

Obituary

Hyla Bristow Stallard, 1901 to 1973

Mr. H. B. Stallard, formerly Consultant Eye Surgeon to Moorfields and St. Bartholomew's Hospitals, London, died at his home on October 21, 1973, at the age of 72.

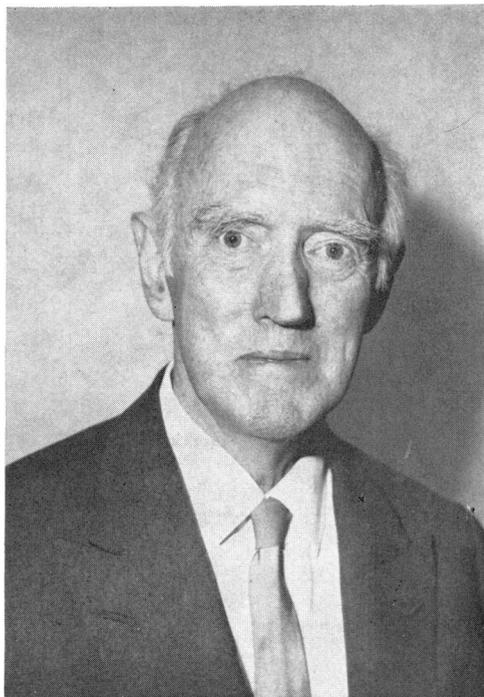
Hyla Stallard had two great international careers. In his youth he was an Olympic runner, and in his maturity one of the greatest eye surgeons of his era. Entering Gonville and Caius in 1919 he found fame on the track and won the mile for Cambridge in each of his three years of residence. In the years 1923 to 1925 he was A.A.A. champion for the mile, half-mile, and quarter-mile respectively in these years, a unique performance. Internationally he represented Great Britain in the 800 and 1,500 metres at the Olympic Games in Paris in 1924 and the same year represented the British Empire against the U.S.A. A world record was also notched as a member of the 2-mile relay team in Pennsylvania in 1920.

Stallard spent his clinical years as a student at Barts and his energy and capacity for work soon won him recognition. As house surgeon to Professor George Gask, a distinguished career in general surgery seemed about to open, but he found in eye surgery an appeal he could not resist and his ophthalmic work started as house surgeon to Foster Moore, later to become his close friend. Success came early; Stallard was only 33 when he became Consultant Surgeon to both Moorfields and St. Bartholomew's Hospitals, having had a firm grounding as Pathologist to Moorfields in the preceding years. His work on retinoblastoma with Foster Moore started about this time, and his interest in surgery is shown by the number of surgical instruments he invented in this period.

The second world war found Hyla Stallard ("Henry" to most of his contemporaries) in uniform at the onset, and in the early years he was in charge of eye units in the Middle East dealing with battle casualties from the Western Desert, and later in Normandy. His interest in plastic surgery dates from this period; and he was made an M.B.E. and was mentioned in despatches. Never idle, the quieter periods of his service life were devoted largely to the preparation of the first draft of his major classic "Eye Surgery", which has now reached its fifth edition.

Academic honours were numerous. Three times a Hunterian Professor of the Royal College of Surgeons, the Gifford Edmonds Prize in 1932, the Nettleship Medal in 1951, the Charles H. May Memorial Lecturer, New York, in 1953, the Doyne Memorial Lecturer at Oxford in 1962, the Middlemore Lecturer at Birmingham in 1963, and the Craig Lecturer at Queen's University, Belfast, in 1965. He was also President of the Section of Ophthalmology of the Royal Society of Medicine from 1967 to 1969 and President of the Ophthalmological Society of the United Kingdom in 1972-3.

Deservedly great as his honours were, Hyla Stallard's distinction lay in the quality of his surgical skills and his ability to impart them to others. Every single operation was in fact a research project



to be performed as perfectly as possible, and at the end of a long day his operations were carefully written up and filed. He was constantly reviewing and renewing his techniques so that his methods were never static; as an example he made some half dozen major changes in his cataract section during his career. He was the complete master and never more on his mettle than when faced with a difficult surgical problem. As a result of his great expertise many surgeons came to watch and learn, and there are many more who have had the privilege of working for him as house surgeons at Barts and at Moorfields and who have gained both knowledge and inspiration from him.

Painstaking in his operative and his clinical work, Stallard worked exceptionally long hours at hospital and private practice, but still had time to produce five editions of his "Eye Surgery" and write over a hundred articles. For a period he was Assistant Editor of this Journal.

For his surgical techniques, his literary achievements, and his original work on eye tumours, Hyla Stallard will be long remembered, but his personal qualities were even more exceptional. There was a natural reserve, a great humility combined with a high ideal of service, and a great compassion which made him an outstanding doctor. His courtesy to his patients and colleagues was a byword, and he had a remarkable memory for names and faces. His tastes were simple and throughout his life he was a model of physical fitness and self-discipline which went with a great capacity for work. Artistic, warm-hearted, perceptive, and with a genial and kindly humour, he leaves many close friends. His wife Gwynneth survives him, and to her we extend our most sincere sympathy.

Edward Bacon, 1903 to 1973

Dr. E. Bacon, who was Consulting Ophthalmologist to the Southampton Group of Hospitals died in Winchester on November 30, 1973, at the age of 70. He began his medical life as Assistant in General Practice to his father but ophthalmology always attracted him and he became a Clinical Assistant at Winchester Hospital Eye Department in 1934. After postgraduate training he was appointed Assistant Surgeon to the Southampton Group of Hospitals in 1939, and after a period of 6 years in the R.A.M.C. he returned to Southampton and took a great part in developing the present Eye Hospital. He retired in 1968. He is survived by his wife and two sons.

Walter Morton Higgenbottom, 1916 to 1973

Dr. W. M. Higgenbottom, Consultant Surgeon in the Wakefield area of Yorkshire, died on November 15, 1973, at the age of 57. He began life as an optician and after the second world war he studied medicine at Edinburgh, qualifying in 1951. He was unfortunate in developing bilateral diabetic cataract so that he was unable to continue his surgical work in hospital. He bore this burden with great patience and was admired by his colleagues for his fortitude. He is survived by his wife and son.