Winslow C. Cutting

WINDSOR COOPER CUTTING (1907–1972)

SIDNEY RAFFEL

Department of Medical Microbiology, Stanford University, Stanford, California

Windsor Cutting was a man of unusual kind. There was a boyish openness about him, of face and manner, which in his case actually portrayed what lay behind. Portentousness was completely foreign to him; he could no more pontificate than fly, and he was as free of malice or rancor or bigotry as anyone can be. These were the qualities that caused the newspapers of Honolulu recently to describe him as a "wise and gentle man who embraced humanity." But these words don't adequately describe him; although wisdom, gentleness, and integrity are great human qualities, they do not explain one who became head of a department and Dean of two medical schools in the course of his career. He was a planner and doer. He loved to design and help build houses for his family, and he carried this creativity over into his scientific work, his departmental activities, and his efforts to get Schools of Medicine afloat. He was not above rigging up shelves or plumbing to help get a laboratory or a house or a school underway; in fact, he enjoyed the doing as much as the planning. A man of this bent needs a bit of iron tucked away in his spirit; he needs convictions upon which he can act, and the moral strength to counter opposing forces, whether people or things. Much as it pained him to harden his will, he stood by his convictions—patiently, and at times remarkably charitably in the face of bigotry or self-interest.

Dr. Cutting was born on July 30, 1907, in Campbell, a town in the environs of Stanford University, to two alumni of Stanford. His father, Theodore Cutting, was principal of a school, and his mother, May Cooper, was a graduate of the Lane Hospital (soon to be Stanford) School of Nursing. His paternal grandfather practiced medicine in Campbell for many years, into his late eighties. From these antecedents and this environment, Dr. Cutting derived a view of life that included a disdain for its trappings and a love of and curiosity about nature in all its forms. He was an ardent devotee of John Muir and the Sierra. His father in his earlier years had bicycled from Campbell to Yosemite, and although Windsor never tried to duplicate this feat, he managed, beginning in his youth, to climb the peaks and to explore most of the canyons and lakes of northern California.

Dr. Cutting received his A.B. degree from Stanford University in 1928, with election to Phi Beta Kappa. He then went to its Medical School, graduating in 1932. He cast about a bit after graduation in search of his ultimate interest; he spent over a year on the house staff in Psychiatry under one of his heroes,

Dr. Mehrtens, and then turned to Internal Medicine, eventually becoming Chief Resident under Dr. Arthur Bloomfield. At the end of his residency, with a new and shining world before him, he married a lovely young nursing student named Mary Weaver, and off they went in 1935 for three years of adventure and work in London and Baltimore. In England he was a National Research Council Fellow in the Courtauld Institute of Biochemistry, working under Sir Charles Dodds, the discoverer of diethylstilbesterol. At The Johns Hopkins Medical School, from 1936 to 1938, he worked with Professor E. K. Marshall, Jr., in the Department of Pharmacology and Physiology. His interests had by this time become centered in Pharmacology, specifically in therapeutics, and he returned to Stanford in 1938 to become Assistant Professor in the Department of Pharmacology, then headed by Dr. P. J. Hanzlik. He became Chairman of that Department in 1950.

By 1938 the Cuttings were on their way to accumulating six children, three boys and three girls, and he settled the family on an acre of land in Menlo Park, a town about 30 miles south of San Francisco, close by the main University campus. From this base, he remained a commuter to the medical school in San Francisco almost until the time the hospital moved to the campus in 1959.

There was a spirit of exhilaration in work and dreams during those years in the Stanford Medical School. The greatest anticipation for many was the plan for moving the hospital and clinical departments to the University on the campus. Dr. Cutting was in the vanguard of anticipators, and he bulged with ideas about how this might be accomplished. Hence, in 1953 it was recommended to the President of the University that Dr. Cutting would be admirably fitted to guide the School's destiny during the period of planning for changes in its locale and goals, and he took over the stewardship. During the next four gestational years he coped with faculty colleagues, old and new, with external physicians, architects, and University administrators, and under his guidance were hatched plans for physical facilities, an entirely revamped and original curricular plan, and a workable patch quilt of relationships with physicians in the new community. On a day in June, 1957, ground was broken on the new Hospital-Medical School site, and the first major phase of the transition had been accomplished.

Dr. Cutting remained Dean for only a short time after this. He decided one day, in a way that was characteristically firm in times of decision, that he had made his contribution to the School in this capacity. The next day he resigned in the face of protests from many who were close to him. This was in 1957. He then withdrew from public view into an office and laboratory set up for him in the Department of Medical Microbiology and called the "Division of Experimental Therapeutics." There he worked quietly for over six years, and I must report in this final salute that never once during that time did I hear him give way, even by implication, to the common frailty of carping at unfolding plans and progress under succeeding leadership. I considered it then, as I do now, a mark of the wisdom and generosity of spirit that were so apparent in other facets of his life.

His scientific interests throughout his life were centered on three major foci which he saw as having biologic interrelationships. He was much concerned with

the chemotherapy of virus infections, with cancer, and with fertility. He published over 200 reports, many of them in the last 20 years of his career, devoted to these areas of investigation. Meanwhile, he authored books dealing with the entire field of pharmacology and therapeutics. In 1943, a "Manual of Clinical Therapeutics" appeared, with a second edition in 1948. He published a textbook for nurses, "Actions and Uses of Drugs," in 1946. And his most recent and broadest effort was "Handbook of Pharmacology," which first appeared in 1962 and was brought out in its fifth edition just a few weeks before his death. The Handbook is a complete compendium of information about the actions of drugs, written in the clear and succinct manner characteristic of its author, and widely popular among students, physicians, and scientists.

During these years of developments in his own laboratory and University, Dr. Cutting was active in outside professional interests. As a member of the American Medical Association, he was on its Therapeutic Trials Committee from 1945 to 1950; on the Council on Pharmacy and Chemistry (later the Council on Drugs) from 1950 to 1962, and its Vice-Chairman in 1962; Chairman of the Nomenclature Committee, 1957–62, and of the AMA-USP Nomenclature Committee from 1962 onward,

In 1950 Dr. Cutting became Editor of the newly established Annual Review of Medicine, serving until 1954. In 1961 he assumed the same post on Annual Review of Pharmacology, serving until 1970. Meanwhile, beginning in 1957 he became a Director of Annual Reviews, Inc., and retained that role also until 1970.

His other services included membership of the Revision Committee, of the Executive Committee, and of the Posology Committee of the United States Pharmacopeia, from 1950 to 1960, and membership on its Board of Directors from 1960 onward. He was Editor of the Stanford Medical Bulletin from 1943 to 1950, and on the editorial board of Clinical Pharmacology and Therapeutics, and of Medicina Experimentalis.

In 1963 the University of Hawaii had decided to establish a two-year medical school, with the projection that this would eventually be expanded to four years. Dr. Cutting was asked to become Director of its parent, the Pacific Biomedical Research Center, and Dean of the School. He responded to this invitation with his usual zest for the challenge of planning and creating, and in the remarkably short period of two years the first class of students was under way. He integrated already existing preclinical departments, and established others by enlisting clinically trained investigators and educators who might eventually participate in the plans for expansion into the complete curriculum. The success of his over-all vision is attested to by the fact that beginning next year the School will be functioning as a four-year institution. Along the way, he laid plans for spreading the influence of the University to outlying islands of the Pacific—among them Okinawa, Pago Pago, and the Fijis. As one mark of this students with promise but poor preparation were brought to the medical school as "Dean's guests," and given extra time and individual tutoring to complete their training.

Just a year ago, Dr. Cutting was beset by serious illness, in the spring and again in later summer of 1971. He resigned from the Deanship while retaining his

professorial position in Pharmacology, and recuperated by devoting part of his time to overseeing the building of a new house on the northern coast of Oahu. He and his wife moved to this new place just a few months ago; in his customary way, he continued to do some of the physical work required to complete it. On May 17 he was asked to give the Commencement Address to the last class of two-year graduates of the Medical School. Shortly after this his wife sent us a clipping from the Honolulu Star-Bulletin reporting this speech and its reception, and telling us that Windsor had felt better in the past two weeks than he had in the preceding year. A few days later, on the morning of Memorial Day—May 29—he suddenly died.

Dr. Cutting's commencement address contained some of the warmth and wisdom that characterized this life. "Travel light and with delight ... Don't make too much money; you have to protect it and this means that you will have to look solemn. It can spoil your fun and may dull your conscience ... Don't be afraid to be a starry eyed idealist. Sometimes the great white charger turns out to be a little brown burro, but persevere ... Be something of a non-conformist. Who was Pope when Martin Luther was a dissident?"

Report has it that the audience responded with a standing ovation. As do all of us who knew him.