

Siamese Twins Survive Surgery Here

In a dramatic operation complicated by the stopping of the heart of one of the tiny patients, Siamese twin girls who had been born joined at the pelvis nine days previously were separated successfully yesterday at Children's Hospital, 1740 Bainbridge st.

A medical team of 14 experts accomplished the rare feat in two hours and 35 minutes, beginning at 8 A. M.

FOUR PRIOR CASES

The operation was so uncommon, in fact—the American Medical Association said there have been only four prior cases in this country in which such twins have been separated and survived—that it never had been performed before at Children's Hospital, in the famed institution's 102-year history.

Head of the medical team that gave the twin girls, Pamela and Patricia Schatz, daughters of Mr. and Mrs. John Schatz, of Park ave., Carl Place, Long Island, a chance to live a normal, unfettered life was Dr. C. Everett Koop, surgeon-in-chief at the hospital.

OPERATION IS FILMED

Dr. Koop was aided by a group of specialists that included a urologist, a plastic surgeon, a neuro-

surgeon, two anesthetists, and two doctors who gave blood transfusions to the infants. Also present were four nurses and two medical photographers, who filmed the tense drama for the benefit of others who might perform the same operation elsewhere.

The actual separation of the infants, who were joined near the base of the spine, was completed at 9:20 A. M. and moments later, the heart of the smaller of the girls stopped, "possibly because of the child's separation from the better blood supply of its twin," according to Dr. Koop.

HEART MASSAGED

Understandably, Dr. Koop was reticent to talk about his role in an operation demanding the skill of many hands, but it was learned that he made a quick incision in the child's chest and began manually massaging the heart, which was at a standstill and empty of blood.

At the same time, a transfusion was given. About six minutes later, the heart regained its normal beat.

Doctors reported that although the smaller infant was born with a congenital heart lesion, she suffered no apparent ill effects from the stoppage. They indicated, however, that she would be watched carefully.

Dr. Koop himself remarked, shortly after the operation, that "they must be pretty good babies, at that, to have gone through this."

Children's Hospital, at the request of the infants' parents, declined to give any background information, but it was learned that the Schatzes have one older child, a boy.

The Siamese twins were born, reportedly in a normal delivery, at Mercy Hospital, Rockville, Long Island, and were brought to Children's Hospital Thursday night after the attending physicians, who had heard of the local institution's reputation, decided that an attempt should be made to separate them there as soon as possible.

WEIGHED 14 POUNDS

The twins weighed 14 pounds at birth, after which they soon lost 14 ounces, which was considered normal. Yesterday, before the operation, which followed intensive studies by the medical team, they weighed together 13 pounds, seven ounces.

Immediately after the surgery the infants were placed in separate incubators, where they will be kept for perhaps a week.

Asked what the "chances" of each infant were, Dr. Koop replied: "Fine, for the larger baby. That of the smaller one depends

completely on its heart, whose lesions would seem amenable to surgery later."

ORGANS ARE NORMAL

The surgeon explained that each baby had a normal "set" of internal organs. He said that additional plastic surgery might be needed "months from now" in an area about four inches in diameter at the point of separation of each infant.

Attempts surgically to separate Siamese twins have been confined largely to the last decade, when better anesthetics, more potent drugs and new techniques combined to make such operations feasible.

FEW ARE SUCCESSFUL

Few of the attempts, however, have met with complete success. Most of the twins involved—and there have been dozens of cases here and abroad in recent years—have died under surgery or lived only a few days afterward. That was largely due to the fact that the twins shared one or more vital organs that could not be surgically divided.