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Reed Dickerson: An Appreciation

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F. Reed Dickerson retiring? I don't believe it! He may be ending his tenure at Indiana University, Bloomington, and that will be an irreparable loss to the University, but, knowing him as I do, that does not mean sitting in a chair playing his trumpet. I am sure that more gold will continue to flow from his pen.

My acquaintanceship with Reed Dickerson goes back a long time. He came across a modest little paper on legislative drafting I had published many years ago, and I came across his text, *Legislative Drafting*,¹ the forerunner to his later text, *The Fundamentals of Legal Drafting*.² We at once recognized that we were kindred spirits, and began to correspond. Strangely, though, we did not meet face to face until just a half a dozen years ago; several times at meetings of committees of the Canadian Bar Association, at a seminar in Bloomington, Indiana, on the teaching of legislative writing, and also in Ottawa on his return from a meeting of the American Bar Association in Montreal. We also both appeared before the Renton Committee in London, England, although at different times, but we read each other's evidence. I feel, therefore, that I am qualified to pass judgment on him and his works—articles and texts—most of which I have read with delight. If I were a Supreme Court of nine Justices, I am sure the judgment would be unanimous.

His reputation as an authority on legislation, both interpretation and writing, and on legal writing in general is worldwide. Our language does not have appropriate adjectives to describe his works and his contributions; brilliant, outstanding, superb, are much too pale. His writings are not mere academic exercises; what he recommends and exhorts is being accepted and followed, not only by bill drafters, but by the profession at large in all English-speaking countries. His influence is ever-growing and will continue to flourish long after we have all taken leave of this terrestrial domain.

I join with the multitude in honoring Reed for his writing and teaching and in wishing for him many happy years in his “retirement.”

Professor Reed Dickerson

GEORGE C. KEELY*

“Who’s that playing the trumpet? He’s terrific.” The occasion for this question was an annual dinner-dance of the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws (NCCUSL) when some of the commissioners got up during the intermission to entertain their fellow commissioners and their guests. The trumpet player was F. Reed Dickerson—a man of unusual talents, great intellect and many abilities. Who would have thought that an eminent professor, noted writer and draftsman, and leading legislative expert could play the trumpet so well. But, of course, Reed Dickerson can do, and has done, many things well.

In debates on proposed new uniform laws at annual meetings of the NCCUSL, new commissioners will often turn to older members and ask after a distinguished member stands and speaks—“Who’s that? He’s good.” Reed Dickerson is one of the members of the Conference whose incisive questions and comments often elicit such an inquiry.

The Conference is composed of commissioners from the fifty states, the District of Columbia and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and of associate members who are directors of their states’ legislative drafting office. There are more than two hundred and forty commissioners and forty-six associate members—all lawyers. Reed Dickerson is outstanding in this group.

The Conference has written and promulgated many uniform laws, such as the Uniform Commercial Code, Uniform Partnership Act, Uniform Gifts to Minors Act, Uniform Reciprocal Enforcement

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