

Obituary

This new section, which is edited by Dr Henry Rollin, will be a regular feature in the *Bulletin* and it is hoped that an accurate record can be maintained. We will be pleased to accept information on deaths and short obituaries which will be used at the discretion of the editor.

THEODORE MARTIN CUTHBERT, Lord Chancellor's Medical Visitor, formerly Physician Superintendent, St Luke's Hospital, Middlesbrough.

Dr T. M. Cuthbert, the last president of the Royal Medico-Psychological Association and formerly physician superintendent of St Luke's Hospital, Middlesbrough, died on 24 May aged 71.

Theodore Martin Cuthbert was born on 15 July 1909, the only child of a doctor father who bore the same name. Martin Cuthbert (as he was invariably known) was educated at Bradfield College and St Bartholomew's Hospital, London. He qualified with the conjoint diploma, MRCS, LRCP (London) in 1933, and having decided on a career in psychiatry, proceeded to the DPM (England) in 1936.

His first experience of mental hospital psychiatry was as a locum at Goodmayes Hospital, Essex, where his uncle, Dr Harvey Cuthbert, was medical superintendent. He then joined the staff of Oakwood Hospital, Maidstone, Kent, and at the early age of 29 was appointed deputy medical superintendent at Cherry Knowle Hospital, Co Durham. In 1947, when aged 38, he was appointed medical superintendent at St Luke's Hospital, Middlesbrough, a post he filled with distinction until his retirement in 1973. In the same year he was invited to become a Lord Chancellor's Visitor. In July 1981 he underwent major abdominal surgery, and although he recovered sufficiently to return to work, he was ultimately forced to retire in December 1981.

Martin Cuthbert, a handsome man of commanding presence, was a very able clinician and administrator, but what was more important for what he was destined to become, he was a born leader of men. All these attributes he exercised to the full, both in his job as a medical superintendent and as a member of a variety of medical committees outside his hospital. He was, for example, a member of the Central Health Services Council.

For many years he was closely identified with the old Royal Medico-Psychological Association. From 1945 to 1949 he held the post of secretary to the Northern and Midland Division, and from 1958 to 1961 he served as its chairman. In 1969 he was elected president of the RMPA at a time when the delicate negotiations with the Privy Council to translate the Association into a Royal College were in train.

That they were brought to a successful conclusion was due in no small measure to Cuthbert's negotiating skills. He it was, therefore, who served as the final link in a chain, the

first of which was forged in 1841 when the Association of Medical Officers of Asylums and Hospitals for the Insane was founded. It was a kindly fate that saw to it that, at this critical tide in the affairs of British Psychiatry in general and our College in particular, the right man was in the right place at the right time. His task completed he handed over the keys of office to Sir Martin Roth, who in 1972 became the first president of the Royal College of Psychiatrists.

Cuthbert was elected foundation fellow of the College in 1971, and as a gesture of its appreciation of his services, was among the first to be elected to the Honorary Fellowship in 1972.

Martin Cuthbert gave of his best to the College in terms of unstinting service. But he did even more; he presented to the College its mace, its symbolic staff of office. In this exquisite work of art, specially designed and cast in sterling silver, the memory of Theodore Martin Cuthbert will be enshrined for all time.

SIR (JOHN) DENIS NELSON HILL, formerly Professor of Psychiatry, Institute of Psychiatry, London SE5.

Denis Hill, who died on 5 May, was perhaps the most influential British psychiatrist of his day. His contributions were comparable in range and significance to those of Mapother and Lewis, his predecessors at the Institute of Psychiatry—though in some respects the contrasts could hardly have been greater. After pioneering work in electroencephalography and neuropsychiatry, he played a leading part in extending the affiliations of psychiatry with general medicine, in furthering psychiatric education and the development of academic psychiatry, in advancing the case for dynamic psychiatry and psychotherapy, and in setting the scene for the modern practice of forensic psychiatry.

John Denis Nelson Hill was born in 1913 and was educated at Shrewsbury School and St Thomas' Hospital. While a house physician at Maida Vale he was infected by Grey Walter's enthusiasm for the potential clinical value of the EEG. He later headed a small team which first in the wartime emergency medical service at Belmont Hospital and afterwards at the Maudsley, explored applications of the technique to psychiatry, achieved international repute, and laid the foundations of modern electroencephalography. Hill was for years in charge of the epileptic ward at the Maudsley, and this too was run with something of the pioneering spirit with a multiprofessional team placing emphasis on psychosocial as well as biomedical aspects of the disorder.

During the post-war years, Hill was also on the staff of King's College Hospital, where he became renowned as a superb clinician and inspired teacher, and where he anticipated the modern vogue for 'liaison psychiatry'. His

Saturday morning clinical teaching sessions at King's became famous and his reputation as a leader of the profession grew during these years, his wider influence also becoming apparent. His appointment to the first of the new chairs, at the Middlesex in 1961, turned out to be immensely important for psychiatry: Hill extended its links with general medicine and became a leading spokesman for his subject, consulted in virtually all matters concerned with medical education. He was knighted in 1966.

Few were surprised when in 1966 Hill was appointed to succeed Sir Aubrey Lewis in the premier chair of psychiatry in the country, at the Institute of Psychiatry. The Institute's new building had been completed, and expansion and diversification were in the offing. The Institute's Department of Psychiatry grew in range and power whilst new departments in the specialties of psychiatry were encouraged to emerge. When Hill retired in 1979, a large and distinguished senior staff headed a series of units which represented virtually all the growing points of postgraduate psychiatric studies.

As Chairman of the Royal College of Physicians' committee on psychological medicine, Hill was one of the small group of people who laboured to ensure the smooth passage of the negotiations which eventually led to the transformation of the Royal Medico-Psychological Association into the new College. In recognition of this and of his continuing wise counsels on the College's behalf, he was elected to the Honorary Fellowship in 1979. Among his numerous advisory roles, special mention should be made of his membership of the Butler Committee on mentally abnormal offenders, which reported in 1975, and of the part he played on the General Medical Council from 1960 until the day he died.

A man with a powerful and independent cast of mind, Denis Hill relished hard work, high responsibility and tough assignments. Friendly, kind, humorous and entertaining, he was a much loved man whose presence, in the normal and humdrum events no less than the splendid ones, conferred a sense of occasion. He had two children by his first marriage. In 1962 he married Lorna Wheelan, consultant in child psychiatry at King's College Hospital, who survives him with a son and daughter.

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FRANK LAKE, Director, Clinical Theology Centre, Nottingham.

Frank Lake, who died in June at the age of 67, made a unique contribution to pastoral care by using a blend of psychiatry and Christian understanding in the treatment of those psychiatrically and emotionally disturbed. He founded the Clinical Theology Association in 1962.

His major work, *Clinical Theology*, published in 1966, is considered a classic of its genre.

ALEXANDER WALK, formerly Physician Superintendent, Cane Hill Hospital, Coulsdon, Surrey.

Alexander Walk, psychiatrist and scholar, historian, man of letters and linguist, died on 22 July at the age of 81. His contribution to British psychiatry in general and to this College in particular can never be surpassed if, indeed, it can ever be equalled. Having said this, it would be fair to add that in spite of all his attributes, he was a rather asocial but kindly man who hid his light under a bushel.

Walk was born in London in 1901, but received a good deal of his early education in Antwerp. He was awarded a scholarship to St Bartholomew's Hospital, where he had a distinguished undergraduate career and graduated MB, BS (London) in 1923. As a student he was attracted to psychiatry and at the earliest opportunity he joined what was then the London County Council mental health service, first as a locum and then as a permanent member of the medical staff. He rose rapidly in the medical hierarchy, and in so doing served in several of the mental hospitals that comprised that prestigious service. In 1949 he succeeded the late Dr George Lilly as medical superintendent of Cane Hill Hospital, Coulsdon, Surrey, a post he filled with distinction until his retirement in 1962. He had proceeded MD (London) in 1926, was the Gaskell medallist in 1929 and was elected to the honorary fellowship of the College in 1964.

His intimate association with the RMPA began when, as a young medical officer at Horton Hospital, Epsom, he attracted the attention of Dr J. R. Lord who was then medical superintendent and editor of the *Journal of Mental Science*. At the tender age of 27, in May 1928, Walk was appointed assistant editor. He was co-editor from 1930 to 1973 and thereafter served as associate editor until Easter 1982.

But his devotion to the RMPA, and later the Royal College, did not begin and end with the *Journal*. In his time he filled many an important office, including that of president from 1960–61. He was *inter alia* secretary and later chairman of the Parliamentary Committee which advised on the Mental Health Act, 1959 and was parliamentary reporter until 1982. He was also our representative on the GMC. From 1953 to 1968 he was a member of the General Nursing Council and the Association of Psychiatric Social Workers of which he was president from 1959 to 1961.

There can be no doubt, however, that in the scale of his affections the College Library ranked high. He was appointed librarian in 1945 and continued in that office for no less than 27 years. It was Walk who built up our stock of antiquarian and historical books, particularly those appertaining to the 19th century, a period in the history of psychiatry of which he was, in all probability, the world's leading authority.

On 12 May 1978, Walk's fifty years of service to the RMPA and the College were marked by a dinner at the Royal Society of Medicine. It was a grand occasion and