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Obituary

*R B Harcourt,
MA, MB, BChir, FRCS, DO*

Mr Richard Brian Harcourt, consultant ophthalmic surgeon to the General Infirmary at Leeds, honorary senior clinical lecturer to Leeds University, and President of the Ophthalmological Society of the United Kingdom, died on 3 November 1987 aged 53.

Brian was born on 3 March 1934, the son of an engineer and the grandson of a surgeon, and was educated at Quarry Bank School, Liverpool, before studying medicine at Trinity College, Cambridge, and St Bartholomew's

Hospital, London. After national service in the Royal Air Force he chose ophthalmology as his specialty and undertook his training at the High Holborn branch of Moorfields Eye Hospital. Early in his ophthalmic career he showed a flair for paediatrics, and after spending a year as a Research Fellow in paediatric ophthalmology at the Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street, and the Institute of Ophthalmology he was appointed to the consultant staff of the General Infirmary at Leeds in 1968. He was made an honorary clinical lecturer to Leeds University and was promoted to honorary senior clinical lecturer in 1978.

At Leeds he developed his expertise in paediatric ophthalmology and in strabismus, so that in a very few years he had become one of the acknowledged experts in these fields. His many publications culminated in the book *The Diagnosis and Management of Ocular Motility Disorders*, written in collaboration with Miss Joyce Mein and published in 1986.

In addition to his extensive clinical practice, he was very active in national and international ophthalmic committees. He was elected a member of council of the Faculty of Ophthalmologists in 1970 and had been its honorary treasurer since 1979. He was a member of the General Optical Council, one of the British representatives on the Section of Ophthalmology of the European Union of Medical Specialists, and represented British ophthalmologists on the board of governors of Moorfields Eye Hospital. In addition to being a member of its court of examiners he had recently been appointed regional adviser in ophthalmology to the Royal College of Surgeons of England. In 1987 he was elected President of the Ophthalmological Society of the United Kingdom, an honour which he particularly appreciated, and he was looking forward with great pleasure to presiding over the annual congress of the society in Harrogate in April 1988.

In recent years he played a major part in developing the interests of ophthalmology, not least in his support for the proposed college of ophthalmologists, and was a wise and sympathetic adviser to his colleagues. He always displayed great charm and had an astute and inquiring mind.

In addition to his medical interests Brian Harcourt was a magistrate and a keen gardener, ornithologist, and sailor. He recently obtained his navigator's certificate and had great pleasure in taking his family sailing during his last summer. Above all he was devoted to his family, who were most loving and supportive during his illness.

Brian will always be remembered as a dear friend and colleague, and his death at the height of his career will be a great loss to British ophthalmology.

He leaves a widow, Margaret, and two sons, one a medical student, and a daughter who is training to be an ophthalmologist.

BJ

Note

Case reports

Reports of single cases are more likely to be accepted if restricted to 600 words plus essential references and illustrations.