IN MEMORIAM

WILLIAM STEELE HAUGHTON
1869-1951

William Haughton was the son of a distinguished and original-minded father, Rev. Samuel Haughton, a Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin; a mathematician of distinction who was responsible for the calculations upon which the tidal tables were determined, and also for somewhat grimmer calculations determining the optimal height of a hanged man's fall. He was also a renowned scientist, with a special interest in animal mechanics, and wrote a book on that subject under the same title. Finally, he was a doctor of medicine, having entered the medical school in his fortieth year, not with the object of practising medicine but to be a reformer of the medical education of the University. Subsequently he was registrar of the medical school for some years.

With such an inheritance it was not unnatural that his son William should, after receiving his early education at Portora Royal School, Enniskillen, enter the medical school of Trinity College, Dublin. There he had a distinguished medical career, obtaining a senior moderatorship and a gold medal in experimental science. He graduated in 1891 and qualified in 1894. He was almost immediately appointed assistant surgeon to Sir Patrick Dun's Hospital, where his interest in traumatic surgery was stimulated by his senior colleague, the famous Boss Bennett, whose name is still associated with the stave fracture of the thumb.

Radiology was in its infancy at this time and, quick to appreciate its possibilities, Haughton obtained a plant manufactured in London, and within six weeks of Röntgen's lecture in Wurzburg in 1895 he was taking radiographs in Dublin. Unfortunately he
did not appreciate the necessity for adequate protection. He exposed his hands too freely and so was compelled to forsake this work. The condition of his hands remained a trial—but fortunately a controllable trial—to him all his life.

In 1899 Haughton was appointed to the staff of Dr Steevens’ Hospital, Dublin, where his renowned predecessor, Colles, had done the work which has made him famous. At this period of Haughton’s life he was a constant visitor at Kocher’s clinic in Berne, and he was largely responsible for bringing back to his own hospital the practice of aseptic surgery. While he continued nominally a general surgeon his interest was predominantly in orthopaedics, and in 1907 he was appointed to the staff of the Orthopaedic Hospital in Dublin, and he remained attached to this hospital for the rest of his life.

During the war of 1914–18 he was responsible, with Sir William Wheeler, for the Blackrock Military Hospital. In 1918, when the British Orthopaedic Association was founded, he was the only Irish representative, and of the original seventeen members was, at his death, one of the few survivors. I think few of the dinners terminating the early meetings were regarded as complete until Haughton had sung “The Snowy Breasted Pearl,” for he had a charming tenor voice. He was a contemporary and close friend of Sir Robert Jones.

In 1936 he was appointed Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery in his old university, T.C.D. He was a clear and inspiring teacher, a careful and meticulous surgeon with a special mechanical aptitude, and his great interest in traumatic surgery influenced his junior colleagues to concentrate especially on similar work.

Until the last years of his life Haughton was a man of rugged good health and infectious good humour, deeply interested in anything connected with the sea, and he was an accomplished yachtsman and a keen fisherman. He was affectionately and universally known among his colleagues as “Baldy” and never resented this somewhat personal reference to the shining dome which was surrounded by an aureole of white curls.

A. C.

DALLAS B. PHEMISTER
1882-1951

Dallas Phemister graduated in 1904 and soon after qualification came to England to undertake physiological research as an adjunct to his chosen career in academic and practical surgery. After the first world war he was appointed to the full-time chair of surgery in the University of Chicago, which placed him in charge of the surgical division of the new Billings Memorial Hospital. His chief interests were in the field of orthopaedics—though to the end he remained a general surgeon—and he did much work on bone growth, bone grafting, tumours of bone, the arrest of longitudinal growth in young bones and the healing of fractures. The combination of experimental and clinical observations was the foundation of his many notable contributions.

In 1923 Phemister was elected a member of the American Orthopaedic Association and before meetings of that Association many of his earlier papers were read. The American College of Surgeons occupied much of his time and he was both a regent and chairman of the Committee of Postgraduate Training. He was appointed president of the College in 1940.

Phemister was a quiet and dignified man who made many warm friendships. He was particularly proud of the distinctions which came to him from outside his own country—the Honorary Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons of England in 1947, and the Vice-Presidency of the International Society of Surgery at the Congress in Paris in September of last year, during which he received the Legion of Honour.

His death after appendicectomy was a sad loss to the world of surgery, coming as it did when, as Emeritus Professor of Surgery in the University of Chicago, he had just begun to look forward to further years of fruitful surgical research.

H. P.