

Obituary

LEO LOEB

1869-1959

Dr. Loeb was a charter member of the American Association for Cancer Research and was president of this association in 1911. He died December 28, 1959.

Dr. Loeb was born on September 21, 1869, in Mayen, Germany. He studied science and medicine at the Universities of Heidelberg, Berlin, Freiburg, and Zurich from 1889 to 1896. At the latter he received his M.D. degree. Dr. Loeb, to the last days of his life, had very progressive ideas. The Prussian spirit of his country did not fit in with his beliefs. He said, "I had to come to a country where people believed in and tried to develop individual human dignity."

He left Zurich and arrived in the United States in 1897, coming to Chicago where his brother, Jacques Loeb, was professor of physiology. Dr. Loeb began his practice of medicine in Chicago, but it never brought him complete satisfaction, so he carried on his cancer research in a homemade laboratory at the back of a drugstore. Sometimes when, at Washington University, his co-workers complained of some inconvenience in the laboratory, he said, "You should have been with me in those days when I kept my mice in the back of a drugstore and did all the work myself. In addition, I bought my mice with my own money."

Dr. Loeb's impulse to do research was so great that after 10 months he left his practice to become a teacher at the University of Illinois. In 1903 he accepted a research fellowship at McGill University and a year later became assistant professor of experimental pathology at the University of Pennsylvania. Here, in 1907, he discovered the hereditary factor in mammary cancer in mice and demonstrated the transplantability of cancer. His experiments showed that cancer was not contagious but that there was a hereditary susceptibility.

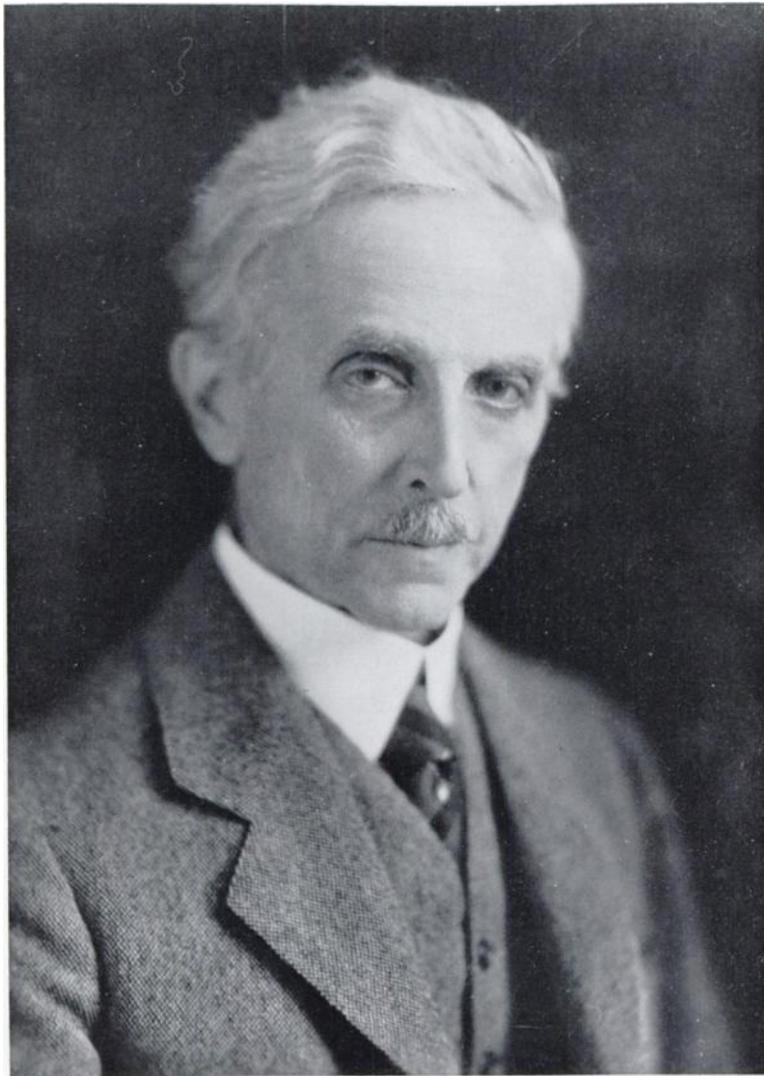
By 1908 Dr. Loeb was already considered the pioneer cancer investigator in this country. In 1910 he became director of the pathology department of the Barnard Free Skin and Cancer Hos-

pital in St. Louis, Missouri. During this period his major contribution was the experimental production of placentomas.

In 1913 Dr. Loeb published a book, *Venom of Heloderma*. This was but one of the many subjects other than cancer which captivated his interest. In 1915 he was appointed Professor of Comparative Pathology at Washington University. On the resignation of E. L. Opie in 1924 he became Professor of Pathology and head of the department, a position which he held until retirement in 1937. Then, as Emeritus Professor, he continued his work in quarters provided by the Oscar Johnson Institute of the same university.

Dr. Loeb's achievements in endocrinology are well known. Many papers were written by him and his associates on the effect of hormones on the production of cancer of the mammary gland and cervix. Years ago, when ready-made hormones for injection were not available, it was necessary to collect fluids from Graafian follicles of fresh ovaries of pigs and inject them into the mice. In the last 25 years much progress has indeed been made for which individuals like Dr. Loeb were mainly responsible.

As a recognized pioneer in cancer research, Dr. Loeb gave guidance to subsequent work in this field. He characterized tumor and tissue growth, and he shares with Ross Harrison the credit for tissue culture *in vitro*. His continued investigations on tissue transplantation brought very fruitful results, which were published in his book *The Biological Basis of Individuality*. This was commenced in 1930 and completed in 1945. Dr. Loeb had faith that it would be of interest to biologists, general pathologists, and also surgeons who practice tissue grafting. Other parts of the book should certainly prove of lasting interest to geneticists and immunologists. In his conclusion he said, "In matters which relate to man as a psychical-social organism, it is the environment which has become a preponderating influence and which largely determines his fate. To adapt the psychical-social environ-



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ment to the needs of man, so that he can function in the most adequate manner is, therefore, the most important task which humanity has now to face.”

Dr. Loeb is survived by his wife, Mrs. Georgiana Loeb, to whom he was married in 1922 and who is a doctor of medicine herself. He dedicated

his book, *The Biological Basis of Individuality*, to his wife, his beloved companion.

V. SUNTZEFF

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Cancer Research

The Journal of Cancer Research (1916–1930) | The American Journal of Cancer (1931–1940)

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