Obituary

Nigel Cridland, 1909—1971

Richard Nigel Bernard Cridland, who died on his 62nd birthday, November 10, 1971, was the son of the famous Bernard of Wolverhampton, whom one remembers as a kindly man, always ready with a helpful and encouraging word for his junior. Nigel inherited his share of his father’s grace and charm. An exhibitioner at Winchester, he went up to Oxford in 1928 and then to St. Mary's Hospital. He was Radcliffe Scholar in Pharmacology at Oxford and gained the Wallace Memorial Prize in Bacteriology and the yearly prize in Ophthalmology at St. Mary's in 1934. Having obtained an Honours Arts degree he qualified in 1935, took his B.M., B.Ch. in the same year, and went on to take his D.M. in 1941; he passed the D.O. (Oxon.) in 1936 while clinical assistant at the Oxford Eye Hospital. He was House Physician to the Medical Unit at St. Mary's in 1937; spent 3 months at the R.A.F. Hospital, Cranwell, and then became house surgeon at the Free Eye Hospital, Southampton. He then started in ophthalmic practice in Portsmouth, and was appointed in due course to the Staff of the Portsmouth Eye and Ear Hospital, and the Royal West Sussex Hospital, Chichester. He joined the R.N.V.R. in 1938, was called up a week before the war started, and served until 1944. After the war, honorary consultant appointments followed to the Bognor Regis War Memorial Hospital; Gosport War Memorial Hospital; Graylingwell Hospital, Chichester; Queen Alexandra Ministry of Pensions Hospital, Cosham; and the Royal Portsmouth Hospital. His latest appointment was to the King Edward VII Memorial Hospital, Midhurst, in 1969. In the National Health Service he was Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon to the Portsmouth Group and Chichester Group Hospitals.

Nigel Cridland was devoted to his specialty and generous in his attention to the administrative and scientific side. He was instrumental in founding the Southern Ophthalmological Society and was President in 1962–63, in which year he was also member of Council of the Ophthalmological Society of the United Kingdom; he was Chairman of the Portsmouth Physical Society in 1957; Vice-President of the Section of Ophthalmology, Royal Society of Medicine, for two spells of office; and Deputy Master of the Oxford Congress in 1970. His knowledge of mathematics and engineering was above average, and this shows in some of his scientific papers, one of which discussed a graticule for his own designing for foreign body localization. His special knowledge was also useful to the British Standards Institution with which he had been connected since 1954; for 10 years he was chairman of the Ophthalmic Standards Committee. He was a most loyal colleague; the writer will always remember his devoted services as Treasurer of the Ophthalmic Nursing Board for 14 years.

As an undergraduate he was a keen oar, rowing for his College and gaining his Leander colours; he rarely missed Henley Regatta. He was Chairman of the Southsea Division and of the City of Portsmouth Boy Scouts Association for many years. Nigel never married; he lived in Southsea with his mother. And all his professional, scientific, and social activities were carried on under the burden of increasingly incapacitating ill health. One has seen him in London, on some professional or administrative errand, in obvious discomfort, looking as though he would be far better at home in bed. But his fortitude was exemplary, and until very near the end he never allowed his physical troubles to interfere with his professional duties. Ophthalmology has lost a devoted servant, and his colleagues a charming and valued friend; their sympathy goes out to his mother and his family.