

# Henry Booth Wightman

*August 8, 1901 — February 2, 1980*

Dr. Henry B. "Pete" Wightman was born in Auburn, New York. The son of a Presbyterian minister, he moved to the University Heights section of the Bronx, New York, when his father was called to a church there. He attended the Horace Mann School and continued his undergraduate education at Williams College, of which he was a loyal alumnus. He attended the Cornell University Medical College from which he obtained his Doctor of Medicine degree in 1927. It was in medical school that he met a classmate, Jocelyn Woodman, who later became his wife.

Following medical school he served a two-year internship at the Bellevue Hospital in New York and a period of several months at the Manhattan Maternity Hospital. He specialized in pediatrics and entered private practice in New Rochelle, New York, in 1930. Early in his medical career he developed an interest in allergy and obtained training from some of the pioneers in that field, including Dr. Robert A. Cooke. During the period from 1930 to 1942 he held appointments as attending pediatrician at the New Rochelle and Grasslands Hospitals and at the Vanderbilt Clinic. He also was on the staff of the children's allergy clinic at the Bellevue Hospital and of the allergy clinic of the Roosevelt Hospital. He was certified by the American Board of Pediatrics and was a member of the American Academy of Allergy and of the Society for the Study of Asthma and Allied Conditions.

As years passed Dr. Wightman became aware of a preference for clinic work as opposed to private practice and of a desire to work with young people. In 1940 he began contacting leaders in the field of student health, including a former schoolmate, Dr. Norman S. Moore, who had recently become director of that department at Cornell. Their correspondence led to Dr. Wightman's appointment in 1942 as assistant professor and attending physician at the clinic and infirmary.

He arrived at a particularly busy time, since the health service was caring for both civilian and military students on the campus. During the early forties he collaborated with Doctor Norman S. Moore and Doctor Edward C. Showacre in a study of the radiographic patterns of primary atypical pneumonia. He continued his interest in allergy and held allergy clinics until several years following his formal retirement. In 1949 he Published a study of clinical and pathological findings in 258 cases of appendicitis observed at the Cornell Infirmary over an eight-year period.

In 1950 Dr. Wightman was appointed assistant to the clinical director, a position he held for ten years. He played an active part in education within the student health department. He also participated in the education of medical

residents during the years when the health service collaborated with the Tompkins County Hospital in conducting a residency program in internal medicine. He contributed articles on a variety of clinical topics to *Student Medicine*, official organ of the American College Health Association. For two years he served on the Faculty Committee on Student Conduct. He was a member of the American Medical Association and of the New York State and Tompkins County Medical Societies.

Pete Wightman had a wide variety of community and social interests. He was a member of the board of trustees of the First Presbyterian Church and served as its chairman. He was a member of the City Club, the Rotary Club, the Country Club of Ithaca, and the Statler Club. He was a member of the American Cancer Society and served on the board of directors of the Y.M.C.A. and of the Family and Children's Service. He was president of the Sons of the American Revolution and a trustee of McGraw House. He had considerable skill and a lasting interest in fine woodworking. Summer vacations usually found him at one of the family cottages on Bailey Island, Maine, or at Big Moose Lake, New York. He enjoyed golf, fishing, and tying flies.

Dr. Wightman retired in 1969 and was granted the title of professor emeritus. His retirement was saddened in 1970 by the death of his wife, Jocelyn. He continued to work part-time as allergist at the Gannett Clinic until 1974. In 1974 he married an acquaintance and friend of long standing, Ms. Elizabeth Stocking. He was brightened by this new period of companionship and maintained the jovial personality and good humor which made him so well liked by those who knew him.

One of his unfinished projects as part of the Retired Senior Volunteer Program was a study of early physicians and medical care in Tompkins County. Physical infirmities ultimately took a heavy toll, particularly after a stroke in April, 1979. He died following a protracted illness in February, 1980. He is survived by his wife, Elizabeth Stocking Wightman; two sons: Henry B. Wightman of Syracuse and Frederick Wightman of Chicago, Illinois; a daughter, Winifred Webster of Boston, Massachusetts; seven grandchildren; three sisters: Katherine Hadden of Bronxville, Elizabeth Selander of Naples, Florida, and Edith Kreitler of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

*Paul H. Darsie, Alexius Rachun, Raymond Haringa*