

Obituary

Editor: Henry R. Rollin

HENRY JAMES CROW, formerly Clinical Director, Burden Neurological Hospital and Institute, Bristol

Henry James (Harry) Crow died suddenly at his home on 10 May 1987, at the age of 66. He began his medical career as a student at Aberdeen University, having already served in the Royal Air Force as a navigator. His natural modesty meant that a distinguished war record, (he was awarded the DFC), was generally unknown to all but his closest friends.

An early post as neurosurgical houseman at Frenchay Hospital began a lifelong interest in neuropsychiatry. This was initially fostered by research undertaken at The London Hospital, but in 1956 he moved to The Burden Institute and Hospital Bristol, where he worked until his retirement. During many years at The Burden, latterly as Consultant and Clinical Director, his dedicated medical and psychiatric skills were reflected in meticulous patient care. He was respected, admired and regarded with affection by all his medical and ancillary colleagues. With his wife, also a psychiatrist, and a multidisciplinary team, he wholeheartedly undertook the care of patients with intractable personality problems, often referred from other psychiatrists throughout the region. His undaunted enthusiasm and unswerving optimism could often yield unexpectedly successful results. His MD thesis, approved by Aberdeen University in 1964, concerned the development and application of multifocal leucocoagulation, and was the cornerstone of his continuing research interest in the treatment and care of patients with obsessional anxiety neuroses.

His clinical practice focused increasingly on patients who suffered from epilepsy, as general practitioners, neurolo-

gists and neurosurgeons alike recognised his particular expertise. He developed the Burden Hospital EEG department, following Grey Walter's pioneering revelations regarding the clinical application of electroencephalography. High technical standards of work within his department were largely due to Harry, and he was justly proud of the emergency EEG service which he developed for the Bristol area. Harry was a founder member of The Royal College of Psychiatrists, becoming a Fellow in 1971, and was a recent past Chairman of The South Western Division. Characteristically he continued, even after retirement, to give generously of his time to others in the specialty, and acted as a second opinion doctor under the provision of the new Mental Health Act.

He was intensely loyal to The Burden Hospital and Institute, and immediately prior to his retirement he took great pains to make himself available for advice as to the best way in which continuity of patient care could be maintained. A framed appreciation from the local Community Health Council which they presented to him on his retirement bore witness to their high regard for his medical skills, when they called him "the patients' doctor". Harry's extrovert personality made him a welcome guest at social functions, and he enjoyed the friendship of many colleagues. Among the latter his presence will be especially missed by the small group who annually accompanied him walking in the Scottish hills. It is sad that he only lived to enjoy a short retirement with his equally hard-working wife, barely having time to follow his golfing and gardening interests. He leaves a widow, Carol, and three sons.

MHM

Book Reviews

My Years with CRUSE by Margaret Torrie (foreword by Baroness Lena Jeger). Obtainable from CRUSE House, 126 Sheen Road, Richmond, Surrey TW9 1UR. Pp 125. £3.25 plus 40p p&p (£3.00 post free to the widowed). 1987.

It is often said that the least familiar period in history is that which just precedes one's lifetime. Thus young adults of the 1960s and 70s were particularly lacking in information and understanding about the Second World War, having missed the experience of living through it, yet not distant enough in time to have learned about it as 'history'.

So, although I have been a supporter of the work of CRUSE (once 'The National Organisation for Widows', now the 'National Organisation for the Widowed and Their Children'), familiar with its present aims and aware of Mrs Torrie's book *Begin Again* for widows, the period which saw the genesis of the organisation and its early development

into what was ultimately to become CRUSE was well before my own qualification in medicine. Its early beginnings were translated into vigorous and successful growth before I began to be professionally concerned as a psychiatrist with bereavement. I mention this point to illustrate the fact that while I have never taken the work of CRUSE 'for granted', I was quite clearly woefully ignorant of the early struggles and development, and this little book has corrected this for me. Since I doubt that I can be the only psychiatrist existing such undisclosed lacunae, I commend it to others, particularly social psychiatrists and those working with bereavement and loss. It will also be of interest to other professionals involved with the development of self- and mutual-aid groups.

CRUSE has indeed interesting origins. Margaret Torrie, a Quaker, pacifist, one-time social worker, writer, poet and wife of a Scottish consultant psychiatrist (Dr Alfred Torrie)

was inspired on hearing a radio broadcast of the late Kurt Hahn, following his departure from Nazi Germany, stating baldly "compassion in Europe is dead."

How it could live again was the challenge that stimulated Mrs Torrie "to do something for widows." "I was challenged," she says, "by my ignorance of the whole concept of widowhood" but by advertising locally in Richmond ("would any widow in need of help and encouragement get in touch"), she opened the floodgates. A group meeting was called and the "stories tumbled out and the problems with them: children, pensions, jobs, exploitation, lack of money, housing, landlords, repairs, and, over it all, the setting of loneliness and lack of support." Later they entered "the more private areas of grief and loss." One thing was clear. They needed to talk and we needed to listen.

From such modest beginnings came the organisation we now know as CRUSE, undeniably a model of professionally organised and supported help, and counselling with far-

reaching effects on teaching and research in bereavement. But not, however, without years of struggle, financial, philosophical and political before its transition from the home of the Torries into its present one at CRUSE House as a fully-fledged organisation with paid staff, a distinguished list of patrons and the development of work for and with the bereaved in many parts of the United Kingdom.

This book is in its form really an extended personal diary of Mrs Torrie's 'Years with Cruse', including many of her own and her husband's struggles with ill-health and personal loss.

Apart from its historical importance to the development of bereavement care for the individual psychiatrist, it is very reasonably priced and would be a useful addition to hospital libraries.

KERRY BLUGLASS

*University of Birmingham and
Woodbourne Clinic, Birmingham*

Forthcoming Events

MRCPsych Examination Course: Seminars will be held in Part I and Part II subjects between 8 and 9 a.m. on Wednesdays in Chelsham House, Warlingham Park Hospital. There is no fee. Details: Dr C. McDonald, Warlingham Park Hospital, Warlingham, Surrey CR3 9YR (telephone 08832 2101, extension 139 – mornings).

Hayes Grove Priory Seminars: An evening seminar will be held at the Hayes Grove Priory Hospital starting at 7.00 p.m. on 10 November 1987. The seminar will be on the Control of Stress when Dr David Wheatley, Head of the General Practice Research Group and Psychopharmacology Research Group, will speak on the Investigation of Stress and the Pharmacological Treatment; there will also be another talk on Stress Control in Public Speaking. Early application is advised to Dr Adrian Winbow, Medical Director, Hayes Grove Priory Hospital, Prestons Road, Hayes, Kent BR2 7AS (telephone 01 462 7722).

The **Radical Jewish Health Group** is a sociable forum for Jews in the caring professions looking at mental health issues from a Jewish perspective. Autumn meetings include 'Working with Colleagues and Anti-semitism' on 24 November 1987, 7.45 p.m., at Swiss Cottage Community Centre, Winchester Road, London NW3 and 'Working with Colleagues on Anti-semitism' on 17 December 1987, 7.45 p.m. (venue to be confirmed). More details about the Group's activities: 01 878 6469 or 01 346 4010.

The Group-Analytic Society and the Institute of Group Analysis will be holding **Group Responses to the AIDS Crisis: An Experiential Workshop** on 5 December 1987 from 9.00 a.m.–4.45 p.m. at the Institute. Fee: £40 (to include refreshments). Closing date for applications: 23 November 1987. The workshop should be of interest to doctors, nurses, social workers, counsellors, health advisers, community workers, volunteers, their trainers, managers and administrators who are working in HIV/AIDS related programmes. Further details: Brenda Ling, Administrative Director, The Institute of Group Analysis, Group-Analytic Society (London), 1 Daleham Gardens, London NW3 5BY (Telephone 01 431 2693).

The Grovelands Priory Seminars: the fourth of this ongoing series will take place on the evening of 26 November 1987 when Dr Jeremy Pfeffer, Consultant Psychiatrist, The London Hospital, will speak on '**Management of Patients with Anxiety States**'. Early application is advised: Dr Bron Lipkin, Deputy Medical Director, Grovelands Priory Hospital, The Bourne, Southgate, London N14 6RA.

The Association of University Teachers of Psychiatry will hold its fourth conference on '**Teaching Dynamic Psychotherapy**' on 14–16 April 1988 at University College, Oxford. The theme is 'Formal Courses in Psychotherapy'. Further information: Dr Stuart Lieberman, Department of Psychiatry, St George's Hospital Medical School, Cranmer Terrace, London SW17 0QT.

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