

Obituary

IAN GEORGE WALKER PICKERING, retired, Locum Consultant, St Ebba's Hospital, Hook Road, Epsom, Surrey.

Dr Pickering, a former Director of Prison Medical Services and a Foundation Fellow of the College, died on 18 January 1984 at the age of 68.

Ian George Walker Pickering was a Yorkshireman. He was born in Bradford, educated at Bradford Grammar School before going a few miles down the road to Leeds University to read medicine. He qualified MB, ChB in 1939 and was able to do one surgical house job at St James Hospital, Leeds, before volunteering for the Royal Navy. He had a distinguished war record, achieving the rank of Surgeon Lieutenant Commander and taking part in the landings at Anzio and Normandy. He was at a later date awarded the Volunteer Reserve Decoration.

After demobilization he returned to Leeds where he joined the Medical Professorial Unit. He gained the MD in 1947. He was elected MRCP London in 1966 and proceeded to the Fellowship in 1972. In 1974 he was elected FFCM.

It was in the Prison Medical Service, however, that he was to make his real career and reputation. He joined that service in 1946, again in Leeds, and rose rapidly through the ranks until, in 1963, he succeeded Dr Harvey Snell as director, an appointment he held with distinction until his retirement at the age of 60 in 1976. During his tenure of office he was appointed a full member of the Prison Board, a tribute indeed to the esteem in which he was held by the prison authorities.

After his retirement he joined the staff of Rampton Special Hospital as a Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist where his previous forensic experience proved invaluable.

During his career he was closely identified with a number of learned societies. He had been, for example, President of the British Academy of Forensic Sciences and Vice-President of the British Association of Social Psychiatry, and the Society for the Study of Addiction.

Ian Pickering was a handsome man with a schoolboy's shining morning face. Before his first coronary some few years ago he had an almost Dickensian figure: he was rotund and across his ample middle he sported a gold watch-chain. He was an excellent raconteur: he told his stories with more than a vestige of his native Yorkshire accent. But what was so idiosyncratic was his infectious belly-laugh, echoes of which will ring round the Halls of Fame for all time.

ERIC DAVID WITTKOWER, Professor and Consultant Psychiatrist, Royal Victoria Hospital, Section for Trans-cultural Research, Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

Eric Wittkower died in Montreal on 6 January 1983. He

was born in Germany, but his father, with commendable foresight, had him registered at birth as a British subject. He studied medicine at the University of Berlin and was publishing on psychosomatic medicine when he was 28 years old, having already become head of the Asthma Clinic at Charité Hospital, Berlin. In 1931 he was Privat-Dozent in Psychosomatic Medicine at the University. With the ascendancy of the Nazis, he and his wife Claire moved to Switzerland, and then in September 1933 to England where he was given a Research Fellowship at the Central Pathological Laboratory of the Maudsley Hospital. Two years later he moved to the Tavistock Clinic as a Research Fellow in Psychosomatic Medicine. His interests in this sub-specialty were very wide, and it is recognized that his comprehensive paper which appeared in the *Journal of Mental Science* in 1935 was a major stimulus to the psychosomatic movement in the United States, leading to the founding of the journal, *Psychosomatic Medicine* and later to the American Psychosomatic Society.

He joined the Royal Army Medical Corps in 1940 and did valuable work in officer selection and in psychosomatic problems. On demobilization, he had a Fellowship at St Bartholomew's Hospital in the Department of Dermatology and was later made a consultant to the Tavistock Clinic and a lecturer at the Maudsley. He completed his psycho-analytical training at the London Institute in 1950.

It is not surprising that with all these credentials he was invited to join the Psychiatric Department at McGill University which, under Dr Ewen Cameron, had developed an international reputation. Publications of the highest quality flowed from his pen and honours descended on him from all over the world.

In 1956 he founded the Section for Transcultural Psychiatric Studies at McGill and directed it until he officially retired in 1969. He did not retire, and though in later years he was crippled following spinal surgery, he got around to lecture at home and abroad with the help of his wife and a wheelchair. He was also still active in the Medical School at McGill.

I recall a visit he made to Ottawa to lecture on 'Cultural Aspects of Psychiatry' when he pointed out the psychological problems of immigrants who had to adjust to strange cultures. I was asked to propose a vote of thanks and I had to point out that while he stressed these negative aspects of acculturation, his own life history was a splendid example of the positive aspects. He had come as a refugee to England and made his mark quickly. He had joined the army and again distinguished himself. He had moved to Canada and enhanced his reputation in Psychosomatic Medicine and then switched to Transcultural Psychiatry in which he again achieved an international reputation. Even after his official