Obituary

Dr. J. L. Pinniger

Dr. John Pinniger died suddenly on 8 June of this year at the age of 49 years when he was in the midst of a distinguished career.

He was born on 9 May 1914 and became an outstanding student. Educated at Epsom College and St. Edmund's Hall, Oxford, he graduated in 1937, and then came to St. Thomas's Hospital Medical School with a University scholarship for his clinical studies. During this period he played Rugby football for the Hospital, where he continued his previous interest in the game, having been a Greyhound at Oxford. He received the B.M. degree in 1940 and became M.R.C.P. in 1941. He was extremely disappointed when he was told he was unfit for service in His Majesty's Forces and continued the house appointments he had commenced at St. Thomas's. At this point he worked as registrar to Sir Maurice Cassidy, and was most keen to adopt a career in clinical medicine. His hopes, however, were again to be dashed for it was apparent that he was becoming increasingly deaf and he therefore made the regretful decision to turn to pathology as a career.

This he did with the greatest enthusiasm and started working under Dr. J. Bamforth. In 1946 he received the D.M. degree and two years later was appointed as consultant pathologist at the Auckland Hospital in New

Zealand. His colleagues there were quickly appreciative of his capacity and personality. On the retirement of Dr. Bamforth in 1951, Pinniger was recalled to St. Thomas's to fill the posts of consultant in charge of the clinical laboratories and senior lecturer in the Medical School. This involved taking over the Louis Jenner Laboratory. Pinniger having taken to clinical pathology with zest set about the difficult task of building up the Jenner Laboratory to the contemporary standards that were now required. This presented considerable difficulties, for not only was the subject advancing at a formidable rate but there was also a lack of adequate accommodation in the Hospital. In spite of the difficulties he provided the best of facilities for the patients whose welfare he had always had at heart. In 1958, he was elected F.R.C.P.

Pinniger's greatest asset was his character. He was most unassuming in his personal relationships but this did not prevent him from having a steady determination to carry out all that he regarded as his duty. He was a man of the greatest integrity and loyalty to the Hospital and Medical School. He had that rare facility for easy human relationships so that he was frequently consulted by both colleagues and students on personal and other matters, his opinion being most highly regarded by them. He particularly cared for the students' welfare and his qualities ensured his capacity as a teacher. In addition he continued his interest in Rugby football, serving as President of the Club. To Pinniger this was no sinecure but demanded much of his freely given time and energy.

As a pathologist Pinniger made an incisive mark. He was able to continue the Louis Jenner traditions, but adapting them to modern requirements. His activities were primarily in histology and haematology, in which he contributed a number of important papers, particularly on aspects of blood coagulation. However, in keeping with his character, he devoted more energy to seeing that his juniors had the time and facility to develop their own minds in the pursuit of work outside the sphere of routine duties, a particularly difficult undertaking in a busy routine laboratory. He was, however, an examiner for the Faculty of Anaesthetists of the Royal College of Surgeons, for the University of London, and for the Royal College of Nursing. His distinction was recognized by his being elected to be President this year of the British Division of the International Academy of Pathology. In addition he maintained his general interests by membership of the Medical Research Society and of the Association of Physicians of Great Britain and Ireland.

Pinniger's loss is most serious for St. Thomas's, particularly from the point of view of establishing clinical pathology in the new Hospital and of his influence on all those around him. He leaves a wife and four children, to whom he was deeply devoted.

F. T. G. PRUNTY