

Edwin G. Bovill Jr.

1918-1986

Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery

- written by Richard C. Maurer Edwin G. "Ted" Bovill Jr., was born in Detroit Michigan on September 1, 1918. He graduated from Dartmouth College in 1940. He attended both Dartmouth Medical School and the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, Philadelphia, graduating from the latter in 1943. He was elected to the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society. After internship at the University of Pennsylvania Hospital, Philadelphia, he served with the United States Army Medical Corps as a general medical officer in the European theater of operations.

Upon his return from military service Ted served a year of residency in pathology and another year of residency in general surgery at the University of Michigan School of Medicine before entering a four-year orthopaedic residency program at the same institution. During the last six months of his residency at the University of Michigan he served as an exchange resident at the San Francisco County General Hospital, finishing his residency in orthopaedic surgery in June of 1951. He was recruited to the faculty of Southwestern Medical School, University of Texas, Dallas, where he taught as clinical instructor until 1953. When he moved back to San Francisco joining the clinical faculty of Stanford University School of Medicine and practicing private clinical orthopaedic surgery. His teaching commitment was at the San Francisco General Hospital. When Stanford Medical School moved to Palo Alto in 1960 he joined the clinical faculty of the University of California School of Medicine, San Francisco, maintaining his teaching commitment at San Francisco General Hospital. In 1963 he became a full-time member of the faculty of the University of California and chief of orthopaedic surgery at the San Francisco General Hospital. He became a full professor in 1969 and Vice Chairman of the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery in 1971.

Dr. Bovill specialized in musculoskeletal traumatology and orthopaedic oncology. During his tenure as chief of orthopaedic surgery at the San Francisco General Hospital the orthopaedic service there was nationally recognized as a leader in the field of traumatology. He was known for his excellent clinical judgment and superb technical skills. As a teacher he was highly esteemed by both medical students and resident orthopaedic surgeons.

In 1984 Bovill relinquished his position at the San Francisco General Hospital in order to devote himself full-time to the management of patients with musculoskeletal tumors. Until his death on August 19, 1986, he developed the orthopaedic oncology service at the University of California Medical Center, San Francisco.

Bovill was an active clinical researcher in both traumatology and oncology. He authored over 50 publications and stimulated his students, residents and colleagues to develop their own academic curiosity and the scientific study of their clinical cases. In doing so he was a catalyst to many more studies than bear his name.

Bovill was an active member of and served as an officer in many national and international orthopaedic and surgical societies. He was particularly active in and devoted to the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, the American College of Surgeons, the American Orthopaedic Association, the International Society of Orthopaedic Surgery and Traumatology, the Orthopaedic Research Society, the Orthopaedic Trauma Association and the Leroy C. Abbott Orthopaedic Society.

Bovill served on the editorial board of the Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery and was a corresponding member of the editorial board of International Orthopaedics .

In addition to his many academic and professional accomplishments, Bovill will best be remembered by his students and resident surgeons as a clever and logical thinker who, when confronted by the most severe and catastrophic clinical problem, could come to a sound conclusion and be able to communicate the process by which he did so to his students. He taught by example and his teaching has stood the test of time.

Ted Bovill and his widow Josephine have five sons of whom they have always been justly proud. Edwin Bovill III is professor of hemopathology at the University of Vermont. Carl is professor of architecture at the California Polytechnic College, San Luis Obispo. Joseph is an anesthesiologist in Buffalo, New York. Robert is an art director in San Francisco. David is a practicing orthopaedic surgeon in Sacramento, California.

Ted Bovill once commented that in his mind "immortality is discovering and passing on to one's colleagues and to humanity some new knowledge." In his students and colleagues Dr. Bovill lives on in the enhanced orthopaedic knowledge he imparted to them.