Sir Thomas Lewis was born in Cardiff, Wales, to a colliery owner. His clinical training was completed at the University College Hospital Medical School of London in 1904. He obtained his membership of Royal College of Physicians in 1907, being appointed to the staff of the London Chest Hospital, Victoria Park. Subsequently, he came into scientific communication with Sir James Mackenzie, the leading cardiologist of Britain.

Lewis brought the string galvanometer of Einthoven (giant ECG machine shown on the stamp) with critical criteria for clinical investigation to the bedside and into the clinics. Auricular fibrillation was then called "pulsus irregularis perpetus", or nodal rhythm, from the assumption that the rhythm producing it arose in the node of Tawara. Lewis advanced the interpretation by producing valid conclusion by electrocardiographic evidence that normal auricular contraction was replaced by fibrillary activity. He called it auricular fibrillation and reported it in BMJ in 1909. He also identified auricular flutter as a circus movement of the excitability wave at the origin of great veins.

Lewis and Rothschild pursued the study of excitation wave with a "unipolar lead" (the exploring electrode), placed on the dog’s heart and paired with a distant electrode. With this, the cardiac condition pathway was traced from SA node to ventricles and described in a paper entitled "The excitatory process in the dogs heart", in 1915.

During World War-I, he was invited by Medical Research Council to supervise studies on the soldier’s heart. He named a functional heart disorder observed in soldiers from the western front, as "effort syndrome".

Lewis also observed the sequence of events, which followed stroking the sensitive or normal skin with a blunt instrument. The “triple response” was attributed to a release of histamine-like substance from the injured cells in 1924.

Lewis shared his intellectual talents with research, hospital service, consulting practice and assumed the editorship of a new journal - Heart, (subsequently named Clinical Science) in 1933. His honors included fellowship of the Royal Society, CBE and knighthood, in 1921. He influenced and advanced clinical cardiology, which spread throughout Europe and beyond Several of his notable pupils from America were Paul D. White, Edward Bland, William Kerr, Samuel Levine, Arthur Master and Frank Wilson.

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