

Circulation

FEBRUARY 1951
VOL. III NO. 2

The Journal of the American Heart Association

Lewis Atterbury Conner, 1867–1950

ON DECEMBER 4, 1950, at The New York Hospital, death came to one of the most distinguished of American physicians. His 83 years had been rich in accomplishment and his life and acts had merited the affection and esteem of the many students and colleagues whom he had taught and influenced.

Dr. Lewis Atterbury Conner was born in New Albany, Indiana. At 21 he received the degree of Bachelor of Philosophy from the Sheffield Scientific School of Yale University. Three years later he was graduated from the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Columbia University and was awarded a position as House Officer at The New York Hospital, thus commencing an association which was to extend over more than half a century. In 1898 he was selected as a member of the original faculty of Cornell University Medical College. Two years later, at the early age of 34, he was appointed Professor of Clinical Medicine, a position which he occupied until 1916, when he succeeded Dr. W. Gilman Thompson as Professor of Medicine.

Over the course of years Dr. Conner's interests and influence embraced many activities. He served as a private in the Spanish-American War and as a Brigadier General in the Army Medical Reserve Corps during the First World War. He was a friend and advisor of John Masterson Burke and was responsible perhaps more than any other for the concept and development of the Burke Convalescent Home.

He was one of the Founders of the American Heart Association, and served as its president in 1924 and 1925. He was the first editor of the American Heart Journal.

Dr. Conner's pre-eminence as a teacher can be attested by all graduates of Cornell and by

many others who came into even casual contact with his remarkable example and method. His learning, his clinical judgment, and above all his integrity, made him the idol of the students and particularly of those chosen young men who were permitted to work with him as interns or residents in the wards of The New York Hospital. To them and to those who have succeeded them, his acumen and skill have become an unforgettable legend.

Dr. Conner's influence was most felt by those who knew him best. The casual observer might be impressed by his poise and dignity and might regard him as reticent, reserved or even austere. With those who knew him best, he was a delightful companion. To those in trouble his reserve was not evident and he appeared at once as a warm, sympathetic friend and wise counsellor.

Dr. Conner never expected praise or gratitude, but it is pleasant to think that he was frequently honored and that many tributes were offered to him. As head of the Department of Medicine at Cornell University Medical College and Attending Physician and Chief of Service at The New York Hospital, he was guest of honor at the dinner given at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel on April 21, 1932, to celebrate the union of the two institutions.

In the last year of his life he received the Gold Heart of the American Heart Association as one of its four living founders.

If he could know that this issue of *Circulation* is to be dedicated to him, he would be surprised and embarrassed but he would be pleased and deeply moved by the expression of the respect of his colleagues.

December 19, 1950 DAVID P. BARR