IN MEMORIAM

IVAR ALVIK

1905–1971

Ivar Alvik died on November 27, 1971, a month after his sixty-sixth birthday. Only a few weeks earlier he was still leading his very active life as head of the orthopaedic department of the University of Oslo Hospital.

Alvik was born on the north-west coast of Norway, and in full measure had the remarkable faculty for hard work that distinguishes the folk of that area. He graduated in 1934, but while still a medical student he had participated in fishing excursions to Iceland and Greenland. For the rest of his life he retained a keen interest in the fishing industry of Norway and delighted in all activities of sea and sail.

While gaining experience in general surgery as head of Vardo County Hospital, the outbreak of World War II found him on the shores of the Arctic Ocean. Norway having been occupied, he made his way to Sweden and there helped to organise the Norwegian Army Medical Corps, with which he returned at the end of hostilities. From that time he took a lively interest in the design of military footwear and other equipment and for several years was consultant to the Corps.

Like most of his colleagues, Alvik’s orthopaedic training started in a tuberculosis hospital, the only kind then run by orthopaedic surgeons. However, he made many visits to countries with a tradition of orthopaedic surgery, and was particularly impressed by the organisation and standards in Great Britain. So when in 1949, after being awarded a doctorate for a thesis on tuberculosis of the spine, Alvik was appointed lecturer at Sophies Minde, he was broadly educated and skilled. After further study at the New York Orthopaedic Hospital, he was appointed head in 1953 and professor in 1959.

The words “Sophies Minde” mean Sophie’s Memory. This was the name given to an institution founded by Sophie, Queen to King Oscar II of Norway and Sweden, for the care of crippled children and their training in various handicrafts. Alvik gradually changed the institution from simply a home for cripples into a modern orthopaedic hospital with workshops, a laboratory for biomechanics, a State School of Physiotherapy, and more recently, a National College of Prosthetics. All these activities were assembled in the present large old building, originally designed as a brewery. In this orthopaedic atmosphere Alvik chose his assistants with care and brought them up like a schoolmaster with the never-failing aim of sound education. Before he died, he had the pleasure of seeing that nearly every orthopaedic division which developed in hospitals throughout the country during his time as professor was the indirect result of his work and was directed by one of his pupils. Thus the career of Ivar Alvik is the story of the rise of modern Norwegian orthopaedic surgery. He was one of the founders of the Norwegian Orthopaedic Association. In due course his pupils had the pleasure of seeing him
elected Honorary Fellow of the British, Yugoslavian and Norwegian Orthopaedic Associations, as well as of the Norwegian Surgical Association, and Corresponding Member of the American Orthopaedic Association.

Besides being a stimulating adviser on experimental work, Alvik’s own technical skill and knowledge of biophysics made him an outstanding surgeon. His three-point fixation for arthrodesis of the hip, with immediate weight-bearing, completely changed the results as regards both complications and fusion, and made this operation available to poor-risk patients. His method of reduction of congenital dislocation of the hip using skin traction with internal rotation diminished the incidence of necrosis of the femoral head to a tenth of that occurring after manual reduction. His technique for treating non-union of fractures by a sturdy metal plate and a solid onlay graft changed the outlook for large numbers of patients formerly treated in departments of general surgery. Alvik was deeply interested in the surgery of spondylolisthesis and scoliosis; he often stated his views at meetings of the International Society, to which he was a most conscientious national delegate for many years.

As professor, Alvik was immersed in official university work and also in the administration of justice, of schools and of insurance companies. Nevertheless, he always had time for his patients, both those in the wards and those who sought him from all over the country. He met them all warmheartedly, won their confidence, and never lost sight of them after treatment. He also found time to advise his undergraduates, who never went away without a clear answer to their problems. Moreover, he had time for his family. Though often returning home late in the evening, he left behind him any hospital worries; these were dealt with when he arrived the next morning at half past six. He and Mrs Alvik dispensed warm hospitality both at their house in Oslo and at their sea-side cottage at Sandefjord. His ability to make hard work interesting and even amusing is shown by the fact that four of six children have chosen a career in medicine.

All those who had the privilege of knowing Ivar Alvik as a friend and colleague will remember him as a great man with a unique personality. We others who also had the pleasure and honour to have him as a teacher will miss him profoundly. We grieve for his family and with them.

P. E.

RAYMOND WILLIAM LINTON CALDERWOOD
1919–1971

Raymond W. L. Calderwood, consultant orthopaedic surgeon to the Pontefract Group of Hospitals, died suddenly of a heart attack on Wednesday, July 7, when staying at his cottage at Edenhall in the Lake District.

Raymond William Linton Calderwood was born on August 11, 1919, at Wanstead in Essex, the only son of William Linton Calderwood, Engineer Commodore of the P. and O. line, whose ship, Strathnaver, took part in the North African landings. Raymond was educated at Wanstead High School where he was head boy and captain of the rugby football team. His medical education was undertaken at St Bartholomew’s Hospital where he represented the hospital and the Eastern Counties at rugby football. He qualified with the conjoint diploma in 1944. He held house posts at Croydon General Hospital and Southend Hospital before entering the Army, in which he served for three years, becoming a surgical specialist at the military hospitals at Colaba and Midnapore in India. At one time he was a medical officer in a troopship taking prisoners of war from Hiroshima after the atomic bombing.

On discharge from the Army he returned to Southend General Hospital, where his surgical training continued under Rodney Maingot and Donald Barlow; his orthopaedic training was started here by Whitchurch Howell, whose registrar he was. He continued his orthopaedic experience at St James’ Hospital, Balham, under R. H. Metcalfe. He obtained his English
Fellowship in 1954, and soon afterwards was appointed senior hospital medical officer to the accident and orthopaedic department of the Pontefract Group of Hospitals, being made consultant in 1962. He came to Pontefract at a time when the new department was expanding rapidly. He entered into the creation of the department at Castleford with enthusiasm and later helped to plan the new accommodation at Pontefract General Infirmary which came into use in 1966. He was a conscientious if somewhat slow surgeon, and a splendidly reliable colleague who shared all the successes and failures of the department. He took an active part in postgraduate teaching in the new Pontefract Medical Centre.

He entered deeply into the religious life of Pontefract, being closely associated with All Saints' and St Giles' Church and president of the Pontefract branch of the British and Foreign Bible Society. He had some skill as an organist and was in demand for weddings. He also had a love of choral music and was chairman of the Pontefract Choral Society and a member of the Leeds Triennial Festival Choir. He found time to be a governor of the King's School, Pontefract, the school at which his three sons were educated, and of the Carleton Boys' School, and he was a member of the Charity Almshouse Trust. He was a member of the British Medical Association, of the British Orthopaedic Association and of the Royal Society of Medicine. Locally he was a member of The Ridings Orthopaedic Club and of the Leeds Regional Orthopaedic Club, of which he was at one time Secretary. He married Mabel Nichols and there are three sons of the marriage; none has followed the medical profession.

Raymond Calderwood was a delightful and loyal colleague and we all are the better for having known him.

A. J. S. B. T.