

Obituary

WILLIAM BOYD, formerly Physician Superintendent, Stratheden Hospital, Cupar, Fife, Scotland.

Dr William Boyd, formerly Physician Superintendent, Stratheden Hospital, Cupar, Fife, died in April 1984.

William Boyd was born on 4 August 1898, at Galashiels. After attending George Watson's College in Edinburgh, his medical studies were interrupted by the First World War, and he saw active service as a Lieutenant in the Royal Horse Artillery. After the war he resumed his studies and graduated MB, ChB from the University of Edinburgh in 1923. He took the DPH in 1925, the Diploma in Psychiatry in 1926, became a member of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh in 1952 and a Foundation Fellow of the Royal College of Psychiatrists in 1971.

He became Senior Assistant Medical Officer at Stratheden Hospital, then Fife and Kinross District Asylum, in 1924 and became Physician Superintendent in 1927. He served as a member of the South-East Scotland Regional Hospital Board, and became Chairman of the Scottish Division of the Royal Medico-Psychological Association.

In 1953 he became Psychiatric Adviser to the Scottish Prison Service and for the next 15 years, at a time when forensic psychiatry was still in an embryonic stage, he regularly visited prisons throughout Scotland and his advice was sought on a wide variety of medico-legal problems. His contribution to psychiatry and to the Scottish Prison Service was recognized by the award of the OBE in 1971.

He was an enthusiastic caravanner, taking an active part in promoting the activities of the Caravan Club from its earliest days, and it was under his Chairmanship that it became a national body.

The death of his wife in 1973 came as a great blow to him for they had enjoyed a particularly close and harmonious marriage. Nevertheless, he continued to lead an active and healthy life until a few weeks before his death. His son, Bill, until recently Physician Superintendent of the Royal Edinburgh Hospital, is now a Mental Welfare Commissioner, Chairman of the Scottish Division of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, and one of Scotland's best known psychiatrists.

Dr Boyd is still well remembered in Fife by an older generation of patients and staff. He took a very active part in promoting sport and recreation and a wide variety of occupational activities before these had become generally fashionable. He was instrumental in developing the Stratheden Admission Block—which eventually gave the hospital its name—in 1938, as well as taking a lead in planning the purpose-built geriatric wards that came into being in 1955. He took a particular interest in the daily lives of the long-stay patients in Stratheden and took some pride in knowing the name, and often a great deal of the background, of every patient in the hospital. A man of impressive build and commanding presence, he is remembered as always friendly and approachable, always courteous and helpful.

Dr Boyd's years in Fife are often recalled with warmth and affection by the older members of nursing staff (many now

retired), and he also receives a regular tribute and what can now be regarded as a fitting epitaph, from an elderly patient whom I still see from time to time in Kirkcaldy. Invariably at some point her eyes kindle in reflective nostalgia and she murmurs: 'Ah, Dr Boyd—now *there* was a gentleman.'

AM

LESLIE COLIN COOK, formerly Consultant Psychiatrist, Bexley Hospital, Kent.

Dr Leslie Cook, who died in Zimbabwe on Christmas Day, 1984, was well known to an earlier generation of psychiatrists. He was a pioneer in this country of convulsion therapy with cardiazol, a treatment originated by Dr L. J. Meduna in Budapest in 1934. At the request of the then London County Council's mental health committee, he visited Budapest in 1937 to study this new treatment, and he himself, while in Hungary, gave 40–50 injections under Meduna's supervision. His report on his visit was never published, although news of his favourable opinion spread rapidly. He took part in the subsequent development of convulsion therapy: the less alarming electrically provoked fit, later modified by a muscle relaxant and a short-acting anaesthetic, both of which improvements he was at first reluctant to adopt.

He was enthusiastic about trying other forms of physical treatment as they were successively introduced: continuous narcosis, for instance, and, following Meduna again, abreaction with carbon dioxide. With two colleagues he published a paper in the *Lancet* on chlorpromazine as early as 1955.

Leslie was as old as the century and was one of the dwindling band of doctors who served in the 1914–18 war. He was at Clifton College, then at Caius College, Cambridge, and completed his medical training at St Thomas's. Improbably, in the light of his later interests, his MD thesis tackled the subject of microcephaly.

In 1939 he became only the third superintendent of Bexley Hospital, where he was already on the staff. Altogether he worked there for about a quarter of a century, and in his last year (1958) became president of the Royal Medico-Psychological Association, the College's forerunner. His presidential address, like many such, was mainly retrospective, but towards the end of it he allowed himself a prophecy: 'It should be possible with further knowledge to prevent the development of the psychotic stage [of schizophrenia] . . . if this comes to pass the mental hospital may eventually consist of a small early treatment centre, an even smaller department for intractable psychosis and, I am afraid, a much larger sector employed in caring for senile and other organic states.'

His interests were in clinical psychiatry and in research, giving much practical help to the Mental Health Foundation. He welcomed the shift towards out-patient treatment, and he himself was invited to join the staff at Guy's. His teaching was old style, as elsewhere at that time, consisting largely of a showing-off of some flamboyant in-patients to groups of medical students. Of formal administration he managed with as little as possible and nobody seemed to suffer. He inspired