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HIBERNIA TURBEVILLE

*Earl C. Borgeson**

IT was 1950, in Seattle, Washington, at my first annual meeting of the American Association of Law Libraries, when an early mentor, Marian Gallagher, made a big effort to introduce me, a newcomer into the profession, to the experienced, influential leaders of the Association. Such company included Helen Newman of the Supreme Court of the United States, Bernita Davies of the University of Illinois, Bob Roalfe of Northwestern University and, among them, Hibernia Turbeville of Southern Methodist University.

I finally met the grand, southern lady I had heard about—she was gracious, personable, and definitely knowledgeable about her profession and the people in it. She was obviously willing to share with and contribute her skills to anyone wise enough to seek her advice. Her warm handshake and smile began a professional and personal friendship that continued through some forty-eight years and now beyond that, in my heart.

We would phone each other from time to time to ask a question or share a bit of library or personal news; letter writing was still in fashion especially when library matters or the affairs of the Association were to be discussed. Visits were dependent upon the programs of professional meetings and our ability to find funds for travel. No matter what method of communication selected, Hibernia's wisdom, understanding, and hard work always came through loud and clear—it was always good advice.

Lest one conclude that all was serious business, my most precious memories include evidence of her sense of humor. Sparkling eyes and a big smile often signaled the approaching comment designed to take the edge off of a touchy situation, to disarm an antagonist, or jut to add flavor to the fellowship of the moment. It was never used to abuse or criticize.

Then came 1978, when I was privileged to be appointed to care for the Underwood Law Library—Hibernia's Law Library in Hibernia's Law School. Oh yes, her character was felt immediately upon entry into the building. One thought carefully about questioning the what and why something was in a given place or handled in a specific way. The staff had been selected and trained by "Miss T" and had already worked for her immediate successor—their love and loyalty were obvious. Each book had been put in place, each procedure carefully thought through by Miss

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T—the purposes, logic, and tidiness were so clear. Yes indeed, this was a quality law library operation—a credit to Hibernia Turbeville.

One had to be proud to be the responsible custodian of this magnificent resource. One also had to know that dear “Bernie” (another name some were privileged to use) still held a master key to the Underwood Law Library. Every now and then this gentle woman would appear like magic in her old office and sweetly report that she had forgotten where the U.S. Tax Court Reports were located. Of course, one week earlier they had been shifted one aisle to the left to make room for their growth. These were times when her sense of humor was very apparent.

It did not take long to realize that this lady was and wanted to be a valuable resource for planning the development of “her” library for the decades ahead. She knew the building, she structured the staff and their work assignments, she organized the collection, she understood the faculty, she still identified with the students, she knew the alumni and the Dallas legal profession. She may have lent her talents to the firm of Locke Purnell Rain Harrell—such was their good fortune. But her heart remained in the Underwood Law Library. She responded enthusiastically every time I sought her counsel or participation in the search for new directions to move the Library ahead so as to be prepared for the era of technology.

What finer closure to my own career as an active law librarian than to know that I had contributed positively to the strengthening and growth of the Underwood Law Library; and to know that my dear friend, Miss T approved. She was, since that early meeting in 1950, always the lady, always the skilled law librarian, and, most important, always my dear friend.