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Frank E. Horack Jr.

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FRANK E. HORACK JR.

As yet, it is impossible for me to think of Frank Horack in the past tense. His spirit, blithe yet serene on the one hand, courageous and idealistically uncompromising on the other, will long pervade the halls and classrooms where he taught, and even the counters in his kitchen and mine, over which on many nights, in these past years, with tall drinks, we had so many spirited discussions, until we rejoined our wives in the bridge game which had ostensibly brought us together.

Frank had an insatiable curiosity to seek out and assess the problems of our society, whether that problem was one of the policies of the Department of Treasury of the United States, of the states of West Virginia, Indiana, or some other state, of civic planning for a great city such as metropolitan Chicago, or for Bloomington and other smaller communities, or a personal problem of one of our law students or one of the maintenance workers in the Law Building. He listened to any of these disturbing questions with equal consideration, and gave to them the same grave attention and respect.

He was equally accepted and equally respected in the ivory towers, the halls of the mighty, and in the homes of the common man. To him, the distinctions between these areas did not exist. All were a part of his universe.

It was of no concern to Frank if some student or law faculty member came to him with a problem which Frank had rather thoroughly researched, to the point that he would soon be able to produce a scholarly article on the matter. Frank did not give the applicant the specific results of his research, but he did ask him the precise questions which would lead his applicant to the same result which he had already achieved. He was not concerned that he had, in fact, given away something which would add to the intellectual stature of his own reputation. He shrugged off the whole matter with the observation that, "There is so much to be done, and if this individual does this bit, it will release me to concentrate on something else that needs doing."

I had come, a long time ago, to depend on the help of Frank Horack. On many matters of law school policy and decision which I posed to him, Frank never gave me the answer. But he proposed to me sharp and perceptive questions which inevitably led to the most desirable decision. On the day before he left on the trip from which he did not return alive, I told him over coffee, "We have an administrative question about which I would like to talk to you." Frank answered, "We'll get

together after I get back." More than once, in the past three months, I have instinctively thought, "I must talk this over with Frank" before I accepted the inevitability that Frank had passed on, at least to another level, which was presently unavailable to me.

Perhaps a student appraisal is more perceptive than mine. Shortly after Frank's death, I received a letter from one of his former students, James B. Young, which captures the living reality of Frank Horack as well as anything I could say further.

Therefore, I offer this unedited quotation, which seems to represent more than anything else which I have received the student evaluation of twenty years of Frank Horack's teaching:

"What an amazing man he was! Isn't it strange how one man can affect the lives of so many men—literally thousands? A few of us worked for him during 1954-55 on a pocket part for his revision of Sutherland's *Statutory Construction*. We were fortunate to know him better than the average student. Why did we work longer and harder for him than the other teachers? Why did we try to be more accurate—make a better report—a better answer—for a more critical approach to problems? I don't know what qualities exactly make up an outstanding teacher but whatever they are, they were all contained in Frank E. Horack Jr. The law school will never quite be the same without him. His intelligence amazed us all. One day in office conversation, I posed a question to him concerning insurance. He couldn't have been very current in that field but he scratched his head, took a drag on the ever-present cigarette and gave the answer directly and simply. He never was the scholarly sophisticate talking in realms of theory far above the student's legal head. Horack was the 'Little Dandy Plow and Tool Company from Green Pastures, Indiana.' As conversant with the peculiarities of Blue Gills at Yellow Wood Lake as with the intricate legislative process, Professor Horack was the unsophisticated legal scholar who painted the law as a vital answer to people's problems. All of us who knew him as a teacher are better lawyers because of him. Those of us who knew him personally are better people because of that friendship."

That was Frank Horack.

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