

L. Harry Newburgh

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L. Harry Newburgh was born in Cincinnati and received his early education there. He then went to Harvard, receiving his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1905 and his degree of Doctor of Medicine in 1908. He interned at the Massachusetts General Hospital and then went abroad for one year. Following this he returned to Cincinnati to enter the private practice of medicine. He associated himself with the late Dr. Frederick Forchheimer, who, at that time, was one of the leading internists in the United States. Dr. Forchheimer, among other things, was the editor of Billing's *System of Medicine*. The active practice of medicine did not interest Dr. Newburgh, as he desired to do research work and to enter academic life. He returned to Harvard Medical School in 1911 and taught there for four years. In 1915 he went to the University of Michigan and stayed for thirty-six years, during a greater part of which time he was Professor of Clinical Investigation. He was retired in 1951.

During this very active career he taught thousands of medical students and endeared himself to them through his sympathetic patience and critical evaluation of their ability.

In addition to his teaching responsibilities he was a very active clinical investigator and a prolific writer. He published ninety-six scientific papers and eight monographs either alone or in conjunction with his associates. His first publication appeared in the *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal* in 1916, reporting his investigation on pneumonia. As early as 1919 he became interested in diseases of the kidney and published in the *Archives of Internal Medicine* his first paper entitled "Production of Bright's Disease by Feeding High Protein Diets." He continued his investigation along these lines for many years thereafter, and in 1930, in association with F. H. Lashmet, published an important paper entitled "Specific Gravity of Urine as a Test of Kidney Function." It was only natural that his work on kidney function should lead to subsequent studies on water metabolism and his contribution to this area is well documented in the literature. He was not satisfied with the existing technics of measuring water metabolism and around 1935 he supervised the con-

struction of a remarkable balance scale in a closed chamber. In this apparatus the subject lived for indefinite periods of time during which accurate body water and caloric exchange were measured. This balance scale set a pattern for subsequent metabolic studies.

In 1921 he published a paper in the *Archives of Internal Medicine* entitled "Use of High Fat Diet in Treatment of Diabetes Mellitus." This was an epochal paper in the dietary treatment of diabetes mellitus. He cogently presented the scientific evidence for the validity of use of the high fat, low carbohydrate, low protein diet for the dietary regulation of diabetes. Had it not been for the discovery of insulin at approximately the same time, it probably is safe to say that the principles that he laid down would have been the basis for the dietary regulation of diabetes now. However, with the introduction of insulin, there was no need for such a dietary program. After the discovery of insulin his interest in diabetes waned somewhat and he renewed his interest in kidney diseases and water metabolism, but at the same time made important observations on obesity in particular relationship to glycosuria.

During World War II he spent considerable time at Wright's Field US Army Air Corps, Dayton, Ohio, doing intensive research on the physiology of heat regulation and the science of clothing.

Dr. Newburgh was a great scientist and he, himself, was his severest critic. These characteristics were combined with a warm personality which won him a vast coterie of friends.

He was a member of many scientific societies and among these was the American Diabetes Association. He was a member of the Council from the inception of the Association until 1946. During this period he contributed actively to its affairs. At the Sixteenth Annual Meeting of the American Diabetes Association, on June 9, 1956, he was the recipient of the Banting Medal.

He was born June 17, 1883, and died July 16, 1956, survived by Mrs. Newburgh and his son, Henry.

There are a few of us who worked intimately with him and many who will cherish his memory and I am sure that he has placed his name on the tongue of posterity.