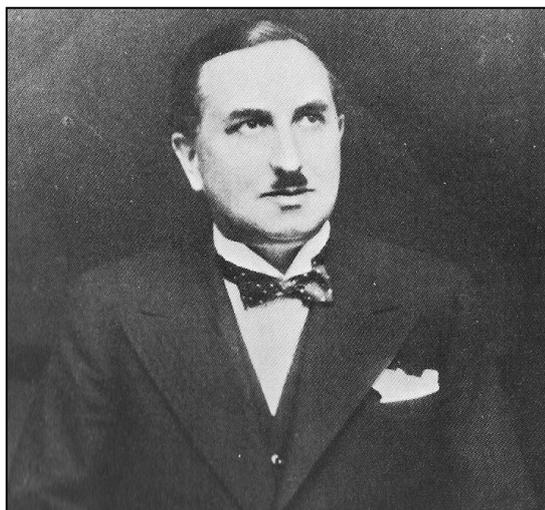


**SIR PENDRIL CHARLES VARRIER-JONES (1883-1941). M.A. (Cantab.), M.R.C.S. (Eng.),  
F.R.C.P. (Lond.). - Pioneer in the treatment of Tuberculosis and Founder and Director of the  
Papworth Village Settlement.**

*“When we take an x-ray film we are filled with wonder at the complications of nodes and shadows, not sufficiently realising that what we are gazing at is the picture of past battles, filled-in trenches, exploding mine-craters and the like. What we imagine we see, but do not, is the advancing army of disease.”*

*Sir Pendril Varrier-Jones (c. 1925).*

As the newly appointed Tuberculosis Officer for Cambridgeshire, Pendril Charles Varrier-Jones (1883-1941) [Epsom College 1896-1896], with the rare insight of a pioneer, saw tuberculosis as a social and economic problem as well as a medical one, and immediately began to seek a solution. He was the son of Dr Charles Morgan Jones, a physician of substance and some style, in Glamorgan, who went about his practice in a smartly painted trap driven by a man in livery. From Epsom College, Pendril Varrier-Jones entered St John’s College, Cambridge as a foundation scholar, before completing his medical training at St Bartholomew’s Hospital. At Cambridge he graduated with First Class Honours in the Natural Science Tripos. He qualified M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P. (Eng.) in 1910. Later research work at Cambridge with Professor Sir G. S. Woodhead on bovine tuberculosis formed the basis for his future career. Within a short time he had published two important reports: *Industrial Colonies and Village Settlements for the Consumptive* (1920) and *Papworth: Administrative and Economic Problems in Tuberculosis* (1925). He was quick to see that treatment of pulmonary tuberculosis in those days, when two thirds of all patients admitted with disease beyond the early stage were dead within five years, was but a half-way house to death, and that advice on after-care was useless unless applied in sheltered conditions of home and work. Although treatment in a sanatorium usually arrested the disease, exposure to the strain and stress of competition with healthy labour often led to a breakdown so that the patient’s last state was worse than his first.



In 1915, with this in mind, Varrier-Jones opened a village settlement at Bourn in Cambridgeshire, initially with just a single patient. In 1918, there were 18 patients and the colony moved to nearby Papworth Hall. From then onwards there was rapid expansion and the colony grew to some 1,200 residents in a hospital (housing 500 patients), hostels and cottages. Over time a surgical hospital and special unit for tuberculosis cases was built, a home for nurses with tuberculosis, research laboratories and workshops were added. The workshops were used by individuals whose disease had been halted, but who continued to remain under medical care. These workshops were equipped with modern labour-saving machinery, with annual sales amounting to well over £88,000 per annum (in 1941). Today, Papworth Hall has become world famous as a heart transplant centre where, in 2011 surgeons inserted the first artificial heart into a patient while he was awaiting a suitable donor heart. In 1920, Varrier-Jones suggested that other colonies might be established for tuberculous ex-servicemen and, following this, Preston Hall, near Maidstone, and Peamont, near Dublin were built.

It was said of Pendril Varrier-Jones that he was a firm but kindly administrator with a profound knowledge of men and business affairs. His nicknames were ‘V-J’ or ‘Pendragon.’ He was indeed a ‘captain of industry’ who employed his gifts solely for the benefit of the consumptive worker. He

was forever planning new departures to meet the existing situation. Shortly before his death he was planning to establish a school of tuberculosis at Papworth. "If necessary," he wrote, "I shall start with one student." At the time of his death he had reached the summit of his career and had received the recognition that he so thoroughly deserved. He was knighted in 1931, was elected a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians in 1934, delivered the Mitchell Lecture on the subject of village settlements for the tuberculous in 1927, and was awarded the Weber-Parkes Prize for his studies in tuberculosis in 1939. He would have been the Government's representative at the meeting in Berlin arranged for September 1939 of the International Union against Tuberculosis, but war intervened. In his obituary it is stated: "[His sudden death] deprives the profession of a great authority whose work, though now widely recognized, he did not regard as nearly complete. Endowed with great power of work, enthusiasm, and sane imagination, he had a genius for organisation." A distinguished colleague, Sir Arthur McNalty, wrote: "I have never known a man of greater single purpose. He devoted his rare holidays for the most part to visits abroad in order to study foreign problems of tuberculosis. He was ever planning new departures to meet the existing situation. Varrier-Jones's place in the history and development of anti-tuberculosis work is a very high one, and mankind has lost one of its benefactors." The village settlement at Papworth has become his memorial. The Duke of Kent has been its president since 1935, and no less than six members of the Royal Family have been its patrons.