

## JEAN DOWNES 1893-1968

Jean Downes died September 30, 1968 at her apartment in New York City. One of the first staff members of the research division of the Milbank Memorial Fund, she had retired in 1958.

Miss Downes came to the Fund in 1926 when studies to evaluate results of the health demonstrations in New York State sponsored by the Fund were initiated. In the next 15 years, most of her research was directed to appraising the effectiveness of specific measures for reducing mortality from tuberculosis and for lowering the incidence of new cases. Her epidemiological studies of the disease in different segments of the population in New York City and in rural Cattaraugus County contributed data useful in planning procedures and policies for more effective services to persons with high risk of contracting tuberculosis.

One of the significant investigations on tuberculosis conducted by Miss Downes was an experimental study by the Fund and the New York City Department of Health from 1942 to 1946, which demonstrated the importance of nutrition in preventing tuberculosis. In a group of Negro families with a recent active case of tuberculosis whose members were given vitamins and minerals during a five-year period fewer new cases of tuberculosis occurred than in the same period in a comparable group whose members did not receive the nutrients.

Morbidity in general became a major field of study after 1938 when Miss Downes assumed active supervision of a continuous five-year survey of illness in the Eastern Health District of Baltimore. This was a collaborative study between the Fund and the United States Public Health Service with the cooperation of The Johns Hopkins University

School of Hygiene and Public Health and the Baltimore City Health Department. The survey provided data on all causes of illness and the use of health services by a general population and were analyzed by a number of researchers. Miss Downes wrote more than a dozen articles based on survey findings. Her personal interest centered on the chronic illnesses, the disabilities caused by them and their effects on families.

The high quality of her research won the respect of her professional peers. The personal rapport established with agency officials was evident in their unfailing cooperation so essential to these collaborative studies. Frequently, she gave generously of her time and professional assistance to administrators interested in studying their own programs.

The Milbank Memorial Fund was honored to enjoy the services and personal loyalty of this fine scientist and records her passing with sorrow.