

Philip Duncan Wilson

April 5, 1886 — May 7, 1969

Medicine in general and orthopedic surgery in particular have lost one of their outstanding teachers, leaders, and colorful personalities in the death of Philip D. Wilson.

Educated at Harvard College, he graduated cum laude from the Medical School in 1912. At the outbreak of World War I, he joined Harvey Cushing in the American ambulance (Harvard) unit, in France and then was with the American Expeditionary Force until 1919. It was during 1916 that he met and married Germaine Porel, a volunteer French nurse.

Having been inspired by Robert Osgood and Sir Robert Jones, Dr. Wilson entered practice in Boston and began an academic career in association with Harvard Medical School.

In 1934 he was brought to The Hospital for the Relief of the Ruptured and Crippled as director and the following year was made surgeon-in-chief, which position he held until 1955. Several of the outstanding events which took place under his guidance follow: (1) The changing of the name of the oldest bone and joint hospital in this country to The Hospital for Special Surgery. (2) The building up and strengthening of the Residency Training Program to be known as one of the best in the world. (3) The establishment of a fellowship program in which foreign-trained orthopedic surgeons could come to The Hospital for Special Surgery for a year or two of special training. (4) Arranging the details and setting in motion the affiliation of The Hospital for Special Surgery with New York Hospital-Cornell University Medical College so that the Hospital would no longer be an isolated unit on Forty-second Street but a vital part of a large academic center, thereby insuring better patient care, teaching, and research.

The move to the present building in 1955 had hardly taken place before Dr. Wilson had raised enough money to erect the Caspary Research Building for basic and clinical research in orthopaedics and rheumatic diseases. Following his retirement as surgeon-in-chief, he served as director of research until 1962.

These are but a few of the many activities of Philip D. Wilson. He again went to the aid of our Allies in 1940 and established the American Hospital in Britain.

He considered his clinical professorship of surgery (orthopedics) at Cornell University Medical College one of his most appreciated distinctions. He held this professorship from 1951 to 1955, when he became emeritus clinical professor.

Dr. Wilson was an indefatigable worker not only in orthopedic surgery but also in play as well. He was an expert sailor, a good huntsman, a good golfer, and an ardent croquet expert. He never entered any of these sports without the desire to play his best and to win. A great sense of humor and a vast knowledge of human beings made him an ideal companion and friend of all of his residents and fellows.

In spite of his innumerable duties, Dr. Wilson was the author of a great number of articles on various aspects of orthopedic surgery, and of several books.

Following are the medical societies to which he belonged: The New England Surgical Society, New York County Medical Society, New York Academy of Medicine, American Medical Association, American College of Surgeons (regent), American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (past president), American Orthopaedic Association, International Orthopaedic Society and Traumatology (SICOT), president, Ninth Congress, 1963, Pan-American Medical Association, Robert Jones Orthopaedic Club, American Board of Orthopaedic Surgery, American Rheumatism Association, Australian Orthopaedic Association, New York Surgical Society, Orthopaedic Research Society (past president), Royal Academy of Medicine (England, honorary), Cuban Surgical Society, Scandinavian Orthopaedic Society (honorary), Italian Orthopaedic Society (honorary), Hispano Orthopaedic Society (honorary), Peruvian Orthopaedic Society (honorary), and Royal College of Surgeons (Edinburgh, honorary fellow, 1965).

Honors conferred on Dr. Wilson include the Chevalier, Legion of Honor (France) 1947; Kings Medal, England, 1947; Honorary Commander Order of the British Empire, 1948; and Doctor *Honoris Causae*, University of Paris, 1966.

We shall all miss this great man of medicine, his foresightedness, his strength, and his love for his fellow man. Our sympathies are with his wife, Mrs. Germaine Wilson; his daughter, Mrs. George Finckel; and his two sons, Dr. Philip °. Wilson, Jr., and Mr. Paul Wilson.

Robert Lee Patterson, Jr., M.D.