

# Obituary



**David Neil Parfitt**, formerly *Medical Superintendent, Holloway Sanatorium, Virginia Water and Consultant Psychiatrist*

David Parfitt, who died at the age of 91 in July of this year, studied medicine at the Welsh National School of Medicine in Cardiff.

He was a medical officer at the mental hospitals of Dorset County and Derby Borough before his appointment at the Warwickshire County Mental Hospital in 1932.

He obtained his DPM (London) in 1929, his MD (London) in 1931 and his MRCP (London) in 1932.

In 1936 he became Medical Superintendent at Warwick. He pioneered an open-door policy and greatly expanded out-patient services. During the Second World War he served in the RAF as a specialist in neuro-psychiatry. In 1946 he was appointed Medical Superintendent at Holloway Sanatorium, Virginia Water. He oversaw the transformation of the hospital from an old style private mental hospital to a modern psychiatric facility. By the time that the hospital was absorbed into the National Health Service in

1948 he had made sure that the entire endowment fund had been spent on improved services for patients.

In 1953 David Parfitt returned to full-time clinical practice as consultant psychiatrist at St Ann's Hospital, Bournemouth. He later occupied consultant positions at the North Wales Hospital (1961-65) and with Western Australia Mental Health Services (1965-68). After his return to the United Kingdom he worked at various locations until his final retirement at the age of 79.

David Parfitt wrote extensively and over 40 of his papers were published, including a dozen in the *Journal of Mental Science*. His most important contribution to the literature was probably 'The Neurology of Schizophrenia' which appeared in the *Journal of Mental Science* in 1956. This paper, based on a detailed study of 61 cases of schizophrenia, is very much in line with modern thinking on the nature of the disease.

David Parfitt would probably want to be remembered most of all for his work with individual patients, many of whom stayed in touch with him long after their recovery. He is survived by his second wife, Josephine, his four children, 11 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

HUGH PARFITT