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WILLIAM DRAPER LEWIS

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William Draper Lewis died September 2, 1949, at his summer home in Bar Harbor, Maine. His death begets a feeling of personal loss to his many friends and to his former colleagues and students at the Law School of the University of Pennsylvania. It is, moreover, the appropriate occasion for a review of his services to the institution and to the profession.

Dr. Lewis was born in Philadelphia April 27, 1867, of Quaker ancestry. He attended the Germantown Academy and went to Haverford College, where he attained the degree of Bachelor of Science in 1888. He then attended the University of Pennsylvania, receiving the degrees of LL. B. and Ph. D. in 1891. As a student at the Law School he received the Sharswood prize for the best essay by a member of the graduating class, and won honors in his second and third years. In 1892 he became Editor of the *American Law Register*, one of the oldest legal periodicals in the country, and continued as Editor until 1895.

When Dr. Lewis attended the Law School it was housed in rented rooms in the upper floor of the old Girard Trust Building at Broad and Chestnut Streets. Its faculty included a number of the most distinguished lawyers and judges in Philadelphia and some of the more brilliant and promising younger practitioners. The older members of the faculty still adhered to the lecture or text book method of instruction while the younger teachers had adopted the case system. In 1896 the local courts had vacated the Criminal Courts Building and the

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Congress Hall rooms in Independence Square, and the Law School was accorded the privilege of using them. Shortly after the School had moved into the shadow of Independence Hall, Dr. Lewis was chosen Dean of the School. He had been, since 1891, an instructor in legal history and legal institutions in the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania and lecturer in economics at Haverford College, and had written several treatises which attracted wide attention. With the Honorable George Wharton Pepper he had launched a project for a digest of Pennsylvania laws.

He was in his thirtieth year when chosen as Dean of the Law School and Professor of Law by the Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania. His advent in these capacities marked a revolutionary change in the organization and work of the School. His first concern was to obtain full-time law teachers who should devote their whole energies and abilities to the work of instruction and research. He realized that however able and distinguished the older members of the faculty were the distractions of their vocation as advocates or judges made it impossible for them to give to the School the full measure of their abilities.

The next step Dr. Lewis took was to persuade the publishers of the *American Law Register* to turn over that magazine to the Law School. It was then re-christened the *American Law Register and University of Pennsylvania Law Review*.

With amazing foresight and zeal Dr. Lewis initiated the final step which was to put the Law School in the first rank of such schools in the country. He persuaded Provost Harrison that the School must have a home of its own, adequate for its present and future uses, on the University campus, and thus become integrated, as it never had been, with the University family. With untiring energy Dr. Lewis cooperated with Provost Harrison in raising what seemed an impossible sum for a Law School building, and at the same time cooperated with the University's architects in planning a dignified and impressive building which should serve the needs of a modern school. By 1901 the present Law School building had been completed and was ready for occupancy. That it was well planned is evidenced by the fact that now, nearly fifty years after its opening, it is adequate for the work of a school approximately twice the size of that over which Dr. Lewis presided.

During the early years of his incumbency as Dean, Dr. Lewis envisaged a new sort of digest of Pennsylvania decisions, which he and Senator Pepper later published. After the School had entered its new quarters there ensued over a decade of constructive work on the

part of the Dean in building up the faculty and the curriculum and in improving the quality of the School's work. During this period Dr. Lewis contributed vision and great administrative ability to the lasting benefit of the School. During this period also he carried a heavy load of teaching and editorial work. He edited several series of legal biographies and works of that nature.

In the early 1920s Dr. Lewis conceived a restatement of the common law which should be an authoritative compendium of the American law as it then existed. It was due solely to his optimism and vitality that the American Law Institute was organized and initiated this enormous labor. It was due almost entirely to his persistence and determination that the work was carried out according to the plans he had envisaged and resulted in the publication of a series of restatements which are without parallel in legal literature. Prior to his embarking on this work he had resigned as Dean of the Law School but continued to hold his position as a Professor. He resigned the latter office in 1924 in order to devote his full time to the work of the American Law Institute. He was Director of the Institute from 1924 to 1947. His health would not permit him to continue as Director after the latter date and, full of years and of honors, he spent the last two years of his life in well-earned leisure.

Dr. Lewis, as may be seen from what has been written, was a great administrator. He was also a great inventor and planner of legal projects. To the students who attended the School in his time he was indeed an institution. He has merited and has possessed the affectionate regard of faculty and students of the School, particularly those students he met in the daily routine of classroom work. His sobriquet was "Uncle Billy."

In a very real sense, Dr. Lewis is the father of the present School. In truth that School could not have been what it is today except for his vision, persistence and planning. Moreover he was one of the pioneers of legal research in the United States. We of the Law School family are proud of his accomplishments and acknowledge the debt we owe him for the lasting fruits of his life and work. Though he is dead he yet speaks.