

SIR ALEC WALTER MERRISON, formerly Vice-Chancellor of the University of Bristol

Sir Alec, who was born on 20 March 1924, died on 19 February 1989 after a short illness. He was educated at Enfield Grammar School, and went on to King's College, London, which meant in fact that he began his university career in Bristol, as King's College had been evacuated there during the war. In Bristol, among other things, he learnt a good deal of physics, read and remembered a remarkable variety of books on a remarkable variety of subjects and took his turn at fire-watching. Fire-watching involved sitting up all night at the top of the Royal Fort tower, waiting for air-raids, so that it would be fair to say that even as an undergraduate, Alec already occupied a high and responsible post in the University of Bristol.

After graduating, he spent a year or two working on radar problems at Christchurch before moving to Harwell, where he developed some of the earliest neutron spectrometers. Then, in 1951, he moved to Liverpool, where he again changed fields and became an elementary particle physicist.

In 1969 Sir Alec was appointed Vice-Chancellor of the University of Bristol, at an unusually early age, but it was clear that the University was getting a brilliant administrator as well as a first rate scientist and engineer. During his stay in Bristol he became Chairman and Member of very important university committees.

Before chairing the Committee of Enquiry into the Regulation of the Medical Profession, he chaired the Committee of Enquiry into Design and Erection of Steel Girder Bridges. One wonders if this chairmanship influenced the chairmanship of the Royal Commission on National Health?

Psychiatry is very much indebted to him for the support he gave in the establishment of a number of new university lectureships, including that in Mental Handicap.

At the Annual Meeting of the Royal College of Psychiatrists in Bristol in 1983, Sir Alec was elected an Honorary Fellow of the College. He was also the distinguished Guest Lecturer, and presented an intriguing paper entitled, 'Truth and Imagination in Science'.

For his scientific endeavours he received the highest accolade, the Fellowship of the Royal Society, in 1969, and the Crown recognised his work by awarding him a Knighthood in 1976. The Universities of Bristol, Ulster, Bath, Southampton, Leeds and Liverpool conferred honorary degrees on him for his outstanding work.

When Sir Alec Merrison retired from his Vice-Chancellorship in 1984, leaving Bristol University with an enhanced reputation for excellence, he entered yet another career, as a banker. He was a

member of the Board of Lloyds Bank and Chairman of its Western Regional Board. He was Chairman of the Western Provident Association, a Director of the *Bristol Evening Post*, and of the Bristol Waterworks Company, and a Deputy Lieutenant of his County.

He was also well versed in the humanities, and was a notably active and successful Chairman of the Bristol Old Vic.

JJ

JAMES ERNEST RUNIONS, formerly Medical Director, Riverview Hospital, Vancouver, BC, Canada

Dr Runions was born on 23 March 1939 and died on 23 May 1989. In his 50 years, Dr Runions combined several careers. A graduate of the University of Alberta (BA 1959, MD 1963), he became a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians of Canada (in Psychiatry) in 1969. In addition to his private practice, Dr Runions taught psychiatry at the University of Alberta (1973–75) and the University of British Columbia (1975–85), published professionally, and read papers at major psychiatric conferences in Canada and Europe. From 1986 to the time of his death he was Medical Director of Riverview Hospital, Vancouver, BC, Canada. He was elected a Member of the College in 1974 and a Fellow in 1983.

Dr Runions was also an ordained minister, serving as pastor in Bonnie Doon Baptist, Edmonton (1969–75) and West Point Grey Baptist, Vancouver (1976–78), and as an interim Minister for Preaching at First Baptist Church, Vancouver (1982–83). His interest in theology found expression in education. He served as Academic Dean for the Baptist Union of Western Canada (1975–80), Adjunct Professor of Carey Hall Baptist College and Sessional Lecturer at Carey Hall. He taught courses in counselling, family life, and the history of worship. Dr Runions' interest in worship led him to yet another expression of his love for God in liturgical music as organist and choirmaster at St Augustine's Anglican Church, Vancouver (1984–88) and, most recently, at St Faith's Anglican Church.

Dr Runions was married to Leola Mae Calderwood in 1963. Their union was blessed by three children; Paul McAllister, BSc (age 23), Erin Mae, BMus (age 22), and Teresa Ruth, RN (age 20). His death is a loss to the entire Christian and professional community, but he will be especially missed by his wife and children; by his parents, Max and Ruth Runions and by his three sisters: Ruth Evans, Maxine Hancock and Margaret Hollands.

As husband and father, son and brother, doctor, pastor and teacher, he touched us all with the power of his mind, the greatness of his spirit, and the completeness of his commitment to God.

JEM