

## WILLIAM EMERY STUDDIFORD, M.D.

1867-1925

BY WILLIAM E. CALDWELL, M.D.

*New York City*

**D**R. WILLIAM EMERY STUDDIFORD, a Fellow of the American Gynecological Society since 1909, died in his home in New York City on November 17, 1925. He was born in Trenton, New Jersey, on July 4, 1867, the son of the Reverend Samuel M. Studdiford, D.D., and Mary Emery Studdiford.

Dr. Studdiford graduated from Princeton University in the class of 1888 and received his M.A. degree from that institution in 1891. In the same year, he also received his M.D. degree from the Bellevue Hospital Medical College. After serving for two years on the third medical division of Bellevue Hospital, which at that time included the gynecological service, he started practice in the office of the late Herman Biggs, who greatly interested him in the larger medical problems and in gross pathology.

He was associated with Dr. Biggs in the New York City Department of Health for the next eighteen years, thus developing a very broad sympathy with and understanding of preventive medicine. In 1895, he was appointed to serve under the late William T. Lusk, as assistant in obstetrics and gynecology, at Bellevue Hospital, and as instructor in the College. He developed the gynecological clinic in the College dispensary and also the gynecological out-patient department of the hospital, in both of which he continued to work until 1914. From 1899 until 1914 he was associated with Dr. Henry C. Coe on the third gynecological division of Bellevue Hospital, and in 1914 succeeded Dr. Coe as professor of gynecology in New York University and Bellevue Hospital Medical College and became the director of the combined gynecological service of Bellevue Hospital.

Dr. Studdiford organized this service on the principle that no woman was to be operated on until she had been thoroughly studied from every standpoint, and that no operation was to be performed simply to relieve anatomical defects unless the operation would definitely improve or guard her future health. The follow-up system which he established required the patients to come back to the hospital for careful examination at regular intervals in order that the end-results might be observed. Though believing that the standardization of technic and operative procedure greatly increased the efficiency of the hospital, he was opposed to standardizing patients and

believed that each case had to be studied as a separate entity and treated accordingly.

In 1919 he was elected professor of obstetrics and gynecology in the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Columbia University and became director of Sloane Hospital for Women. He took to Columbia the same principles which he had applied at New York University. Believing that the pregnant woman should be studied early in pregnancy and that the attending physician should know as much about the patient as possible, her present physical condition, her past history, her environment and her mental attitude and adjustment to her life, he laid great stress on the development of the prenatal clinic. He believed that pregnancy is a great revealer of latent medical defects, and that patients require constant study throughout their pregnancies and for a long period afterward in order to return them to the best of health with healthy children.

He reorganized the service of Sloane Hospital according to these principles, teaching obstetrics and gynecology as a combined subject. The mechanism of labor, the toxemias of pregnancy, the cardiac conditions in pregnancy and many other problems were thoroughly studied during his directorship of this hospital.

Dr. Studdiford had an unusual sense of humor. He was fond of outdoor sports. He was a good companion, and toward his assistants he maintained an attitude of fatherly interest both professionally and personally.

He was married to Maria Emlen Hall on September 17, 1896. His family life was singularly happy. His widow and two sons survive him. William Emery Studdiford, Jr., is at present an intern at Sloane Hospital.

Dr. Studdiford was a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons, a member of the American Gynecological Club, of the New York Academy of Medicine, of the New Obstetrical Society and of the Society of the Bellevue Alumni. He was also a member of the Century, University and Princeton Clubs.

Dr. Studdiford was fortunate in the possession of a superior intellect which enabled him to make full use of his wide experience in all branches of medicine. Extensive general reading in the literature of his profession, accuracy of observation, high technical skill, great power of logical deduction, sound clinical judgment and a kindly, sympathetic understanding of the human heart made him one of the greatest surgeons of his generation, mourned by many devoted friends in every rank of society.



*W. B. Steadford*  
history-of-obgyn.com