

Obituary Notice

JAMES ARTHUR KINNEAR BROWN, C.M.G.
(1902-1971)

James Arthur Kinnear Brown, C.M.G., M.D., B.Sc., D.T.M. & H., died suddenly at Hale, Cheshire, on 28 September, 1971. The news of his passing, at the age of 69, will be received with real sadness by his friends in many lands; the cause of leprosy has lost a valuable and valued worker and advocate.

Born in Hull, Yorkshire, Kinnear Brown received his early education at Hymer's College in Hull, and entered the Faculty of Science of Manchester University, graduating B.Sc. with Honours in chemistry in 1924. He then turned to medicine, and qualified as a doctor in 1929, gaining the diplomas of M.R.C.S. and L.R.C.P., and the M.B., Ch.B. degrees of Manchester University. During this time he lived in Hartley College, in company with Methodist ministerial students. He was thus well known to two generations of men who subsequently were ordained to the Methodist ministry. He took the course in Tropical Medicine at the Liverpool School, gaining the D.T.M. & H. diploma in 1930.

Having married Hilda Kirkland, S.R.N., S.C.M., a ward sister at St Mary's Hospital, Manchester, the previous year, he left England with his wife in April, 1930, for Eastern Nigeria as a medical missionary of the Methodist Missionary Society. He served a 9-month apprenticeship at Itu Leprosy Settlement, a pioneer establishment organized by Dr A. B. MacDonald of the Church of Scotland. Kinnear Brown was then appointed superintendent of the embryo Owerri Native Administration Leprosy Settlement which the Church had been asked by the Government to establish. With characteristic vision and forthrightness, he declined the offer of a stretch of infertile and waterless land that had been a brickfield, and chose instead a densely-forested area to the north of Uzuakoli. The new settlement was officially opened in 1932. Within the next 4 years, thanks to real co-operation between everybody concerned, and to Brown's administrative ability, Uzuakoli became a well-organized and tastefully laid out settlement, where leprosy sufferers needing in-patient care could obtain it. At the same time, the foundations were laid for an extensive system of segregation villages: with the support and encouragement of local chiefs and their people, families containing a member suffering from leprosy were established in loosely-knit communities on fertile land. Treatment was provided by the newly-developed teams of leprosy aides. During his furlough in England in 1934, Kinnear Brown gained the M.D. degree of Manchester University, the subject of his thesis being Leprosy and Diet.

In 1937, he had to return to England for medical and domestic reasons. He was in general practice in Altrincham, Cheshire, for 14 years—covering the 1939-45 war. For his services in this capacity, he was made a Life Member of the British Red Cross.

In 1951, he returned to Africa as Senior Specialist, Leprosy, with the Uganda Government. He reorganized the existing leprosy settlements sponsored by

Christian missions, both Roman Catholic and Protestant, and ensured a happy working together of government and voluntary agencies. Dapsone was provided for all those needing it. He inaugurated a mass treatment campaign throughout Uganda, including 85 villages built by communal labour, and over 200 district clinics. He carried out extensive fact-finding surveys in Uganda and also in Kenya, and did the preliminary work for the investigation into the possible value of BCG vaccination in the prevention of leprosy, with which his name will always be associated. It was in 1960 that this latter project was inaugurated, under the aegis of the Uganda Government and the Medical Research Council, and with financial help from the Ministry of Overseas Development.

Meanwhile, he had—in 1951—been elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, and—in 1957—a member of the World Health Organization Expert Committee on Leprosy. He was Honorary Lecturer in Leprosy at Makerere University Medical School, Kampala, and taught successive batches of Leprosy Assistants at Kumi, Uganda. In 1963 he had to resign his full-time appointment on health grounds, but was able to continue in an advisory and supervisory capacity as Honorary Consultant in Leprosy to the Uganda Government and representing the Medical Research Council. He was the principal author of the First and Second Reports on the BCG vaccination investigation, and was, indeed, engaged on the compilation of the Third Report when the end came.

For his outstanding work in Uganda, he was made a Companion of the Most Distinguished Order of St Michael and St George in 1967.

Kinnear Brown was the author of over 60 publications on his subject, and wrote a chapter in Trowell and Jelliffe's *Diseases of Children in the Tropics and Subtropics*. He was a member of the International Leprosy Association and a familiar figure at its Congresses.

Many folk in Nigeria and Uganda, as well as in England, will mourn his passing, and remember him as a conscientious and untiring worker, possessed of a keen enquiring mind, a flair for administration, and organizing ability of no mean order. Leprosy patients will be grateful to him for his kindness and keen concern for their welfare. He was a Christian gentleman who carried his ideals of selfless service into his daily work, whether it was diagnosis and treatment, or demonstrating and lecturing, or painstakingly arranging the details of a scientific investigation.

Our sympathy goes out to his widow in the sudden distress of bereavement, and to his married daughter and son.