

Obituary

Editor: Henry R. Rollin

ROBERT GOW MCINNES, formerly Physician Superintendent, Warneford Hospital, Oxford

Robin—as he was known—McInnes was one of the last of the forward-looking Medical Superintendents. His far-sightedness made the Warneford and Park Hospitals, Oxford, nationally sought after.

Robert Gow McInnes was born in Alloa on 31 August 1903. Qualifying at Edinburgh, he practised in general medicine before moving to psychiatry. He became Deputy Medical Superintendent at Morningside Hospital and was much influenced by Professor Sir David Henderson.

In 1938, McInnes was appointed to succeed Alexander Neill as Physician Superintendent of the Warneford Hospital, the original Oxford Asylum built in the 1820s. McInnes adapted a convalescent home, bought by Neill, as the 'undesignated' Park Hospital for Functional Nervous Disorders.

Into the Warneford Hospital he introduced psychiatric social work in 1949 and, in 1950, psychology in the person of May Davidson.

During the planning of the National Health Service, McInnes was one of the heads of registered private hospitals who tackled Aneurin Bevan personally in the hope of remaining independent, with NHS help: totally in or out, was Bevan's uncompromising reply. After heart-searching, McInnes and his Hospital Management Committee decided in favour of entering the Service in 1948, to avoid the exclusion of "the very patients which the hospital had been founded to assist, namely the middle and professional classes".

McInnes proceeded to extend the medical staff to form training grades. His close friend, Ian Skottowe, was persuaded as second consultant in 1951. Since McInnes's idea was to make the Warneford and Park a psychiatric clinic specialising in teaching and research, he enlisted, also in 1951, Dr R. W. Parnell to research into the constitutional aspect of psychiatry.

During the 1950s, the Warneford had care of the majority of mentally ill undergraduates and postgraduates of the University. The special facilities for work and examinations engendered the nickname 'Warneford College', reputed to get more Firsts than any other Oxford College.

McInnes was one of the innovators of the open mixed ward as early as 1951. In that year he took control of child psychiatry which, in 1958 with Christopher Ounsted as consultant, he expanded into the Park Hospital for Children. The Park's adult patients were transferred to the front wards of the Warneford, which became 'de-designated' from the Board of Control.

An assiduous and dogged administrator, McInnes was for many years the psychiatric 'guru' of the Oxford Regional Hospital Board.

In the 1960s he introduced general unlocking of wards and expanding day care. When the Regius Professor of Medicine obtained the endowment of a Chair of Psychiatry from the W. A. Handley Trust Funds in 1967, McInnes retired.

His retirement was a sad one because of a developing cardiac and Parkinsonian trouble. His wife, Dorothy, whom he married in 1935, nursed Robin devotedly at Wootton throughout his long illness, under which he lost neither his pawky sense of humour nor his interests. He died peacefully on 24 October 1987 with his family around him.

SS

VERA ANN WILKINSON, Consultant Child Psychiatrist, Slough Family and Child Guidance Clinic and Wexham Park Hospital, Slough, Berkshire.

Dr Vera Wilkinson died after a short illness on 28 February 1987, at the age of 64. Vera was born in Sawley, near Ripon, Yorkshire, on 25 May 1922 and was educated at Ripon High School for Girls, where she was head of school and captain of games. A Parkinson scholarship took her to Leeds University to study medicine, where she graduated MB, ChB in 1947. She became MRCPsych in 1972 and was elected to the Fellowship in 1984. She worked in obstetrics and gynaecology, pathology, medicine and paediatrics during the following three years, and after a period at the London Chest hospital specialised in thoracic medicine in Brentford and later at Birmingham.

She married in 1953 Rupert Wilkinson, a specialist in radiology, and during the following ten years she had four children. She managed to continue part-time work in the school medical service during the early childhood of her young family.

In 1962 she took up psychiatry and her training was initially at the Fairmile Hospital and the Tavistock Clinic. During 1964–65 she was a clinical assistant at the Maudsley Hospital and the Brixton Child Guidance Clinic, and in 1967 was appointed registrar at the Ealing Child Guidance Clinic. From 1967–1969 she was senior registrar to the Earl's Court Child Guidance Clinic, and was appointed consultant to the Slough Child Guidance Clinic and Wexham Park Hospital in 1969.

Vera took a special interest in the families of children with chronic and life threatening illnesses, helping to relieve pain and anxiety. She was particularly interested in the problem of juvenile arthritis, and worked closely with the specialists in physical medicine at the Canadian Red Cross Hospital in Taplow until it closed, and wrote a number of papers on this problem.

Vera led her team at the Slough Child Guidance Clinic, which was a truly multi-disciplinary one, providing support for other professionals, and maintaining strong links in the community with health visitors, school medical officers and educational welfare officers. Her special contribution was her ability to be both a mother and a specialist to the families that sought her help, and it was noticeable how quickly anxious mothers with difficult children were put at their ease after meeting her. She set no limits to the demands on her time and worked a punishing round of clinics, case conferences and professional meetings. She even took work into hospital with her when she was having a cataract operation not long before she died. She was a skilled and dispassionate clinician and a scrupulous administrator.

Vera enjoyed reading, gardening, and travelling abroad, especially to Italy, where she had a farmhouse. She was a constant and steadfast support to her family, to whom she was devoted. She will be much missed by all those who had the privilege of working with her.

JHN

OLIVER ZANGWILL, Emeritus Professor of Experimental Psychology, University of Cambridge

Oliver Zangwill, an Honorary Fellow of the College, died on 12 October 1987 after a long and disabling illness.

Although he was the doyen of British experimental psychologists and honoured for this, psychiatrists too have good reason to remember him with gratitude and affection, for he worked constantly to foster understanding between our two professions. Born in 1913, the son of Israel Zangwill, the turn-of-the-century novelist and chronicler of Jewish ghetto life (*Children of the Ghetto; King of the Schnorrers*) and campaigner for liberal causes, Oliver grew up in a cultured London Jewish household where his intellectual brilliance soon became clear. From University College School, London, he came up to Cambridge in the 1930s and went through King's College where he had a distinguished career winning prizes and Firsts. He spent 1935 to 1940 in psychological research in Cambridge and then, during the War, worked as psychologist to Norman Dott's Neurosurgery Unit in Edinburgh. After the War he was Assistant Director of the Institute of Experimental Psychology in Oxford, working closely with Sir Hugh

Cairns. It was during these years that he did outstanding work on cerebral location, in particular as it affected memory disturbance.

In 1952 he went back to Cambridge as Professor and lived and worked there ever since. He gradually pulled the department together and his laboratory served as a starting point for several who have since become eminent in psychology, such as Weiskrantz, Gregory and Hudson. He always encouraged psychiatrists who were interested in academic work, first Derek Russell Davies in the 1950s and, much later, Sir Martin Roth and his Department, but his commitment to psychiatric work went much further. Having had personal experience in his family of long-term psychosis, he was deeply committed to the reforms and social psychiatric advances at Fulbourn Hospital during the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, even coming on the Hospital Management Committee for several years in order to support the new ideas which were at that time struggling for recognition. He guided Douglas Hooper to his important social studies of the changes on the long-stay wards at Fulbourn following the application of social therapy.

He always looked forward to the day when there would be an Academic Department of Psychiatry within Cambridge University and was disappointed when the proposal for a Cambridge Clinical School was defeated in the early 1960s. When, in the 1970s, the Clinical Medical School came into being he welcomed Martin Roth and gave great help in the setting up of the new Department.

In 1980 his services to psychiatry were recognised by an Honorary Fellowship of the Royal College.

A kindly, courteous man of diffident charm, he was always ready to help any of us with shrewd advice quietly given, and he came to operate deftly amidst the Byzantine politics of Cambridge University. His tall, stooped patrician figure was well known, especially in King's College where he lived for a number of years. In his later years he made a good and happy marriage with Shirley who supported him nobly during his final illness.

DHC

The deaths of the following have also been reported:

GEOFFREY FULLER HARRIS, Consultant Psychiatrist, St Lawrence's Hospital, Caterham, Surrey.

JOHN ROGER HAWKINGS, formerly Consultant Psychiatrist, North Tees General Hospital, Stockton-on-Tees, Cleveland.