

STEN FRIBERG

IN MEMORIAM

Sten Friberg, one of the pioneers and outstanding leaders in Scandinavian and international orthopaedics died in Spain on May 3rd, 1977. A brief summary of his creative professional life will be appreciated by his contemporaries and friends and an inspiration to younger readers.

Sten Friberg was born and raised in Stockholm. After a comprehensive surgical and orthopaedic training he was appointed head of the orthopaedic service in Lund in 1941 and in 1943 he succeeded Henning Waldenström to the chair of orthopaedics at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm.

The scientific basis for orthopaedics in Sweden was laid down by Waldenström, and Sten Friberg built further on this foundation. In his department at Norrbacka in Stockholm he developed a comprehensive service for the disabled, and promoted clinical and experimental research, primarily concerned with hip and spine problems, later with arthroplasties, tumours and arterial reconstructions as well.

He realized at an early stage that the traditional segregation of orthopaedics and traumatology had to be eliminated if further progress was to be made. Accordingly, he worked for recognition of a concept of orthopaedics expanded to include care of and research into disorders and injuries of the total musculo-skeletal system. This field was to be catered for by orthopaedic surgical wards in the teaching hospitals as well as in the county hospitals. His political ability,



his firm, though tactful approach and dedicated endeavours have been of great value in establishing today's general acceptance of orthopaedic surgery as an integral part of general hospital care in Sweden. When he was appointed professor in 1943 his chair of orthopaedics was the only one in Sweden. Today there are nine professors of orthopaedic surgery in Sweden and orthopaedic departments are to be found in all counties.

His achievements in this respect also had a great impact on the other Scandinavian countries.

Many of those who now have the responsibility for orthopaedic surgical care, teaching and research in Scandinavia continue his work and try to build further on what Sten Friberg has created; they will always remember him with gratitude.

Sten Friberg's talent for administration and his personal capacity were recognized by national and international organizations. He was elected dean of the medical school and chairman of the Nobel committee. During the years 1953-1969 he had to reduce his clinical work as professor and head of the department as he at the same time held the position of dean (rektor) of the Karolinska Institute. For the Karolinska Institute this was a period of very expansive activity. Sten Friberg, however, maintained his deep interest in his patients and in the development of research projects carried out by his associates and pupils. Through his profound interest in teaching, his wish to guide and his ability to listen he also gained the appreciation and gratitude of the students.

In 1951 he was congress president for SICOT and arranged a most successful congress in Stockholm, which a number of orthopaedic surgeons from all over the world will long remember. In 1966 he was elected president of SICOT and during the triennium he invested great efforts in strengthening the society.

Acta Orthopaedica Scandinavica will remember Sten Friberg with great gratitude. Over a period of more than 20 years Sten Friberg was editor of our journal. The position of Acta as an important international journal is essentially due to his vision and endeavours.

Sten Friberg received numerous honours at home and abroad and he enjoyed the friendship of colleagues in all parts of the world.

He was always faithfully supported by his dear wife, Gudrun, who also acted as a charming hostess to their mutual guests. To Mrs. Friberg and to the Friberg family we extend our deepest sympathy.

Tor Hierton

Knud Jansen