

these admirable qualities of accurate clinical observation and clear headed classification. It was in 1957 that, working in neurosurgery at Atkinson Morley's Hospital, I first learned of him, met him and immediately seized the offer to enter psychiatry training in his department. The department at that time again reflected his creative influence. During the previous decade key research papers on such topics as the natural histories of obsessional neurosis and homosexuality and the impact of prefrontal leucotomy had been published. Everyone of the junior and senior staff in training with him became naturally engaged in well supervised research. From immediately after the war he had begun to build up a strong psychotherapy department. He believed that some people could change through learning and that they might be hampered by the occasionally psychosocial defence! However, he was fond of advising against psychoanalysis on the grounds that it could devitalise people—'like taking the fizz out of soda water', he would lament with a certain feeling. He himself was deeply interested in aberrations of social behaviour and became an internationally respected authority on the classification of personality disorders, sexual deviations and violent behaviour. He served on the Wolfenden Commission and was adviser to both the Foreign Office and Home Office. In 1948 he was Croonian Lecturer at the Royal College of Physicians. He became President of the psychiatric section of the Royal Society of Medicine in 1951/52 and President of the Royal Medical Psychological Association in 1963–64, immediately before its metamorphosis into the Royal College of Psychiatrists. A physician to the core he regretted the total separation from the Royal College of Physicians but saw its inevitability at the time.

For those of us who sometimes judge people by their ability to hold a three iron shot straight into the wind, it is noteworthy that he became a low single figure handicap golfer at a young age. He won the Jubilee Vase at St Andrews and gave up golf in middle age. Desmond kept his 'fizz' until the end. Ten or so years ago at Atkinson Morley's Hospital we renamed the male ward 'Curran Ward' in his honour. Shortly afterwards the annual 'Curran Lecture' was established and he graced it with his presence until recently. Sadly, but proudly, we shall now, with the agreement of Margot Curran, his delightful and loving wife for many years, be renaming it 'The Curran Memorial Lecture'.

AHC

ALECK FOLKSON, formerly Consultant Psychiatrist, St Francis Hospital, Haywards Heath, Brighton General Hospital and the Royal Sussex County Hospital.

Dr Aleck Folkson died on the 21 November 1985, at Cuckfield Hospital, aged 63. He graduated from St Bartholomew's Hospital in 1946. Early in his psychiatric career he held a house job at The Lady Chichester Hospital in Hove, later working at Warley Hospital, Brentwood and as a Senior Registrar at Westminster Hospital. He

served in the Army as a captain in the RAMC, graded as a psychiatrist.

He became a consultant psychiatrist at St Francis Hospital, Haywards Heath, in 1957 and in 1959 became the Deputy Medical Superintendent there. He held that post until superintendents and deputy superintendents disappeared, continuing as a consultant psychiatrist and later becoming the Chairman of the Medical Committee.

His important work was distributed between a profound dedication to making St Francis Hospital a centre of excellence, developing a psychiatric unit at Brighton General Hospital and establishing a service for alcoholism. The first time I met him, which was at a reception for candidates for a consultant appointment, he told me that he viewed his work with alcoholics as a hobby. This beautifully illustrated Aleck's attitude to work and the care of patients. His dedication was such that he often made little of it and the help, support and kindness he gave to a vast number of alcoholics who have been described by him as a hobby was as much, if not more, than any of us give to the whole of our work.

He retired in 1984 but continued yet another of his interests, forensic psychiatry, by doing sessions at Lewes Prison. He was particularly pleased by being invited to join the Home Office Parole Board on which he served until his death. Aleck was much more concerned with services for the mentally ill and the individual treatment of patients than publishing papers but he did contribute to journals on the subject of depression and alcoholism.

His wife, Sheila, was ill for many years and died but a short time before Aleck. Both were very much involved in voluntary work at St Francis Hospital and were the driving force behind the St Francis Summer Fair Association (Hospital Friends). He is survived by a son and two daughters.

Aleck Folkson was a lovely man who made a significant contribution to psychiatry in the Brighton Health District and much more importantly humanely helped a very large number of people, supporting many of them over long periods without consideration for himself or his free time.

JAW

The deaths of the following have also been reported:

SAMUEL MILLAR ALLAN, formerly Medical Superintendent, Exminster Hospital, Devon.

SURESH BUDHWANI, Registrar, St Cadock's Hospital, Caerlon, Gwent, South Wales.

FAKHRI MOHAMED SALEH DABBAGH, Assistant Professor, Mosul College of Medicine, Mosul, Iraq.

JONATHAN GOULD, retired Consultant, The Chantry Rhode, North Petherton, Bridgewater, Somerset.

WILLIAM JOHN GRAY, Principal Medical Officer and Assistant Under Secretary of State, 88 Crosshill Terrace, Wormit, Fife.