

OBITUARIES

Raoul Follereau
1903–1977

Raoul Follereau is no more. He died in Paris on 6 December 1977 in his 75th year, and the world of leprosy will never be the same again.

He was a colorful figure, larger than life. The sober scientist and the detached research

worker in leprosy might try to ignore him, to dismiss him as a theatrical interloper into the domain of their serious unemotional activities. But Raoul Follereau had to be heard; he made himself heard, like a barrister pleading a case—or a cause.

He was master of the magnificent gesture and the sonorous phrase. At the International Leprosy Congress in Tokyo in 1958, he soundly berated the participants, in that eloquent rounded French of his, for their preoccupation with the experimentally infected mice to the apparent neglect of the actually infected man. Even those who could not follow the flow of his untranslatable Gallic oratory could not but be impressed by the sincerity of his convictions.

This was the real Follereau, trained in philosophy and law, a born journalist with a real literary flair, a man genuinely moved by compassion for the underdog, the sufferer from leprosy.

Having seen for himself the deformed victims of neglected leprosy, he resolved 50 years ago to devote himself to their well being. Adzope, on the Ivory Coast, was his brainchild. He founded The Order of Charity in 1948. World Leprosy Day, now observed in no fewer than 137 countries, was another of his realized dreams. ELEP, the Federation of European Antileprosy Associations, was formed in 1966 due largely to his vision and persuasive advocacy. Now ILEP (the "I" representing an international component) brings together voluntary organizations that are re-

sponsible for the medical care of a third of those of the world's leprosy sufferers who are getting treatment. Two years later, the Fondation Follereau was founded now with branches in several countries.

It was Follereau who roused the conscience of French-speaking peoples in both metropolitan France and beyond the seas to the plight of neglected and ostracized leprosy sufferers, and it was he who in the course of 32 round-the-world journeys and visits to 102 countries goaded governments into action and spurred individuals to do something for leprosy sufferers. He was more than a thorn-in-the-flesh to reluctant officials, more than an exposé of bumbledom and bureaucratic procrastination. He saw that decisions must be taken at the highest level if attitudes were to be changed. At his instigation the French National Assembly unanimously passed, on 25 May 1954, a resolution calling on the United Nations to adopt a veritable charter for leprosy sufferers the world over. That they did so is a tribute to his prestige and pertinacity.

Sometimes, it must be admitted, his flowery and highly-charged French phrases grated on less emotional Anglo-Saxon ears, and his equating of deformity with leprosy did not exactly please his more scientific listeners. But Follereau never claimed to be a scientist. He was a man with a heart, a large heart, and his sympathy and love overflowed to those who were and, unfortunately still are in some situations, despised and ostracized. He was in his own inimitable and highly personal way trying to remove the stigma and the segregation, the ignorance and the inertia, that kept leprosy sufferers from being accepted as men like other men.

This Apostle of Charity, this traveling vagabond, this St. Francis of the 20th century, is no more. Untiring in his travels, eloquent in speech, indeflectable in his advocacy of the rights of leprosy sufferers, he rode rough-shod over bureaucratic red tape and scientific pretensions, and with a worthy impatience confronted the world of leprosy.

We shall not see his like again. When he was needed, with his special gifts and unique experience, he was there. And there to help.

Raoul Follereau is gone, but he lives on in those he has inspired to follow his ideals, and

he lives too in those whose lives have been made richer and fuller by his presence and his touch. [Photo courtesy of Fondation Raoul Follereau, Paris, France.]

—S. G. BROWNE

Albert Dubois, M.D., D.T.M. 1888–1977

Albert Dubois died in Brussels on August 19, 1977 at the advanced age of 89. In his time, and in advance of his time, he was an outstanding and forward-looking leprologist. His experience embraced both the pre-sulfone era and subsequent years, and he kept abreast of research in his subject.

Born in Ghent (Belgium) in 1888, Dubois graduated brilliantly in Medicine from Louvain University in 1910 and, having taken a diploma in tropical medicine at Brussels, sailed to the Belgian Congo (now known as Zaire) in 1911. He threw himself wholeheartedly into the many-sided work of the medical laboratory in Leopoldville (now Kinshasa), his scientific interests ranging from human trypanosomiasis and amoebiasis to beri-beri and onchocerciasis. He was brought early into contact with leprosy in the riverside hospital, and began his investigations of the diverse clinical manifestations of the disease and its histopathologic basis, which later occupied so much of his time and interest. He became associated especially with an area of unbelievably high prevalence in the Uele, and enlisted the interest of the Belgian Red Cross and subsequently other Belgian philanthropic organizations in establishing and maintaining a first class laboratory in Pawa in 1934, which became the center of a model leprosy control scheme in the surrounding villages. A series of good papers came from Pawa, associated directly or indirectly with Dubois.

In 1928, Dubois was appointed professor of tropical medicine at the School of Tropical Medicine in Parc Duden, Brussels, and thereafter in Antwerp when the school became the Prince Leopold Institute of Tropical Medicine. When the great Professor J. Rodhain retired in 1947, Dubois was appointed director of the institute, a position that he brilliantly filled until his own retirement in 1958. In these two roles he played a great part in the

training of successive generations of doctors and other health workers from various countries, most of whom would serve in the Belgian Congo or Zaire. From its publication in 1947, his textbook *LES MALADIES DES PAYS CHAUDS*, written in collaboration with Louis van den Berghe achieved a deserved success.

He was a careful and methodical clinician, quiet and unassuming, and showing a meticulous objectivity. While his medical interests were many and varied—*Histoplasma duboisii* is of course named after him—his first and foremost love was leprosy, its clinical aspects, its pathology and its treatment. Influenced by the excellent German and Scandinavian workers, he was early convinced of the importance of the nasal mucosa as the site *par excellence* of the exit of leprosy bacilli; he was equally convinced of the role of cellular—as distinct from bacillary—infiltration as the overriding factor in peripheral nerve damage. His inspiring teaching of leprosy is enshrined in the manual entitled *LA LÈPRE*, which for several decades was the leprosy Bible for doctors and other health workers (particularly the *agents sanitaires*) working in Central Africa.

Many of Dubois' former students, as well as distinguished admirers from Belgium and other countries, had the pleasure of presenting to him a *Liber jubilaris* or *Festschrift* on the occasion of his 75th birthday.

The doyen of Belgian leprologists, Dubois maintained his interest in the subject long after most people would have shown signs of senescence. He will be remembered with esteem and affection by his many students, and by friends and colleagues all over the world.

—STANLEY BROWNE
MICHEL LECHAT

(Former students at the Institut de Médecine Tropicale, Antwerp)

Yoshinobu Hayashi, M.D.
1890-1977

The Japanese Leprosy Association, and indeed the whole world of leprosy will mourn the death, on 1 November 1977, of the doyen of Japanese leprologists, Dr. Yoshinobu Hayashi.

Born as long ago as 1890, Dr. Hayashi began his very fruitful service for leprosy sufferers soon after qualifying as a doctor in 1914, when he joined the medical staff of the Tama Zensho-en Hospital. From the outset, his keen mind and wholehearted dedication to his work were abundantly evident. Interested no less in the clinical than in the pathologic aspects of leprosy, Dr. Hayashi became head physician to the hospital, and then was appointed head of the hospital. In 1941, he was made director of the National Leprosarium of Tama Zensho-en. It was during this period that Dr. Hayashi made his greatest contributions to the study of leprosy, pursuing his researches into host reactions to the invading organisms and paving the way, through his meticulous observations, for the recent spectacular advances in the immunology of the disease.

Retiring from his responsibilities at the National Leprosarium in 1963, he continued

very actively his professional work as a member of the medical staff of the Ministry of Health and Welfare. An appointment that gave him great personal pleasure was that of honorary director of the National Leprosarium, a position that he graced from 1964 until the time of his death.

For many years, Dr. Hayashi maintained close and cordial links not only with the Japanese Leprosy Association and with such personal stalwarts as Dr. Mitsuda, Dr. Hamano and Dr. Yoshie, but also with the International Leprosy Association. He was a much-respected figure at congresses of the Association and his opinions were always welcomed. The Leonard Wood Memorial valued his cooperation as consultant during 1953 and 1954.

We salute the memory of a great and good man, who devoted himself to the well-being of leprosy sufferers in Japan itself, and who, through his internationally renowned researches served the larger weal of leprosy sufferers throughout the world.

—S. G. BROWNE, Secretary-Treasurer,
International Leprosy Association

René Labusquiere
1919-1977

Le 24 septembre 1977 est mort à Paris, à l'âge de 58 ans, le Médecin-Général Labusquiere, ancien Secrétaire Général de l'O.C.E.A.C. (Organisation de Coopération pour la Lutte contre les Grandes Endémies en Afrique Centrale).

René Labusquiere avait été, au cours des 30 dernières années, un des grands animateurs de la lutte contre les maladies tropicales en Afrique Centrale. De 1946 à 1954, il séjourne au Cameroun et en Oubangui-Chari. Il participe, sous les ordres du Médecin-Colonel Beaudiment, puis du Médecin-Général Richet, à la création et au développement des équipes mobiles, ces escadrons médicaux, véritables figures d'épopée, qui pénètrent au coeur de la brousse pour y traquer la maladie du som-

meil, le pian et d'autres fléaux tropicaux. C'est là qu'il s'intéresse à la lèpre, avant de compléter sa formation en Guyane et au Brésil.

A la tête de la Section Lèpre du Service Général d'Hygiène Mobile et de Prophylaxie à Dakar, il parcourt toute l'Afrique de l'Ouest francophone et participe à l'action de grande envergure qui permet enfin de toucher la grande majorité des malades de la lèpre dans leurs villages. Il fut parmi quelques uns qui dès le début incarnèrent la nouvelle stratégie de lutte contre la lèpre, rendue possible par les sulfones et basée sur le dépistage précoce et le traitement de masse.

Après l'indépendance des pays d'Afrique de l'Ouest, faute de moyens fixes suffisants et pour répondre au nomadisme et à la faible

densité des populations, la médecine préventive devient l'une des options prioritaires des nouveaux états. Le rayonnement et les capacités de Labusquiere le placent au coeur de l'action, à la tête du Service des Grandes Endémies de Haute-Volta. C'est là qu'en quatre années de travail intensif, il organise, recrute, forme et finalement crée un nouveau réseau: le Service de la Médecine Rurale et des Grandes Endémies. Une nouvelle organisation opérationnelle est née. Le monde international (l'O.M.S., l'U.S.A.I.D., le C.D.C.) s'intéresse de plus en plus à ces méthodes. C'est alors le début de la grande campagne de vaccination contre la rougeole. Labusquiere a une fois de plus l'occasion de mettre à l'épreuve ses talents d'organisateur.

En 1964, les pays d'Afrique Centrale créent l'Organisation de Coordination pour la Lutte contre les Grandes Endémies en Afrique Centrale. Labusquiere, Médecin-Colonel, en devient le premier Secrétaire-Général.

C'est là qu'il va donner sa pleine mesure avec pourtant des moyens très réduits. Utilisant l'Organisation inter-étatique, il plaide la cause des grandes campagnes, recherche des moyens matériels et financiers, met au point les techniques de diagnostic et de traitement adaptées aux actions de masse et les diffuse au plan international. En 1970, il publie "Santé Rurale et Médecine Préventive en Afrique Noire," synthèse de toutes les expériences menées au cours d'une carrière bien remplie.

Sa mémoire restera proche à tous ceux, malades, dirigeants, collègues, amis qui l'ont approché, comme un homme de coeur, un scientifique plein de bons sens, pragmatique, un de ces hommes rares qui peuvent jeter un lien entre la théorie des laboratoires et la réalité quotidienne et vécue des villes et villages d'Afrique.

—M. F. LECHAT
H. JOURNIAC