

Obituary

Dr Erik Moberg

Erik Moberg died on 14 February 1993, having lived a long life of outstanding achievement. A great intellect was combined with a forceful, vigorous character of the utmost integrity. He had an overall charm and compassion which won him lasting affection from colleagues everywhere and devotion from his patients.

As professor of orthopaedics in Gothenburg, Sweden, his unit was a constant attraction for visitors and trainees, particularly for his work on the upper limb and hand. His insistence on the importance of sensation to the function of the hand, his advocacy of the two-point discrimination test and his "pick-up" test in assessing recovery of function after injury to the median nerve won him worldwide fame.

On retiring from his Chair at statutory age, he spent the next 21 years developing a new career in his campaign to aid the severe disability of spinal cord injured tetraplegic patients, which took him to all parts of the world.

The operation he devised to restore active elbow extension by transfer of the posterior third of the deltoid to the triceps is now an accepted standard procedure in those spinal injuries units that have a trained hand surgeon on their staff. The operation has a high rate of success and will transform the

lifestyle and selfcare activities of the patient. To visit the spinal injuries unit in Gothenburg and see the large number of tetraplegic patients rehabilitated to good upper limb function was a great joy and a monument to Erik's work.

He stimulated many others to follow his example and this led to international conferences in Edinburgh, Giens (France), Gothenburg and Palo Alto (California) with a steadily increasing number of enthusiasts attending.

His own enthusiasm and selfless crusade to help the tetraplegic patient continued up to the last year of his life, and he will be sorely missed. Among many honours he was elected to be the first President of the International Federation of Societies for Surgery of the Hand (IFSSH). He was greatly helped in every way by his wife Marta whom he missed greatly after her death a few years ago.

Erik was a surgical giant who epitomised the hardy and independent Viking spirit.

Douglas W Lamb
Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon (Retired)
Honorary Senior Lecturer
Department of Orthopaedic Surgery
University of Edinburgh
Immediate Past President IFSSH