

## Obituary

St Mary's, the Jesuit College in Derbyshire, and at St Thomas's Hospital Medical School, where he graduated in medicine in 1923 at the early age of 22 years.

In 1924 he joined the Colonial Medical Service and was appointed to Uganda, where in 1929 he married Alice, daughter of Sir Charles Griffin, QC. Five sons and five daughters were the product of this long and happy marriage. Early in his career he specialised in ophthalmology, though this had to be combined with the duties of a general medical officer until 1945, when he was finally gazetted as senior specialist ophthalmologist. In addition to his clinical duties, Arthur Boase was at various times president of the East African Association of Surgeons and the Uganda branch of the BMA. Together with his colleagues he was instrumental in founding the medical school at Makerere. He was also the first chairman of public health when Kampala became a municipality. Despite these many commitments Arthur Boase found time to be an enthusiastic golfer and to develop an interest in woodwork, which was to be his absorbing hobby well into his retirement.

Arthur Boase retired from Uganda in 1956 to take up the post of warden of the Ophthalmic Hospital of the Order of St John in Jerusalem. The next 13 years proved to be very eventful. The early days were spent in the cramped quarters of Watson House in the old City before moving to the large modern Eye Hospital which was built on the northern outskirts of Jerusalem. During this time the hospital acquired a remarkable reputation throughout the Middle East, and every year record numbers of patients were treated. A visit to the Eye Hospital was an important part of the itinerary of many pilgrims visiting the Holy City. Under Arthur Boase's wardenship the hospital became a popular place for ophthalmic surgeons from Britain and America to round off their training. The years spent in Jerusalem also had their dangerous moments; anti-British sentiment necessitated evacuation during the Suez campaign, and later he and his wife were caught up in the middle of the Six Day War. He was regarded with affection and esteem by the Jordanian people.

On retirement from Jerusalem in 1969 he went to live in Uckfield, Sussex. However, his professional services were still needed and he continued to work part-time until he was 76 years old.

During his long and distinguished career Arthur Boase was awarded, in addition to his other honours, the KStG and the KStJ. He is survived by his wife and eight of his 10 children, one of whom is a consultant ophthalmologist.

### *John Edward Cairns, MA, MB, BS, FRCS*

In the loss of John Cairns British ophthalmology has been deprived not only of one of its most able and well known ophthalmologists but one of its most likeable characters. John, born in 1925 of farming stock, was brought up in the countryside of Northumberland, where he acquired the most acute powers of observation, his unusual and delightful sense of humour, an intense interest in all natural phenomena, and the most extraordinary accuracy with a catapult.



*John Edward Cairns.*

He was educated in King Edward VII Grammar School in Morpeth and then went to Durham University to read classics until he was called in up in 1943. He joined the Indian Army in which he was commissioned and remained until 1947. Although he never returned to India, his knowledge of the mountains, its wild life, particularly its entomology, and its people was encyclopaedic. He had intended on his return from the Army to become a schoolmaster; fortunately he decided instead to enter St Bartholomew's Hospital Medical School. He took the anatomy prize in the second MB and after qualification was house officer on both professorial units. It was then that Henry Stallard interested him in eye surgery, and after working with him John subsequently completed his eye training at Moorfields Eye Hospital, City Road, London. He worked for a time in London until he was appointed to Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge, in 1964.

When he arrived in Cambridge the work load was enormous. He tackled this with his characteristic energy, deciding on priorities and then ensuring that they were carried out. All this was achieved apparently effortlessly and with a gentle humour. As the department began to come together he developed his abiding interest in glaucoma surgery, first in the development of that operation for which he will always be remembered, trabeculectomy, and later in modifications of iridectomy and latterly internal trabecular surgery. All of this interest has been brought

together in a large two-volume textbook on glaucoma which is due to be published in the next few months and will undoubtedly become a classic reference volume in the field of glaucoma.

John Cairns was a shrewd observer and a careful and original thinker. He was infinitely patient, kind, and gentle in dealing with his patients and a quite exceptionally lucid teacher both as a lecturer and as a teacher of surgical technique. He was a perfectionist not only in his work but also in his greatest hobby, gardening. He won the local horticultural challenge cup on no less than 17 successive occasions. Those who worked under him were expected to have similar high standards, but even if they were put on the carpet the interview would always be lightened with a joke or anecdote and always ended in laughter.

In the incredible courage with which he faced his last distressing illness and his ability to return to work he was greatly helped by Denise, his wife, and his two sons, Hugh and Neil, of whom he was so quietly proud. We have all lost a great man and a wonderful companion. PGW

## Notes

### A new Eye

The *Transactions of the Ophthalmological Societies of the United Kingdom* will change its title to *Eye* from 1 January 1987.

### IAPB Third General Assembly

The International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB) Third General Assembly will convene in New Delhi, India, on 6-11 December 1986. The theme will be 'A decade of progress.' Persons wishing to attend should register before 1 July 1986 and send name, affiliation, address, telephone number, and registration fee (\$65.00) to IAPB President Carl Kupfer, MD, National Eye Institute (Code TG), Building 31, Room 6A03, Bethesda, Maryland 20892, USA.