

# John H. Warvel, Sr., M.D.

1893-1967

*Franklin B. Peck, Sr., M.D., Indianapolis*

John H. Warvel was born in Bradford, Ohio, on Nov. 28, 1893. He received his early education in the public schools of Ohio, and attended Ohio State University and Medical College, where he was awarded his M.D. degree in 1916. During World War I he served with the Army Medical Corps. In 1919 he became Director of the Clinical Pathology Laboratory at Methodist Hospital in Indianapolis.

In 1922, with Dr. John McDonald, he participated in early studies with the Lilly group on the clinical standardization and application of insulin which had just been discovered. For many years thereafter he was a clinical consultant for the Lilly Company, and conducted clinical potency tests of each lot of insulin which was produced, in order to confirm the animal assay tests which were not then regarded as being sufficiently reliable. In 1927 Dr. Warvel left the laboratory to devote full-time attention to the clinical aspects of diabetes. His indefatigable, ebullient, sparkling personality and his obvious love of people, along with his round-the-clock skillful devotion to their needs and problems soon created one of the largest diabetes practices in the Midwest. His leadership led to the development of the Diabetes Department at Methodist Hospital, an entire floor where the diabetic patient's care and teaching could be concentrated for the entire staff, with facilities for dietary instructions and accurate meals from the diet kitchen available for outpatients. Dr. Warvel's unflagging devotion to diabetes was shared with and encouraged by his wife, Ruth Michaels, whom he married in 1923.

Dr. Warvel became a Fellow of the American College of Physicians in 1938, and was a Life Member. He was Assistant in Diabetes at the Indiana University School of Medicine, a Member of the American Diabetes Association since 1941, the American Medical Association, Indiana State and Marion County Medical Societies, and Phi Rho Sigma medical fraternity. He received

the 50-Year Medical Practitioner Award of the Indiana State Medical Society.

In 1946 Dr. Warvel was one of a small group of internists who founded the Clinical Society of the Indianapolis Diabetes Association. He organized its Lay Society in 1949, and arranged the formal incorporation of the two groups as the Indianapolis Diabetes Association in 1950 while he was serving the society as President. He organized the summer Camp for Diabetic Children at Bradford Woods with the cooperation of the Riley Hospital Foundation, and remained its father, in or out of office, until his death. In 1964 he was made an Honorary President of the Indianapolis Diabetes Association.

Dr. Warvel was elected to the Council (now Board of Directors) of the American Diabetes Association in 1952, and served through 1959. He was a member of several of its most important committees over a span of twenty years, and served as Chairman of the Committee on Camps, 1956-59. As in all things, he gave his utmost to these assignments, and the pattern of camp structure for the National organization which was developed remains practically unchanged today.

John Warvel never did anything half-way. He worked as hard as he could; possessed a tremendous physical and mental endurance, and on those infrequent occasions when he could, he played just as hard. He never lost his cheery smile or the bright twinkle of his blue eyes, even over the last few years of painful and incapacitating illness. The closing words of an editorial in the Indianapolis Star are most appropriate: "His loss at seventy three is felt keenly in his city, state, and nation. But his example is a star that young physicians and young people embarking on careers in medicine would do well to steer by." He is survived by his widow, Ruth M.; a son, Dr. John, Jr.; daughters Mrs. James E. Noland and Mrs. Alvin E. Meyer; a brother; and several grandchildren.