

Doctor Arthur Drury, M.B., C.M.
1862 - 1927

Born in 1862, Dr Arthur Drury was the second son of Edward and Kezia Drury. He received his early education at Making Place Hall, Soyland, later attending Edinburgh University, where in 1887 he graduated with M.B., C.M. During his time, there he was a First Prize winner for a paper on mental disorders, this being awarded by the Royal College of Surgeons. He returned to commence practice in Halifax and held the appointment of District Medical Officer to the Halifax Board of Guardians, a post which he held for over 36 years, unequalled by any other officer of the Board. He was also the public vaccinator to the borough and sat on the panel of the doctors under the Health Insurance Act, in addition to maintaining a private practice.

During the Great War, Dr Drury offered his services and received a commission as a Major in the R.A.M.C, being registrar of St. Luke's War Hospital in Halifax. While on service there he took a great interest in the wounded soldiers who came in and did much to help to 'entertain' them.

He was chiefly remembered for his strenuous support of Vaccination. In May 1893, as a public vaccinator to Halifax, he gave evidence before the Royal Commission on Vaccinations; his name was henceforth closely linked with the cause and therefore advocated. He was honorary secretary of the Jenner Society and for a time edited a supplement of *the Medical Officers' Journal* on this subject. At one time, he was the President of the Association of Public Vaccinators of England and Wales, and was the author of an article published in the *Journal of the Royal Sanitary Institute*. He was also a member of the Vaccination Subcommittee of the Public Health Committee from 1912 to 1913.

Dr Drury was assistant secretary of the Yorkshire Branch of the British Medical Association from 1890 to 1900, and a member of the Branch Council from 1909 to 1914. He was a representative of the Halifax Division from 1908 to 1916, and chairman in 1914. From 1913 up to the affiliation of the Jenner Society with the Medical Research Defence Society, in 1920 Dr Drury was secretary of the former organization.

Dr Drury was admired and well known throughout the borough of Halifax. He was a witty speaker and could express his opinions with humorous illustrations, generally in the way of interesting personal experiences. He had a great love and passion for music and drama, always welcoming visitors to Halifax with kindness and hospitality. He even had a collection of photographs of distinguished people in the realm of music and drama with whom he had been personally acquainted. Dr Drury was also widely known to the sportsmen of Halifax as he was the doctor of the Halifax Rugby League Football Club.

On a personal level, he was a friendly controversialist, but never harboured a grudge, and his uncompromising honesty and singleness of aim won him many friends even amongst his opponents. In later years, his health was starting to decline and was a source of anxiety; however, his enthusiasm and courage kept him working right until the end.

After being unwell for several months, having suffered lung and bronchial trouble he finally succumbed at his residence, Landon House, Halifax on August 22nd 1927 aged 65 years. He was buried on August 25th 1927, interred with his Brother and Grandmother in a plot (No. 1471) owned by his father Edward Drury. He left a widow, Sarah Louisa (nee Wilson) Drury, a son named Edward and a daughter named Margaret. His estate was valued at £3095 5s. 9d.

In his Obituary from the *British Medical Journal*, September 1927, he was highly respected and esteemed by his colleagues, he is described as '...[Losing] a most loyal comrade and friend, and the public health service a strenuous and unselfish advocate'. All in all, Dr Drury can be described as being one of the most interesting and remarkable residents of Halifax.