

JOHN WESLEY YOUNG—IN MEMORIAM

John Wesley Young* was born in Columbus, Ohio, November 17, 1879, and died in Hanover, New Hampshire, February 17, 1932, at the age of fifty-two years and three months.

It is fitting at this time to gather together a summary of the principal activities to which Professor Young gave of his energy, but the primary purpose of this article is to pay a sincere, but confessedly inadequate, tribute to Professor Young as a man and as a friend—as a man of many-sided ability with a long record of successes as research worker, teacher, administrator, committeeman, author, editor, and citizen; as a friend whose distinctive individuality and endearing personality remain real and living, even though their charm and vigor are now matters of memory alone.

John Wesley Young was the son of William Henry Young and Marie Louise Widenhorn Young. William Henry Young, born in West Virginia of native American parentage, had a varied and interesting career. After serving in the Civil War as a colonel, he was appointed by President Grant to the consular service in Germany. For a time he held a professorship at Ohio University in Athens, Ohio, but later retired to devote himself to business interests. Marie Louise Widenhorn was born in Paris, France, of a German father and a French mother. Previous to her marriage she had lived on the Continent and spoke both German and French with fluency.

When only a few years old, John Wesley took the first of many trips to Europe when his parents, ideally fitted for the task, took charge of a party of young people seeking a year of European travel and culture. Later, when his father's business interests required extended stays in South America, his mother maintained the family home in Germany. Hence, after four years of school divided between Karlsruhe, Germany, and Columbus, Ohio, John Wesley spent the six years from 1889 to 1895 in the Gymnasium at Baden-Baden. He then returned to the United States to complete his education.

Thus Young was not only born of an international marriage but also had the advantage of an international education,—an education by no means confined to formal learning from books, but one which included many lessons in the art of sane living in a world peopled with races and individuals of widely diversified standards, ideals, ambitions, and temperaments. Is it not reasonable to find in his early development and experiences a partial explanation of the unusual degree to which the mature man was open-minded on all questions, and uniformly tolerant of the views of others?

Although Young's years in German schools had many beneficial influences on his later life, Germany can claim little credit for his proficiency in mathematics. When he entered Ohio State University from the Gymnasium, he was granted advanced credits in both French and German, but was required

* A notice regarding Professor Young has appeared in the *American Mathematical Monthly*, vol. 39 (1932), pp. 309-314.