

**Obituary notice of Edward H. Douthy, M.D., M.C. Cantab., F.R.C.S. Eng., &c.;,
obit May 27, 1911 / [H.D.R].**

Contributors

Rolleston, Humphry Davy, Sir, 1862-1944.

Publication/Creation

[Place of publication not identified] : [publisher not identified], [1911?]

Persistent URL

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/nue6u2t7>



Wellcome Collection
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE UK
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722
E library@wellcomecollection.org
<https://wellcomecollection.org>

OBITUARY NOTICE

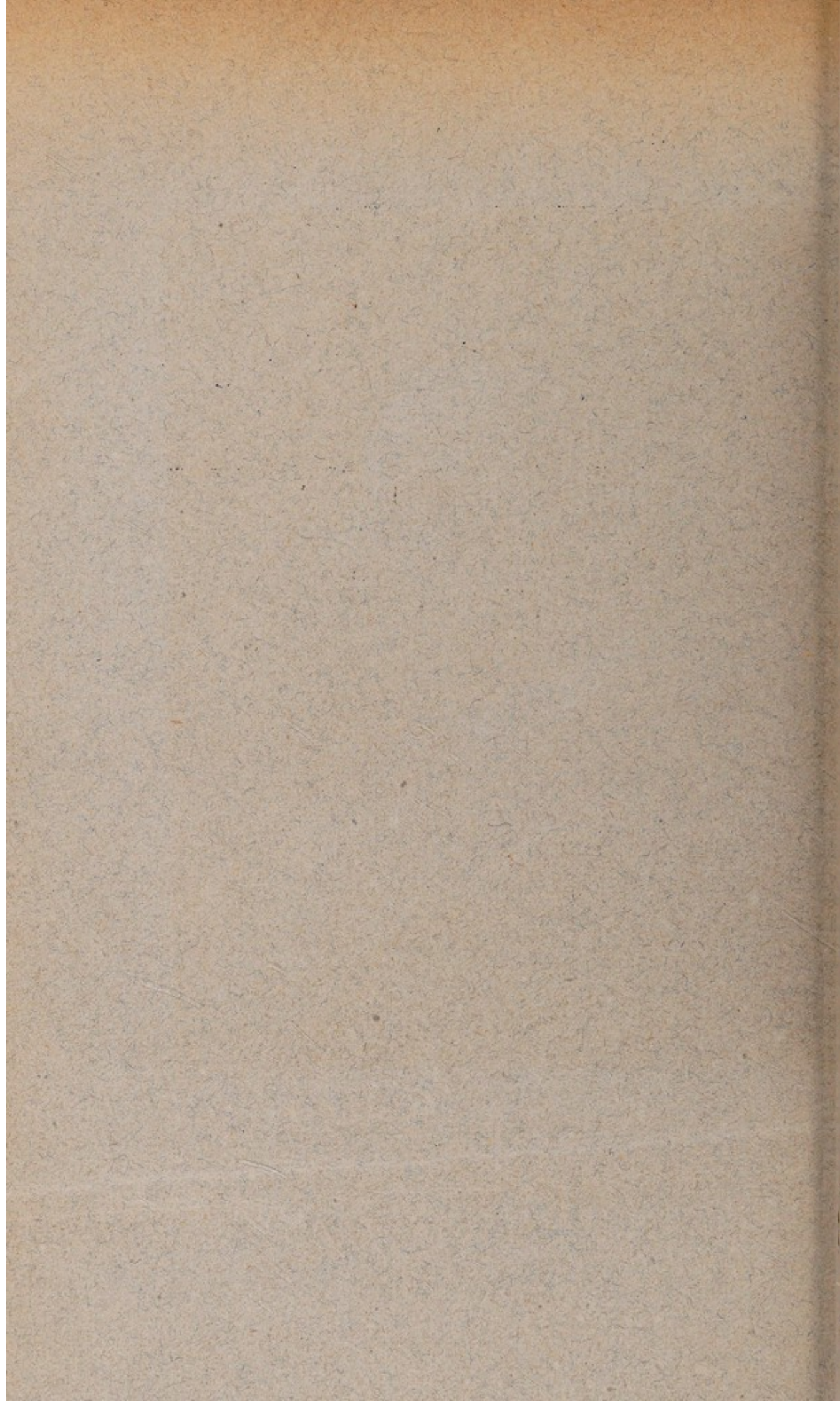
OF

EDWARD H. DOUTY, M.D.

M.C. CANTAB., F.R.C.S. ENG., &C.

Obiit MAY 27, 1911

Reprinted from THE LANCET, London, June 10, 1911





E. H. DOUTY, M.D. CANTAB., F.R.C.S. ENG.

(From a photograph taken in 1909.)



EDWARD H. DOUTY, M.D.,

M.C. CANTAB., F.R.C.S. ENG., &C.

A WIDE circle of Cambridge men, especially medical graduates of the closing 15 years of the last century, will have learned with sincere regret of the death of E. H. Douty on May 27th. He was born on Dec. 17th, 1861, at Wilton, near Salisbury, and was the second son of Joel Douty, a well-known schoolmaster, of Netherhampton House, near Salisbury, and Mary, daughter of J. Donaldson of Carlisle. He was educated at St. Edmund's School, Salisbury, and at King's College, Cambridge, which he entered as a choral scholar with the intention of taking Holy Orders. In 1884 he was placed in the second class in Part I. of the Natural Sciences Tripos; and as his father died on the day he took his degree he at once devoted himself to keeping his father's school, which was disposed of later as a going concern. In 1885 he returned to Cambridge to work for a medical degree and to support himself meanwhile by coaching. During the next 12 years he worked incessantly and with restless activity, becoming senior demonstrator of anatomy in 1887 and supervisor of medical students at King's and Emmanuel Colleges. Indeed, it was said that at one time he was nearly elected a Fellow of King's with a view to his being made Dean. After qualifying M.R.C.S. Eng., L.R.C.P. Lond., in 1888, he was house surgeon in 1889 at the Middlesex Hospital, where he had worked in the vacations, and where his elder brother, Harrington, had had a brilliant career. He then began practice in Cambridge with the late Mr. Hyde Hills, and rapidly achieved great success. Before this he had worked up a large coaching connexion and shown himself

a teacher of the highest ability. His engagements multiplied; he became, after a contested election, assistant surgeon and surgeon in charge of the gynaecological department, Addenbrooke's Hospital, and was lecturer on midwifery in the University. In 1890 he performed what was probably the first cholecystotomy in East Anglia and was supported at this operation by the presence of his senior, Sir G. Humphry, whom he resembled in his impressive manner and powers of teaching. He was a member of the Cambridge county council and surgeon-captain Harwich Infantry Brigade.

In 1897 he had hæmoptysis after influenza and sent his sputum to be examined by the late Professor A. A. Kanthack, who, believing it to be from some patient unknown to him, said casually to Douty that it was teeming with tubercle bacilli. This ended a chapter in Douty's life and made him a wanderer over Europe; he was for a time a patient at Nordrach under Walther, and later settled in practice at Davos, where he carried out the Nordrach treatment at the Belvedere Hotel. After some years he found the cold of Davos so unbearable that he decided to practise elsewhere, and finally settled at Cannes, for a time having rooms also in Paris. His ambition had always been in the direction of surgical practice, and in 1906 he spent some months working in London, and in spite of severe intercurrent illness obtained the Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons of England. He often thought of settling in London, and no doubt his extensive connexion with patients who had passed through his hands at Davos would have ensured him success, but his health was too uncertain to justify such a step, and he laid himself out for surgical practice in the Riviera, where he was surgeon to the Asile Evangelique, Cannes, and to the Queen Victoria Memorial Hospital, Nice.

From a medical point of view he was remarkable on account of his numerous qualifications; indeed, apart from those in the possession of honorary degrees he was probably the best qualified man in the world; his degrees and qualifi-

cations included M.A., M.D. (1898), M.C. (1908) Cantab.; M.D. Paris (1904); M.D. Lausanne (1901); Swiss Federal Diploma, Geneva (1900); M.R.C.P. Lond. (1904), and F.R.C.S. Eng. The foreign degrees were, of course, necessary to enable him to practise in Davos and Cannes. He had many interesting stories about his examinations, and he obtained the Paris degree in the face of very considerable difficulties. As a medical man he formed his opinions quickly, accurately, and seldom made mistakes. He had a facility for attracting and managing patients and rapidly got into work. His contributions to medicine were comparatively small and were confined to a few papers on the treatment of tuberculosis and of syphilis, and to reports of some surgical cases. His surprising energy enabled him to triumph over constant and slowly increasing physical disabilities and to accomplish an amount of work of which few realised the cost or the extent. A man of the world, of extraordinary versatility, he was a connoisseur in music, literature, and in almost every form of art. There were, indeed, few subjects on which he had not clear and independent views. With a mind exceptionally virile, and little inclined to bow to authority as such, he had a shrewd eye for humbug in high places, and a generous appreciation for merit in unlikely subjects. His striking personality exerted a direct and wholesome influence over his pupils and patients, especially the undergraduates at Cambridge between 1885 and 1897. No one was less like the traditional don, but many owe much to his kindly and vigorous assistance at critical periods of their lives.


With his many-sided nature Douty had numerous friends, such as the late J. W. Clark, J. H. Middleton, F. Whitting, and Felix Cobbold, to mention some only of those who are dead, and no doubt his outspoken and upright character raised opposition among those who failed to understand his aims and ambitions. Though he was frank in his opinions and could hold his own, he bore adverse criticism without rancour.

His old friend, E. H. Parker of Cambridge, writes: "He was a man of an extraordinary personality and the best

of companions, but perhaps the most attractive part of his character was shown by his unostentatious work amongst the poor of Cambridge without reward. It was no uncommon thing for him to pass the night in the poorer part of the town gratuitously attending the confinement of some poor woman. There was no amount of trouble he would not take for the poor or for a friend. His sympathy and personal magnetism were felt by all."

On Sept. 21st, 1909, he married Kathleen, third daughter of the late Sir Frederick Wills, Bart., and of this exceptionally happy union there is a son aged 8 months. In the early part of May he was attacked with fever, accompanied by intestinal disturbance, severe headache, and later by vomiting. On May 22nd he became delirious, and on May 25th cardiac failure began and proved fatal on May 27th at 10.50 P.M. at the Villa Florence, Cannes. The funeral took place on Friday, June 2nd, at the Church of St. Helen, Clifford Chambers, near Stratford-on-Avon, and was conducted by the Venerable Archdeacon William Cunningham, who had officiated at his marriage 20 months before.

H. D. R.



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2019 with funding from
Wellcome Library

<https://archive.org/details/b30617510>



