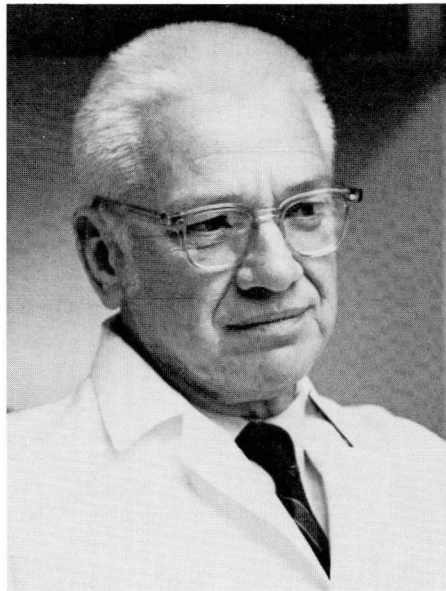


## Stanley O. Hoerr, MD (1909–1990)

**S**TANLEY O. HOERR, MD, former chairman of the Division of Surgery as well as the Department of General Surgery, died at the Cleveland Clinic on March 14. Throughout his 23 years as a member of the professional staff, Dr. Hoerr fashioned a legacy of compassionate patient care, thoughtful clinical research, and exceptionally mature leadership during the period when the national reputation of the Clinic became firmly established. He was a supportive colleague, an inspiring teacher, and—perhaps most memorably—a man of absolute integrity and uncommon common sense.

Following his graduation from Antioch College and Harvard Medical School, Dr. Hoerr received his surgical training under the eminent direction of Elliot Cutler at the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital in Boston. During this exciting period, he developed lasting friendships with J. Engelbert Dunphy and Robert M. Zollinger, two of his fellow residents who also went on to enviable achievements in American surgery, and he cultivated an interest in surgical pathology which influenced his own work for the rest of his career. After serving as an officer in the Army Medical Corps in the European theater from 1942 to 1945, he returned to the teaching staff of the Harvard service at Brigham Hospital before rejoining Dr. Zollinger as an associate professor at Ohio State University in 1947.

When Thomas E. Jones, renowned chairman of the Department of Surgery at the Cleveland Clinic, died unexpectedly in the autumn of 1949, Rupert B. Turnbull (his surgical fellow) immediately assumed responsibility for many of Dr. Jones's patients. Dr. Jones had such an enormous practice, however, that George W. (Barney) Crile soon inquired among his own circle



of Harvard friends and, in January of the following year, recruited Stan Hoerr to the Clinic staff. It was a prescient move. Upon the retirement of Robert S. Dinsmore only 6 years later, Dr. Hoerr assumed the chairmanship of the Department of General Surgery and demonstrated such sound, visionary leadership that he was appointed chairman of the entire Division of Surgery in 1965. During his tenure in this position, his peers included some of the most respected surgeons of their time—in addition to Crile and Turnbull, Donald B. Effler, Alfred W. Humphries, and Robin Anderson, to name just a few.

Dr. Hoerr was an instinctive conciliator, and made the following, revealing remarks at this retirement banquet in 1975:

“I hope that the attitude which permitted these men and many others to grow and mature in their own fashion will continue to prevail, and when new members are added to the staff, it will be for their professional potential, and not necessarily for the smoothness with which it is believed they will mesh with administration or other staff. In a lengthy experience with gifted physicians and surgeons—15 years as Chairman of the Department of Surgery—it has been my observation that such gifted persons are most ‘unreasonable’ when someone or something is interfering with a legitimate goal in their professional mission. Too often the obstruction is some mindless, unthinking application of a minor rule, and the cure is merely to get it out of the way and let the race horse run!”

Dr. Hoerr made nearly 200 substantive contributions to the surgical literature, all of which were distinguished by his literate composition and by the immediate, practical importance of their conclusions. He was widely recognized as an authority in biliary, pancreatic, and peptic ulcer disease, and

his original classification for the surgical staging of gastric cancer was remarkably similar to the modern TNM system, even though he conceived it almost 20 years earlier. As an indication of his professional stature, he was a member of the prestigious American Surgical Association and was elected President of the Cleveland Surgical Society (1958), the Central Surgical Association (1969), and the Society for Surgery of the Alimentary Tract (1971). In addition, he was selected as 2nd Vice-President of the American College of Surgeons (1969) and served on the Editorial Board of the *American Journal of Surgery* as well as the Board of Trustees of his alma mater, Antioch College.

Dr. Hoerr and Janet, his devoted wife for 57 years, were the parents of four children and withstood the untimely death of their son, Stan Jr., with grace and courage. Although Dr. Hoerr formally concluded his career as chairman of the Department of Surgery at Fairview General Hospital 5 years after he retired from the Cleveland Clinic, he remained unswervingly loyal to the center where he spent his most productive years. Again, in his own words:

“My hope for the future of The Cleveland Clinic Foundation is a continuing emphasis on professional excellence. May the Foundation meet this goal with professional personnel and by giving them what is needed in the best equipment and—yes—even buildings. Let this be accompanied by the old-fashioned, but not outmoded concept of service and kindness to the patient. If these aims and ideals remain active, I am convinced that the Clinic will never lack for superior staff, will never lack for patients, will never go bankrupt, and will continue to increase its national and international luster.”

Stan Hoerr was, quite simply, a very wise man. Such men are rare, and he will be missed.

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