

MEMORIAL RESOLUTION

JOHN KENT LEWIS (1897 – 1961)

A native of San Diego, California, John Kent Lewis came to Stanford as an undergraduate student in 1914. After receiving his Bachelor of Arts degree here in 1918 and after a brief interlude as an infantryman, he became a Doctor of Medicine at Stanford in 1922. Except for a year as Resident in Medicine at University Hospital, Minneapolis (1922-23) and another as Fellow in Medicine at Johns Hopkins (1927-28), he devoted his entire life to medicine at Stanford until his untimely death on December 21, 1961.

Successively, he was an Instructor in Medicine, an Assistant and later Associate Professor of Medicine; in 1949 he was appointed Professor of Medicine and Chief of the Stanford Medical Service at San Francisco General Hospital. When the School of Medicine moved to the campus, he relinquished his San Francisco post and joined his colleagues at the University. He meanwhile had become President of the San Francisco Heart Committee and of the California Heart Association, and for four years gave important advice to the National Institutes of Health as special counsel to the United States Public Health Service as a member of the Cardiovascular Study Section.

Doctor Lewis was attracted early to research in cardiovascular physiology, and with his Stanford professors, A. W. Hewlett and G. D. Barnett, he published a number of pioneering studies on vascular sounds, exercise, respiration, and the production of lactic acid. A bit later, he turned his attention to thyroid hormone in relation to the heart. He was one of the earliest students of the mechanism and origin of the human heart sounds, recording these for investigation by means of fragile, extraordinarily fine membranes which he himself constructed. This was a classic study, one which is quoted by other medical scientists today.

Perhaps above all, he was a gentle physician and wise scholar.

His survivors are his wife, Katherine Bohlen Lewis, his daughter, Mary Katherine Lewis, and a sister, Mrs. P. W. Rutledge. To them, we of the Academic Council extend our deepest sympathy.

David A. Rytand, Chairman
Windsor C. Cutting
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