

Obituaries

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SIR ROGER ORMROD, Honorary Fellow

Sir Roger Ormrod, PC had the unique distinction of achieving the highest honours in two learned professions, the law and medicine: he was a Lord Justice of Appeal and an FRCP.

Roger Fray Greenwood Ormrod was educated at Shrewsbury and The Queen's College, Oxford, where he read jurisprudence. Pressure from his father, however, resulted in him following in the footsteps of his grandfather and uncle and becoming a doctor. To this end he switched to reading medicine at Oxford where he graduated BM, BCh in 1942. He was elected FRCP Lond. in 1969.

Of the two professions he could have made his life's work, Sir Roger chose the law. His career was interrupted by the Second World War in which he served in the RAMC and saw service in Normandy, North-West Europe and in India. He was demobilised in 1945 with the rank of major.

He returned to his former chambers in Fountain Court and very soon acquired a large divorce practice interspersed with medical negligence cases. He took silk in 1958 and in 1961 was appointed a judge of the Probate, Divorce and Admiralty Division. From 1975, he sat regularly in the division of the Court which heard appeals from the Family Division and Divorce County Courts over which he eventually presided from 1979 until his retirement.

Despite the heavy burden of his judicial work Sir Roger found time to assist in extra-mural activities, mainly with a medical flavour. Thus he was a governor of Barts, and the Maudsley and Bethlem Royal Hospitals as well as Chairman of the Institute of Psychiatry.

In 1938 he married Anne Lush, a magistrate and marriage guidance counsellor.

BARRY WYNDHAM RICHARDS, formerly Consultant Psychiatrist and Deputy Physician Superintendent, St Lawrence's Hospital, Caterham

Barry Richards qualified from St Bartholomew's Hospital Medical School in 1939. The field of mental handicap soon attracted his attention after he joined the Royal Medico-Psychological Association in 1947. He served on the Executive Committee for Mental Deficiency. He became Consultant Psychiatrist and Deputy Physician Superintendent at St Lawrence's Hospital in the early 1950s. A

consultancy to the London Borough of Croydon and Honorary Lecturer in Psychological Medicine at King's College Hospital, London, followed.

As the occasion demanded, he was an excellent administrator, but preferred, instead, to melt into the background with his precious research work, which to him was a form of creative art. Easily lost in books, articles and reverie, he became known affectionately, but with some truth, as the "absent minded professor".

Down's syndrome, cytogenetics, dermatoglyphics, biochemical disorders and family trees were the focus of most of his work. They were subjects about which he wrote numerous articles. Many years of devotion to the editorship of *The Journal of Mental Deficiency Research* gave him much pleasure. His work background was depicted in a book he edited *Mental Subnormality, Modern Trends in Research, 1970*. Penrose, in a preface to this book, commented on a survey of demographic processes in a study by Richards and said "it could with advantage be more widely recognised by administrators, who often tend to ignore such data in forming policy decisions". His research work was rewarded when he became the first recipient of the Burden Research Medal and Prize in 1970. In 1972 he delivered the Blake Marsh Lecture at the Royal Society of Medicine, his topic being 'Mongols and their Mothers'.

The Barry Richards library at St Lawrence's Hospital was started by him. It grew into a richly subscribed collection of specialist books and journals and was constantly consulted by those working in the field. Barry was a European, belonging to the Anglo-German Society and developing close links with the University of Warsaw. His net spread to the New World, where he spent a year as Visiting Professor in Mental Deficiency in Toronto. In terms of scholarship he was a most unusual person to find working in a long-stay hospital. However, his work certainly advanced knowledge in helping to understand, treat and prevent mental handicap. His endeavours and original thoughts were a complement to the Penrose, Shapiro, Heaton-Ward era.

Barry was a quiet, dignified, private and contemplative man. Appearing rather remote and seemingly not sentimental was a contradiction of opinion when one got to know him. He was very proud of his Welsh ancestry, his family and links with Barry – his home town, after which he was named. His retirement hobby was a comprehensive study of his own