

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.

P SZEKELY

MD, FRCP

Dr P Szekely, formerly consultant cardiologist to the Regional Cardiovascular Centre, Newcastle General Hospital, died suddenly on 15 November.

Paul Szekely was born in Czechoslovakia in 1910 and obtained his MD in Prague in 1934. He



worked in the medical clinic of the University of Prague until 1938, when he moved to Paris, spending two years at the cardiac clinic of Hôpital Broussais. When France was invaded he escaped through Bordeaux to England and then became a house physician and subsequently medical registrar at Newcastle General Hospital. He worked with Sir William Hume, who later became a close family friend. He graduated MB, BS in 1946 and obtained his second MD in 1947 from Durham.

Paul Szekely devoted most of his medical career to cardiology and became a much respected clinician, having a particular interest in arrhythmias, rheumatic fever, rheumatic heart disease, and, above all, heart disease in pregnancy. He had done research initially in Prague and later in Paris, where he came under the influence of Laubry, who became a lifelong friend. His contributions to British work started in 1940 with a paper on electrocardiographic findings in anaemia; his MD thesis was on complete heart block in myocardial infarction. Contributions in subsequent years concerned the effects on the heart of magnesium, procainamide, digitalis, and DC shock, but it will be for his observations on heart disease in pregnancy that he will be particularly remembered. His interest in this dated from 1946, a close working relationship with his obstetric colleague, Linton Snaith, allowing him to see a large number of affected women in the succeeding 30 years. A series of valuable papers ensued, culminating with the standard text on this topic, *Heart Disease in Pregnancy*, which was published in 1974. He continued an interest in this subject long after retirement, his last papers being published in 1985, and he continued to be consulted on difficult clinical problems right up to the time of his death.

Outside his work Paul enjoyed archaeology, opera, and art, and he particularly relished travelling to medical conferences abroad, especially to India. His clinical skills and research work were of a very high order, but the aspect of Paul that his former colleagues and patients will most cherish will be his gentle charm and intense personal concern for each person with whom he came into contact. This particularly applied to those for whom he had cared during pregnancy and whom he continued to supervise for decades thereafter; for them his retirement was already a bereavement. He remained intellectually active until the end, undertaking investigations for the Committee on

the Safety of Medicines and continuing to be au fait with contemporary medical work. He is survived by his wife, Peggy.—DGJ.

J H GOULD

MRCP, FRCPSYCH, DPM

Dr J H Gould, a psychiatrist of versatility and England's foremost Roman Catholic doctor in the political lobby, died on 19 November.

Jonathan Horace Gould was born on 17 December 1915 and educated in London. He was a medical student at St Bartholomew's Hospital, where he came under the influence of Dr Eric Strauss, with whom he was later to work as chief assistant in the department of psychiatry. He graduated MB, BS in 1940 and gained the DPM in 1942 and the MRCP in 1944. Subsequently he pioneered the parenteral use of vitamins in both general medicine and psychiatry, forerunning by many years the current revival of interest in nutritional factors. Foremost a clinician, he gained experience in a wide variety of mental hospitals before his consultant appointment to Lady Chichester Hospital, Hove, which was then still private and from which he retired in 1973 when it joined the NHS. A part time specialist in forensic psychiatry, he served for 11 years as visiting psychiatrist to Broadmoor Hospital and was earlier on the visiting consultant staff at Wormwood Scrubs prison.

On his return to London to set up a flourishing private practice Dr Gould took on honorary consultant psychiatric posts at three London Roman Catholic units: St Andrew's, Dollis Hill (now defunct); St Teresa's, Wimbledon; and St John and St Elizabeth, St John's Wood. He became psychiatric adviser to both Cardinal Heenan and Cardinal Hume, as well as lecturing in normal and abnormal psychology to seminarians of the Westminster archdiocese. He became one of the psychiatric advisers to the Archdiocese of Westminster Metropolitan Tribunal for the consideration of annulment of marriage; was master of the Westminster branch of the Guild of Catholic Doctors for many years until his election to the national mastership of the guild for 1976-9; and was a founder member of the Catholic hierarchy's legislation committee, serving on it until his final retirement, in 1984, to Somerset. He was made a knight commander of St Gregory for his service to the church.

A longstanding and eloquent member of all the most important committees of the Catholic Union, which, under the presidency of the Duke of Norfolk, operates the political front of the church in England, he founded and chaired the joint ethicomedical committee of the union and the parliamentary subcommittee of the Guild of Catholic Doctors. Thus was created a forum for debate of such ethical issues as abortion, euthanasia, and in vitro fertilisation between doctors, lawyers, and other interested laymen. Nevertheless, beneath his political sagacity he practised with simple devotion the faith to which he was converted via high Anglicanism from Judaism as a young man.

Dr Gould had wide outside interests, including

craftsmanship, theology, and moral philosophy. Gourmet and wine connoisseur, he was the soul of generosity in entertaining his wide circle of friends. To this entertainment his wife, Marguerite, his great support throughout his life and his distressing last illness, particularly devoted herself.—SS.

S R ROBSON

MB, BS, DOMS

Mr S R Robson, formerly consultant ophthalmologist at the Royal Infirmary, Leicester, died on 2 November aged 68.

Stanley Rhyl Robson was born in Newcastle upon Tyne in 1918, educated at the Royal Grammar School, and graduated in medicine from Durham University in 1942. After house jobs in the area he was appointed a senior registrar at Sheffield Royal Infirmary and then consultant ophthalmologist to Leicestershire in 1954.

To all his colleagues he was affectionately known as Robbie. A man of quiet charm, he was respected and loved by his friends and all the staff at the hospital. He took early retirement because of poor health, but his patients still speak of him, praising his attention and great care and understanding. For many years he took a keen interest in the Leicester Medical Society and an active part in the organisation of medical charities. He was fascinated by the world of antiques and used to attend weekend seminars on the subject.

Robbie was devoted to his family and is survived by his wife; his son; his two daughters, one of whom is a general practitioner and the other a sister in paediatrics; and his six grandchildren.—NSB, DBG.

A D MESSENT

MB, BS, FRCS

Mr A D Messent, formerly consultant surgeon to the Brentwood group of hospitals, died on 2 August.

Arthur David Messent was born in 1915 and educated at Roberough Preparatory School, Eastbourne, whence he obtained an open exhibition to Mill Hill. His medical education was at St Bartholomew's Hospital, where he obtained the Brackenbury prize in surgery and the anatomy prize. His sporting interest was hockey, and he played for Barts. After graduating in 1938 and doing various house appointments he went for a short time into general practice until in 1940 he joined the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. His service was mainly in the Faroe Islands and the Middle East with Coastal Command, and he was mentioned in dispatches. On leaving the RAF as a squadron leader in 1946 he rapidly obtained the FRCS and then held a series of appointments as senior registrar at Norwich, Reading, and Hammersmith. In 1955 he was appointed consultant surgeon to the Brentwood group of Hospitals, where he devoted himself mainly to genitourinary and vascular surgery. He served on various medical committees and on the Brentwood group hospital management committee.

During his professional and committee life

David was helped and sustained by his wife, Margaret, a doctor's daughter, whom he had met and married in 1940 while she was a medical secretary at Barts. The family—David, Margaret, and their two daughters, one a London hospital physiotherapist and the other a Barts nurse—was a close one and one of David's dearest interests. He enjoyed gardening, reading, entertaining and being entertained, and the countryside, so that when he retired in 1980 to his wife's birthplace in Nant-garedig, near Carmarthen, he settled with complete enjoyment until his long and tragic illness, which he bore with great courage. A sincere practising Christian, he was the kindest of men, showing not soft and sentimental kindness but kindness for those who needed it and for those in real misfortune.—WHB.

J N RUNES

MD, MRCPsych

Dr J N Runes, formerly a consultant psychiatrist in Basildon, died on 8 November aged 76.

Joseph Nicolas Runes was born on 22 July 1909 and graduated MD from Vienna in 1932. He had a distinguished war service, serving with the British army in Burma as a major and medical officer (psychiatrist). He was wounded, but as soon as he had recovered he returned on duty in charge of medical supplies and field ambulances and was mentioned in dispatches. After leaving Burma he went with the forces of occupation to Germany.

On returning to civilian life Joe worked as registrar at the Maudsley and Bethlem Royal and Cassel hospitals. His great interest in family and child psychiatry gave him the impetus to work in Sussex in various establishments concerned with disturbed children and adolescents. Next he worked in east London and Essex child guidance clinics, where he did pioneering work in family psychiatry, becoming consultant psychiatrist at the Basildon and Thundersley family and child guidance clinics. He was devoted to his work and built up a truly comprehensive service for children, young people, and their families. He spent a great deal of time training his staff, increasing their awareness of psychiatric problems.

Joe had hardly retired when he was asked to return to the Basildon clinic as his own locum—here he worked till the age of 73, when he met with a severe accident. During the three years of illness that followed he was supported by his devoted wife, Linda.—ED.

EVELYN M HALL

MB, BS

Dr Evelyn M Hall died last year aged 84. With her death doctors and patients in east Northumberland have lost a professional figure who was deeply respected and greatly loved. She was the first woman colliery doctor in the area, though paediatrics was her first love.

Evelyn Mary Hall was born in Bedlington and went to Newcastle Medical School, graduating in 1923 at the age of 22, though most of her fellow students were much older, having served in the first world war. As was then the custom she went off to do general practice locums in Byker and Gateshead: she earned a little money and gained great experience. She then took a series of house jobs in children's hospitals in Newcastle and Sunderland, where her uncle was medical officer of health. These gave her a love and understanding of children and their ailments that was lifelong and so important in a mining village where poverty and unemployment were rife.

In 1927 Evelyn married George Hall, a fellow graduate of the Newcastle school, and joined him in his practice in New Hartley, where the greatest colliery disaster of all time was still remembered. Though she helped her husband, for the next few years her function was that of a mother and a figure in the village. Suddenly in 1935 George died of pneumonia after going out to treat a man with a minor ailment during the night when he himself had influenza. Evelyn Hall was alone. No one believed that she would carry on, for "doctoring" was not then regarded as women's work in pit villages. Neither her fellow doctors nor the patients, however, had reckoned with Dr Hall. They insisted in the interests of propriety that she should have a male assistant. This of course came to an end in 1940, when the last such was called up, and Evelyn carried on for almost four decades until she went into partnership with a doctor in neighbouring Seghill.

As the years went by Evelyn Hall became a byword, devoted to and adored by generations of Hartley folk. Her colleagues grew to admire the woman who did it on her own. Though in time she served on the Northumberland Local Medical Committee, I doubt if she had much sympathy for the cohort of young medicopolitical activists of the 1960s, nor was she aware how highly they regarded her. Evelyn's children grew up and left home and she continued her work in the village, becoming a figure of security to all. She took a great interest in the Women's Institute and loved knitting. Though neither of her children became doctors, just before her death she was delighted that her grandson had been accepted at the medical school in Edinburgh.—JSN.

S LASK

TD, MD, MRCOG

Dr S Lask, who was in general practice in Ealing, died on 25 October in hospital.

Samuel Lask was the second of four brothers (all destined to go into general practice) born to a first generation immigrant family who fled from Russian antisemitism at the turn of the century. He was born in December 1913 and graduated MB, ChB in Leeds in 1937. He joined the Territorial Army in 1938 and when war broke out joined the 2nd Royal Tank Regiment; in the great retreat from France he made good his escape far out on the right wing. Later he served in the Middle East and found a special interest in improving the efficiency of rescue methods from damaged tanks. He was captured at Kos in 1943 and spent the rest of the war as a prisoner of war in Germany.

On returning home he concentrated on obstetrics and gynaecology, proceeding MD and gaining the MRCOG in 1948. In 1953 he joined two of his brothers in Ealing, leaving one who had escaped to Ascot. He quickly settled into general practice work, developing his own style of relating to patients. He found, as have many other general practitioners, that the adventure and excitement of pregnancy and childbirth, well conducted, led to a powerful bond between the doctor and the family that survived the passing of the years.

Samuel was neat, precise, and always well dressed: in fact, he had been referred to as the "elegant one." He devoted most of his time and energy to his work and, many of his patients truly loved and worshipped him. Secretary and later chairman of the local BMA division for several years during the renaissance of the BMA in the 1970s, he strictly limited the number of committees on which he sat.

He was happily married to Salme. They had two children and later two grandchildren, all of whom gave him much pleasure. He was especially pleased

by his daughter, Sandra, a state registered nurse, climbing the academic ladder. He found some relaxation in golf, of which the less said the better.—AL.

Surgeon Commander

C J MULLEN

BA, MB, BCH, BAO

Surgeon Commander C J Mullen died peacefully at his home in Southsea on 8 November aged 77.

Cecil Jameson Mullen was born in Blessington, County Wicklow, on 27 February 1908 and was educated at King's Hospital School and the University of Dublin (Trinity College), graduating in the arts and medicine in the early 1930s. Soon after graduating he joined the Royal Navy as a surgeon lieutenant; he retired nearly 30 years later as a surgeon commander, having served in a variety of ships and naval hospitals and establishments in such diverse places as China, the Middle East, Malta, and the North Sea, though for the greater and later part of his service he was based in the United Kingdom. After retirement from the Royal Navy he did some part time work including medical boards and examinations for the DHSS: these he continued to do until shortly before his death.

Cecil was a dedicated, expert, and intuitive fisherman and was never happier than when casting a fly, particularly if it happened to be on one of the many small rivers or lakes in the lovely countryside of Donegal or Derry, where he was brought up. Early in his career he married Dr Rita McCarthy, whom he first met as a medical student in Dublin. Sadly, Rita died some three years ago: they are survived by their three children, Maeve, Ann, and John, and eight grandchildren. He is also survived by his younger brother, Norman, also a doctor, and his sister, Nora.—NAJM.

H G J HERXHEIMER

MD

DFH writes: Hx (obituary, 30 November, p 1581) once told me the story of how when he came to England he had to take a qualifying examination in medicine. The most expedient course was the Scottish triple qualification, and he approached the pathology viva with trepidation. The examiner beamed at him, placed a pot on the table, and said, "With a name like yours, I suppose I don't have to tell you what that is?" Hx said "Gumma," and the rest of the viva was purely social. His wisdom was to be remembered. I once had to write a review of a small monograph on digitalis written by an aging scientist. Hx read what I had written, which included examples of comments in the book that I thought were puerile. He then looked at me with a smile and said, "Your review is completely correct and justified and I admire your accuracy, but you simply cannot say things like that about the man who discovered ascorbic acid, ATP, and actomyosin." Knowing Hx's absolute integrity, I was shocked at the time but took his advice and have had occasion to commend it to youthful iconoclasts on occasion since. I met Hx one day looking weary and depressed in the entrance hall at University College Hospital. This was about the time that his approach to asthma of ephedrine, antihistamines, and bronchia' hyposensitisation was being overtaken by sympathomimetic inhalers and often irrational use of steroids. He said, "Today an asthmatic died in this hospital of asthma, a thing that hasn't happened here in 10 years; I fear there will be more." Sadly, he was right. Hx was a great clinician, physiologist, pharmacologist, and teacher; but above all he was a very kind man.