

# OBITUARY

*Obituaries of any doctors will be considered for publication provided that the doctors have worked in the United Kingdom for a large part of their career. Obituaries must be submitted exclusively to the BMJ and should be up to about 400 words long. "Self written" obituaries are welcome.*

## Sir ERIC RICHES MC, MS, FRCS

Sir Eric Riches, emeritus surgeon and urologist to the Middlesex Hospital and a past vice president of the Royal College of Surgeons of England, died on 8 November aged 90.

Eric William Riches was born at Alford, Lincolnshire, on 29 July 1897. He was educated locally before securing a scholarship to Christ's Hospital, where he had an outstanding record and, in later life, became treasurer and chairman of the council of almoners. Having secured an entrance scholarship to Middlesex Hospital in 1915, he deferred his admission to join the army. He served in the infantry, first with the 10th Lincoln and then with the 11th Suffolk regiments. Awarded the MC in 1917, he was demobilised in 1919 with the rank of captain and entered medical school. His distinguished progress was marked by the award of a second year exhibition and the Lyell gold medal, and he was first Broderip scholar before securing the conjoint qualification in 1925 and graduating MB, BS in the same year. After resident appointments at the Middlesex, where he also demonstrated anatomy, he was prosector at the Royal College of Surgeons. After serving as surgical registrar he was appointed to the surgical staff of the Middlesex in 1930, specialising in urology there as well as the Hospital of St John and St Elizabeth; St Andrew's Hospital, Dollis Hill; and the Royal Masonic Hospital. He later became consultant urologist to the army and to the Ministry of Pensions Spinal Injuries Centre.

Eric Riches was a Hunterian professor at the Royal College of Surgeons in 1938 and in 1942 was both Hunterian professor and Jacksonian prizeman. He served for six years on the court of examiners and for 16 years on the council, being vice president in 1961-2. He was also successively Bradshaw lecturer, Arnott demonstrator, and Gordon-Taylor lecturer and received the well deserved accolade of knight bachelor in 1958.

Sir Eric was a most energetic man who took an enthusiastic interest in training young surgeons and teaching his students. He wrote many urological papers and wrote or contributed to several books, including *Modern Trends in Urology* and *Tumours of the Kidney and Ureter*. He was also a lively and effective speaker. He served as treasurer of the *British Journal of Surgery* and chairman of the editorial board of the *British Journal of Urology*. A keen supporter of many societies, he was one time president and St Peter's medallist of the British Association of Urological Surgeons; president and Lettsomian lecturer of the Medical Society of London; and president and orator of the Hunterian Society. At the Royal Society of Medicine he was a vice president and honorary librarian and had presided over the clinical section as well as the sections of urology and surgery. He was president of the 13th congress of the International Society of Urology in London, in 1964, having previously served as the society's vice president.

It was inevitable that Sir Eric should build up a large and successful private practice, which he continued for many years after his retirement from the NHS in 1962. He included among his hobbies

photography, golf, and music, with considerable enthusiasm for the last two, though even he admitted that his standard of performance on the 'cello did not quite match up to that of his surgery. For the last few years of his life, in sad contrast to the lively character of former years, he was in poor health.

Sir Eric married Dr Annie Brand in 1927. They had two daughters, one of whom, Dr Anne Riches, is in general practice. After the death of his first wife in 1952 he married in 1954 Ann Kitton, a nurse at the Middlesex Hospital, and they had one daughter. He is survived by his second wife and by the daughters of each marriage.—RM.

## E W SKIPPER MD, FRCP

Dr E W Skipper, formerly consultant physician to the Royal Infirmary and the Royal Hallamshire Hospital, Sheffield, died on 1 October aged 83.

Eric Walter Skipper was educated in London at the Parminter School, where he gained the *victor ludorum* in athletics and a gold medal for the violin. He graduated MB, BS at the London Hospital Medical School in 1927. A succession of minor posts (house physician, house surgeon, and pathological assistant) paved the way for a medical registrarship at the same hospital, where he came under the stimulating influence of such giants as Russell Brain, Donald Hunter, and Charles Evans. After the glamour of The London Hospital, succeeding posts in Cambridge and south east London proved to be dull and disenchanting. Indeed, he was not sorry to join the Royal Army Medical Corps as a medical specialist at the outbreak of war. He served as a lieutenant colonel in Northern Ireland, west Africa, and France during the Normandy landings, where he was arduously engaged in long hours of resuscitation and blood transfusion work. He said afterwards that he would not have missed it for anything but would not like to endure it again. Demobilised in 1946, he became a consultant physician at the Royal Infirmary, Sheffield, and at Barnsley Beckett Hospital.

I first met him in Sierra Leone. We were both posted in similar jobs at adjacent military hospitals and struck up a friendship at once. Of serious mien, he was well able to laugh at himself and at other people, too, if the occasion warranted it. He was, though, a very serious physician. His forte was diabetes mellitus, and he had no time for geriatrics. He became president of the Sheffield Medico-Chirurgical Society and was then appointed a member of the medical appeal tribunal for the east Midlands (1948-76).

He had other pursuits. As a young man he played the violin with a skill and interpretation that

I have not heard or seen equalled by any other amateur. I liked to see him, instrument on high and bow a-sweep at the conclusion of a superb sonata by J S Bach. And then he gave it all up for the pleasure of painting Derbyshire landscapes—I never forgave him for this. After his retirement (1969) I saw less of him. His former patients speak of him still and remember the help he gave unstintingly in times of trouble.—TEG.

## J E BLUNDELL-WILLIAMS MB, BS

Dr J E Blundell-Williams, who had been a general practitioner in Tenbury Wells, Worcestershire, died on 3 October after a brief illness. He was 84.

John Edward Blundell-Williams was educated at St Edward's School, Oxford, and proceeded thereafter to University College Hospital, where he won the silver medal in medicine and graduated in 1927. After house jobs at UCH and the Coventry and Warwick Hospital he decided on a career in general practice, the whole of which he spent in the small country market town of Tenbury Wells. Known to all as "Dr Bill," he quickly made a name for himself with his kindly and sympathetic care.

Dr Bill had many interests outside medicine, especially in local government. He served the district on the local district and parish councils and extended his influence to Worcestershire County Council from 1955 to 1974, becoming an alderman just before reorganisation. Always interested in rural life, he became president of the prestigious Agricultural Society of Tenbury in 1954. He became active in the BMA at the time of the inception of the NHS in 1948. He was made chairman of the Worcester and Bromsgrove Division and, after the reorganisation of the counties, president of the Hereford and Worcester Branch. He also chaired Worcestershire Local Medical Committee from 1963 until 1972. Deeply religious, he served as a churchwarden for 36 years.

This catalogue of service might suggest that Dr Bill had little time for the lighter side of life, but in fact he was a true all rounder, being interested in sport both in the district and nationally. He always found time to attend Ascot each year, for horse racing was perhaps his major interest, and he also regularly attended Twickenham. He is survived by his wife, Jane; two daughters and a son; and two grandchildren.—JAB.

## M MEIR MB, CHB

Mr M Meir, formerly consultant surgeon to Ashton under Lyne General Hospital, died in Victoria, British Columbia, on 28 October while he was visiting his son.

Moses Meir was born in Baghdad in 1911 and gained his preliminary education at the Alliance Israélite Universelle before reading science at the American University of Beirut. Two years later he ventured to travel to Britain to read medicine at Birmingham University, graduating in 1937. His first appointment, at Selly Oak Hospital, Birming-



ham, resulted in an interest in surgery, and he was later appointed resident surgical officer to Ashton Infirmary, in due course becoming consultant in surgery. With the advent of the National Health Service he remained one of the few doctors who combined general practice with hospital consultancy.

Not only in professional matters but in affairs in general Mo was a man of great caution and sound judgment. Everyone knew that he could be relied on to give an honest, sensible, and well informed opinion. A quiet, modest man, he was unfailingly courteous and was always ready to extend generous help and hospitality to his friends and colleagues. He is survived by his wife, Grace, and his five children.—HDI.

## K O BLACK

MD, FRCP

Dr K O Black, consulting physician at St Bartholomew's Hospital, London, died on 5 August in Hove, Sussex, after a short illness.

Kenneth Oscar Black was born in Scarborough on 10 November 1910 and attended Bootham



School, York, before entering King's College, Cambridge, as a senior exhibitioner. While there he represented the university at athletics. Awarded first class honours in the natural sciences tripos, he then did his clinical training at St Bartholomew's Hospital Medical College, qualifying MRCS, LRCP in

1935. After house appointments at Barts he became a demonstrator of physiology in the medical college and at the age of 28 became a chief assistant. It was during this time that he developed his interest in diabetes. He then worked at the regional blood supply depot at Luton and in 1940 became a consultant with the Emergency Medical Service. Subsequently commissioned in the Royal Army Medical Corps, he served in west Africa and India as a medical specialist with the rank of lieutenant colonel. In 1946 he was appointed assistant physician to St Bartholomew's Hospital. He subsequently became an examiner in medicine for the University of London, the Society of Apothecaries, and the Royal College of Physicians.

Kenneth Black was one of the new breed of general physicians with a special interest. His clinical interests covered the whole of general medicine, but it was with the management of diabetes that he was most concerned. His clinics at Barts became a model for similar developments elsewhere in the country. The emphasis from the outset was on teamwork, and to this end he enlisted the cooperation of dietitians, chiropodists, social workers, and ophthalmological and biochemical colleagues. Patients were encouraged to participate in their overall care and to pay scrupulous attention to urine testing and to retain their blood glucose records. A late afternoon/early evening clinic was initiated to minimise loss of working time. For many years he contributed regularly to the standard anaesthetic textbooks on the management of diabetics undergoing surgical treatment.

Kenneth never lost his boyish appearance and was reserved and self effacing. He had strong religious convictions and a deep humility. He was at his happiest with those he knew well—his family, his patients, and the members of the team

at Barts—or when following his interest in natural history and archaeology. In 1959 he married Virginia, who survives him with their two daughters, Anne and Clare.—RCK.

## J B MUSGRAVE

MB, CHB, BAO

Dr J B Musgrave, who had been a general practitioner in Hendon, London, died on 31 October aged 65.

John Brendan Musgrave was born in Cork and educated at Portora Royal School, Enniskillen, and Trinity College, Dublin, where he graduated in medicine in 1945. Highlights of his college years included a Leinster senior cup winner's medal for hockey. After house jobs in Dublin and Ryde he entered general practice in Hendon in 1948. His capacity for hard work became legendary,



and this together with a great sense of humour and an easy Irish charm endeared him to his patients. He developed a special affiliation with his many Jewish patients. He was the inspiration for Derwent House Old People's Day Centre in Hendon and remained a board member until he retired. He also helped found Glebe Court Old People's Home. After bringing up their family his wife, Evelyn, joined him in the practice as a partner in 1967. He became senior partner in 1966 and the following year was appointed medical officer to the Metropolitan Police Training Centre at Hendon. This coincided with the building of a new 37 bedded nursing home and expansion of the residential site to house 1000 recruits and cadets. He brought to this appointment his integrity and enthusiasm, and his role was widely acclaimed; he retired from the post in 1982.

Brendan counterpointed his doctoring with several crafts and became proficient at carpentry, picture framing, and upholstery. He built several boats and enjoyed watching his children sailing them during holidays in Cork. He was also an accomplished fly fisherman. He retired fully in 1983 to return to the family farm in Cleggan, County Galway. Sadly, his illness began to manifest itself from the earliest months of his retirement. He is survived by Evelyn, three sons (one of whom joined the practice in 1978), and a daughter, together with eight grandchildren.—MM.

## J R HAWKINGS

FRCPsych, DPM

Dr J R Hawkings, formerly consultant psychiatrist to North Tees and Winterton Hospitals, died suddenly on 9 October in Sedgfield, County Durham. He was 65.

John Roger Hawkings was born in Taunton and educated at Colston's School and the University of Bristol, where he graduated MB, ChB in 1945. During the next two years he trained in psychiatry. He entered the army in 1948 on a short service commission, becoming senior specialist in psychiatry to the British army of the Rhine with the rank of major. From 1952 he was senior registrar in the united Birmingham hospitals until his appointment as consultant to Winterton and North Tees Hospitals in 1955. He later was also consultant

to Richmond Hill School, Stockton child guidance clinic, and Middleton Hall Private Mental Hospital. He retired from the NHS in 1986, continuing private practice from his home. He was chairman of the Stockton branch of the BMA in 1976.

John was always an irregular time keeper, not least because once he was interviewing a patient time did not matter and the rest could wait. Thus, although he was an irritant to administrators, patients worshipped him, especially those whom he befriended and helped long after they had lost other medical sympathy. General practitioners valued his services highly, particularly appreciating his comprehensive assessment of the patient, conveyed as a brilliant essay. He had an extensive medicolegal practice. As an expert he excelled, his clarity of exposition and obvious command of his subject making him a formidable witness, particularly for the defence in several murder trials.

John's love and understanding of people as individuals was ever apparent, but, as he confessed, his deep insight into the lot of humanity appalled and depressed him, so that he threw himself into all aspects of his life with extra enthusiasm. Artist, talented sculptor, sailor, he even found time for long discussions in philosophy and religion with his many friends of the cathedral and university in Durham. A gourmet's tastes and a prodigious appetite sustained his physical presence; his enjoyment was infectious, so that it was a delight to entertain him or to be his guest. He is survived by his wife, Joyce, and his two children, Judith and Julian.—WE.

## C CAMERON

ERD, MB, CHB, FRCPATH

Dr C Cameron, the first full time director of the East of Scotland Blood Transfusion Service from 1954 until his retirement in 1981, died on 19 September aged 71.

Charles Cameron was born in Glasgow and graduated in medicine from Glasgow University in 1938. During the war he served in the Royal Army Medical Corps transfusion service in north Africa, where he crossed the desert with the victorious 8th Army, and later in Italy. After the war he served as a colonel in the Territorial Army, and his help with transfusion matters was



recognised by the award of the Emergency Reserve Decoration. He passed this off lightly, remarking that "emergency blood collection could always be contrived, providing there were sufficient empty gin bottles available."

As director Dr Cameron built up the transfusion centre in Dundee to ensure sufficient supplies for all clinical needs. There was a continual exchange of information and specimens with other workers, which contributed to the characterisation of new blood group systems. He read widely, had a retentive memory, and was intensely interested in new clinical applications. When rhesus haemolytic disease was a major problem he attended the special rhesus antenatal clinic, and his close interest contributed to the excellent results. When the value of anti-D prophylaxis was recognised he was quick to procure a supply and, most crucially, to organise a system that ensured that no eligible

patient was missed. His observations on the acquired B antigen caused international interest, recently regenerated by the finding that certain monoclonal anti-B reagents are capable of detecting this. He took a long term interest in serum hepatitis, keeping samples and records of patients and the implicated donors. When hepatitis B surface antigen was first identified he made his samples available for study. An excellent antibody was soon identified in the serum of a Dundee patient, who agreed to be a donor. Her serum was one of the first made available for national distribution to transfusion centres throughout Britain and enabled the immunoelectro-osmophoresis detection method for hepatitis B surface antigen to be set up. This was a major contribution towards protecting patients from transfusion jaundice.

Dr Cameron was a cheerful, optimistic man with a brisk common sense that found simple solutions to organisational problems. He was often to be seen updating his records from the deaths column of the local paper in preference to using more cumbersome notification procedures. His qualities were displayed in the 1970s, when he played a key supportive part in the creation and development of the Scottish National Blood Transfusion Service. He led a private and happy family life and is survived by his wife, Diana; three children; and grandchildren.—EMB.

### Brigadier R S HUNT

MBE, MRCS, LRCP, FRCSED

Brigadier R S Hunt, of the Royal Army Medical Corps, died on 3 July aged 76.

Richard Swinton Hunt was born in Glasgow on 12 December 1910. After studying medicine at Cambridge he received his clinical training at St Bartholomew's Hospital, London, qualifying in 1935. Soon after, he applied for a career in the Royal Army Medical Corps. His first posting was to Cambridge Military Hospital in Aldershot, where his interest in surgery was encouraged. In 1937 he was posted to India, and after the outbreak of hostilities he served in the Middle East. After the war appointments to the surgical divisions of British military hospitals in Egypt and Tripoli, where he was awarded the MBE, followed. Command of the surgical division at Queen Alexandra Military Hospital was followed by a short tour in Washington and his first posting to the Far East as command consultant surgeon. He returned to the United Kingdom as senior surgeon to Cambridge Military Hospital. He went back to Singapore in 1965, and it was from there that he was invalided home after a severe myocardial infarction in 1967. After a remarkable recovery, and having been invalided from the army, he became one of the medical officers at Queen Alexandra Military Hospital until the hospital closed in 1977. He was then a civilian medical officer in the Aldershot area until he retired in 1983.

Richard Hunt knew how much the future of our corps depended on the training of the next generation and their attitudes, how their hearts had to be won. All his life he was devoted to the Royal Army Medical Corps and to the Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps, for one must not forget Elizabeth and her many nursing friends. Whenever possible they were to be seen at the many reunions at Millbank or Keogh or throughout the world, keeping in touch with their many friends.

Richard worked long after the age most men retire but still found time to continue his hobbies, develop new ones, and write his diaries. He always made time to see the beauty in the world and was given the talents to record that beauty in his

painting, his carving, his garden in Hindhead, and his written and spoken words. Most of all he never lost his greatest virtue, his sense of fun.—ISL.

### H L THORNTON

MRCS, LRCP, FFARCS, DA

Dr H L Thornton, honorary consulting anaesthetist to St Mary's Hospital, London, died on 19 August after a short illness.

Harry Lestock Thornton was born in 1906 in Devon and educated at Sherborne School and St



Mary's Hospital London, where he qualified in 1937. After house jobs and early anaesthetic experience at St Andrew's Hospital in Bow he saw war service in the Middle East and was captured at Tobruk. A prisoner of war in Italy for a year before being repatriated, he later told fascinating

stories of the improvised anaesthetic apparatus he used in the camps. On returning to England he was sent to the maxillofacial unit at Basingstoke, where he worked with Gillies and others, and the skill and interest he found there served him well during his later career. He continued his distinguished war service with maxillofacial anaesthesia as a major in France and Belgium after D-Day, being mentioned in dispatches. At the end of hostilities he returned to St Mary's Hospital, first as honorary consultant anaesthetist and then in 1948 as consultant in the National Health Service. He was for several years senior anaesthetist. He retired from his hospital appointment in 1972 but continued in private practice for some years thereafter.

Harry Thornton was a dapper man of military bearing. He was a magnificent anaesthetist, in whom his surgical colleagues reposed absolute confidence, for his terrier like tenacity was invaluable in the daunting cases he often had to face. He retained interest in and enthusiasm for his subject right to the end of his career and was coauthor and editor of a well received textbook, *Emergency Anaesthesia*, only a few years before he retired.

A very private man, Harry was a quietly devout convert to Catholicism. He was punctilious and could be peppery at times, but generally he had a twinkle in his eye, an infectious sense of humour, and a hearty laugh. He married Patricia Aung in 1937, and they had one daughter.—PK.

### A A DONALDSON

FRCSED, FRCPED, FRCR, DMRD

Dr A A Donaldson, a consultant neuroradiologist in Edinburgh, died suddenly on 17 May in his 65th year.

Andrew Alexander Donaldson—Tony—was born in Edinburgh and educated at Broughton School. After qualifying LRCP&SED, LRFPSGlas in 1945 he did house posts at Leith Hospital and the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh. After national service in the Royal Navy he returned to begin a career in neurosurgery, but he switched to the emerging specialty of neuroradiology in 1953. His unusual skill and experience led to rapid promotion and the post of consultant neuroradiologist to Edinburgh Royal Infirmary and the Western General Hospital, Edinburgh in 1956. There he

pursued a fruitful and valued professional life over many years developing new skills. Many trainees in both neurosurgery and radiology learnt the technique of angiography and were taught the new imaging methods as they evolved. Tony was among the first in this country to use diagnostic ultrasound, radioisotope scanning, and computed tomography. His publications were numerous.

Tony's contribution to his specialty and to medicine gained him fellowships from three royal colleges. A founder member of the British Society of Neuroradiologists, he was successively president of the Scottish Radiological Society and of the European Society of Neuroradiology. He served on the radiologists group committee of the BMA but his interests and activities extended beyond medicine. With his wife, Winnie, he gave many years of outstanding and devoted service to the community. A member of the children's panel since 1968, he was appointed a magistrate and served on the bench from 1975. The theatre and arts received his active support and he was a member of the council of the Edinburgh International Festival. His hobbies included car racing, sailing, and golf, and he died at Gleneagles while playing golf. He is survived by his wife, his mother, and four sons.—WAC.

### Brigadier T W DAVIDSON

MD

Brigadier T W Davidson, formerly medical superintendent to the Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast, died on 16 October aged 86. He had broken his thigh a few days earlier.

Thomas Walker Davidson—Tommy—went up to Queen's University, Belfast, in 1918. Half of the students in his year were ex-servicemen back from the Somme. As a result of this connection many men in that year joined the Royal Army Medical Corps at once on graduating; Tommy was one of those who joined up when he graduated MB, BCh, BAO in 1923. He retired in 1946 with the rank of honorary brigadier, having been deputy director of medical services to the First Airborne Corps, which was preparing for Malaya. During his 23 years in the corps he served extensively overseas, starting with seven years with the Sudan Defence Force and later serving in Egypt, India, and, during the second world war, Persia and north west Europe. Tommy loved his army service; he loved a party and a party also loved him. He made a lot of friends, who were friends for life. Having retired from the army he returned to Belfast, where he was appointed medical superintendent to the Royal Victoria Hospital. After retiring from his appointment there he stayed on in Ulster for some years, but finally, with his family all in England, he moved to Milford-on-Sea.

Tommy filled his appointment at the Royal Victoria Hospital with such distinction that the university gave him an MD honoris causa. In Belfast he was a great supporter of the Order of St John, being commissioner of the brigade for some 12 years, during which time he was made a knight of grace.

Tommy was an all round sportsman, playing his full part in his younger days in hockey, athletics, and riding; he was also a piper in the officers' training corps. Probably his greatest love was his family. Much of the credit for his happy home life must go to Kanky, his loyal consort for so many years. People had only to talk to Tommy for a short time before they were told of the doings of the family. Kanky and he had five boys of their own, but when his sister died leaving a small boy, that boy was at once taken in as a further member of the family.—IF.