

Obituary

John Arthur Harland Hancock, 1923–1974

The sudden death of John Hancock on June 7, 1974, at the age of 51, came as a shock and a great sadness to his many friends in and out of the medical profession. He began his medical studies at the London Hospital in 1942 and, as might be expected, he was an outstanding student, winning the Anderson Prize in Elementary Clinical Medicine and the In-patient Dressers Prize in Elementary Clinical Surgery. In May, 1945, he joined a party of volunteers which was sent to the notorious Belsen concentration camp to help with the medical and other problems of the unfortunate inmates. There he contracted typhus fever and was seriously ill for some time at the London Hospital under the care of the late Lord Evans. Convalescence was slow and, although he ultimately made a good recovery, the disease left its mark and his medical studies were seriously interrupted. He qualified in 1948 and held a series of House Appointments at the London Hospital, including the post of House Physician to the Dermatological Department. In December 1949 he began his National Service in the R.A.M.C. and was given an appointment as a trainee in dermatology. In 1951 he was granted a short service Commission in the R.A.M.C. and became a Graded Specialist in Dermatology. He was appointed Officer-in-Charge of the Skin Department at the Cambridge Military Hospital, Aldershot. For a time, in 1953, he held the post of Acting Adviser in Dermatology to the War Office. His military service ended in 1955 and he returned to the London Hospital to hold successively the posts of Junior Registrar and Registrar to the Department of Venereology (the Whitechapel Clinic). From June, 1957, to June, 1958, he was a Fellow in Medicine at the Syphilis Clinic and Department of Chronic Diseases at the Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, then the most renowned clinic for venereal diseases in the world. In 1958 he returned to his appointment at the London Hospital and in due course became Assistant Physician to the Medical Research Council Working Party on Non-Gonococcal Urethritis, with the status of Senior Registrar at the London Hospital. When his research appointment terminated in 1962 he became Senior Registrar to the Department. From 1959 to 1962 he was Acting Part-time Consultant Venereologist to the Metropolitan Hospital



in London, and from 1962 to 1964 Consultant Venereologist to the Southend-on-Sea Group of Hospitals. In 1964 he was appointed Consultant Venereologist to the General Infirmary at Leeds, a post which he held with distinction until the time of his death.

During the post-war period a number of talented young men and women held junior posts at the Whitechapel Clinic and many of these made venereology their life's work. Even among these John Hancock was outstanding as a clinician. He had an excellent knowledge of general medicine and, of course, of dermatology, and soon became most able and proficient in his special subject. He was a good organizer and an excellent teacher, most kind and helpful to his patients and in all respects a most admirable colleague. He was hard-working and conscientious to a degree. Such was his striving for

perfection that the difficulties common to most venereological departments in this country, of too many patients and too little help, made him drive himself unremittingly and probably contributed to his final illness. He had done first-class research work and published a number of excellent papers and other contributions to the literature. He had a special talent for writing and became Editor of the *British Journal of Venereal Diseases*, a post which he held from

1968 to 1972. During this period the Journal increased considerably in importance and from 1970 it was published at intervals of two months instead of three.

A man of this quality is a serious loss to his profession and his specialty. He will be mourned by a host of friends and colleagues who will wish to extend their heartfelt sympathy to his wife and son.

Ambrose King

International Union against the Venereal Diseases and Treponematoses

28th General Assembly, Corinthia Hotel, St. Anton, Malta, April 13 to 17, 1975

Scientific papers on the following themes and allied subjects are invited:

- (1) Sexually-Transmitted Diseases (STD) among Tourists
Sexually-Transmitted Diseases (STD) among Immigrant Workers
- (2) Sex Education of the Public
Sex Education of Doctors
- (3) The Role of the Practitioner, the Public Health Officer, the Dermatologist, and other Specialists in the Teaching, Investigation, and Treatment of STD
- (4) The present position in microbiological and serological research in *Neisseria* infections.

An exhibition of material used in different countries in Public Health Education concerning V.D. will be arranged. The official languages will be English and French with simultaneous translation. Summaries of papers should be submitted *before December 31, 1974*, to the Secretary-General, Dr. F. J. G. Jefferiss, The Praed Street Clinic, St. Mary's Hospital, LONDON W2, England.

Information regarding participation, travel, and hotel arrangements will be circulated in October, 1974, by the Conference Secretary, Dr. A. Ferrante, IUVDI, c/o National Student Travel Service, 220 St. Paul Street, Valletta, Malta, to whom all enquiries should be addressed.

The Society of Apothecaries of London

Diploma in Venereology, 1974

The following candidates have satisfied the Examiners:

WAHEEB ATALLA ATIA, M.B., B.Ch. Cairo,
L.M.S.S.A. Lond., M.R.C.P. Lond.
HIKMET JAMIL, M.B., Ch.B. Baghdad.
LOW BIN TICK, M.B., B.S. Singapore, M.R.C.G.P.
AMAR KISHORE SHARMA, M.D. Delhi.
ADELANI OLUWAJI SOGBETUN, M.B., B.S. Ibadan.

OSMAN MOHAMED AHMED TAHA, M.B.,
B.S. Khartoum, D.T.M. & H.
MICHAEL ANTHONY WAUGH, M.B., B.S. Lond.,
D.H.M.S.A.
Ernest Busby, M.B.E., L.M.S.S.A. (Hon.)
Registrar