

copy for John Doyle

The New York Obstetrical Society

A Memorial Resolution to Dr. Charles M. Steer, Life Member, delivered at the December 1990 meeting of the Society held at the Yale Club.

In February this society lost its distinguished Life Member, Dr. Charles M. Steer, of Bronxville, New York, one week after his 77th birthday, as the result of heavy bleeding from multiple diverticuli of the large bowel, myasthenia gravis and coronary artery disease. He died at the Presbyterian Hospital where he had spent his entire professional career except for three years in the U.S. Army. At his death he was Emeritus Professor of <sup>clinical</sup> Obstetrics and Gynecology at the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Columbia University and Consultant, Obstetrics and Gynecology, at the Presbyterian Hospital in the City of New York.

Charlie Steer, born in 1913, brought up and educated through high school in New Jersey, matriculated at Columbia College in New York in 1929 graduating with a B.A. in 1933. He entered the College of Physicians and Surgeons that September graduating in '37 with his M.D. degree. After a year's rotating internship at the Jersey City Medical Center he returned to West 168th Street as an intern in Ob/Gyn in the Sloane Hospital for Women, properly called the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology of the Presbyterian Hospital in the City of New York, then entering the Ob/Gyn residency and becoming chief resident in 1942, when he also received the degree of Doctor of Medical Science from P & S. He joined the U.S. Army Medical Corps in '43 as a first lieutenant to spend 2 years as a Battalion Aid Surgeon with the paratroopers. He

then became chief of general surgery and assistant chief of surgery at the Newton D. Baker U.S. Army General Hospital where he apparently did neurosurgery!!! During the war he also married, having met his bride, Miss Catherine Quinn, at Sloane where she was nursing supervisor in the Sloane Operating Room. In future years this union produced 2 <sup>attractive</sup> daughters, Anne and Betsy, known to many in this audience.

Major Steer returned to Sloane in '46 as a civilian junior attending Obstetrician/Gynecologist; here he spent the remainder of his professional life.

He became a diplomate of the American Board of Obs/Gyn, a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons and a Fellow of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists as well as Professor of Clinical Obs/Gyn. From 1968 to 1970 he was Acting Chairman and Director of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at <sup>the Columbia</sup> Presbyterian <sup>Medical Center</sup>.

An expert gynecologist and surgeon as well as an obstetrician, his major interest lay in obstetrics and his many publications were largely in this area. These included x-ray evaluation of the pelvis, fetopelvic disproportion, breech, electrohysterography, fetal distress and many others. Charlie was a fine teacher as many P & S students and Sloane residents will remember, He loved (after his family) - Columbia, the College, P & S, and particularly the Department of Ob/Gyn (Sloane) The department ran very well during

his chairmanship which was dignified and perceptive. His sagacious advice, when sought by others faced with problems, professional or personal, was always discerning and sound. Chas pursued lofty ideals, with "excellence" the dominant principle which by example he tried to pass on to others. As a raconteur and humorist, he often lightened our day. We thought very well of Charlie; he was loved and respected.

Charlie died six years after retiring; he is survived by his wife, Catherine Steer (nee Quinn) and two daughters Betsy and Anne, (Mrs. Philip Miller and Mrs. Ralph Sheridan respectively).

Equinn W. Munnell, M.D.