

MEMORIAL RESOLUTION
DR. GEORGE DE FOREST BARNETT
1884-1955

Dr. George de Forest Barnett, Professor of Medicine, Emeritus, was born in Santa Rosa, California, July 12, 1884; he died at his home on the Stanford campus December 9, 1955. He attended Stanford University, where he received the degrees of A.B. in 1906, A.M. in 1909, and M.D. in 1913. From 1909 to 1910, he was an Instructor in Chemistry at Stanford and from 1910 to 1912, a student at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. He was appointed Clinical Instructor in Medicine at Stanford in 1915 and from 1917 until 1919 served overseas with the Stanford Medical Unit in Scotland as Lieutenant in the Medical Corps of the United States Navy. Upon return from overseas he was appointed Assistant Clinical Professor of Medicine and in 1924 joined the full-time faculty to become Chief of Stanford Medical Service at San Francisco Hospital where he served until his retirement in 1949. He was a member of Phi Beta Kappa, Sigma Xi, the Society for Clinical Investigation, the Society for Experimental Biology and Medicine, the American Medical Association, and the Pacific Interurban Clinical Club.

Dr. Barnett was married in 1924 and is survived by his wife, Dr. Anna Franklin Barnett, and by a daughter and son, Dr. Margaret Yales Barnett and Edward Franklin Barnett. Two sisters also survive -- Miss Margaret Adelle Barnett of Santa Rosa and Mrs. Alvin J. Cox, Sr., of Palo Alto. Two nephews, Dr. Charles W. Barnett and Dr. Alvin J. Cox, Jr., are members of the faculty of the Stanford School of Medicine.

George Barnett was dedicated to the study of medicine as a serious scientific discipline. Never a reformer, he was always a sharp critic; he had little tolerance for the political or promotional side of medicine, which was really beneath contempt as far as he was concerned. For many years he led an important service at the San Francisco County Hospital, serenely aloof and above the minor intrigues which are inevitable in such an institution and which give so many men deep concern. Every one recognized in him the presence of a great man and his opinion was respected without question. And yet Barnett was in no way a visionary. He loved the students; he knew them all well and discussed their problems in a practical and helpful way. As a teacher he was outstanding. Not cabined or confined by an artificial blueprint, his teaching was an intimate expression of his personality; it was part of the man. The course in physical diagnosis was one of his particular interests; under his guidance through the years it became recognized everywhere as outstanding and perhaps inimitable.

Barnett left no huge list of publications; perhaps he was too critical of his own work to be easily satisfied. His brilliant and original mind was however constantly seeing problems; for example, it is to his acuity while he was working with Addis in 1918, that we owe the formulation of the concept of renal clearances, a fact not sufficiently well known. Not much of an outdoor man, he reveled in the pleasures of the intellect. He was a higher mathematician and an expert chess player. He became a fine pianist by practicing during off hours of his intern year.

But most of all George Barnett was a wonderful companion. His gentle sense of humor was a delight to his friends, and conversation—the play of flint on steel—he regarded as a fine art.

He loved those

"regions mild of calm and serene air, above
the smoke and stir of this dim spot--"

and he will go down in memory as one of Stanford's really great men.

John K. Lewis, Chairman
Sidney Raffel
H. Donald Winbigler