



Creating a Legacy: John Henry Evans and Ralph Milton Waters

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Conflict of Interest

- I have no financial conflict of interest

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Learning Objectives

- The learner will appreciate elements in an individual's legacy
- The learner may apply historical lessons from Evans and Waters to understand how their legacy might be created
- The learner will comprehend that a legacy is created over time by interactions with others and may be out of the control of the individual
- The learner will understand the concept of the silent legacy

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What is Your Legacy?



- How will Richard Nixon be remembered?
- As the "goat" of Watergate?
- As the President who normalized international relations with China?

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A Show of Hands Please

- Who is this gentleman?
- Prior to today, have you heard of him?



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John Henry Evans and Ralph Waters

- Evans and Waters were contemporaries
- They corresponded with each other and most likely interacted at meetings
- Ralph Waters is credited with the first Academic Department of Anesthesia in the country and is still revered almost 80 years after his retirement and almost 45 years after his death
- Evans remains, unfortunately, a footnote in history

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The Legacy of John Henry Evans in the 1980s

- Richard Ament remembered him as the “crazy old man” at the Buffalo General Hospital



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The Legacy of John Henry Evans in the 1980s



- Richard Terry remembered him as a medical student in 1937.
- Terry vividly recalled Evans’ demonstration of intravenous oxygen.
- Terry also recalled Evans as his residency program director

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Why is There Such A Divergent Opinion of Evans and Waters?

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John Henry Evans Brief Biography I

- Born on September 24, 1876 in Freedom, NY
- Spoke Welsh until the family moved to Machias in 1886
- Spent 6 Years in the Merchant Marine



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John Henry Evans Brief Biography



- Graduated from the University of Buffalo in 1908 with honors
- Spent one year as a house officer at the Buffalo General Hospital

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John Henry Evans Brief Biography

- Returned to Machias and opened a general practice
- Stayed until his brother was killed in a train accident



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John Henry Evans Brief Biography



- Returned to the Buffalo General Hospital
- Specialized in Anesthesia at the insistence of the Chairman of Surgery, Roswell Park

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Evans Academic Practice

- On June 2, 1913 Evans was appointed assistant in anesthetics
- He was paid \$2.00 per student taught--averaging 40 students a term
- In 2022 dollars that is about \$60.00 per student or about \$4,800 dollars a year
- Salary was cut after his return from the First World War

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Evans' Contribution to the Practice of Anesthesia



- Was an expert with Nitrous Oxide
- Did not favor the use of intravenous or regional anesthetics
- Firm believer in the preoperative assessment and risk stratification of patients

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Evans' Contribution to the Practice of Pediatric Anesthesia

- Worked with Tonsillectomy patients
- A pleasant induction and good overall experience was critical
- Played a "game"--the winner received five shiny pennies!



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Politics--National and International

- Evans was the President of the Board of Governors of the International Anesthesia Research Society from 1925 through the end of the Second World War
- Served as President of the Associated Anesthetists of the United States and Canada (1927), the Eastern Society (1928)
- Was a leader on the first international meeting of the Section on Anaesthetics of the British Medical Society and the IARS in 1926

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Politics National and International



- Given a 15 inch silver loving cup for his work
- July 1927 issue of the *British Journal of Anesthesia* was dedicated to him

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Evans' Most Remembered Contribution--Oxygen Therapy

- Believed that oxygen should be administered until cyanosis disappeared
- Was requested to help treat the victims of the Coconut Grove fire in Boston in November 1942



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The End?

- Was Replaced as Chairman in 1940 by Paul Searles from the Mayo Clinic
- Searles lasted until the end of World War Two
- Evans continued to practice until the mid 1950s
- Evans partner, Clarence Durshordwe, was one of the ASA's observers at the First World Congress of Anesthesiologists

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Ralph Milton Waters

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Ralph Waters Biography

- Born October 9, 1883 in Bloomfield, Ohio
- He had two sisters and was raised on a farm
- Graduated from Grand River Institute in 1902
- BA in General Arts from Western Reserve University
- Received his MD in 1912 from Western Reserve



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Ralph Waters Biography



- Began practicing obstetrics and giving anesthetics in Sioux City, Iowa
- To insure financial viability eventually switched exclusivity practicing anesthesia
- After WWI established the Downtown Anesthesia Clinic—the first Ambulatory Surgical Center!

Waters RM. The downtown anesthesia clinic. *Am J Surg Q Supp.* 191;33:71

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Ralph Waters Biography

- 1924 Waters moved to Kansas City
- Back injury
- July 1, 1926 spends 3 months at the Mayo Clinic learning regional anesthesia under the tutelage of John Lundy
- Established a strong friendship with Lundy which would have profound effects on American Anesthesiology



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The University of Wisconsin (Madison)

- Arrived at UW in Madison in 1927
- Chair of the Agricultural Bacteriology Department Edwin George Hastings (1872-1953) had married Waters' sister
- Chauncy Leake welcomed Waters and invited him to lecture in Pharmacology



Chauncy D. Leake, PhD (1940-1955)
Dean and Executive Vice President

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The University of Wisconsin (Madison)

- Waters' motivation was to "get medical schools right" on the teaching of anesthesia
- Health Issues
- Desire to be closer to family



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The University of Wisconsin (Madison)

- Waters established a three-year training program
- First and third years were clinical
- Second year was spent in the lab
- Exposed residents to the world of anesthesia as Madison was a destination for visitors from across the globe



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Waters Residents

- The Aqua Alumni represent a substantial part of the leadership of American Anesthesiology in the 30, 40, 50s 60s and beyond
- In 1934 Waters supported Emery Andrew Rosenstein as he left Madison and ventured forth to Bellevue and NYC



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Organizational History

- Waters was instrumental in the success of:
 - The Anaesthetists Travel Club
 - The Section on Anesthesia of the AMA
 - The evolution of the American Society of Anesthesiologists
 - The original American Society of Regional Anesthesia
 - And many, many more



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Retirement



- In 1948, Waters retired from the University and the practice of anesthesiology
- He grew oranges outside of Orlando, Florida
- He rarely if ever attended anesthesia meetings
- The once notable exception was the 1964 World Congress in Sao Paulo, Brazil where he was feted by the world and invited by his former resident Carlos Parsloe

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Why is There Such A Legacy Gap Between Evans and Waters?

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Legacy Lessons From Evans and Waters

- Much of Waters legacy as a founder, through well deserved, has come through the writings and talks of his residents and colleagues
- Waters choice of the University of Wisconsin—a leading institution during his career—and was a salaried employee Evans never had that financial freedom
- Waters worked to ensure that his residents would be successful and that the mission of academic anesthesiology would continue
- Waters left anesthesiology at the height of his popularity and effectiveness.

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Legacy Lessons From Evans and Waters

- Evans did not practice in a nationally known university
- Evans never had trainees—the residency began in 1939 and was interrupted by World War Two
- He was not salaried and therefore spent a great deal of his time supporting his family
- Evans, like Waters was an innovator—but the subject he chose—subcutaneous oxygen for pain relief was quickly supplanted by more effective therapies
- Evans practiced too long and was ineffective at the end of his career

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A Few Final Thoughts

- How you treat people day in and day out is critical to your legacy
- What you do on the national and international scene in organized anesthesia may influence your legacy
- Trainees are critical to keeping the memory fresh (Rovenstine, Waters, Dripps)
- A discovery may also secure your future memory (Apgar)



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The Silent Legacy



- George Russell, the Chair of Orthopedics has a theorem
- A significant change made in the operations of medical center by an individual who is not remembered for it
- Fixing the weekend OR schedule

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