IN MEMORIAM

MORRIS AXFORD
1901–1968

Morris Axford died in Auckland after a long illness. Always a brilliant student and a hard worker withal, he qualified in the University of Otago Medical School in 1924 with high distinction, having been awarded two much-sought-after medals. After a year as Demonstrator in the Anatomy Department and a house appointment, he took his postgraduate training in England, returning in 1930 to the Auckland Hospital and private practice. He became at an early age a Senior Visiting Orthopaedic Surgeon to that hospital and later to Middlemore Hospital, where he continued from the time of its opening until his retirement in 1957. He did much to stimulate orthopaedic progress amongst us. He worked hard for our Crippled Children’s Society. He was one of the first presidents of the newly formed New Zealand Orthopaedic Association, and the first medical president of the Auckland Medico-Legal Society. He was generally regarded as being one of the best expert witnesses in orthopaedic cases in New Zealand.

Ill-health developed in his later years and dogged him until he was eventually forced to cease his active work much earlier than he and multitudes of his patients and friends could have wished. He had a long retirement until his death in February of this year.

He was always a happy companion and good company, a strong character, a raconteur, fond of a good joke and “quick to see a pleasantry,” no mean tennis player or opponent at bridge and a devotee of rugby football. His stimulating presence on our orthopaedic scene has been sadly missed.

A. A. M.

JAMES KENNEDY ELLIOTT
1908–1968

It was with regret that we learnt of the sudden death of Kennedy Elliott on January 19, 1968. James Kennedy Elliott was born in Wellington and educated at Wellington College. He showed high academic ability and at Edinburgh, where he qualified in medicine, he became an Honours Student. There followed postgraduate study in London where he obtained his English Fellowship. On returning to New Zealand he was appointed a Visiting
Orthopaedic Surgeon to Wellington Hospital where, for the past twenty years he was the Senior Orthopaedic Surgeon.

He was a dexterous surgeon with sound and wise judgement and his opinion and services were widely sought, both within and beyond the orthopaedic field. After the last war he had, at the New Zealand Government’s request, made a study in Britain and the United States of rehabilitation organisation and limb-fitting techniques. He maintained a particular interest in this work, and in the treatment of children with gross limb deformities.

He was a foundation Fellow of the New Zealand Orthopaedic Association and its president in 1961 and 1962, holding this office on the occasion of the first combined meeting of the Australian and New Zealand Orthopaedic Associations. He was a Fellow of the British Orthopaedic Association, and for some years a member of the British Editorial Board of the Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery. A Fellow of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, he was for many years a member of the Court of Examiners of the College.

With the outbreak of war in 1939 he was among the first to enlist and go overseas to the Middle East. His surgical and administrative ability was apparent in Base Hospital in Egypt, as R.M.O. in the Western Desert and as Field Ambulance Commander at the Sangro and Cassino in Italy, and especially so during the arduous days of the campaign in Greece and Crete when he was Medical Staff Officer to the N.Z. Division. He was awarded the O.B.E.

Kennedy Elliott was a memorable personality, a modest man, impatient of the trivial, with a keen intellect and wit and of complete sincerity and integrity. He was widely read and a fine speaker, his concise papers and contributions to the discussions enhancing any orthopaedic meeting he attended. Many a junior colleague will remember with gratitude the generous but always unpretentious assistance and advice received from him. Despite his many professional and other commitments and his busy private practice, he had a diversity of interests, being an accomplished golfer and angler and an authority on many facets of horticulture. He will be sadly missed. We extend our deep sympathy to his wife, Elfie, and his son and daughter.

J. H. S.

DUNCAN DAVIDSON CRANNA
1909-1967

Duncan Davidson Cranna, orthopaedic consultant surgeon to the Salford Group of Hospitals, died at the age of fifty-eight on December 23, 1967. He was born in Bolton, Lancashire, where his father was a general practitioner, but he was very much a Scotsman and was educated at Merchiston Castle, Edinburgh. He graduated in Manchester in 1934 and after service in the Royal Army Medical Corps gained the F.R.C.S. in 1947. He was demonstrator, and later lecturer, in anatomy at Manchester University, and this was the basis
of the exact knowledge of anatomy which he applied to orthopaedic surgery. He held appointments at the Manchester Royal Infirmary and the Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic Hospital, Oswestry, for a time working closely with Sir Harry Platt both in hospital and as private assistant. He was also visiting surgeon to the Bethesda Crippled Children’s Home.

We must always remember that there were several Duncans. Each facet of his character was so distinctive and forceful that any appreciation might fail because some would say that this was not the Duncan they knew. As a surgeon he was tireless and strict, a superb administrator and an excellent teacher. None forgot his lectures. He loved rugby football as only a devotee can, and as he became too old and, sadly admitting, too rotund for active play, he became an enthusiastic referee. For many years he was president of the Athletic Union of Manchester University.

He was always a “hail-fellow-well-met” companion and those who were his companions loved and admired him. He was a great raconteur and was much sought as a guest at formal dinners.

He was the devoted husband of Yvonne, a nurse of Scottish ancestry and Indian upbringing whom he met while on active service abroad. Their four boys and three girls were ruled with firm justice. He was an enthusiastic horticulturist, cultivating his own garden and planning to retire at the age of sixty to take up farming in Dundee, thus following the tradition of relatives in the farming world.

Three months before he died, with no early symptoms, a malignant disorder was discovered quite accidentally. He carried on as if nothing had happened, entertaining his friends, speaking at convivial gatherings and apparently enjoying his usual social occasions, until the time came for him to enter the hospital where he had for so long treated so many patients, confident and content in the care of his fellow consultants. The church in Eccles where he was warden and councillor was packed to capacity by those who paid their respects to a good and brave man.