

Obituary

Emeritus Professor H. Gwynne Jones (1918-1985)

H. Gwynne Jones, Emeritus Professor of Psychology at the University of Leeds and Past President of the BPS, died suddenly at home in Swansea on 5 March 1985 at the age of 66.

A Welshman through and through, Gwynne spent most of his professional life away from the Principality, in London and in Leeds. He graduated first in botany at the University of London, and then immediately served as a pilot in the Fleet Air Arm (1940-45). In 1946 he obtained a teaching diploma and returned to Wales to teach botany for five years in Cardigan and Llanelli. An interest in education and psychology drew him back to London where in 1951 he completed an external BSc in Psychology and was then seconded by the London County Council to undertake training in clinical psychology at the University of London Institute of Psychiatry.

On completing the course Gwynne was recruited to the staff where he continued in teaching and research for 12 years until 1963 when he became Founder Head of the Psychology Department at St George's Medical School. The climate was favourable to medical/psychological co-operation, and during the ensuing five years Gwynne was able to deploy a full range of capabilities within the field of mental health. He built up a good appreciation of multidisciplinary collaboration, and he comprehensively demonstrated the value of psychology's contribution.

Throughout the period of his work in London Gwynne undertook much lecturing, especially to doctors and teachers involved with handicapped children, introducing them to the significance of statistical work in the understanding of psychological literature relevant to their work. Alongside these professional activities Gwynne took on considerable committee work especially in association with the National Association for Mental Health and The British Psychological Society. He joined the Society in 1950 and was elected Honorary General Secretary in 1962 and then President in 1970.

He left London in 1968 when he was appointed to the Chair of Psychology at the University of Leeds. He was a distinguished head of department, an office which he vacated temporarily, from 1977 to 1979, while he served as the University's Pro-Vice-Chancellor. At the end of Gwynne's period as PVC, Lord Boyle, who was Vice-Chancellor and whose health was beginning to fail, asked Senate to record that no PVC had ever taken on a larger variety of assignments. The eulogy underlined not only Gwynne's professional achievements, but his personal qualities too: '... one of the outstanding marks of Professor Gwynne Jones' term of office has been a notable frankness and openness with his colleagues, a readiness always to disclose 'his personal self, while his acute understanding both of individuals and of... interpersonal relations has helped to promote tolerance and clear sightedness in all our work'.

Gwynne's interests and concerns spanned the full range of university business, and he was committed to the code of teaching in a research environment. From the early years of his Leeds appointment, Gwynne succeeded in establishing a high reputation for the Department. He stressed the scientific basis of the discipline, and he encouraged joint research and teaching enterprises with other departments. Most notably, he helped foster the MSc in Clinical Psychology with the Department of Psychiatry, he helped the Careers Counselling Development Unit develop out of

the Department of Psychology, and he encouraged the development of the Human Psychopharmacology Research Unit within the Department.

In 1981 he took early retirement from Leeds, but he remained as active as ever, traversing the length and breadth of the country by rail and car. He became a University of Birmingham Senior Research Fellow, heading a DHSS project comparing Regional and Interim Secure Units. He became a Mental Health Act Commissioner to North Wales and the North West of England. He remained a Member of the Courts of Governors at University College, Swansea and at UWIST.

Those who had the benefit of studying or working with Gwynne, in whatever capacity, will remember with gratitude his zest and verve and his enjoyment of life in all its aspects. He gave generous support to the young and to those who, for whatever reason, had lost their way, or had difficulty finding themselves or finding a role in life.

Gwynne's colleagues greatly enjoyed his infectious enthusiasm, his administrative skills, and his good fellowship; they admired his versatility, his excellence as communicator or interpreter, his catholic tastes, and his wit. Gwynne was a man without enemies. Renowned for his tolerance and even-handedness, he was always calm and considerate, and he had time for all. He would never say an unkind word to anyone, and he was a stalwart supporter of his colleagues and students. He was an influential man, and it is difficult to envisage that power could be better bestowed or exercised. There was no one better at bridging factions and stemming conflict: he was a natural arbitrator, an ombudsman, a diplomat. When affairs proceeded smoothly, he preferred to be a catalyst and to adopt a role behind the scenes. He was never bland, but always modest, often low-keyed, and sometimes impish.

While the Society's Honorary General Secretary he was required to undertake much of the negotiations in preparation for the Royal Charter obtained in 1965. Whether engaged in the more legalistic work or explaining to uninitiated or unconvinced Members, he always showed great flexibility and patience. He played a lion's part in bringing the scheme to fruition, and he continued along those lines as the Society moved towards Legal Registration. Other protracted discussions centred around the registration of psychotherapists and the work of the Sieghart Committee.

Gwynne helped to thrash out the Society's attitude to psychological therapies and was himself an early practitioner, publishing in the 1946 *Journal of Abnormal Psychology* an article titled 'The application of conditioning and learning techniques to the treatment of a psychiatric patient'. He did a great deal to broaden our notions of psychological treatment and to carve a role for psychologists in the therapeutic field.

In recognition of his contribution from psychology to psychiatry Gwynne was awarded, in 1984, an Honorary Fellowship of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, an honour accorded previously to one other psychologist. The Society's Division of Clinical Psychology was to have made him an Honorary Fellow at its AGM this year.

All psychologists have much for which to be thankful in the life of Gwynne Jones. We remember with affection his interests in ideas, art, and sport. A one-time rugby player for Felinfoel, and for Llanelli, and a trialist for Wales, his last weekend was spent with Welsh friends watching his national team play Scotland at Murrayfield. Latterly he had great enjoyment from sailing, and at the age of 65 he gained his master's certificate as a yachtsman.

Gwynne Jones loved his family life. His wife (Eileen) and he had moved to the Mumbles at the start of their retirement—not so far from where they had been at school together. Gwynne recognized that he owed much to Eileen's continual support and hard work.

GRACE RAWLINGS
ANTONY J. CHAPMAN