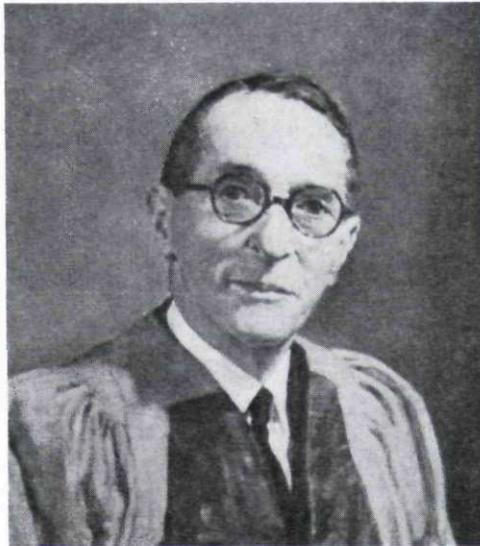


**Obituary**

JOHN THORNTON INGRAM 1899-1972

John Ingram was convinced that dermatology was one of the most important, if not the most important, subject in medicine and as such warranted an equal status with any other branch. This conviction he pursued with such energy that he gradually impressed his general medical colleagues so that they developed an increased respect for the study of skin diseases at a time when dermatology was considered by most physicians as only a second rate subject. This influence was shown following his appointment in 1927 as physician in charge of the newly formed skin department in Leeds at the age of 28. Within 12 years he had persuaded the authorities to build a skin department in the new out-patient block which for years remained second to none in the country. Dermatology



also took a prominent place in the curriculum and was fully represented in the final examination with the only external examiner in the country; this greatly enhanced the importance of the subject in the eyes of the students who had already spent an intensive three months at "skins" during their training. Several times during the war the writer was told that an ex-Leeds student could be recognized because he knew his "skins". In this department he developed a large lupus clinic in which no patient was pronounced cured till he had been clear for five years, and also the intensive treatment of psoriasis, largely on an out-patient basis, which has become known as the "Ingram treatment".

John Ingram was a very careful observer and the histories of his patients and the descriptions of their lesions were meticulously recorded. He always insisted on a thorough general examination of the patient at a time when most dermatologists were only paying lip service to this. Trained at the London Hospital under Sequeira and with O'Donovan, he was very conscious of the importance of psychological factors in skin diseases and he was prepared to spend long sessions with individual patients even in out-patients. This approach was further expanded by his close co-operation with his lady almoner in dealing with both psychological and social problems.

In 1939 he joined the army and went to France with the B.E.F. holding the rank of

Colonel. Here he had differences of opinion with the authorities as he believed strongly that army dermatology should be separate from venereology with its own independent adviser at the War Office. He also urged that skin wards should be under the control of nursing sisters and not men as in the V.D. sections. He returned to civilian life after Dunkirk but his ideas were later implemented in the army.

He remained in Leeds till 1959 making it an outstanding dermatological centre and attracting many overseas graduates especially from Australia, and building up a school of young dermatologists bearing the imprint of his exacting discipline. On the retirement of Sydney Thompson at Newcastle, he was asked to advise on the re-organization of the skin department there with a view to creating the first whole time chair in the U.K. However, when this was done, no suitable candidate could be found and so he himself was asked to fill the post. He was thus able to use his experience and great influence to lay the foundations of another outstanding department which, when he retired in 1963, he could hand over to his successor in full running order. Tragically his retirement was marred by ill health and he was never able fully to become the active elder statesman which should have been his destiny.

Ingram wrote on many subjects, especially psoriasis but possibly his most outstanding contribution was the part authorship of Sequeira's "Diseases of the Skin", much of which was a very personal expression of his own experience. He was very active in other fields holding many offices in his own hospitals, serving on the G.M.C. and on the Council of the R.C.P. and on several M.R.C. Committees. He was President of the B.A.D. in 1947 and of the Dermatological section of the R.S.M. in 1957. Space prevents a longer list but this may be found in the B.M.J. for July 1st, on page 54.

John Ingram was rather a shy man but in his own home he was a charming and often amusing host and many overseas visitors recall his hospitality with gratitude. He married Lucy Graham, who like John was small in stature but the two of them made a very positive and popular couple at meetings, at home and overseas. Lucy by whom he had his devoted daughter Pamela, died in 1957 and two years later he was remarried to Kathleen Raven, formerly Matron of the General Infirmary, Leeds and later Chief Nursing Officer for the Department of Health and Social Security.

F. F. HELIER

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