHUR WESTBURY, retired, formerly Consultant Psychiatrist, Winterton Hospital, Cleveland.**

Dr David George Arthur Westbury, a founding father of British forensic psychiatry as we know it today, died on 7 June 1983, at the age of 69.

David Westbury was educated at Rugby School and read medicine at Guy's Hospital, graduating MB, BS (London) in 1947. He had long wished to make psychiatry his career, and after a varied experience in hospital and general practice and two years in the Royal Army Medical Corps, he took up appointments at St Audrey's Hospital, Melton, Suffolk and then at Hellesden Hospital, Norwich. He gained the DPM (England) in 1959 and was elected to the foundation membership of the College in 1971, proceeding to the fellowship in 1976.

It was in forensic psychiatry that he was to make his mark. In 1964 he joined the Prison Medical Service and

served as a medical officer at HM Prison, Durham. Then, in 1967, he was appointed Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist to the Home Office, a post he held jointly with the Northern Region Health Authority, thus, in effect, establishing forensic psychiatry as an academic discipline in the northern region. It was he who founded the forensic psychiatry centre at the Winterton Hospital, Sedgefield, which included facilities for the treatment of adolescent male offenders.

Dr Westbury lectured on his subject to a variety of professional and lay audiences and gave readily of his services to the forensic section of the College and to various committees and organizations. He was for many years a medical member of the Mental Health Review Tribunal.

A serious illness in 1973, which left him a cardiac invalid, led to his premature retirement in 1981. As a tribute to his services to his community, and to forensic psychiatry in particular, the centre he had founded has been renamed the David Westbury Centre.

**The deaths of the following were also reported:**

**GRAHAM JOHN MILNE AIKEN**, Registrar, The Maudsley Hospital, Denmark Hill, London SE5.

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

**DEAN GEORGE ELEFTHERY**, Professor and Director of the Institute of Human Relations, 335 North East 26th Street, Miami, Florida 33137, USA.

**JAMES LORIMER HALLIDAY**, retired, formerly Psychiatrist, Lansdown Clinic, Glasgow, Scotland.

**HYMAN ROSENBERG**, retired, formerly Consultant Psychiatrist, Morgannwg Hospital, Bridgend, Wales.

**TREVOR CHARLES NOEL GIBBENS**, CBE, retired, Emeritus Professor of Forensic Psychiatry, Institute of Psychiatry, De Crespigny Park, London SE5.

**WILLIAM VICTOR WADSWORTH**, Medical Director, SIHV, 'Franklyn', Macclesfield Road, Alderley Edge, Cheshire.

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## *Forthcoming Events*

A **Workshop in Psychodrama** will be held by Marcia Karp, a graduate of the Moreno Academy in New York, at the Warneford Hospital from 9 to 11 March 1984. The workshop will suit both beginners to psychodrama and those who wish to improve their skills. Anyone working in the mental health field is welcome. The cost of the workshop is £20. Information: Dr S. Bloch, Department of Psychotherapy, Warneford Hospital, Oxford OX3 7JX.

The **5th Annual Paediatrics, Obstetrics and Psychiatry Conference** of The London Hospital Medical College will be held on 3 February 1984. The theme will be 'Teenage Pregnancy and Motherhood'. Information and application forms: The Postgraduate Education Secretary, The London Hospital Medical College, Turner Street, London E1 2AD.

The **1984 Residential Conference in Child Psychiatry** will be held at City University, London, from 20 to 22 September 1984. Short research papers by SRs in Child Psychiatry are invited. Please contact Dr H. Zeitlin, Westminster Children's Hospital, Vincent Square, London SW1P 2NS.

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### *Correction*

An error was made in the news item from Dr Matthews, commenting on the Advisory Council's report on the treatment and rehabilitation of drug misusers (*Bulletin*, October 1983, 7, 195). The sentence which stated: 'An urgent request for dipipanone prescribing is made . . .' should have read: 'An urgent request for *the restriction of* dipipanone prescribing is made . . .'