

Stephen Sebag-Montefiore

Unshockable doctor and psychotherapist

Stephen Eric Sebag-Montefiore (b 1926; q Cambridge/Middlesex Hospital 1950), died 1 June 2014.

My father, Stephen Sebag-Montefiore, was the son of Colonel Eric Sebag-Montefiore and Audrey Haldin. His father, nicknamed Colonel Blood for his irrepressibly expletive laden stentorian boom (and for once chasing a fellow officer around the mess with a naked sword), was a landowner, soldier, and Master of Foxhounds. Stephen and his sister Sonia spent their first years in India but were brought up in a rare hybrid of Jewish and English traditions.

Born into the so called cousinhood of Jewish banking families, Sebag-Montefiore was a great great nephew of Sir Moses Montefiore, the Italian born Victorian baronet and philanthropist, who was the brother in law and partner of N M Rothschild; and great grandson of the banker Sir Joseph Sebag-Montefiore. His maternal grandparents were Sir Herbert and Lady Leon, who lived at Bletchley Park, where he often stayed as a boy, recalling the luxury of an Edwardian country house (where guests were offered three milks from three different dairy herds). Much later, his historian son, Hugh, wrote a book, *Enigma*, about Bletchley's role as a codebreaking centre in the second world war.

Sebag-Montefiore typically went his own way. At school he developed blood poisoning from a rugby cut. The operation that saved his life also left him with a leg he could not bend, a weakened heart, and, after a year in hospital, an interest in medicine and love of reading. He never let his limp stop him either dancing or rushing everywhere, and as he crossed roads, taxi drivers would often shout, "Watch it, guv'nor, or you'll lose the other one!"

Early "holistic" approach

After Wellington College and reading medicine at Magdalene College, Cambridge, he qualified as a doctor at the Middlesex Hospital in 1950; interning at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital for Children before starting his own private general practice in Kensington. In his 40s he qualified as a psychotherapist specialising in family therapy. He was able to combine general practice with psychotherapy to become a family doctor who could deal with everything from the common cold to treating depression and marital or family crises. He was an old fashioned sort of doctor who regularly visited patients day or night with his black bag. He treated depression with hypnosis—and



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compassion—but he was also an innovator, using acupuncture and allergy treatments long before they were generally accepted. He ran his practice from the basement of his Kensington townhouse, where his sons were told that anything they saw in the house was secret and never to be repeated.

Running the family therapy clinic at St Bartholomew's Hospital from 1966 to 1983, he took his MD with a thesis on electroconvulsive therapy in 1975, moved to Harley Street in 1981, and in 1993 was elected president of the hypnosis and psychosomatic medicine section at the Royal Society of Medicine.

A doctor for everyone

Sebag-Montefiore looked after many generations of the same families—and saw famous patients too: Peter Sellers, Dudley Moore, Peter Cook, and many others. But he treated everyone the same and had no interest whatsoever in being a doctor to society or stars.

He was shy, laconic, and passionate in private life, but dynamic, creative, and original in his practice and always calm, patient, and caring. He was impossible to shock and non-judgmental, usually concluding, whether to patients or his own children, "Don't worry—that's perfectly

normal." Dudley Moore and Peter Cook did a comic sketch based on him, called "Perfectly Normal" (or, in other versions of the sketch, "Perfectly Understandable," another one of his phrases) in which Moore confessed ever more outrageous desires to which Peter Cook, playing Sebag-Montefiore, calmly replied "Don't worry, that's perfectly normal."

Family man

He married April Jaffe, a doctor's daughter and novelist, at Bevis Marks Synagogue (London's oldest synagogue, in the City of London), and was happily married for 62 years. April helped him run his hectic practice and they have four sons: Rupert was chairman of Savills UK estate agents for 13 years. Adam, a dedicated Zionist, emigrated to Israel, where he is a leading wine expert. Hugh and Simon (the author of this obituary) are writers, and April published four novels, so Stephen also presided over something of a literary family salon. Sebag-Montefiore loved opera, gardening, and literature. When two of his sons became authors, he helped edit their books, and even diagnosed Simon's subject, Prince Potemkin, as having cyclothymia—and analysed the symptoms of Herod the Great's agonising death from worms bursting out of his swollen belly and scrotum. Even in his last days, he was always available to his family, including 11 grandchildren, to give wise advice that usually concluded: "Don't worry. That's perfectly normal."

He donated his body to medical research. He leaves his wife and four sons.

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We regret that we no longer accept obituaries sent by post.

Geoffrey Ambrose



Former general practitioner and consultant child psychiatrist (b 1925; q Guy's Hospital, London, 1947; MRCP, MRCPsych, DPM), d 27 March 2014

Geoffrey Crosby Ambrose settled in Woking to work as a GP in 1955. Late night home visits and police surgeon duties were routine. After 20 years in general practice, he decided to specialise in child psychiatry; he was eventually appointed to a post as a consultant child psychiatrist in Guildford, where he worked for 20 years. In his publications, he discussed how parents and parent figures could learn to handle children's defiance and anxiety by being assertive in a firm and relaxed way and giving praise for any cooperation shown by the child. He believed that successful parents are neither too strict nor too permissive, and adopt what he called a middle way with their children. He leaves his wife, Dympna; four daughters; and eight grandchildren.

Veronica Ferguson, Georgina Field, Charlotte Ambrose, Clare Ambrose
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Derek P Anderson



Former general practitioner (b 1931; q Edinburgh 1955; Dip IMC RCS Ed, FIMC RCG Ed), died from an acute cerebral haemorrhage on 14 February 2014.

Derek P Anderson might not have become a GP had his father not died suddenly in 1959, just as Derek finished his national service, but he took the opportunity to return to

Kinross, where he served as a GP until 1996. He was the moving force that brought three singlehanded practices into a single surgery in 1971, and in 1993, when the Kinross Health Centre was opened. Anderson thrived in an era when GP obstetrics was a respected option, and he also had an interest in emergency trauma care, coordinating the evolution of Perth and Kinross immediate medical care and holding senior office with the British Association of Immediate Medical Care. He died within hours of an acute cerebral haemorrhage, the first and last serious illness in what had been a healthy life.

Robert Wood

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J W P Bradley

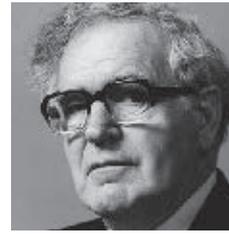


Former general surgeon (b 1927; q Oxford 1952; FRCS Eng), died two weeks after aortic valve surgery on 30 September 2013.

While at Christ Church, Oxford, John W Bradley ("Jack") joined the university's air squadron; he later did national service in the Royal Air Force. He had always found reading difficult and used drawing as a method of learning anatomy; he was able to draw with both hands simultaneously. In 1967 he was appointed consultant surgeon to Hillingdon, Harefield, and Mount Vernon hospitals. He developed a particular interest in vascular surgery, and, although largely self taught, he was skilful in aortic and peripheral vascular surgery. His research started at St George's and the Buxton Browne Farm, Downe, where, using the external oblique aponeurosis, he developed aortic grafts. He was diffident about his teaching abilities, but his students felt privileged to have been his trainees. He leaves his second wife, Averil.

Averil Olive Mansfield Bradley
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Neville Rex Edwards Fendall



Professor of tropical community health Liverpool (b 1917; q University College London and University College Hospital, London, 1943; BSc, MD, MRCS, DTM, DPH Lond, FFCM, FFPHM), d 25 May 2014.

Neville Rex Edwards Fendall started his career in HM Overseas Medical Service in 1944. Initially in Nigeria, Malaya, and Singapore, he moved to Kenya with his wife, Doreen, in 1948; he subsequently became the country's director of medical services before Kenya became a republic in 1964. After a spell in New York, he accepted the Middlemass Hunt chair of tropical community health at the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine. His work for World Health Organization expert panels, the World Bank, the UN, the Commonwealth, and the UK and international governments confirmed his worldwide reputation. Rex and Doreen moved to Ludlow in Shropshire, where they enjoyed a quiet retirement, stimulated by a love of roses and trees. A memorial tree to the couple will be planted at Queenswood, near Hereford, which became their favourite place.

Julie Lipscomb

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John Francis Gerard McCaughan



Occupational health physician (b 1955; q Queen's University Belfast, 1981; DRCOG, MRCP, MFOM RCP Lon, FFOM RCPI), d 6 June 2014.

John Francis Gerard McCaughan trained in general practice before entering a career in occupational medicine. A decade in the occupational health unit

of the Royal Ulster Constabulary (1992-2002), including a spell in Kosovo, followed before he joined the Northern Ireland Civil Service Occupational Health Service in 2002, from which he retired on health grounds in June 2014. He chaired the NI group of the Society of Occupational Medicine and served on its council. A member of the Irish Faculty of Occupational Medicine, he served as the newsletter editor, a member of the faculty board, and as an examiner. John was an examiner for the St John Ambulance first aid and was awarded the organisation's service medal. He leaves his wife, Roisin, and three children.

Ken Addley

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Shirley Ratcliffe



Consultant paediatrician (b 1932; q Royal Free Hospital School of Medicine, London, 1956; MRCS Eng, DCH Eng, FRCP Ed), d 17 June 2013.

Shirley Ratcliffe was appointed as clinical scientist and honorary consultant paediatrician to the Medical Research Council's clinical and population cytogenetics unit (later human genetics unit) in Edinburgh in 1971, where she established a longitudinal follow-up programme for the 70 babies identified as having additional X and Y sex chromosomes through the newborn cytogenetic screening programme. She also established a comparison group of 200 chromosomally normal children to act as controls for the study. The detailed growth records of these control children form the backbone of the UK growth charts still in use today. The Edinburgh study was completed in 1997, on Shirley's retirement. In 2010 she donated her research to the Wellcome Foundation. This work will always be available to others studying and researching this particular condition. Shirley leaves two children and two grandchildren.

Una Sapietis, Gary Butler

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