

## **JAMES VICTOR FIDDIAN, MD Cantab.**

Dr J V Fiddian died in hospital in Lancaster on February 16<sup>th</sup> 1965 at the age of 77. For many years he was in practice in Ashton-under-Lyne where he was also honorary surgeon to the Infirmary. He was born in India, where his father was a judge in the Indian Civil Service. His mother was an Australian, and for a time he was at school at Wesley College in Melbourne. After he came to England, he attended the Leys School. He briefly studied architecture, before entering Emmanuel College, Cambridge, where he completed his preclinical studies and obtained his blue for rugby and for water polo. In both sports he distinguished himself, and he was one of the first to introduce the Australian crawl to English swimming, and as a line-out specialist on the rugby field his one-handed grab and his height of 6 ft 4 in brought him a trial for England. He qualified from St Bartholomew's Hospital in 1912, and he was house-surgeon to Sir D'Arcy Power. Later he took a trip around the world as a ship's surgeon. The 1914-18 war started while he was away, and he returned to join the RAMC. He was regimental medical officer to the 11th battalion of the Suffolk Regiment and later he joined a mobile surgery unit. He was in the Battle of the Somme and at Passchendaele. In 1919 he entered general practice in Ashton-under-Lyne, Lancashire, and became honorary surgeon to the Infirmary. A colleague writes: " Dr. Fiddian was a general surgeon in the old, wider sense and was much respected and admired. In addition to his hospital work and a busy single-handed practice (until his eldest daughter joined him), he found time to get his golf handicap down to 7 and to become a skilled bridge-player. In 1930 he submitted a thesis on the biology of the cancer cell and proceeded to MD. His surgical prowess became widely known, and in earlier days he often gave his own spinal or local anaesthetics. On one occasion he successfully carried out a fore-quarter amputation under local and brachial plexus block. He was one of the first surgeons in this country to re-start, by direct massage, a patient's heart after cardiac arrest during operation. His interest in his patients and in his work was maintained at a high level throughout his career and as late as 1949 he published an account of a case in which he performed bilateral embolectomy for simultaneous occlusion of the main arteries in both upper limbs. He was a man who brought great energy to his work and his leisure. He had a very lively sense of humour. Dr Fiddian leaves a widow, two sons, who are both doctors, and three daughters, one of whom is also a doctor.