We deeply regret to record the death of Philippe Bauwens, Honorary Member of the Association, on February 21 at the age of 72.

Philippe Bauwens was born in Belgium on March 4, 1901. His father owned a fleet of fishing-boats, and when Belgium was invaded at the outbreak of the First World War he ordered his crews to sail with their families and possessions to Britain. For a time Philippe studied electrical engineering, but in 1918 he entered St. Thomas's Hospital Medical School and qualified with the Conjoint Diploma in 1924. Two years later, at the early age of 25, he was appointed to the new post of Electrotherapist at St. Thomas's Hospital.

At that time similar posts had been, or were being, established at most of the teaching hospitals because of the need for specialized study and application of the electrotherapeutic methods which had been developed by pioneers around the turn of the century and had become widely used in the treatment of infected wounds, peripheral nerve injuries, surgical tuberculosis, and as a panacea in numerous lesions for which no specific treatment was known. The apparatus in use was relatively crude and the techniques of application as well as the indications for treatment were mainly empirical.

Bauwens was a natural scientist, and with his knowledge of electrical engineering, his analytical mind, and capacity for hard work he made an outstanding contribution to establishing the scientific basis of electrotherapy. His advice was widely sought by his medical colleagues, by the manufacturers of apparatus, and by the masseurs and masseuses, forebears of the physiotherapists, who were being trained to assume responsibility for the administration of electrotherapy.

The introduction of chemotherapy prior to, and antibiotics during, the Second World War greatly reduced the need for electrotherapy, especially in pyogenic infections and surgical tuberculosis. At the same time technical development of thermionic valves made possible more precise and elaborate methods of electrodiagnosis. Most of Bauwens's creative work in the second half of his career was in the development of clinical electromyography, in which he was the leading expert: at first in Botleys Park Emergency Hospital during the war, and thereafter in his department at St. Thomas's Hospital, which became the Mecca of postgraduate students of the subject and to which diagnostic problems were referred from near and far afield.

Bauwens took infinite pains in the preparation of lectures, including diagrams and models, and he made it very easy to follow his scientific reasoning. As a lecturer and
leading expert in his subject he was in demand all over the world. In 1960 he delivered the John Coulter Memorial Lecture in Washington and was awarded the Gold Key for meritorious services to physical medicine. At the Royal Society of Medicine in London he gave the 12th Samuel Hyde Memorial Lecture in 1958 and the Richard Kovacs Prize Lecture in 1961. After he retired from the staff of St. Thomas’s Hospital Bauwens undertook extended lecture tours in South America, Portugal, and South Africa.

Bauwens was an exacting examiner in that he expected accurate knowledge, but he was also kindly, and many physiotherapy students will remember how their vivas resolved into a private tutorial about some subject which they did not understand, followed by a pass mark to their satisfaction and relief.

Bauwens played a leading role in the development of physical medicine—in the union of Electrotherapists at the teaching hospitals and Balneologists at the spas to form the Section of Physical Medicine at the Royal Society of Medicine in 1933; in the formation of the British Association of Physical Medicine in 1944, of which the late Lord Horder was the first President, and Philippe Bauwens by unanimous acclaim succeeded him in 1956. He was also a leading member of the International Federation of Physical Medicine, and Vice-President of the International Congresses held at four-yearly intervals between 1952 and 1964.

Although his own clinical interests were highly specialized, Bauwens ensured that all aspects of physical medicine, including rheumatology and rehabilitation, were developed in the Department of Physical Medicine and School of Physiotherapy at St. Thomas’s Hospital, of which he became the Medical Director on the retirement of the late Dr. James Mennell.

In private life Philippe was a bachelor with a very wide circle of friends in many countries. In his younger days he was a keen yachtsman and sailed across the Atlantic with Sir Thomas Lipton in his racing yacht in his vain attempt to recapture the America Cup. Philippe was an excellent host, and guided meticulously his domestic staff in the choice, preparation, and cooking of food for his guests. Dinner with Philippe was always a superb and memorable feast.

Philippe Bauwens leaves behind him a wonderful record of achievement in his professional work and a great number of friends, colleagues, and grateful students.

F. S. Cooksey