

Lewis Linn McArthur.

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LEWIS LINN McARTHUR

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IN the death of Dr. Lewis Linn McArthur the medical profession lost one of its most distinguished members and the surgical profession one of its leaders.

Dr. McArthur possessed qualities of mind and heart that are not often to be found in the same degree in one person, and he had in unusual measure the confidence and respect of all who were associated with him and the love and appreciation of his friends. As a surgeon he never grew old, but was interested and interesting to the end.

During the many years I knew Dr. McArthur, I was impressed with his surgical acumen and his ability to adapt to the individual patient the surgical procedures to be carried out. He had a rare understanding of surgical pathology, and what might be called a flexibility of operative technic. I have seen him in the middle of an operation, on recognizing that the procedure he had planned was not best adapted to the case, change from one method to another, with complete success. He insisted that the tissues at operation be handled with extreme gentleness, and that meticulous care be exercised in all coaptations.

But more than technical skill, he had a humane understanding of the emotional states from which the patient suffered. He appreciated the natural desire of the patient not only to feel well but to look well, and he wanted to be of aid, in building up not only his physical but his mental condition. In his work he was a marked individualist. He took the most intense personal interest in each case, always visiting his surgical patients at least twice daily.

It would appear sometimes that the modern surgeon thinks of surgery only from the standpoint of the operation, the after-care of the patient, and the physical results. He carries out with the most scrupulous attention the necessary technical procedures, but not always does he possess that kindly spirit of helpfulness which is essential to carry the patient through an operation, to instill the confidence and courage which so often bring the patient safely through a crisis he might not otherwise withstand.

Perhaps this characteristic of spiritual understanding comes to those who in their earlier years were successful general practitioners, that is, practicing not only surgery but medicine as related to surgery. Perhaps the ability not only to acquire the confidence of the patient, but to deserve it, to see what the patient desires and

needs, comes through the sixth sense we call intuition, which in turn comes from wide experience and deep sympathy for and devotion to the patient, giving to the possessor remarkable ability to achieve results.

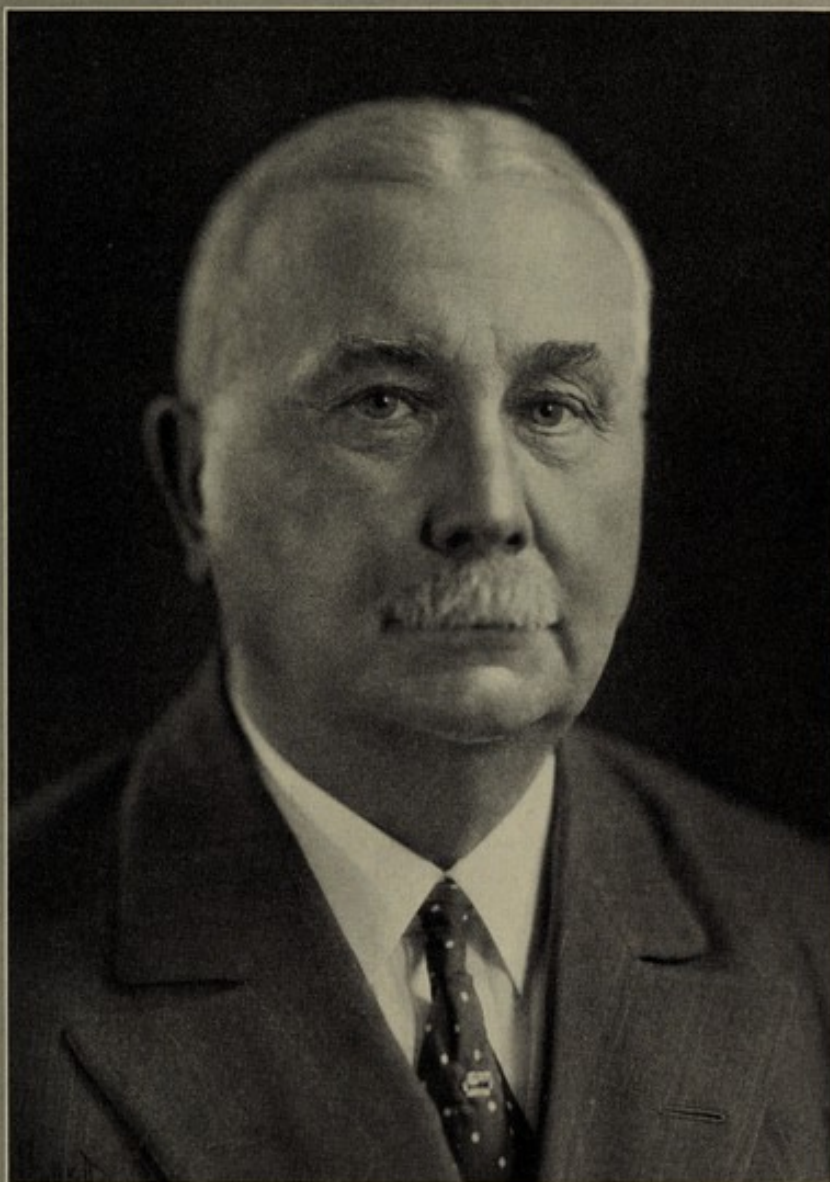
Dr. McArthur had a large surgical practice which took up his time to an extraordinary extent, and he was a successful surgeon because his skill and his humanity enabled him to carry many patients through most serious operations. He was a general surgeon to the last, but like all general surgeons of the older school, the pressure of patients' afflicted with certain types of disease compelled him to restrict his work to rather definite fields.

Among Dr. McArthur's numerous contributions to surgical science, those in which he felt the greatest pride were: (1) the muscle-splitting incision for approach to the appendix, which is usually attributed to McBurney (among the papers found in his desk after his death was a letter dated 1894 from McBurney acknowledging Dr. McArthur's priority); (2) the autoplasic fascial repair of inguinal hernias, used in the McArthur clinic as standard since 1896 and recently popularized by Gallet; (3) the supra-orbital approach to the pituitary; (4) the use of the gall bladder or common duct for the administration of fluids; (5) the buried catheter method of common duct and ureteral repair; (6) the "tobacco pouch" method of nephropexy; and (7) the method of rectosigmoidostomy for complete rectal prolapse.

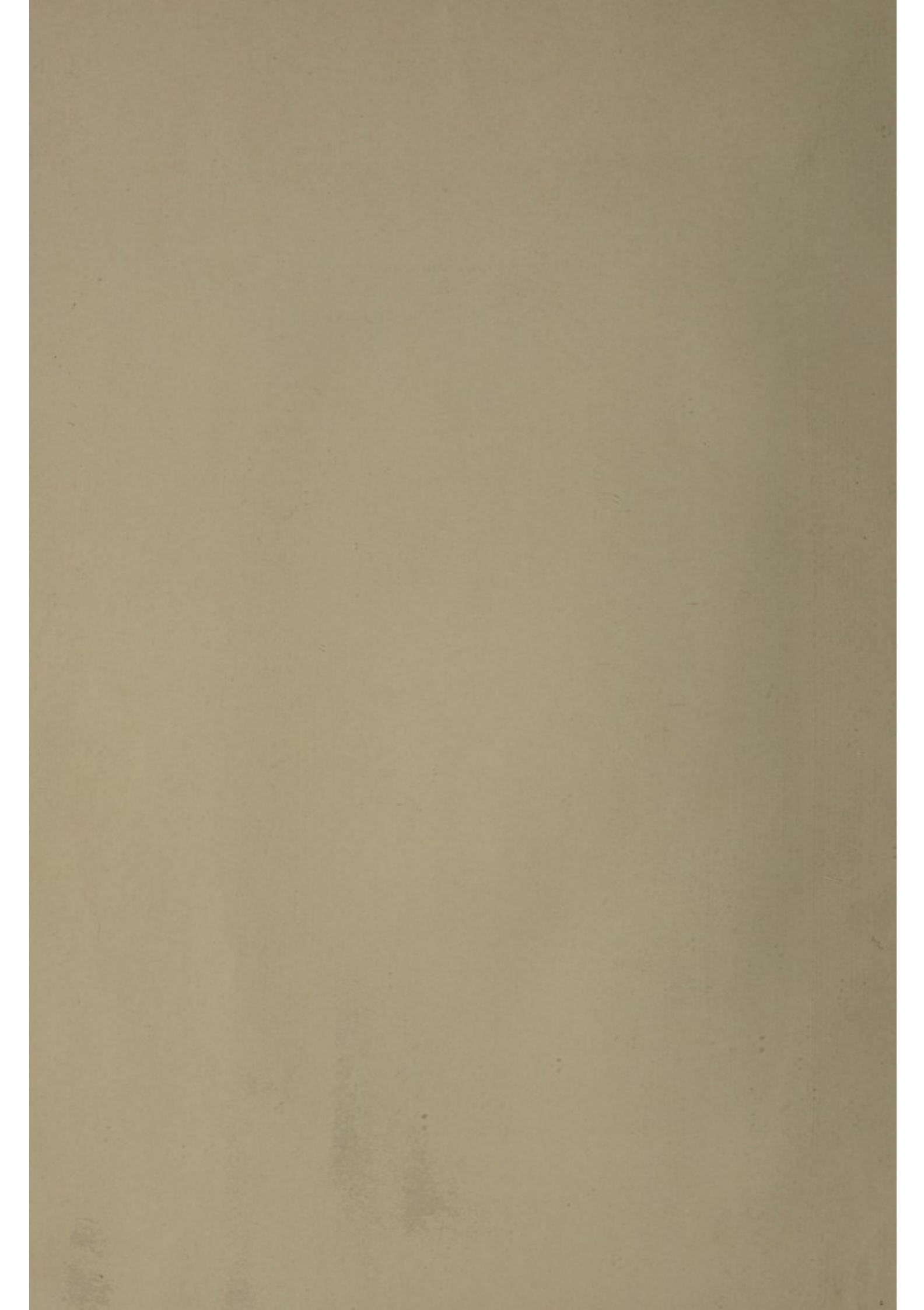
The many scientific papers which Dr. McArthur contributed to the various medical societies are a measure of his intense interest and activity in his profession. They are too well known to require discussion. Dr. McArthur was a member of his county and state medical associations in Illinois, of the Chicago Medical Society, of which he was a past president, of the Chicago Pathological Society, the Chicago Gynecological Society, the Institute of Medicine of Chicago, the International Surgical Society, the Colorado State Medical Association, the Western Surgical Association, the American Medical Association, the American College of Surgeons, the Society of Clinical Surgery, and the American Surgical Association, of which he was president in 1922.

Lewis Linn McArthur was born January 23, 1858 in Boston, Massachusetts, the son of Major Joseph Hunter McArthur, U. S. Army, and Julia Woodworth McArthur, daughter of Samuel Woodworth, poet, who perhaps was best known through his well-known poem "The Old Oaken Bucket."

In 1878 Lewis L. McArthur matriculated at Rush Medical College and was graduated in 1880. He won first place in the competitive examination for internship at the Cook County Hospital, where he served 2 years. On completion of his internship he spent 2 years in Vienna and Heidelberg in postgraduate study before returning to Chicago to take up his life work. He fitted out the first opsonic index laboratory in Chicago and sent his first assistant, the late Dr. John Hollister, to London for a year, about 1900, to study there the method of Wright.



L. L. McArthur



In 1917, he received the commission of Major in the Medical Reserve Corps of the U. S. Army, and he organized and was director of U. S. Base Hospital No. 14. He was made Chevalier of the Order of Leopold of Belgium in recognition of his service to Belgium during the war.

Dr. McArthur is survived by three sons, Dr. Selim W., Lewis Linn, Jr., and Billings Meacher McArthur. Dr. Selim W. McArthur was fortunate in receiving his surgical training under his father. He has continued on the staff of the hospital where Dr. McArthur did much of his life work, and he well fulfills the tradition established by his father for skilled and humanitarian service.

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