

Hervey Clock Williamson

June 9, 1887 — February 1, 1951

Hervey Clock Williamson was born in 1887, at Islip, Long Island, the son of Gilbert and Isabel Clock Williamson. His forbears were of English and Dutch stock who established their homes in eastern Long Island and were among the early settlers of America. His father died during the first year of his life. He attended the Islip Grade and High Schools and with a firm resolve and initiative he managed successfully to finance his medical education and subsequently graduated in 1908 from the New York University and Bellevue Medical School. Under competitive examination he won a two year internship ending as house physician on the Third Division at Bellevue Hospital. By virtue of his industrious and faithful application to the study and care of his patients on the medical wards he developed a keen diagnostic acumen and perspective which made him a good doctor prior to entering his chosen specialty. He was then appointed on the Resident staff of the Manhattan Maternity Hospital and served in that capacity for two years.

In 1916, the late Dr. William E. Studdiford, Sr. became director of the reorganized combined gynecological service at Bellevue and among the six men he chose to work under him was Hervey C. Williamson. In 1917 the late Dr. Clifton Edgar, Director of Obstetrics on the Cornell Division and Professor of Obstetrics at Cornell University Medical College, appointed him as Instructor of Obstetrics at Cornell University Medical College and as Adjunct Assistant Attending Surgeon on the Second Division (the Cornell Obstetrical Division) at Bellevue Hospital. During the year 1918 he was appointed to the Junior Attending Staff at the Manhattan Maternity Hospital. He also served for a time as Assistant in Gynecology at the Memorial Hospital, as well as Attending Obstetrician at the John E. Berwind Free Maternity Clinic. Later, he received an appointment as Assistant Attending Surgeon at the New York Nursery and Child Hospital, becoming a full Attending Surgeon in charge of a service in that institution in the latter years of its existence. During the years 1928 to 1932, he served as Director of the Obstetrical Service on the Cornell Division at Bellevue Hospital, resigning in 1932 when Cornell terminated its service at Bellevue. Since 1932 he has held the title of Attending Obstetrician and Gynecologist at the New York Hospital.

Dr. Williamson held the following faculty appointments at Cornell University Medical College: Instructor in Obstetrics, 1917 to 1927; Assistant Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, 1927 to 1932. During the period from 1928 to 1932, under the Chairmanship of Dr. George Gray Ward, he acted as Director of Obstetrics at the Medical College until Dr. Henricus J. Stander assumed the Chair in 1932. From 1932 to 1941 his appointment was that of

Assistant Professor of Clinical Obstetrics and Gynecology, being promoted to Associate Professor in 1941 and, finally, in 1950, to that of Professor of Clinical Obstetrics and Gynecology.

Upon the organization in 1935 of an obstetrical service at French Hospital he became an Associate Attending Surgeon in Obstetrics and Gynecology under the late Dr. Frederick C. Holden. Upon the latter's death in 1944 he was chosen to succeed him as Director. In 1948 he was promoted to Attending Surgeon in charge of Obstetrics and Gynecology at that institution.

Dr. Williamson held appointments as Consultant in Obstetrics and Gynecology to Bellevue, the Margaret Hague Maternity, the New York Infirmity, the Beth David and Mary Immaculate Hospitals. He was a member of the New York County and State Medical Societies, the American Medical Association, a Fellow of the New York Academy of Medicine, the American College of Surgeons and the New York Obstetrical Society. He was a member of the Society of Alumni at Bellevue Hospital and a Diplomate of the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology. At one time he served as a member of the Medical Advisory Board of the Maternity Center Association. He was awarded recognition by being selected to hold the highest offices in several distinguished societies. He served as Chairman of the Section of Obstetrics and Gynecology of the New York Academy of Medicine; President of the New York Obstetrical Society, 1936-1937; President for two terms of the Medical Alumni of the New York University College of Medicine, 1944 to 1946 and President of the Society of the Alumni of Bellevue Hospital, 1947 to 1948.

In conjunction with the late Dr. Harold Bailey, Dr. Williamson developed an obstetrical forceps, subsequently named the Bailey-Williamson forceps, which is in extensive use today. He was the author, for the Oxford Outline Series, of a volume on obstetrics. He contributed numerous papers on various obstetrical subjects. Among those published may be found articles on cesarean section under local anesthesia, maternal and infant mortality, management of breech presentation, the obstetrical forceps, the extraperitoneal cesarean section, and the management of placenta previa.

Dr. Williamson possessed a sincere faith in mankind and an unselfish will to do good for others. He had a high sense of intellectual honesty which far superseded any thoughts of personal gain. In the practice of his specialty he did not hesitate to request consultation and help if he thought there was any possibility of increased benefit to the patient. He was a great man and a great leader without resort to showmanship or politics. His professional responsibilities always came first and for this reason he had little time to devote to his hobbies, such as sailing, fishing and photography.

Dr. Williamson was found to have an advanced neoplastic process which was in a sense held in check, allowing him to carry on in full activity with apparent cheerfulness and great faith in the future. His death on February 1, 1951, at the age of 63, was relatively sudden and was due to a cerebral hemorrhage from which he never recovered consciousness.

Dr. Williamson married Miss Lilly White who survives him as well as a son, John Hervey, whose profession is engineering and a daughter, Susan, an able obstetrician and gynecologist in this city who is a graduate of Cornell University Medical College.

In the death of Hervey C. Williamson this institution has lost a devoted, conscientious and valuable medical adviser as well as a staunch friend, greatly beloved by our fellow members.

R. Gordon Douglas