

## Obituary

**RUDOLF KARL FREUDENBERG, formerly Physician Superintendent, Netherne Hospital, Coulsdon, Surrey.**

Dr Rudolf Karl Freudenberg, former Physician Superintendent of Netherne Hospital and Senior Principal Medical Officer and Head of the Medical Mental Health Section for the Ministry of Health, died at his home in Reigate on 18 April 1983 at the age of 74.

He was born on 11 May 1908 at Weinheim in Germany, the eldest son of an industrialist. He received his education in the local *Gymnasium* before studying medicine at the Universities of Kiel, Munich and Freiburg. He qualified MD in 1934. In 1935, while doing a house job in Berlin, he decided that he could no longer stay in Hitler's Germany. He went to Vienna where, in the University of Neuro-Histological Institute as assistant to Professor Sakel, he became interested in the physiology of insulin coma. This led to an invitation to join the staff of Moorcroft House and he moved to England in 1936. Like many other German *émigrés* who influenced the development of British psychiatry, he re-qualified, taking the Scottish Triple qualification in 1939. He continued to work at Moorcroft during the war years, and was one of the pioneers of the physical treatment of schizophrenia using deep insulin coma.

The use of such physical treatments in psychiatry heralded a period of active change in mental hospitals, and with the establishment of the NHS in 1947, Dr Freudenberg joined the staff of Netherne Hospital and was appointed Physician Superintendent in 1951. In spite of his interest in physical treatment he appreciated, earlier than most, the importance of social and psychological influences on the manifestations and course, not only of schizophrenia, but also other mental disorders. He presented his studies of the relative value of physical and social treatments at the Second World Congress of Psychiatry in 1957.

At that time it was still assumed that the vigorous use of physical treatment would do away with chronic psychiatric illness, just as today's reformers hope to achieve the same end by abolition of the mental hospital. Dr Freudenberg did not share such beliefs. Instead he felt that the state and the function of chronic patients could be bettered by change in the mental hospitals. With Dr Lorna Wing he surveyed the needs of the long-stay patients in the hospital, and then went on to reduce overcrowding, provide more occupation, and improve the clothing, care and attention received by the patients. While as Physician Superintendent he exercised wide administrative influence, he never lost sight of the details of the lives of individual patients and members of staff. For years he negotiated for the liberation of both staff and patients from the petty tyrannies and outmoded routines which characterized mental hospital life at the time.

Even before the 1959 Mental Health Act, he played an important, if unrecognized, part in the introduction of the in-

formal patient status. The significance and influence of the changes at Netherne Hospital on the mental state and condition of patients with schizophrenia has been documented in critical evaluations reported by the staff of the MRC Social Psychiatry Research Unit and others who worked at Netherne.

In 1961 Dr Freudenberg joined the then Ministry of Health as Senior Principal Medical Officer and Head of the Medical Mental Health Section for four productive years. In addition he took an active part in the development of post-graduate medical training, and after his retirement served on various College committees and as a member of the Expert Committee of the Council of Europe on the organization of preventive services in mental health. He was a supporter of voluntary efforts in mental health, including the Schizophrenia Fellowship, and was for many years Chairman of the Management Committee of the Cheshire Homes in South West London.

Dr Freudenberg was an extremely modest man who cloaked his warm and humorous sympathy with shy formality. Many who were charmed by his courtesy stood in awe of him. But those who had the privilege of his friendship appreciated his broad and liberal sentiments. He was a good teacher, a good listener and a sympathetic friend to those in trouble. He had a lasting and cultured interest in music and the visual arts, and in his latter days developed considerable expertise in the making of violins. He married in 1933 and is survived by his wife, Gerda, and three sons, of whom the eldest is a general practitioner.

DB

**RICHARD T. C. PRATT, formerly Physician in Psychological Medicine, National Hospitals for Nervous Diseases, Queen Square, London.**

R. T. C. (Dick) Pratt died peacefully at home on 20 March 1983. He had recently retired from the National Hospitals, Queen Square and Maida Vale, where he had been a consultant psychiatrist since 1954. Born in 1917, he was educated at Cheltenham College and Trinity College, Oxford, completing clinical studies at the Middlesex Hospital, London. His early interest in psychiatry developed at the Shenley Hospital and, in 1952, he was appointed as registrar to Dr Eliot Slater at the National Hospitals. He was awarded the Gaskell Medal in 1953.

At this stage his interest in genetics was already advanced, having undertaken a study of multiple sclerosis, for which he was awarded the DM in 1950. In those early days at the Square he made a number of significant contributions, including the identification of the genetic basis of primary basilar impression, and providing the original description of the syndrome of fructose intolerance.

In 1967 his book, *The Genetics of Neurological Disorders*, was published, a masterpiece of careful research and

diligent writing that became a standard work of reference.

His contributions to psychiatry were substantial, but not widely known. Having developed diabetes in early life, he had a reluctance to travel and was rarely seen at meetings. His modesty was such that he usually had his name attached at the end of papers, if it appeared at all, even when he was the prime mover behind an investigation. His work included studies with monoamine-oxidase inhibitors, and extensive investigations with ECT. He had a great interest in depression, especially intractable cases, and would attempt to help patients that his colleagues had long since abandoned. His judicious use of ECT, each treatment carefully monitored and, except for holidays, personally given, was unrivalled amongst his contemporaries.

Dick Pratt was a generous man, warm, kind, but firm where necessary. To his colleagues he gave good practical clinical decisions and advice; to prospective researchers he gave ideas; to patients he gave time; and of great importance to all, he gave encouragement.

MT

**The deaths of the following were also reported:**

ROBERT ALEXANDER BLAIR, Consultant Psychiatrist, North Manchester General Hospital, Crumpsall, Manchester.

JAMES DOLAN, The Ontario Hospital, St Thomas, Ontario, Canada.

GERALD EDWIN DUGGAN-KEEN, formerly Consultant Psychiatrist, Winterton Hospital, Cleveland.

PEARL GODDARD, formerly Consultant Psychiatrist, St James' Hospital, Portsmouth.

GUSTAVE CHARLES HELLER, retired, 83 Parkstone Avenue, Emerson Park, Hornchurch, Essex.

JEFFREY LOMAS, formerly Consultant Psychiatrist, Horton Road and Coney Hill Hospitals, Gloucester.

WILLIAM JOHN MCCULLEY, 1 Amberley Court, Angell Road, London SW9.

ARIE QUERIDO, Consultant Psychiatrist, University of Amsterdam, Bachstraat 1 Hs, Amsterdam 2, Netherlands.

EDMUND CHRISTOPHER TURTON, formerly Consultant Psychiatrist, Stoke House, St Mary Bourne, Andover, Hampshire.

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## College Notices

### **Post-Qualifying Courses in Alcoholism**

The Dependence/Addiction Group would like to draw to the attention of its members the following Post-Qualifying Courses in Alcoholism.

**10th Scottish School on Alcoholism Related Problems—** 26 to 30 March 1984 at Heriot-Watt University, Riccarton Campus, Currie, Mid-Lothian. Information available from: Mrs J. L. Navey, Administrator, Scottish Council on Alcoholism, 147 Blythswood Street, Glasgow G2 4EN (telephone: 041-333-9677).

**Post-graduate Diploma Course in Alcohol Studies—** held in August/September each year at Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh. Information available from: Alcohol Studies Centre, Paisley College of Technology, Westerfield Annexe, 25 High Calside, Paisley PA2 6BY (telephone 041-887 1241, Ext. 359 or the SCA (above)).

### **Examinations—Spring 1984**

The Spring 1984 MRCPsych Examinations will take place on the following dates:

**Preliminary Test:** 22 February 1984. Closing date for receipt of entries—30 November 1983.

**Membership Examination:** 11 April 1984 (written papers); 16 to 19 April 1984 (clinical and orals). Closing date for receipt of entries—25 January 1984.

The entry fees are £55 and £105 respectively. *Late or*

*incomplete entries are not accepted.* The College does not give exemption from any part of the examination. Candidates are reminded that they must pass the Membership Examination within five years of passing the Preliminary Test.

Details and application forms are available on written request from the Examinations Secretary at the College. Candidates who wish to re-sit either part, or to claim credit for psychiatric experience gained outside the UK or Eire, should submit their applications *at least three weeks before the closing date.*

### **On Sale at the College**

**College Ties:** A new All Silk Tie is now available—plain blue, green and maroon with the College Crest (single motif) in black, gold, silver and red. Price £7 each, plus 25p postage and packing (overseas airmail £1). Other designs are still available in either Crimplene or polyester (blue only), both at £4 each (postage as above).

**College Plaque:** This is available at £7 plus 80p postage and packing (£1.75 surface overseas).

**College Christmas Cards:** These are 15p each; 12 for £1.80—postage and packing, 40p.

### **Late News: New Editor**

Dr Hugh Freeman (Hope Hospital, Salford) has been elected as the new Editor of the *British Journal of Psychiatry*.

Printed in Great Britain by Headley Brothers Ltd The Invicta Press Ashford Kent and London