

# Joseph H. Barach

*Cecil Striker, M.D., Cincinnati*

Dr. Joseph H. Barach of Pittsburgh was one of the group of physicians headed by Dr. Cecil Striker who worked together to found the American Diabetes Association. He served as a member of the Council from the beginning of the organization and he became the fourth president of the Association. A review of his career is presented to the readers of DIABETES by his friend and co-worker in the Association, Dr. Striker.

Dr. Joseph H. Barach has passed away. He died on March 7, five days before his seventy-first birthday. To those of us who knew him intimately, his passing came as a great shock and his loss will be keenly felt. For those of us who knew him less intimately, it is well here to recognize his personality and his contribution to science in general and to the American Diabetes Association in particular.

Dr. Barach attended the University of Pittsburgh and received the degree of Doctor of Medicine in 1903. Later he was a graduate student of Columbia University and a resident pathologist and intern at the Western Pennsylvania Hospital. He became an Associate Professor of Medicine at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine and also Medical Director of the University Clinics in 1930. He served as Captain in the Army

Medical Corps in the first World War. Dr. Barach's name was inscribed on the Wall of Fame of the American Common at the World's Fair of 1940 in New York for "having made notable contribution to our living, ever-growing democracy devoted to peace and freedom."

Dr. Barach was both austere and affable. Once the barrier of austerity was penetrated his sterling qualities glittered and his devotion to his friends unfolded. He possessed the rare combination of fidelity to work and capacity to play. He had many attributes, but above all towered the single underlying one of self-discipline. Other men might have elected to relinquish responsibilities, but even during his last illness Dr. Barach was intimately involved in broad scientific responsibilities. He was methodical in thought and activity. His every

day was outlined and programmed. Where others would trust to fate, he had a design for living. His schedule of activities was always full, and if one discussed this with him, his great lament was that there was not time to do more.

This pattern of living was reflected in Dr. Barach's mode of thought. Each scientific undertaking and each accepted responsibility was planned well in advance and in an orderly fashion. His charts, his files, and his scientific contributions indicate a polished effort culminating in a fine product.

Counterbalancing Dr. Barach's fidelity to work was his capacity to play. Many of us will most happily recall our visits to his "other" home—Mountain Hill Farm, Manteo, N. C. Here he gathered many of his medical friends for conference and play. Here it was that he was almost at his best. He displayed his fishing tackle, his guns, his boats and above all his ability to use them. Here was the real host unstinting in his efforts to make one's visit a highlight. Here it was that he indulged in exaggerations in talking about his fishing and shooting. He was an excellent sportsman but exercised the right of every sportsman to magnify his prowess. In the past several years he spent time during all seasons of the year at Manteo and became an integrated citizen of the community. On his farm in addition to his sports activity, he seriously undertook the development of the raising of figs and had acquired considerable success in this project.

Being a great self-disciplinarian, Dr. Barach was able to make many important contributions to the medical literature. He published one hundred and fifty scientific articles, and contributed to the *Cyclopaedia of Medicine*, and to Stroud's *Diagnosis and Treatment of Cardiovascular Disease* and was himself the author of three books. One, entitled *Self Help for the Diabetic*, from the University of Pittsburgh Press, has gone into its sixth printing. In 1950 Dr. Barach contributed from the Oxford University Press *Diabetes and Its Treatment and Food and Facts for the Diabetic*. He was one of the earliest contributors to the literature on the use of insulin; in fact, he was believed to be the first American author of a paper on insulin. Early in his career he did sound work in hydrotherapy and collaborated with Dr. Simon Baruch in this project.

Dr. Barach's early efforts were devoted to cardiovascular diseases, but shortly after the discovery of insulin his attention was focused on diabetes, and thereafter he published many papers on the clinical and experimental phases of his subject. At the time of his death, he was intimately involved in a long-term project at

the University of Pittsburgh, studying the relationship of atherosclerosis to diabetes.

Dr. Barach's particular devotion was to the American Diabetes Association. When the history of this association is written, it will be clearly seen that much of its amazing success is the result of Barach's ceaseless devotion. In the early days of the development of the Association, it was he who drew up many of the plans for its development, and it was he who executed many of these plans. A long chapter in the history of the Association could be devoted to his activities. He sparked every Council meeting and had the enviable capacity to accomplish much and to overcome the hurdles in the early history of the organization.

Dr. Barach frequently recalled that one of the highlights of his medical life was the meeting of the American Diabetes Association in Toronto on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the discovery of insulin. He was the president of the Association at this time and devoted much time and energy to the success of this remarkable meeting. He labored to bring together world authorities on diabetes to pay tribute to the discoverers of insulin, and for the record it is worthy of note that at that unprecedented meeting were Drs. Joslin, Best, Wilder, Lawrence, Hagedorn, Houssay, and Opie.

Dr. Barach was the fourth president of the American Diabetes Association, serving during World War II from 1944 to 1946; he was treasurer from 1948 to 1952. From the Association's inception in 1940 he was an active member of its Council. He was awarded the Banting Medal of the American Diabetes Association in 1946.

Dr. Barach was a member of many other scientific organizations, among them the American College of Physicians, of which he was a Fellow, the American Association for Advancement of Science, and Sigma Chi. He was chairman of the Metabolism and Endocrinology Section, Research Grants Division, United States Public Health Service, from 1946 to 1951. He had also been a member of the National Advisory Arthritis and Metabolic Diseases Council, National Institutes of Health, Public Health Service, since 1952. Thus one can see that he had a guiding hand in many scientific endeavors.

He is survived by a devoted wife, who spurred him on and encouraged him in his medical activities, and two sons, Joseph L. Barach, a physicist, and Richard L. Barach, M.D.

The American Diabetes Association was a part of the life of Joe Barach. Its growth and its perpetuation are secure because of him. His name will always be prominent in the annals of the Association.