

OBITUARY

Sir THOMAS HOLMES SELLORS DM, MCH, FRCS, FRCP

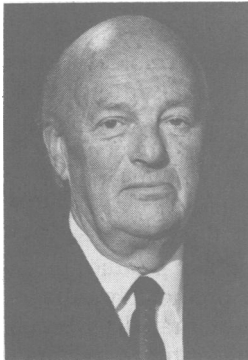
Sir Thomas Holmes Sellors died on 13 September at the age of 85. Everyone in medicine and surgery will have heard of his death with regret; the more senior of us, however, will have greeted the news with a purely personal pang and said, with genuine sorrow, "Uncle Tom has died." Tom was a surgeon and physician beyond compare, a gifted and compassionate teacher, a research worker, and a skilled administrator. He achieved a great reputation among the surgeons of the next generation, and they regarded him with admiration and respect but, above all, affection—which explains the soubriquet by which they knew him.

Thomas Holmes Sellors, born a doctor's son on 7 April 1902, was educated at Loretto School and Oriel College, Oxford. A career in medicine was natural to him, and he graduated BM, BCh at the Middlesex Hospital in 1926. He became pre-eminent in the study of thoracic surgery and was appointed to the staff of the London Chest Hospital in 1934, the Middlesex Hospital in 1947, and the National Heart Hospital in 1957. He also held appointments at Harefield Hospital, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital for Children, Mount Vernon Hospital, and the Queen Mary Hospital at Stratford.

After the war years thoracic surgery expanded into cardiac surgery and Tom was among the very first to operate successfully within the heart, to break new ground with his surgery and practice, and to teach others to do the same. He was a natural for appointment to high office in many medical societies and associations of thoracic and cardiac medicine and surgery. In the BMA he held a great number of important appointments, which culminated in his becoming the president in 1972.

His great love, apart from the Middlesex Hospital, was the Royal College of Surgeons of England. He was appointed Hunterian professor in 1944 and gave a great number of named lectures at the college, including the Hunterian oration in 1973. He was elected to the council by the fellows in 1957 and was president of the college from 1969 to 1972. His term as president was supremely successful, and many of his innovative ideas bore fruit in later years. On the medical side he was elected to the fellowship of the Royal College of Physicians of London—a signal honour for a surgeon—in 1963. His fame was international. All the surgical world knew him and loved him, and he was much in demand. He was elected to the honorary fellowship of colleges of many countries and achieved many honorary degrees; it would be impossible to list here all the international lectures that he gave.

Although Tom's main love was surgery, he had other loves as well, and he enjoyed life to the full.



An enthusiastic gardener, he was a skilled painter in water colours. Surgeons in general rejoiced when he was knighted in 1963.

So Uncle Tom is gone. He is survived by his son and daughter.—RS.

DPS writes: It is said to be a truism that the more difficult and time demanding jobs can best be left to those who already have a schedule of work that would daunt a less dedicated person. Certainly it was true of Tom Holmes Sellors, whom I never knew to shirk any task asked of him. Certainly he was not the archetypal negotiator, being in some ways too sensitive to relish the hard cut and thrust of medicopolitics. But once Tom had satisfied himself that there was an urgent job to do—and that he could do it—he would somehow find the time, in his busy professional life, to brief himself and lend it his full support. It was this gift that led him to the chair of the Central Committee for Hospital Medical Services and the Joint Consultants Committee and to grace the office of the president of the BMA. It was the unusual combination of distinguished surgeon and medical statesman that gave him such an unusual authority. Consultants today owe a lot to this most distinguished member of their ranks, and he will be remembered with pride and affection.

C W CURTIS BAIN MC, DM, FRCP

Dr C W Curtis Bain, a distinguished cardiologist who was formerly senior physician at Harrogate General Hospital and a past president of the BMA, died on 14 August. He was 92.

Cyril William Curtis Bain, whose father was spa physician at Harrogate, was educated at Wellington College; Christ Church, Oxford; and St Thomas's Hospital. His studies were interrupted by the first world war, during which he served with the Duke of Wellington's Regiment in France and Flanders, reaching the rank of major. He was mentioned in dispatches and won the MC when,

in charge of a contingent of eight men operating a mobile machine gun during a heavy attack, he successfully moved undetected and wiped out the enemy position. In 1917, because of an acute shortage of doctors, he was asked to resume his studies, and he graduated BM, BCh in 1922. After early appointments at St Thomas's he became resident medical officer at the National Heart Hospital before being appointed physician at Harrogate General Hospital and in charge of the cardiographic department of the Royal Bath Hospital. He wrote several original papers, especially on chest and oesophageal leads, and in 1927 began a fruitful collaboration with Terence East of King's College Hospital, with whom he wrote



Recent Advances in Cardiology, which between 1929 and 1959 went to five editions under their authorship. He became a member extraordinary of the Cardiac Society.

For many years a member of the BMA, he was honorary secretary of the Harrogate Division from 1925 to 1929, chairman of the division from 1939 to 1946, and president of the association in 1949, the first year of the health service, when the association met at Harrogate. In his presidential address, "Man and the Machine," he warned against giving machines precedence over opinions based on clinical judgment. A commanding figure, he was held in respect and some awe by his colleagues and was widely sought in consultation throughout north Yorkshire and the dales.

He retired to St Ives, Cornwall, in 1958, where his considerable skill with the trout rod was forsaken and he taught himself to sail. For 15 years, based at Falmouth, he explored the Carrick roads and the Helford river in his cruiser with customary determination. He tamed a large garden and resumed his collaboration with Terence East as they investigated the Cornish saints together. For seven years he acted as locum physician all over Cornwall and discovered the value of the cottage hospital system. His inquiring mind and forthright views remained intact until his death, which followed an operation for a fractured hip.

He married in 1930 Diana Pease, who survives him, together with his daughter, a general practitioner near Portsmouth, and two sons, one of whom is an ear, nose, and throat surgeon in Ontario.—RLHB.

E F GRIFFITH MRCS, LRCP

Dr E F Griffith, a founder member of the National Marriage Guidance Council, died at home in Trebetherick, Cornwall, on 30 July aged 91.

Edward Fyfe Griffith, known from his medical student days as "G," began his training at St Mary's Hospital, London, in 1916, having been rejected for military service because of poor eyesight. When he qualified in 1922 and joined a practice in Tavistock he was already concerned with the problems of personal relationships, having seen the misery and ignorance of the women attending as gynaecological outpatients; and the indifference and lack of understanding shown by their husbands. He soon came up against the problem of what advice to give to prevent pregnancy and was deeply upset when a young patient died after an eclamptic fit. As a result he decided that he should learn about contraception and moved to a practice nearer London.

In 1930 G went to see Dr Helena Wright at the North Kensington Women's Welfare Centre to learn about contraceptive methods. It took him six months to persuade his partners to allow him to teach contraception in the surgeries and more than a year to persuade Aldershot Borough Council to lend rooms where a proper clinic could be run. He hoped to continue lectures on personal relationships and sex education, but there was considerable opposition and it took him seven years to get lectures started in Aldershot. By the mid-1940s he was lecturing in several public

schools, in all the secondary schools in Wiltshire, and to many other organisations. In 1938 he began working part time in the department of psychological medicine at the Middlesex Hospital and was instrumental in getting the Marriage Guidance Council inaugurated. In 1947, after an attack of pneumonia, he underwent Jungian analysis and started treating his patients' emotional problems on a deeper level. He continued working as a Jungian analyst until he was 80.

G wrote 12 books, the best known being *Modern Marriage*, originally published in 1935. His autobiography, *The Pioneer Spirit*, was published in 1981. He is survived by his wife, Joyce, and a son and daughter by his first marriage.—HRB.

MARGUERITE S PEREIRA

MD

Dr Marguerite S Pereira, director of the Public Health Laboratory Service Virus Reference Laboratory at Colindale from 1971 to 1986, died in Rio de Janeiro on 17 August after a car accident.

Marguerite Scott (Peggy) Pereira was born on 29 July 1921, a daughter of Dr W M Scott, the first head of the Emergency Public Health Laboratory Service and a pioneer in the provision of national microbiological services. She was educated at James Allen's Girls' School, Dulwich, and Aberdeen University, where she graduated MB, ChB in 1943. She followed her father into pathology and, while

working in the bacteriology department at Manchester University, met Helio, a British Council scholar from Brazil, whom she married. She went to Brazil with him, where their son and twin daughters were born. In 1951 they returned to Britain and she joined the Public Health Laboratory Service, becoming director of the Salisbury laboratory in 1954. In 1957 they moved to London, Helio to the National Institute for Medical Research and Peggy to the Virus Reference Laboratory at Colindale. She took charge of the respiratory virus section, which became a joint World Health Organisation Influenza Centre; her findings on newly emergent strains of influenza virus helped in the planning of vaccination policies.

Students came to Peggy's laboratory from all over the world to study. She took a keen interest in their training, continuing to advise and encourage them during their subsequent careers and organising several training workshops in developing countries. She and her husband gave much time to developing virological services in Brazil, spending sabbaticals and many working holidays there. They worked closely together, sharing a unified view of viral disease informed by their knowledge and wide experience.

Through collaboration in a study of infectious mononucleosis in students Peggy became familiar with lymphocyte culture, and this enabled her to produce some of first monoclonal antibodies raised against virus antigens. She was also one of the first to develop a fluorescence test for antibody to human immunodeficiency virus. No virological or administrative problem ever daunted her, and solutions were sought and rearrangements made at once.

Peggy was unfailingly courteous and genuinely

interested in the needs of everyone with whom she came into contact. A rapid, decisive laboratory worker who intuitively recognised important developments in virology and saw laboratory work in the wider context of disease prevention and cure, she wrote well and by her encouragement and example taught others the skills of scientific writing. She won the respect of several generations of laboratory scientists, the oldest of whom she had known from her childhood; but more important to her were the friendship and esteem of her staff and students. She is survived by her husband and son, both doctors, and by a daughter.—JMBe, SDG, PPM.

J E REES

MRCS, LRCP, DLO

Mr J E Rees, formerly consultant aural surgeon in Harrogate and Ripon, died on 6 August aged 74.

John Emlyn (Jerry) Rees was born in Wimbledon and educated at King's College School. He studied



medicine at King's College Hospital, qualifying in 1937, and early developed an interest in ear, nose, and throat work. He served in Egypt and Northern Ireland as a specialist in aural surgery in the Royal Army Medical Corps with the rank of major and on demobilisation was appointed consultant aural surgeon to the Harrogate and Ripon group of hospitals. His time in Harrogate covered the great advances in ear, nose, and throat work that took it from the relative crudity of the "tonsil morning" to the delicate touch of modern microsurgery. In the early years of his appointment his was an onerous singlehanded post with often inadequate junior help. Latterly, after he had suffered a heart attack, his colleagues in York were given some sessions in Harrogate to relieve the strain.

Jerry was a most kindly man who took a friendly interest in the lives of his patients. In his spare time dinghy sailing, model making, and wood carving were special interests. Another occupation, with his wife Lyn, was puppy walking and preliminary training for the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association. He was also a governor of Harrogate Ladies' College.

In 1974 Jerry retired to Lyme Regis, where he bought one of a row of old coastguard cottages overlooking the Cobb and spent long hours almost completely rebuilding it. His interest in guide dogs remained, and he and Lyn passed on to the association 12 well trained and handsome puppies in as many years. As his cottage garden was small Jerry took an allotment and grew wonderful vegetables; he became the secretary of the Lyme Regis Allotment Holders Association. He is survived by Lyn; his two children, Carol and Anthony; and three grandchildren.—WMJ.

E F W BAKER

MD, FRCPC, MCPS, MRCPsych

Dr E F W Baker, consultant psychiatrist at Epsom District Hospital and West Park Hospital, Epsom, Surrey, died suddenly on 16 April.

Earle Franklin William Baker was a Canadian and graduated MD at Toronto University in 1951.

He became consultant psychiatrist to two teaching hospitals in Toronto and from 1959 to 1975 combined the posts with a lectureship at Toronto University, later being promoted to assistant professor. He wrote extensively on varied and disparate topics in psychiatry. In 1976 he moved to the United Kingdom and after three short locums was appointed consultant psychiatrist to Epsom District and West Park Hospitals in 1979. His main interest was the day hospital at Epsom District Hospital, to which he introduced many good ideas; he ran his department with verve.

Over and above his duties at the day hospital Earle was appointed to the clinical tutorship and carried out its onerous responsibilities most conscientiously for several years. A most amiable colleague with a keen intellect, he would often have unusual and stimulating ideas. He carried his intellectual interests into his private life and for the two years before his death was a keen student of the Russian language and of Russia.

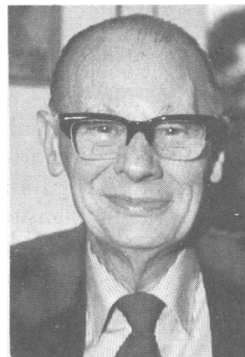
Earle is survived by his wife, Lorna, and two young children.—HJS.

N E PITT

MB, BS, FRCS

Mr N E Pitt, superintendent of Redhill County Hospital and consultant surgeon there from 1941 to 1969, died on 8 August aged 82.

Norman Ernest Pitt attended Brighton Grammar School and studied medicine at Guy's Hospital



Medical School, where he obtained a BSc in physiology before graduating in 1929. After junior appointments he left Guy's to work in Southend, Kingston-upon-Thames, and Woking. At the height of the war in 1941, being then aged 36, he was appointed superintendent of Redhill County Hospital

and senior surgeon; then, with the advent of the National Health Service, he was appointed consultant surgeon. His devotion and energy, his forceful administration, and, above all, his skill as a general surgeon made Redhill a hospital with a fine reputation, providing an excellent service to patients and attracting very able trainees.

Though he retired perforce from the NHS at the age of 65, Norman never retired as a surgeon. He established the Southern Clinic, with its own operating theatre, near his home and continued to admit and to treat patients there until the end of 1986. He and his wife, Emily, a nurse whom he met while at Guy's, were adept at making their patients feel at home, and the clinic had a distinctly happy atmosphere. He continued in active practice even after he had sold the clinic and performed his last operation only a few days before his death.

Although he worked exceedingly hard, Norman found time for gardening, for photography, and to become a busy and distinguished mason. Above all he was a committed Christian and a powerful supporter of Holy Trinity Church, Redhill, and the chapel that he founded at Redhill Hospital. He was a great believer in his family and a constant support to its members. A highly intelligent, perceptive man with a lively, inquiring mind, he was warm, caring, and sociable and had a sense of humour. He is survived by Emily and his five children, of whom two are doctors (one is a surgeon) and three trained as nurses.—BP.