

J. Willis Hurst

The Heart

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THE HEART

Arteries and Veins

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Fifth Edition

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THE HEART Arteries and Veins

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To those who are in the profession* of serving
the sick.

*“The essential characteristic of a profession is the dedication of its members to the service they perform.” M. J. Adler, *Great Ideas from the Great Books*, Washington Square Press, Inc., New York, 1961, p. 282.

Also see the quotation from Judge Elbert Tuttle at the beginning of Chapter 6.

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Preface

Research is endlessly seductive; writing is hard work. One has to sit down on that chair and think and transform thought into readable, consecutive, interesting sentences that both make sense and make the reader turn the page. It is laborious, slow, often painful, sometimes agony. It means rearrangement, revision, adding, cutting, rewriting. But it brings a sense of excitement, almost of rapture; a moment on Olympus. In short, it is an act of creation.

Barbara W. Tuchman¹

The first edition of *The Heart* was conceived in 1962 and born in 1966. The objective of *The Heart* has always been to assist physicians and other health personnel in their effort to provide excellent medical care for their patients. From the beginning we linked basic science principles to the identification and solution of clinical problems. We included discussions of the arteries and veins, as well as all-encompassing discussions of the heart itself. As we wrote, we had clinicians and their patients in mind.

The four previous editions of *The Heart* were well received by physicians, students, house officers, fellows, and other personnel. Our fondest dream was exceeded when *The Heart* was chosen on several occasions by the American College of Physicians as the cardiology book that should be in every internist's library. *The Heart* achieved considerable success in this country and was translated into Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Japanese, and Greek. Its worldwide success was then ensured.

While it is easy to be content with success, I have always held that changes in institutions, programs, and books should be made at a time when success is apparent. *I believe very strongly that the greatest peril of excellence is contentment.*² Accordingly, I felt *The Heart* should be revised at a time when it was enjoying its greatest success. The time had come to reorganize and to rewrite the entire book in an effort to set the tone for the teaching and practice of cardiology for the eighties.

To help in the planning and editing of this major undertaking, three eminent cardiologists—distinguished for their scientific, clinical, and educational contributions to the field—have joined the editorial board. Drs. Charles E. Rackley, Edmund H. Sonnenblick, and Andrew G. Wallace have already

made substantial contributions to *The Heart*, and they are most gratefully and enthusiastically welcomed.

The fifth edition began with a two-day “think tank” in a Washington hotel, July 11 to 13, 1979, when the new editors joined the old editors for the first time. New ideas were abundant, and each new idea was examined carefully. We were determined to write a book that would assist the practicing physician in the care of his or her patients. We would continue to link basic science information to the clinical problems. *We reasoned that we should highlight the cardiovascular questions that we believed physicians should ask about their patients and discuss the new techniques used in cardiology as methods devised to answer these questions. We would deemphasize the routine use of techniques before the proper questions have been formulated in the minds of physicians.* This led to the development of the new format for the fifth edition, which included the creation of the short prefaces that introduce each of the six parts of the book. We hope the mini-prefaces will be carefully read, for they will guide the reader through the book.

While we strove to eliminate unnecessary duplication in the book, there is some purposeful duplication. Unnecessary duplication in a book is like placing one shingle directly on top of another shingle on a roof. This does not guarantee that the roof will not be filled with holes. Purposeful duplication is similar to placing the end of a shingle over the end of another shingle. When this is done carefully, it produces continuity and eliminates holes. Thus, we have retained the duplication that provides continuity, eliminates holes, and reinforces the points we have tried to make.

The fourth edition of *The Heart* had “daughters.” They were *Self-Assessment and Review of the Heart* and five Updates. The self-assessment book was developed so that Continuing Medical Education (CME) credit was given by the Department of Continuing Medical Education of Emory University School of Medicine. The Update series has been very popular. (An index was placed in the last Update of the series). The purpose of the Updates has been to present new ideas that updated the information presented in the previous editions of *The Heart*; old subjects that needed updating and new emphasis; and more detailed discussions of interesting subjects. The discussions in the Updates have been exciting and may not be found in other textbooks or journals.

The daughters were well received by the read-

1. Tuchman, B. W.: In Search of History, *Radcliffe Quarterly*, 65(1):34, 1979.

2. Hurst, J. W. (ed.): The Perils of Excellence, in “Four Hats”, Year Book Medical Publishers, New York, 1970, pp. 42–44.

ership and will continue. Accordingly, a self-assessment book (permitting CME credit) and five Updates will follow this edition also. *The Heart* plus the self-assessment book plus the five Updates offer the most extensive discussions of the heart and its diseases that have ever been developed.

I want to express my appreciation to all who made this edition of *The Heart* possible. I wish to thank our predecessors in medicine. In doing so I agree with the philosopher who said, "He who drinks the water should not forget who dug the well."

I wish to thank my secretary, Carol Miller, who can type with lightning speed, edit beautifully, keep order, and smile. I also thank Paula Noriega and Mary Garner in my office for their special contribution to typing and editing the manuscripts. They are invaluable.

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I encourage the readers to write me. Remember, the book is written for *physicians and others who take care of patients*. We hope you have as much fun reading—and studying—the book as we did writing it.

J. Willis Hurst, M.D.

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THE HEART

Arteries and Veins

Prologue
