

MD REMEMBERS: Dr. Florence Sabin

Anatomist-hematologist Dr. Florence Rena Sabin who was the first woman to teach at Johns Hopkins, the first to become a member of the Rockefeller Institute and the National Academy of Sciences, was born on November 9, 1871 in Central City, Colorado. After a distinguished career in research on the formation of blood cells, the origin of the lymphatic system and the pathology of tuberculosis, she came out of retirement when she was 76 to head Denver's department of health and charity.

The daughter of a gold and silver miner and a schoolteacher, she was a precocious child. At four she told a woman who was dipping a ladle into a common drinking pail: "That isn't a very hygienic arrangement you have there." She was eight when her mother died and she was sent to boarding school, then to live with an uncle in Chicago and later to Vermont Academy. In high school she planned to be a professional pianist but she majored in zoology at Smith College, received her B. S. in 1893 and taught mathematics for several years to earn money for medical school.

One of the first women to enter

Johns Hopkins, she was awarded her M. D. in 1900, interned at the school's hospital and became assistant in Dr. Franklin Paine Mall's anatomy department.

In 1925 she joined the Rockefeller Institute where a young British researcher who visited her laboratory later recalled that he was "welcomed by a kindly looking woman with greying hair and shrewd eyes, obviously working at the bench with her collaborators." He also remembered that Dr. Sabin, who was called one of the foremost scientists of all time, showed her shy guest her new technique and treated him as if he were a colleague.

When Dr. Sabin left the laboratory bench to return to Colorado she had published more than 100 scientific papers, including a series of beautifully illustrated monographs and an atlas on the medulla and brain stem. Her retirement was short-lived for when she was asked to serve on the postwar planning committee she traveled around the state enlisting support for new improved health laws. She said she was "bumptious enough to ask the dairy industry why they fought the program" and in the end she was

able to enlist its cooperation.

On her 80th birthday when the University of Colorado named a building for research in cellular biology for Dr. Sabin, she had re-



ceived 13 honorary degrees, a Lasker Award, the Trudeau Medal and many other honors. At 81 she retired as head of Denver's health department to care for her ailing older sister but the strain of nursing was great and she contracted pneumonia. She was well enough on October 1, 1953 to root for the Giants while watching a televised baseball game, but during the 7th inning she got out of bed, collapsed and never recovered.

MD's HONORS LIST

Columbia University's \$25,000 Louisa Gross Horwitz Prize was recently awarded to

Dr. Hugh E. Huxley of Cambridge University for his studies of muscle contraction and the localization of

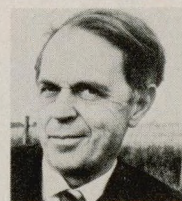
the functional proteins, myosin and actin. Dr. Huxley's citation stated that his "sliding filament hypothesis . . . provides for the first time an understanding of the manner in which chemical energy can be transformed into mechanical energy in the living organism."

The Public Health Service's commendation medal was recently won by **Dr. Frank E. Lundin, Jr.** for organizing a definitive study of the epidemiology of lung cancer among uranium miners.

The James B. Herrick Award of

the American Heart Association was recently presented to **Dr. Tinsley R. Harrison** of Birmingham for his contributions to the advancement and practice of clinical cardiology. The association's Louis N. Katz basic science research prize for young investigators was received by **Dr. Cristobal G. dos Remedios** of San Francisco for his studies on the molecular basis of muscle contraction.

At the 99th annual meeting of the American Public Health Association a Bronfman Prize was awarded to **Dr. John H. F. Brothertson**, chief

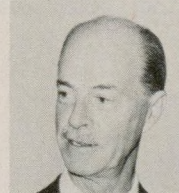


medical officer of the Scottish Home and Health Department, "for his achievements as a health administrator, medical educator, scientist and internationalist."

Dr. Johnathan W. Uhr, director of the Irvington House Institute for

Rheumatic Fever and Allied Diseases at the New York University Medical Center recently received the 1971 Squibb Award for excellence in achievement in the field of infectious diseases.

The Bristol Award of the Infectious Diseases Society of America was presented to **Dr. Colin M. MacLeod**, president of the Oklahoma Medical Research



Foundation who was cited for his early work that demonstrated the biologic activity of DNA and for showing the effectiveness of polyvalent vaccine against four pneumococcal types.

The American Society of Anesthesiologists at its annual meeting in Atlanta conferred its distinguished service award on **Dr. Henry Knowles Beecher**, professor emeritus at Harvard.