

MEMORIAL

JOHN BAMBER HICKAM, M.D.

By HENRY D. McINTOSH, M.D.

On February 9, 1970, John Bamber Hickam, one of the truly great men of American medicine, died of a cerebral vascular accident. The passing was the more significant because John was not old, 55 years, and until four days before he had appeared quite fit. His passing leaves a great void, not just for his wife, Mary, his daughter, Helen, his son, Tom, the Indiana University School of Medicine, but for his many friends, colleagues, students and patients, who looked to him for encouragement, advice and guidance. John was truly a leader among men. Although he is no longer with us his influence upon American medicine will continue to be felt for many years.

Dr. Hickam was born in the Philippine Islands August 10, 1914, the son of the late Colonel Horace Hickam. His father was one of the country's military aviation pioneers and will be remembered through the name Hickam Field in Honolulu. His father endowed John with a kindred pioneering spirit that similarly will be remembered through the years.

Dr. Hickam graduated summa cum laude from Harvard University in 1936 and cum laude from Harvard University School of Medicine in 1940. He received his house staff training at the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital in Boston and the Grady Hospital in Atlanta. He served his country in the U. S. Army at the Air Corps Laboratory at Wright Patterson Field in Dayton, Ohio. He returned to Emory University in 1946 and shortly thereafter, in 1947, joined Dr. Eugene A. Stead, Jr. at Duke University School of Medicine. In that environment, he rapidly rose to the rank of Professor of Medicine and launched a career as a pioneer in medical education and research.

In 1958 he became Chairman of the Department of Medicine at Indiana University School of Medicine. Under his direction the department grew rapidly, both in numbers and in prestige. In 1958 there were less than 10 members of the full time faculty in the Department of Medicine, few interns and residents were being trained, and research and training grants were almost nonexistent. He brought several young investigators into the department with him and began the development of new research and training programs which expanded the teaching capabilities. Over the years, Dr. Hickam continued his effort to build a strong department in teaching, research and public service. Research and training programs

flourished so that by 1967, Indiana University School of Medicine was among the top 10 centers for funding in cardiovascular research and training, with much of it concentrated in the Department of Medicine. Other subspecialties and divisions within the Department of Medicine grew comparably. At his death, there were nearly 60 full time faculty members and about 90 interns, residents and fellows in training. The department is ranked among the country's largest and best.

From the outset he directed his efforts to developing new methods in medical education. His influence led to the development at Indiana of one of the most innovative curricula in the country. His belief that health care must be improved led to the development of the "Indiana Plan for Medical Education." The keystone of this plan was a strengthening of graduate training programs. These efforts were instrumental in the establishment of the Regenstrief Foundation for Research and Health Care of which Dr. Hickam was the Director.

Dr. Hickam is widely known for his original research on pulmonary function in heart and lung disease and retinal circulation through the use of photography. He published approximately 75 original articles in medical journals and wrote several chapters in Cecil-Loeb's Textbook of Medicine and numerous other texts of medicine. He served on editorial boards of the Journal of Clinical Investigation, Annals of Internal Medicine, Circulation, and the American Review of Respiratory Disease.

Because of his outstanding qualities of leadership and research achievements, Dr. Hickam was active in numerous organizations and received many honors and awards. He was Secretary-Treasurer of the American Board of Internal Medicine and a member of the Executive Committee of the National Board of Medical Examiners. He was President of the Central Society for Clinical Research, Secretary of the Association of American Physicians, Past-President of the Association of Professors of Medicine, a trustee of the Thomas A. Edison Foundation. He had been a member of the Cardiovascular Study Section of the National Institutes of Health National Advisory Heart Council. He was a member of the USPHS Surgeon General's Advisory Committee on Smoking and Health which, after extensive study, wrote the report entitled *Smoking and Health*, published in 1964. He was a member of the AMA-ERF Committee for Research on Tobacco and Health, which awards grants for research on the relationship between smoking and health. He was a Fellow of the American College of Physicians, Diplomate of the American Board of Internal Medicine, a member of many other organizations including Phi Beta Kappa, Alpha Omega Alpha, American Federation for Clinical Research, American Physiologic Society, American Society for Clinical Investigation, American Thoracic Society, American Clinical and Clima-

tologic Association, American Medical Association, American College of Cardiology, American College of Clinical Pharmacology and Chemotherapy, and the Southern Society for Clinical Research.

John Hickam, the man, was best known to his colleagues at Indiana. Their thoughts were synthesized and expressed by Dr. William H. Hudnut, III, Pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church at the Memorial Service in Indianapolis, Indiana on February 12, 1970. He said in part, "It was undoubtedly the unique combination of talent in research and teaching and the practice of medicine that made John so good. The key to the combination lay in his astute mind, his indomitable will, his warm heart, and his humble spirit. His was a probing intellect that could explore a problem patiently, meticulously, deeply and clearly. His was an administrative ability that could organize and execute fairly, judiciously, diplomatically, tactfully. His was a tough resilient will power that gave him the strength and stamina to work hard, to shoulder tremendous responsibilities, to carry heavy burdens without complaint, and to put in long, long hours of work. His was a style of life that made him a delightful companion, a good friend, very well liked and very much beloved, kind, considerate, sensitive, sincere, a man of warmth and good humor, possessed of the highest wisdom of all, which is the wisdom of humility. He was articulate without being aggressively talkative, modest though he had much to be proud of, self-confident without being self-centered. His was an unobtrusive quality of leadership that invariably surfaced in every group with which he was associated. His was an understanding, a patience, a tenderness, a sensitivity to the person behind the patient, an appreciation of the individual human being with dreams and hopes and problems and needs behind the student, that gave him a willingness to work with people patiently toward a solution of their problems rather than dispense them casually—so that his students felt there was a special quality in the education they received from him, so that his colleagues would consult with him even though they were not members of his department, so that his patients would sense that he practiced a medicine of the whole person and treated people, not diseases, so that no one who ever talked with him would be made to feel that he was small or his problem was small, and so that one would say, 'Outside my own family, he's done more for me than anyone else.' "

John B. Hickam's passing deprives those who knew him of a sincere and gentle friend; his students of an inspiring and stimulating teacher; those who worked with him of a wise and generous counsellor; his university of a remarkable leader; his profession of a fine mind and one of the truly great men of American medicine.