

Obituary

Editor: Henry R. Rollin

HENRY JAMES CROW, formerly Clinical Director, Burden Neurological Hospital and Institute, Bristol

Henry James (Harry) Crow died suddenly at his home on 10 May 1987, at the age of 66. He began his medical career as a student at Aberdeen University, having already served in the Royal Air Force as a navigator. His natural modesty meant that a distinguished war record, (he was awarded the DFC), was generally unknown to all but his closest friends.

An early post as neurosurgical houseman at Frenchay Hospital began a lifelong interest in neuropsychiatry. This was initially fostered by research undertaken at The London Hospital, but in 1956 he moved to The Burden Institute and Hospital Bristol, where he worked until his retirement. During many years at The Burden, latterly as Consultant and Clinical Director, his dedicated medical and psychiatric skills were reflected in meticulous patient care. He was respected, admired and regarded with affection by all his medical and ancillary colleagues. With his wife, also a psychiatrist, and a multidisciplinary team, he wholeheartedly undertook the care of patients with intractable personality problems, often referred from other psychiatrists throughout the region. His undaunted enthusiasm and unswerving optimism could often yield unexpectedly successful results. His MD thesis, approved by Aberdeen University in 1964, concerned the development and application of multifocal leucocoagulation, and was the cornerstone of his continuing research interest in the treatment and care of patients with obsessional anxiety neuroses.

His clinical practice focused increasingly on patients who suffered from epilepsy, as general practitioners, neurolo-

gists and neurosurgeons alike recognised his particular expertise. He developed the Burden Hospital EEG department, following Grey Walter's pioneering revelations regarding the clinical application of electroencephalography. High technical standards of work within his department were largely due to Harry, and he was justly proud of the emergency EEG service which he developed for the Bristol area. Harry was a founder member of The Royal College of Psychiatrists, becoming a Fellow in 1971, and was a recent past Chairman of The South Western Division. Characteristically he continued, even after retirement, to give generously of his time to others in the specialty, and acted as a second opinion doctor under the provision of the new Mental Health Act.

He was intensely loyal to The Burden Hospital and Institute, and immediately prior to his retirement he took great pains to make himself available for advice as to the best way in which continuity of patient care could be maintained. A framed appreciation from the local Community Health Council which they presented to him on his retirement bore witness to their high regard for his medical skills, when they called him "the patients' doctor". Harry's extrovert personality made him a welcome guest at social functions, and he enjoyed the friendship of many colleagues. Among the latter his presence will be especially missed by the small group who annually accompanied him walking in the Scottish hills. It is sad that he only lived to enjoy a short retirement with his equally hard-working wife, barely having time to follow his golfing and gardening interests. He leaves a widow, Carol, and three sons.

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Book Reviews

My Years with CRUSE by Margaret Torrie (foreword by Baroness Lena Jeger). Obtainable from CRUSE House, 126 Sheen Road, Richmond, Surrey TW9 1UR. Pp 125. £3.25 plus 40p p&p (£3.00 post free to the widowed). 1987.

It is often said that the least familiar period in history is that which just precedes one's lifetime. Thus young adults of the 1960s and 70s were particularly lacking in information and understanding about the Second World War, having missed the experience of living through it, yet not distant enough in time to have learned about it as 'history'.

So, although I have been a supporter of the work of CRUSE (once 'The National Organisation for Widows', now the 'National Organisation for the Widowed and Their Children'), familiar with its present aims and aware of Mrs Torrie's book *Begin Again* for widows, the period which saw the genesis of the organisation and its early development

into what was ultimately to become CRUSE was well before my own qualification in medicine. Its early beginnings were translated into vigorous and successful growth before I began to be professionally concerned as a psychiatrist with bereavement. I mention this point to illustrate the fact that while I have never taken the work of CRUSE 'for granted', I was quite clearly woefully ignorant of the early struggles and development, and this little book has corrected this for me. Since I doubt that I can be the only psychiatrist existing such undisclosed lacunae, I commend it to others, particularly social psychiatrists and those working with bereavement and loss. It will also be of interest to other professionals involved with the development of self- and mutual-aid groups.

CRUSE has indeed interesting origins. Margaret Torrie, a Quaker, pacifist, one-time social worker, writer, poet and wife of a Scottish consultant psychiatrist (Dr Alfred Torrie)