OBITUARY

JEAN MORTON, MD, MB, ChB, DPH

Dr Jean Morton died on February 22, 1965, after a long illness, and will be missed by all who knew her. She possessed to a high degree the qualities of courage, integrity, and loyalty, and bore the knowledge of her approaching demise with fortitude and an almost disconcerting humour. Jean Morton was born in Dumbarton of the Rev. H. D. and Mrs Morton, qualified at St Andrews in 1923 and early made her career in public health. Having obtained the DPH from Newnham College, Cambridge, in 1928, and the MD from St Andrews in 1934, Dr Morton decided to pursue the subject which chiefly interested her, venereology, a speciality at that time attached to public health but later integrated with the hospital service.

Jean Morton held posts at Lincoln and at Derby before becoming a specialist venereologist in the RAFVR on the outbreak of war in 1939. She held the rank of Flight Lieutenant, later being promoted to Squadron Leader. After demobilization she worked for a while in Birmingham and later served several hospitals in Hertfordshire, where she was adviser to the Medical Officer of Health. Within a short time Guy’s Hospital was added to her list of appointments. It was at Guy’s that she was happiest, where there were opportunities for her to influence, as a woman colleague and teacher, both students and staff. Jean Morton, despite her strong personality, was very feminine and a keen feminist. This latter trait made her demand rather more from her own sex than from the opposite sex, and she always expected the formers’ standards to be of the highest. When they were not it obviously grieved her deeply.

There was in Jean Morton a quietly sparkling sense of humour which was often directed against herself. Those who knew her will carry, in particular, a lively memory of this humour, and of her massive integrity. The busiest period of her life was probably that with the WAAF during the war years, when she suffered no man to override an opinion or a moral position which she considered to be right and in the best interests of her (mainly young) women patients. As a professional woman, in her early years she had known the difficulties sometimes to be met with in what was in some quarters still considered to be a male preserve. Experiences such as these, in the case of so sensitive a person, bred in her the paradox of a wide tolerance and a stern judgement of principle.

In later years Jean Morton started painting in oils as a recreation and in anticipation of retirement. To a non-professional critic these paintings reflected her enthusiasm, her dedication, and her gentleness of spirit.

For many years she regularly attended the meetings of the Medical Society for the Study of Venereal Diseases, and also served on its Council. As an expert witness she took part in the recent BMA investigation into the social background of venereal diseases.

To her sister, who looked after her, we extend our deepest sympathy. A.S.G.
OBITUARY

Those of us who were privileged to have served with her in the Royal Air Force will be especially saddened by the death of Jean Morton. In spite of her previous experience in venereology, her appointment to take charge of the main centre for the treatment of WAAF personnel was by no means automatic as, in view of her Diploma in Public Health, the “Administration” had other ideas for her employment.

A very frequent visitor to her department, as well as a colleague and a friend, I would like to pay my tribute to her tireless work for those in her care. With high professional standards, she had also that exact blend of kindliness and toughness, coupled with a keen sense of humour, which made her ideally suitable for her job. That in her middle age she was so well loved by the young, is an important clue to her character, and a touching tribute was the number of affectionate inquiries from her ex-patients who attended the writer’s clinic for follow-up in the immediate post-war years.

G.L.M.McE.

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THE MIDDLESEX HOSPITAL

A new department has just been opened at the Middlesex Hospital, London, W.1, for the venereal and sexually transmitted diseases. It is the first completely new department of venereology at a London teaching hospital for over 25 years and is situated in a new five-storey building in central London.

The department is open between 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. on Monday to Friday and between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. on Saturday. Patients may attend without a doctor’s letter or they may be referred to the clinics by their doctors. An appointment is not necessary but patients may telephone direct to the department, MUSEum 8333, extension 666, to ascertain the best time to attend. Medical social workers and health visitors are available to help with the social, family, and personal problems.

In addition to the clinic service the new department also provides instruction for undergraduate and postgraduate medical students and for nurses. Facilities for research into the scientific, medical, and social aspects of disease are also available.
Obituary: JEAN MORTON, MD, MB, ChB, DPH

A.S.G.

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