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DEAN ROBERT GERALD STOREY: SOME RECOLLECTIONS

by

*Charles O. Galvin**

I HAVE had the special privilege of knowing all the deans of the School of Law of Southern Methodist University. Charles Shirley Potts was the first dean¹ and served from 1927 until 1947 when he was seventy-five, well past the usual retirement age. Dean Storey succeeded Potts in 1947 and served until his own retirement in 1959. One of the fortuities of the history of the School is that each man was exactly the right person for the task during the time he served, and each complemented the other in his contribution to the development of the institution.

Potts had hardly begun when the Great Depression threatened the School and the University. Just as the School was making some recovery in the late thirties, the impact of World War II caused the rapid diminution of an already small enrollment, as faculty and students left for various military and government assignments. I witnessed this calamity, for I started my law studies at the School in the fall of 1941, and after a year was called into the United States Navy. Somehow Dean Potts held the School together through the war, maintaining academic integrity and commanding the respect of the professional community for the training that students received. He believed in quality scholarship and a fine supportive law library. The excellent collection we have today in Underwood Library has its genesis in his dedication and that of Professor William Alexander Rhea. They scrounged and begged wherever they could and with severely restricted resources established early on a respectable working library for law students and practitioners.

These modest but effective beginnings provided Storey with an excellent foundation on which to build a school of national prestige. As my friend and colleague, Professor Thomas, recounts in excellent detail in the following memorial, Storey's vision was of a law school that was far more than a place where traditional legal theory was taught. He conceived of a legal center where students would have the opportunity for extensive clinical and law office experience, where lawyers from the freedom loving

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1. Judge Joseph E. Cockrell was appointed by the Board of Trustees of the University to serve from 1925 to 1927 as Chairman of the Faculty until Dean Potts's arrival.

nations of the world would assemble for advanced academic programs in international law, where lawyers from the United States would sharpen their practical skills in specialized areas in programs of study leading to advanced degrees, where lawyers and judges would meet for institutes, seminars, and symposia as part of a broad-gauged program of continuing legal education.

With incredible energy and enthusiasm, Storey plunged toward accomplishing all these endeavors. The Southwestern Legal Foundation, of which he was president and chairman of the board of trustees, was formed to conduct at the School a wide ranging series of programs in continuing legal education. These consisted of institutes and seminars lasting a few days, concentrated courses in specialized areas running a few weeks, and regular programs of several months' study from which a student might receive a certificate of satisfactory completion. Thus, Storey was far ahead of his time in developing institutional arrangements that permitted the practitioner to update his knowledge and skills by means of programs not dissimilar from those presently required for certification in particular legal disciplines.

Storey traveled the world and recruited students to enroll in the School's international program. He recruited faculty and students for both the regular term and the special summer program, conducted at the School for many years, offering lawyers from abroad a series of practical lectures in the Anglo-American legal system. To sustain these efforts he effectively raised funds for the expansion of faculty and the establishment of scholarships, fellowships, and prizes for students. Indeed, part of these funds provided the resources to convert a new struggling law review entitled *Texas Law and Legislation* into a journal of distinction now in its thirty-fifth year, the *Southwestern Law Journal*.

Yet with all this Storey had time to be president of the American Bar Association just when it moved to create the American Bar Center in Chicago. He was instrumental in increasing significantly the role of the American Bar Foundation and its supporting group, the Fellows of the Foundation, in sponsoring major legal research. He presided over the Inter-American Bar and caused that organization to host one of its major international meetings at the Law School. He had time to be dean of a rapidly growing school, to be counsel to the University, and to be a member of its board of trustees.

Despite an almost inhuman regimen of travel and meetings, Storey regularly taught the required course in Legal Profession at the Law School and his adult Sunday School class at the East Dallas Christian Church. He rarely missed either of these commitments. And somehow he found time, as Dallas Bar Association President Jack Hauer recounted in that organization's weekly publication, to do such menial tasks as personally picking up a set of law reporters and texts that had been offered to the law library by the estate of a local practitioner.

It was my honor in 1977 to make a keynote address to the Fifth Lawasia

Conference in Seoul, Korea. One of the hosts, the Korean Bar Association, presented a brochure of its history to the participants from the countries of the Far East, Southeast Asia, Australia, and New Zealand, and there, for all to read, was the account of the creation of the Korean Legal Center by Dean Robert Gerald Storey of Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas, U.S.A., and the initial gift in 1953 of books on Anglo-American law from the SMU Law School to the Korean Legal Center.

One would suppose that to make an appointment to see a man so fully committed to so many important undertakings would require considerable arrangements through a battery of assistants. The opposite, however, was the case. A knock on his door would elicit the familiar response, "Come," and he would interrupt whatever was in progress to discuss whatever the caller had in mind.

A personal word. My contact with Dean Storey goes back many years, for he and my father were good friends. Storey came to Dallas just after World War I from East Texas to practice law; my father came at the same time to head a branch of the Berger Manufacturing Company, a subsidiary of the Republic Steel Corporation. The two men participated together in civic and community work. My father spoke so often and so glowingly of Storey that I felt I had known him for many years. After World War II when I finished my law degree at Northwestern University, I was associated with a firm in the old Republic Bank Building a few floors away from Storey's law firm. It was then that I became close friends with Bob Storey, Jr. We became members of the Dallas Bar Association at about the same time, and were both active in the Naval Reserve.² Through Bob I saw the dean from time to time, and our mutual exchanges eventually led to my association with the Law School in 1952 as a member of the faculty.

As I reflect on these events of the past, a montage of many events flashes in the mind's eye. There is no way adequately to describe the man. Lawyer, soldier, educator, civic and professional leader, internationalist—he lived out a lifetime equivalent to that of several ordinary mortals.

So when a great man dies,
For years beyond our ken,
The light he leaves behind him lies
Upon the paths of men.
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

2. Bob Jr. and his mother, Hazel Porter Storey, later became victims of cancer within a year of one another.