



A. Torsteff pinx.

POUL GUILDAL

13. MARCH 1882 — 26. DECEMBER 1950

POUL GUILDAL

In Memoriam

Poul Guildal passed away on the 26th of December, 1950, at the age of 68 years.

Guildal was one of the central figures in Scandinavian orthopaedics, partly owing to his position as head of Denmark's largest orthopaedical hospital, partly owing to his own remarkably sound qualities.

He sat his final medical examinations in 1906 and afterwards obtained general surgical training in various surgical departments at Copenhagen. During 1915-16 he was head of the Danish Ambulance at le Tréport and Paris.

From 1919 onwards he was the senior surgeon of the Samfundet for Vanføre and remained the outstanding personality of the Danish organisation for crippled welfare until his death. He led the development of the organisation with powers of judgement and a foresight which not only proved important for Denmark, but in many ways influenced developments especially in the other Scandinavian countries, but also elsewhere.

Guildal was the driving force behind the foundation of the Orthopaedical Hospital in Copenhagen where he was head surgeon, 1935-47. This included an orthopaedical department, accident department, orthopaedical workshop, trade schools for invalids, and social services embracing vocational advice and the activities of welfare officers. Both with regard to the architectural and organising aspects it was *Guildal* who created this centre. A countless number of orthopaedical surgeons received new impulses in their work through their visits to this hospital. To discuss hospital problems with *Guildal* was an exceedingly stimulating experience. He knew everything, from the technical building details to details concerning ventilation, the pipe-laying system, and sterilisation etc. He entered into every question with the thoroughness of an expert. He wished to have an intimate knowledge of everything which he concerned himself with.

He occupied a leading position, in his profession as an orthopaedical surgeon, chiefly due to exceptionally good powers of discrimination, a lively interest in biology and extensive reading.

Guildal's professional output was large and various. He was not an innovator in the orthopaedical sphere but his work is of great value, above all for the gifts of critical analysis and calm judgement which he devoted to technical questions of orthopaedics which came to the fore. In my opinion *Guildal's* greatest importance in this field consisted in the part he played in congress life. His contributions to discussion were always concise and clever, often ingenious, edged with humour,—and indispensable.

I myself can recall many congresses in which *Guildal*, both in discussion and in his presentation, supplied the final touches which rounded off a doubtful question, delivering the summing-up of a wise man, devoid of pretentiousness, but with a weight of experience which brought conviction.

Guildal has meant very much indeed to Scandinavian orthopaedical surgeons now in practice. Many of us have attended lectures in his department for longer or shorter periods, visits which left deep impressions on each one of us. For some period or other, at least, he has probably acted as leading instructor to almost all the younger Danish orthopaedical surgeons.

Guildal's activities also extended to quite different fields, amongst others, for instance, the Danish Red Cross and health insurance, where his services were very effective.

In *Guildal* the Scandinavian Orthopaedical Association possessed one of its oldest and most popular members. His loss to this company of friends is irreplaceable. He was alway a centre-point of interest in our meetings, this confident, calm and friendly man who enjoyed life, rejoiced in the circle of his friends, and who radiated wisdom.

The international respect which was accorded *Guildal* may be illustrated by the fact that he was an honorary member of the Scandinavian Orthopaedical Association and the British Orthopaedical Association, as well as corresponding member of the Belgian Orthopaedical Association, the Orthopaedical Association of Bordeaux and the American Orthopaedic Association.

Poul Guildal is greatly missed. He was a Scandinavian orthopaedical surgeon of rare stature.

Stockholm, March 1951.

HARALD NILSONNE