

Percival Bailey



1892-1973

PERCIVAL BAILEY was born prematurely on May 9, 1892 in Mt. Vernon, Illinois while his mother was visiting there. He was christened Percival Sylvester Bailey, but the Sylvester was dropped very early. However, since he disliked the abbreviation of Percival to Percy, he used the name Ves until he went to college. He grew up near Springerton, Illinois. He attended Southern Illinois Normal School at Carbondale, Illinois, was a Phi Beta Kappa Ph.D. graduate from the University of Chicago, and attended medical school in Chicago at Rush, Northwestern. He began his neurosurgical training in Harvey Cushing's Clinic in Boston. However, Cushing was just organizing his program at Peter Bent Brigham, so Bailey returned to Chicago for a year on the Neurology and Psychiatry wards at Cook County Hospital. He then went to Europe, where the clinics of the Salpetriere stimulated his desire to return to Cushing's service, where he hoped to utilize his newly acquired knowledge of Cajal's neuroanatomical techniques. He adapted these techniques to the glial tumors of the nervous system, which Cushing had accumulated. After over two years of work with Cushing's tumors, he proposed a classification of the gliomas of the nervous system, based on the embryology of the brain. In their classic monograph, Cushing and Bailey correlated the pathological picture of tumors with their clinical history. A subsequent series of papers in collaboration with colleagues and pupils extended this classification to include rarer types and the meningeal neoplasms.

In 1928, he was appointed Professor of Neurology and Neurosurgery at the University of Chicago, a position he held until 1941. When Eric Oldberg persuaded the University of Illinois to establish the Illinois Neuropsychiatric Institute, Dr. Bailey joined him. During this period, his work with McCulloch on the fiber connections of the cerebral cortex and his studies, with von Bonin, of the cytoarchitecture of the cerebral cortex were carried out. He also edited a stereotactic atlas of the brain, in collaboration with Georges Schaltenbrand of Wurzburg, Germany, and taught in the medical schools of Harvard and Northwestern.

In 1951, he became Director of the Illinois State Psychopathic Institute, and later, Research Director of the State Psychiatric Institute. He was instrumental in establishing the former, as well as the Illinois Psychiatric Training and Research Authority.

He was an honorary or corresponding member of 25 professional societies, and a member of 15 societies in the United States. Between 1914 and 1956, he received 44 awards, lectureships, etc. He published 260 articles and eight books. His autobiographical tales reveal not only his ability as a raconteur, but also his penetrating observations and sympathetic understanding of humans and their nature.

In his later years, Dr. Bailey turned his interests to the scientific needs of psychiatry. He is remembered for his exemplary teaching, his stimulating and inquiring mind tempered with a keen wit, and his sage advice. Although not an original member of The Society of Neurological Surgeons, he was prominent in the discussions of The Society in its early days and exerted great influence.

A collection of his literary presentations was published in *Up from Little Egypt* by Dr. Paul Bucy using his Buckskin Press 1969.