



Carl John Wiggers, M.D.

Honorary Professor of Physiology, 1953-1963
The Cleveland Clinic Educational Foundation

Born May 28, 1883

Died April 29, 1963

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DR. CARL J. WIGGERS, Honorary Professor of Physiology of The Cleveland Clinic Educational Foundation, and known throughout the world as the "dean of cardiovascular physiologists," passed away suddenly of coronary disease at his home on April 29, 1963.

His death brought to a close one of the most remarkably distinguished careers in American research and teaching. His basic contributions in physiology laid the foundation for many recent advances in the diagnosis and treatment of cardiovascular disease, and have provided the groundwork for further advances by generations to come.

He was born in Davenport, Iowa, on May 28, 1883, and received his medical degree from the University of Michigan in 1906. During his active career, spanning more than 50 years, in addition to his many research achievements, he trained scores of students, at the University of Michigan, at Cornell University, and at Western Reserve University where he was Professor of Physiology from 1918 to 1953. He took special pride in the fact that so many of his students subsequently made their own important contributions in cardiovascular physiology, and that more than two dozen of them became professors or heads of departments during his lifetime.

Upon his retirement from Western Reserve University, he joined The Cleveland Clinic Educational Foundation as Honorary Professor of Physiology where he continued to teach in graduate and postgraduate courses, and to serve as research consultant; he continued to lecture throughout this country and abroad. Also in 1953, he was chosen as the first editor of a new journal, *Circulation Research*. During the five years of his editorship, he established this journal as one of the most important and respected in the field of cardiovascular research. Understanding and helpful with constructive comment and criticism, he nonetheless set the highest possible standards, only permitting publication of papers that presented clearly and concisely findings of genuine basic importance.

His career of active research resulted in publication of more than four hundred scientific papers. During his years in Cleveland he also found time to publish a number of important books, which include the classic monographs entitled *Pressure Pulses* (1928), *Physiology of Shock* (1950), and *Circulatory Dynamics* (1952), as well as five editions of the widely used textbook *Physiology in Health and Disease* (1934-1949). In 1958 he published his autobiography entitled *Reminiscences and Adventures in Circulation Research*. Written in his usual lucid style, it provides an all too rare portrait of a great man and the era of science in which he lived.

Doctor Wiggers also gave freely and generously of his time to various scientific societies and organizations; his wisdom, wit, and clear-headed analysis were of inestimable value in solving many an administrative problem. In addition to being a member of all of the learned societies touching on his field of investigation, he served as President of the American Physiological Society (1949), Vice President of the American Heart Association (1947), President of the Cleveland Area Heart Society (1956), and President of the Inter-American Society of Cardiology (1958).

He received several honorary degrees: Doctor of Science, from The University of Michigan (1941); Honorary Doctorate, from the Ludwig Maxmillian University of Munich (1953), and from the University of Brussels (1956). Among the many honors bestowed on Doctor Wiggers, are the Gold Heart Award in 1952, and the Albert Lasker Prize, in 1955, by the American Heart Association.

Doctor Wiggers was one of the outstanding figures in medical history; his influence in medicine throughout the world has been profound and lasting. Warm, sincere, and direct, he will always be held in special esteem by those of us who had the real privilege of knowing him well.

JAMES W. McCUBBIN, M.D.