



HENNING WALDENSTRÖM

IN MEMORIAM

Professor Emeritus Henning Waldenström, Stockholm, died on January 23, 1972, at the age of 94.

After an extensive education in general surgery and paediatric surgery and immediately after having defended his doctorate thesis, he was appointed Chief Surgeon to the Clinic for Tuberculosis of the Bones and Joints at the St. Göran Hospital, Stockholm, where he remained until 1935. In 1936, then aged 58, he became Professor of Orthopaedics at the Karolinska Institute, Stockholm. By education and attitude he was a surgeon, so when he was appointed Lecturer in 1910, he only accepted this post if it was designated "orthopaedic surgery". Thus, he was far ahead of his time, as it was not until the 1960's that the authorities altered the discipline of the orthopaedic professorships to "orthopaedic surgery".

Waldenström had an extremely scientific mind, highly critical of himself and stimulating to his environment. His own publications were few but were characterized by high quality. During his short time as professor—at that time the only one in the country, whereas now we

have nine—he laid the foundations of the development in orthopaedics from which we benefit today in Sweden and which I believe acted as an incentive and support to our Scandinavian colleagues. From a limited “disability speciality”, or “service speciality”, grew an organ speciality, bone and joint surgery, the largest of the surgical sub-disciplines.

In 1929 Waldenström was one of the initiators and founders of the Société Internationale de Chirurgie Orthopedique et de Traumatologie, S.I.C.O.T., which he and the other founders had planned as an academy, *viz.*, an association of the elite. This, however, was not the case, as the S.I.C.O.T. has become a manifold, world-wide organization with various important tasks apart from its purely scientific purpose.

Waldenström came from a long line of intellectuals. Since the middle of the seventeenth century all his direct ancestors had defended their academic theses, the first generations in divinity, the more recent ones within medicine. His grandfather was a doctor of medicine, his father the first professor of surgery to the Upsala University, and his son Jan, is retiring this year from his chair of internal medicine at the University of Lund.

Henning Waldenström was extremely well versed in literature and the fine arts. He was a reserved person and any form of publicity was alien to his nature. He chose his friends and associates with care, and to those he had accepted he was forever loyal and helpful. He enjoyed a long and happy life and preserved his fine intellect throughout. Being with him was never like being in the company of an old man, not even during his last years.

Scandinavian orthopaedics have lost one of their eminent pioneers.

Sten Friberg