

IN MEMORIAM

EVERETT DUDLEY PLASS
1886-1956

IT IS appropriate at this time to pause and pay tribute to one of our esteemed colleagues, Everett Dudley Plass, who died at Saranac Lake, New York, on Aug. 17, 1956.

Dr. Plass was born May 5, 1886, in Poughkeepsie, New York. His undergraduate education was obtained at Colgate University, and he received his Doctor of Medicine degree from Johns Hopkins University in 1911. Dr. Plass was truly a worthy son of this Society, having received his training under J. Whitridge Williams at the Johns Hopkins Hospital and Edwin B. Cragin at the Sloane Hospital for Women, both illustrious members of this Society.

Dr. Plass began his teaching career in 1915 with an appointment as Instructor in Obstetrics at his Alma Mater, and, except for a tour of duty with the Army Medical Corps, he remained at Johns Hopkins through 1923, advancing to the rank of Associate Professor.

In 1923 Dr. Plass became Chief of Obstetrics at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit, but three years later he returned to academic medicine as Professor and Head of The Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the State University of Iowa Medical School. Here his native intelligence, analytical mind, and tremendous drive carried both him and the University to national and international prominence.

It is difficult to appraise the tremendous influence for good which Dr. Plass exerted on obstetrics and gynecology, not only in his own state but throughout this country and abroad. His research, both clinical and laboratory, led to the elucidation of trichomoniasis, the relationship between yeast vaginitis and oral thrush, polyneuritis of pregnancy, and other related problems. His early studies on pulmonary physiology served as background for the more modern concepts. His investigations are recorded in over 100 published papers, and he contributed important chapters to several books.

In the field of education his mastery of the basic and applied science of reproduction soon established him as an eminent teacher. His logical explanation of the many facets of reproduction made them lucid and easily understood by the student.

Perhaps his greatest contribution in this field, however, is the long list of very capable clinicians who obtained their training under his tutelage, and who are now serving obstetrics and gynecology throughout the country.

Organized medicine is indebted to Dr. Plass for his energy and foresight, as he utilized his skills in the cause of better obstetrics and gynecology. He was

a founder of the Central Association, one of the original members of the American Board, assisted in the organization of the American Committee on Maternal Welfare, and was an esteemed colleague of the American Gynecological Society.

Dr. Plass's personal life was far from tranquil, often combining the happy with the tragic. His military career was of no great significance in international affairs, but it greatly influenced his personal life for it was while stationed in Albania that he met a Red Cross nurse, Miss Lillian Genrich, his future wife. It was about this time that he contracted pulmonary tuberculosis which was to plague him at intervals throughout his life. Such was the mental and physical stamina of the man, however, that he overcame its enervating influences to achieve national and international reputation. And although this infection eventually forced his retirement, it never dulled his inquiring mind.

The fall of 1955 had provided much pleasure for this great man as he returned for a visit in Iowa with his family and many friends in and about the area of his professional triumphs. The end came suddenly from an aneurysm of the abdominal aorta.

Dr. Plass is survived by his three children, Ruth, Betty, and William, and by a great host of professional sons and daughters. The dynamic personality of the man influenced us all, and has left a permanent mark on American Obstetrics and Gynecology.

Willis E. Brown



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