OBITUARY

WILLIAM AIKEN FAIRCLOUGH, 1881–1968

The long and active life of one of New Zealand’s leading ophthalmologists has ended. Fairclough’s interest in the specialty started with his spell as resident house surgeon at the Royal Westminster Ophthalmic Hospital in 1907, after which he passed the F.R.C.S.E. examination and returned to New Zealand. He became a Foundation Fellow of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons in 1928, and for 28 years was a senior honorary ophthalmic surgeon at Auckland Hospital. He became particularly interested in gas keratitis, contact lens work (he attended Dallos’s clinic in 1938), and heredity in retinoblastoma. In addition he presented papers at meetings of zoological societies and similar institutions.

Fairclough was a man of great integrity who never hesitated to defend his own rights or those of his profession, and he was a force majeure in New Zealand ophthalmology for four decades. The long span of his life may be judged from the fact that when batting for London Hospital against London County he was caught by none other than W. G. Grace.

To his surviving son deep sympathy is extended.

JOHN BRUCE HAMILTON, 1901–1968

Many of our readers will regret the death on April 11, 1968, of Bruce Hamilton, an Australian ophthalmologist well known in Great Britain and internationally.

He belongs to the fourth generation of emigrants who went to Van Dieman’s Land (now known as Tasmania) 150 years ago. Educated first in his native Hobart, he pursued his medical studies first in Sydney, then in Melbourne, and finally in Moorfields Eye Hospital where he was a Resident. He obtained the DOMS (London) in 1928 and the DO (Oxford) in 1929, became a fellow of the RACS in 1932 and an MD (Sydney) in 1948. In Australian ophthalmology he occupied a prominent place. He was chairman and member of the Research Committee of the Ophthalmic Institute of Australia, vice-president of the Royal Tasman Society for the Blind and Deaf, president of the Ophthalmological Society of Australia, a councillor of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, and president of the Tasmanian branch of the British Medical Association. In a wider field he was a vice-president of the International Association for the Prevention of Blindness, and he retained his connexions with Great Britain in being a member of our Faculty of Ophthalmologists, a life-member of the Ophthalmological Society of the United Kingdom, and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Medicine. During the second world war, from 1941 to 1943, he served as a Major in the Australian forces in the Middle East. In addition to sixty papers in various journals in the English-speaking world, he published two books—A Guide to Ophthalmic Operations and The Significance of Heredity in Ophthalmology.

His interests were not confined to ophthalmology, for he took a prominent position in the public life of Tasmania; a typical hobby was the building of the Bligh Museum of Pacific Exploration in Adventure Bay on a small island on the southern coast of Tasmania. Here with immense pains and after much travelling he gathered priceless historical relics of the distinguished visitors to the island, who included Tasman, Captain Cook, and Vice-Admiral Bligh of the Bounty. The museum, opened in 1954 on the 200th anniversary of Bligh’s birthday, is itself historical, for it was built of bricks taken from an old church; these were hand-made by convicts in the 1840s and still show the finger-prints of the labourers.

We all send our sympathy to his wife, Dora, his son, John, and his daughter, Elizabeth, who survive him.