

**LIEUTENANT-COLONEL JOHN CUNNINGHAM (1881-1968). C.I.E., B.A., B.Ch., M.D. (Edin.), F.R.S. (Edin.). - Director of the Pasteur Institute at Kasauli, India.**

*“He was a great disciplinarian, and we, his colleagues, used to interpret his M.D. to mean “master of details.”*

*British Medical Journal (1968).*

John Cunningham (1881-1968) [Epsom College 1895-1899] was the eldest son of Professor D. J. Cunningham, F.R.S., who held the Chair of Anatomy at the University of Edinburgh. He entered Epsom College from Loretto and, in his final year became a prefect and Captain of the Rugby XV. He completed his medical training at Trinity College, Dublin, qualifying M.B., B.Ch., B.A.O. in 1903. In 1905, he obtained a commission in the Indian Medical Service and proceeded M.D. the following year. After preliminary training at Poona and after completing two years of military service he was transferred to the research department of the Government of India. It was there that he first saw the opportunities for preventive medicine, especially in bacteriology, and after working for several years in provincial laboratories, he was appointed Assistant Director of the Bombay Bacteriological Laboratory in 1910. From then onwards he pursued a distinguished career in the pursuit and direction of preventive medicine.



In 1912, he became Assistant Director of the Central Research Institute of India, where apart from a period of military service on the Indian North-West Frontier (1915-1916), for which he was mentioned in dispatches, he remained until 1918. In 1919 Cunningham was appointed Director of the King Institute of Preventive Medicine in Madras, and this became an active centre of research under his direction. The mass production of glycerinated calf vaccine lymph against smallpox, was started by him. With his great interest in public health problems, particularly in water and sewage purification, he constructed experimental filter stations, the first of their kind in India. In 1926 he was appointed Director of the Pasteur Institute at Kasauli – the first, and one of the most important of the institutes to be established in India in connection with the suppression of rabies, and he was greatly involved in the preparation of anti-rabies vaccine. During his time at the Pasteur Institute his research into bacillary dysentery was of a pioneering nature.

John Cunningham also found time to act as general organizing secretary of the 7<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Far Eastern Association of Tropical Medicine. In 1928 he was appointed C.I.E., in recognition of his services to preventive medicine, and the following year he returned to Edinburgh on his appointment as the first medical superintendent of the new Astley Ainslie Hospital. It was during this period that he set up at the hospital the first school of occupational therapy in Scotland. He wrote widely on rehabilitation and occupational therapy and was a strong negotiator in securing recognition for this new profession with the Department of Health for Scotland. From 1946-1965 he was Vice-President of the Scottish Association of Occupational Therapists, and in 1966, he was elected President as a mark of the association’s gratitude to him as the principal pioneer of occupational therapy in Scotland. In 1954, he was elected honorary fellow of the World Federation of Occupational Therapists and, shortly before this, he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh.