



“Uncle Harvey, as he was affectionately called . . .”

GEORGE L. PHILLIPS

(1973)

At the time he received this award, George L. Phillips was a hospital pharmacy consultant. He retired in 1972 as the Director of Pharmacy Service at the University of Michigan Hospital, Ann Arbor.

Uncle Harvey

Joe Oddis was first to both notify and congratulate me on having been named the recipient of the Harvey A. K. Whitney Lecture Award for 1973. In the same conversation, he advised me to start thinking about the title of my address. It occurred to me that I might be the last of Whitney’s residents to receive this Award and that I am also one of the dwindling number of people linked to the times and life of Uncle Harvey, as he was affectionately called by coworkers and students. Therefore, I shall try to tell you why we are here to honor this man tonight.

A couple of days after Joe’s call, Walter Frazier called to offer me his good wishes. I told him of my intention to tell the Whitney story and advised that I would be visiting Cincinnati to obtain information from Harvey A. K. Whitney II. Walter then invited my wife and me to stay at his home while we were in Cincinnati. Walter telephoned again on the evening of Wednesday, April 18, to firm up the date of our visit. Three days later, on Saturday, Harvey II called to relate the tragic news of Walter’s death while working in the garden of his church. Thus, one week after last hearing from Walter, we were sorrowfully attending his funeral on Wednesday, April 25, 1973. Needless to say, this started off my historical search on a very sad note as

Walter and I had been close friends since his postgraduate training days at Michigan nearly 30 years ago.

In 1958, when Walter Frazier received this same Award in Los Angeles, he said:

To be the recipient of an honor such as the Harvey A. K. Whitney Award causes one to reflect on his indebtedness to those who have been responsible for this recognition. This Award provides the opportunity for me to transmit the honor to my colleagues, to those who have generously given me ideas to use and who have inspired me to use them, and who have given me the insight to understand the true meaning of pharmacy and the vast possibilities for a full and pleasant professional life in the practice of hospital pharmacy.

This nicely sums up the way I feel about many people, including:

1. Harvey A. K. Whitney I, my preceptor and first boss after my father.
2. Don E. Francke, my copreceptor and teacher, who stimulated me to write and teach and yet allowed me great latitude helping him to run the ship.
3. John Zugich, who started in residency with me and later went into hospital administration and became one of my closest friends and good fishing partner.
4. Joe Oddis, who guided me through three years as President and Board member of the ASHP.
5. Vern Thudium, who was my strong right arm as Associate Director of Pharmacy at Michigan.
6. The hundreds of pharmacy students and residents at Michigan who always tried to give as much as they received.
7. And saving the best for last, my dear wife Maggie, who literally keeps body and soul together. She was born under the sign of Virgo and, true to her sign, is neat and orderly and helps to rescue me from my own sea of disorganization.

Adrian, seat of Lenawee County, is a small college town in southeastern Michigan about 35 miles southwest of Ann Arbor. It is called the Maple City of Michigan because of the fine old trees that shade its quiet streets. It was here that Arthur and Emma Whitney lived during the 1890s and where Arthur served as fire chief. On the cool, crisp fall day of November 7, 1894, Harvey Whitney I was born to Arthur and Emma Whitney at home, as was the custom in those days. Dr. Allan, a friend of the family, was the attending physician. Harvey was the first-born child to be followed by brother Arthur two years later and four years later by a sister, Gladys. Arthur is still living in Adrian, and Gladys lives in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

His natal day was also nearly his final one. Harvey often told the possibly apocry-

phal story his father, Arthur, had told to him. His birth had been difficult as Harvey was a bouncing 12-pound baby with an unusually large head. The nurse who was caring for Mrs. Whitney thought he would not be normal and should be allowed to die. She had relegated young Harvey to a basket behind the coal stove. It was there that his father found him that afternoon when he returned from work. He gently reshaped the baby's head and fontanelles and literally breathed life back into the little fellow. The excellent job Arthur did is evident; Harvey was a handsome boy and possessed a movie star visage in his twenties. The nurse was fired immediately.

The baby was christened Harvey Allan Whitney. Allan was chosen to honor the attending physician. The "K" was to come later.

Whitney's early education was in the Adrian schools, and he graduated from Adrian High School in 1912. During eighth grade and high school, he worked part-time in the hometown drugstore. In 1913, he went to Toledo to work for the Rupp & Bowman Drug Co. However, in 1916, he was attracted by the large salaries being paid by the automotive industry, and he took a job in the drafting division of Dodge Brothers in Detroit.

As World War I enveloped the world, Whitney served in the U.S. Army Medical Corps. After an honorable discharge, he entered the College of Pharmacy of the University of Michigan and received his Ph.C. degree in 1923. John G. Searle of Searle Laboratories was a member of his class, as was Dean Emeritus Troy Daniels of the University of California School of Pharmacy. Dean Daniels remembers Whitney as:

a gifted, conservative young man who was always well dressed and neat in appearance. He made friends readily and communicated easily but not excessively. He was a good student and demonstrated a well-organized mind. His notes taken from lectures were unusually well done. I recall especially his notebook and drawings in pharmacognosy as a work of art and Harvey received special mention for their excellence.

At the 50th anniversary celebration of the founding of Rho Chi in Ann Arbor on May 19, 1972, Dean Daniels also revealed the key role played by Harvey Whitney in the founding of Rho Chi. Dean Daniels said that, to the best of his knowledge, Whitney was solely responsible for selecting the name Rho Chi and for the design of the octagonal key emblematic of that society. John Searle recalled pleasant memories and pleasant relations with Harvey as a member of the pharmacy class of 1923 of the University of Michigan.

The year 1923 was important to Uncle Harvey for another reason: he married Hildreth Katherine Wheeler, whom he often affectionately referred to as "the blond." I am most indebted to Mrs. Whitney Hewitt for many facts and pictures used here tonight. For example, Mrs. Hewitt also relates that the story of Harvey's birth came out when she found a crocheted baby bonnet large enough for a football player among his possessions. She now lives in Boca Raton, Florida, and is married to Al Hewitt.

Harvey was appointed to the pharmacy staff of University Hospital in Ann Arbor in 1925 and was named Chief Pharmacist there in 1927, succeeding Perry Briggs. The

stage was now set for Whitney's major contributions to hospital pharmacy and pharmacy as a whole during the two decades from 1925 to 1945.

Of the many people I contacted who knew Whitney, most felt that his greatest contribution was as an inspiring leader. This was apparent in Dean Daniel's remarks concerning Harvey's activity in Rho Chi, and later in molding and developing a small group of hospital pharmacy practitioners into a subsection of the APhA and finally in August 1942 into the ASHP at the APhA convention in Denver.

One key to his success as a leader was his well-developed ability to communicate as a writer and a conversationalist. As an example of this, Leo Godley said:

I remember that he wrote me once, and I believe that I still have the letter. I still see it. The letter had great style and a great personal message. It made me feel that I had been chosen for something special. And I suppose that is what I think his greatest professional contribution was. He made us feel and know that we were involved in a specialty that was worthy of respect and preservation and development, and he compelled many to strive for this respectability and development through service and research. The electricity in the aura of his national influence was obviously the catalyst that influenced our professional effort. I really did not know Harvey on a personal basis. I always felt that I did and faked it.

Whitney served as the first president of the ASHP from 1942 to 1943, as vice president of the APhA from 1940 to 1941, and as president of the Michigan Board of Pharmacy in 1937 and 1938. Geraldine Stockert remembers him best from the APhA meeting in Detroit in 1941, one year prior to the official formation of the ASHP, when she was vice chairman of the group that preceded the ASHP. She said, "He was so sure the future of pharmacy was in hospitals and aware of the need to get the young pharmacy school graduates coming out of the colleges into hospitals and further build the profession."

Evlyn Gray Scott remembers Whitney's ability to see the potential of the young people around him and how he worked with them to see that they received a firm foundation in the profession.

Sister Mary John remembers Whitney as a friendly, compassionate man dedicated to hospital pharmacy, the education of hospital pharmacists, and the reduction of hospital costs through efficient pharmacy services.

Sister Mary Berenice remembers Whitney from the APhA convention of 1937 where he, Dean Spease, and Dean Muldoon all took special interest in the sisters attending the convention, made them feel welcome, and introduced them to the other APhA members.

Don Clarke sums up his leadership qualities with this thought: "Harvey functioned as a rallying point for his peers and, as such, generated in them a like spirit. This served to elevate many people out of a defeatist attitude to one of creativity and progressiveness."

To keep the ASHP alive in its early days and to allow for free interchange of information among its members, Whitney and Leo Mossman founded *The Bulletin of the ASHP* in 1943. Mr. Mossman is still practicing as Director of Pharmacy at Holzer

Hospital in Gallipolis, Ohio, and last month reminded me that the ASHP has come a long way since May 1943 when the total membership was about 120. After writing *The Bulletin*, Whitney would go to the Addressograph plate-making section of the University of Michigan Hospital and personally make the mailing plates for the members. As you know, *The Bulletin of the ASHP* became the *American Journal of Hospital Pharmacy* in January 1958. Thank goodness Editor Provost doesn't now have to make the mailing plates by hand.

Whitney is credited with establishing the first hospital pharmacy internship program, now known as a residency program, at the University of Michigan Hospital in 1927. This was 10 years before the first combined internship program would be offered by Spease at Western Reserve and 20 years before the second and third programs would be offered in Baltimore and Philadelphia.

Dr. Warren McConnell, a Whitney resident of the early 1940s, thinks this may have been his most noteworthy contribution:

What made the greatest impression on me was his recognition of the need for the well-trained hospital pharmacist to have a good understanding of the clinical aspects of hospital pharmacy practice. He insisted that his pharmacy residents attend clinical staff conferences, grand rounds and autopsies and that an intimate professional relationship be established between the pharmacy and medical staffs.

McConnell also recalls the night he was on call as a resident and inadvertently left the pharmacy door unlocked after taking care of a late evening call. The next morning, he found the following note from Uncle Harvey in his mailbox.



University of Michigan Hospital Pharmacy Staff, 1940–1941. Harvey A. K. Whitney I is seated at the center of the first row.

Flash Confidential:

Last night (11:27 p.m.) ye olde profit (sic) while engaged in “whether sniffing” had occasion to consult the barometer in the “club headquarters.” To his utmost astonishment the entrance way MCV was left unguarded, open if you must know. This is a most reprehensible situation, one, in fact, that has been known to lead to a “terminal” situation.

Signed: The Whipcracker

McConnell was so impressed that he still has the note and sent me a Xerox copy.

Don Creagan, a former Whitney resident with Mac and me and now with Squibb and known to many of you, recalls the following story of how Harvey I trained Harvey II, then known as Kim. Kim wanted to earn money as a boy by selling Sunday papers at a downtown Ann Arbor street corner on Saturday nights and Sunday mornings. Harvey was opposed because he could foresee problems in tying up every Saturday night and Sunday morning, but he relented under persistent coaxing and agreed with the stipulation that once a thing like this is undertaken, it requires a discipline and a sense of responsibility to stick with it, rain or shine, no matter what temptation would arise to be absent every now and then. Everything went well until one night Mrs. Whitney thought Kim should eat supper. In order to reinforce the idea that it was important to “man the stand” without fail, Harvey, acting the part of a good father, took over to relieve Kim while he ate supper. Along came two U. of M. nurses out of uniform and, not sure that Whitney had recognized them, they went by looking a little embarrassed and sheepish. It was reported to Harvey later that they had felt so sorry for him, they didn’t want him to know he had been seen. They thought it terrible that the chief pharmacist at a big place like the University of Michigan was paid so little that he had to moonlight by selling papers.

Muriel Creagan, Don’s wife and a University of Michigan Nursing School graduate, is quoted as follows:

All the student nurses adored Uncle Harvey, who taught us materia medica. In that era, student nurses thought they were on the bottom rung in the hierarchy ladder because to them it seemed that no one listened and everyone put us down. Everyone except one Uncle Harvey, who remembered all our names and taught with a kind, gentle and understanding manner, always with a sense of humor.

My first remembrance of Whitney was when he lectured to our pharmacy class of 1939 and told us impressibly about hospital pharmacy and showed us the facilities at the hospital. Four members of my class became Whitney residents, proving how well he convinced us of the merits of hospital pharmacy practice.

Dave Hamilton, a Whitney resident of the late 1930s, remembers Whitney as a great organizer. The program of internship he installed in Ann Arbor was a masterpiece of organization. To quote Dave: “On the rotating principle of duties, a young pharmacist learned more about hospital pharmacy in one year than he could learn in four years of studies.” Dave also remembers the drug card file that Whitney’s secretary kept up-to-date for him on his desk. A physician would call the pharmacy for

information about a drug, and Whitney would discuss current events while he was fingering through his drug information file until he found the card he wanted. Then he would offer the information requested. I am sure the physicians thought that Whitney had a photographic mind or a great storehouse of knowledge.

As you can see, Whitney was deeply involved in teaching pharmacy residents, nursing students, pharmacy students, and the medical staff of University Hospital.

In the day-to-day job of running the hospital pharmacy, Harvey also excelled. On April 4, 1928, Whitney was requested by the hospital director, Dr. Harley Haynes, to submit a written report of pharmacy needs for the next two years. Along with the usual requests for more space and personnel, he requested an autoclave, a hot air sterilizer, a steam bath, and a tablet machine. The closing paragraph in Whitney's letter to the director is especially typical:

Because these needs are regarded as necessary for the maximum interest and welfare of the care of patients, and because they are held as accessories to the efficiency of the pharmacy, they are not presented as debatable. In the event some reason must be attached to each request, I shall be glad to furnish this added information.

In the early 1930s, 40 years ago, Whitney had already accomplished the following:

1. Distributed a printed formulary of available drugs which had been approved by the pharmacy and therapeutics committee. He never stocked more than one brand of each chemical entity and had full permission of the medical staff to use professional judgment in brand selection. This formulary was later revised by Francke and became, still later, the basis for the *American Hospital Formulary Service* of today.
2. Published pharmacy drug bulletins for the nursing and medical staffs.
3. Prepackaged drugs in convenient dispensing sizes, coded and dated.
4. Manufactured many sterile products before they were marketed commercially, including allergenics and intravenous and surgical fluids. In the bulk sterile fluid manufacturing process, he, in conjunction with the U.S. Bottlers Company, devised a new mixing, filtering, and filling unit of corrosion-resistant stainless steel.
5. Prepared a wide variety of ointments and washable bases especially tailored to suit the needs of a large dermatology service.

Remember that he was doing all these things 40 to 50 years ago, several decades before they became accepted norms of practice.

Another of Harvey's good traits was his great willingness, almost an obsession, to share his knowledge with his fellow pharmacists. This was very apparent in the early issues of *The Bulletin of the ASHP*. Gerry Stockert says that he always had the answer when she would send him a "What do I do now?" letter.

Marjorie Zugich, pharmacist-secretary to Whitney, recalls his tolerance to the practical jokes of his residents, such as when a live goldfish would appear in a sealed “sterile” liter of intravenous water or when his Fatima cigarettes, which were stored in the pharmacy refrigerator, would be borrowed by a young resident until payday.

Uncle Harvey would frequently outdo us on the humorous side, as when he became the “flaming spot wizard” walking along the hospital corridors followed by a flame of ethyl chloride burning on the floor behind him. This he sprayed from a pressurized bottle of that local anesthetic which was concealed in his hand.

Tom Reamer cherishes his memory of Whitney during the Whitney Award banquet of 1957 in New York City. Tom was toastmaster; Sister Mary John, the Award recipient, was seated on one side of him and Harvey on the other. All evening long, Harvey kept telling Tom funny stories that made it difficult for him to keep his mind on toastmastering. That was the last Award dinner and ASHP meeting that Whitney attended, as he died in December of that year.

At the first Whitney Award banquet in 1950 in Detroit, when Arthur Purdum was the recipient, Harvey was asked to say a few words. He remarked that these honors usually come after one is dead. He quipped, “I may be diseased but not deceased as far as I know.”

In May 1944, Harvey left the University of Michigan Hospital to again respond to his country’s wartime needs. This time he went to Richland, Washington, to head the pharmacy department at the Hanford Nuclear Engineering Plant. One year later, he joined Ortho Products in Linden, New Jersey, as Director of Pharmaceutical Research.

The final decade of his life (1947–1957) was spent mostly in community practice, with one exception when he was Director of Pharmacy at Detroit General Hospital. During his last three years, he practiced at Middle Park Pharmacy near Detroit. Here, as usual, his patients felt that he was most understanding of their problems and always ready to help.

On December 2, 1957, Harvey came to the University of Michigan Hospital for the last time. There, on December 5, he was operated on for an abdominal aneurysm and he died 10 days later on December 15, 1957, at 4:40 p.m. following postoperative complications. I recall that my wife Maggie and I visited him at the hospital the night before the operation and that, as we were leaving and saying goodnight, Harvey laughingly said we should say goodbye as he fully realized the risk involved. Unfortunately, he was correct. His funeral was held on December 18, 1957, at the Muehlig Chapel in Ann Arbor, and he lies buried in Washtenaw Memorial Park on the north side of Ann Arbor. Pallbearers at his funeral were his close friend and hospital administrator, Dr. Albert Kerlikowske; a fellow pharmacist and state pharmacy board member, Jerry Totzka; and four of his former pharmacy residents, Don Francke, Don Creagan, John Zugich, and George Phillips.

Hildreth Whitney Hewitt admits that Harvey’s first love was pharmacy. She is quick to add that his second love, his family, was never neglected. He was a fine husband and father. He was never too busy to help with the children; although he used a firm hand, he never failed to explain to them in detail any problems that might arise.

When Harvey II was born, Harvey I decided to name him Harvey Allan Kim Whitney II and legally to add Kim to his own name. Uncle Harvey was a great admirer of Rudyard Kipling, and Kim comes from the title of Kipling's best known novel whose principal character was Kimball O'Hara.

Quite possibly, the influence of Kipling's *Kim*, and certainly his poem *If*, helped Whitney set the pattern for his own life-style. The dominant themes of *Kim* are tolerance, love, loyalty, respect, and self-realization. The dominant theme of *If* is that life is what we make it. Uncle Harvey's career and accomplishments are proof that he was able to follow Kipling's sage maxims successfully:

*If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with Kings—nor lose the common touch,
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,
If all men count with you, but none too much;
If you can fill the unforgiving minute,
With sixty seconds worth of distance run,
Yours is the earth and everything that's in it
And—which is more—you'll be a Man, my son!*

Harvey A. K. Whitney Award Lectures (1950–2005)

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