

CHARLES HERAPATH

Charles E. K. Herapath was born in Bristol in 1882, and was the son of a well-known and beloved general practitioner. He was educated at Clifton, at University College, Bristol, and at the Bristol Royal Infirmary. After qualifying M.B., B.S., in 1907, he held various house appointments and completed his studies in London, taking the M.D. in 1910. On returning to Bristol he was appointed to the staff of the Bristol Dispensary but maintained his connections with the Royal Infirmary. He joined the Territorials and became one of the keenest and most efficient officers in his unit. He enjoyed the army drill and discipline and was almost an authority on army regulations which appealed to his precise and accurate mind. During the 1914-18 war he served throughout as a company medical officer, was awarded the M.C., and earned the lasting esteem of his men.

On his return from war service he was appointed Assistant Physician, and later Physician, to the Bristol Royal Infirmary and here he developed his interest and enthusiasm in cardiology. His attraction in this branch of medicine was probably partly due to his love of mechanical "gadgets" and the consequent appeal of Mackenzie's polygraph. It was the same mechanical bent that made him an enthusiastic motor cyclist at a time when every expedition on a motor cycle was something of an adventure. As a result of his early work with the polygraph one of his main interests in cardiology was the study of the arrhythmias and his long records of patients with heart block and Stokes-Adams syndrome will be remembered. He was probably never happier than when struggling to correct some minor defect in his electrocardiograph or puzzling out some obscure cardiac arrhythmia.

Herapath was elected a member of the Cardiac Club in 1924 when it met at Bristol under the chairmanship of Carey Coombs. He attended the meetings regularly but did not give many communications, though in 1932 he was asked to open the discussion on the heart in influenza.

Apart from cardiology his other great interests were freemasonry, stamp-collecting, and music. The advent of wireless and the consequent possibility of listening to first-class music in the comfort of his own home was a great delight to him. Herapath was supremely happy in his home and marriage; but he was a rather shy man and not one who made friends readily, and as a result had few intimate companions. However, once the superficial reserve was penetrated it would be impossible to find a more loyal or staunch friend.

During the last years of his life he looked forward to retiring to a small house in the country, and it was a great tragedy that his death should occur so shortly after he acquired a house and garden at Keynsham, in which he was taking such a great delight.

He leaves a widow, one daughter, and one son who is, at present, a medical student.

C. BRUCE PERRY

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