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My Recollection of Burnett Harvey

Douglass Boshkoff

Indiana University Maurer School of Law

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A Tribute to William Burnett Harvey

The Board of Editors, in recognition of his lasting contributions as Dean of the Law School, hereby dedicates Volume 75 of the Indiana Law Journal to the memory of William Burnett Harvey.

IN TRIBUTE

HARRY PRATTER*

Burnett Harvey was a man who made a difference. In the Bloomington Faculty Council his incisive remarks, delivered in an impressive voice, made him an important participant in that body's deliberations. When student protests hit this campus, he was seen as one who understood the nature of their disaffection and alienation—the opposition to the Vietnam War and their anti-establishment view of the University.

For the Law School he was a dedicated leader. As Dean, he encouraged and supported the faculty and imbued them with a vision of all that the School and they could be.

He taught a wide variety of subjects. Most exotic were courses that drew on his experience in Africa. His scholarly writings, always couched in a felicitous style, were most distinctive when he addressed the problems facing Ghana. His innovative casebook in contracts (co-authored with John Dawson and later with Stanley Henderson) was a rich teaching resource.

Most memorable to me was the warmth of his friendship. He and his wife Lou were gracious hosts, lively and fun to be with. A visit to their farm home in Vermont was an opportunity to enjoy the countryside and engage in good talk. Burnett was a fascinating raconteur, especially when he talked about his time in Africa and his relationship with Conor Cruise O'Brien.

In short, Burnett Harvey was a mench.

MY RECOLLECTION OF BURNETT HARVEY

DOUGLASS G. BOSHKOFF**

Burnett Harvey had many good qualities. Pictures of him often show a rather
reserved, formal person, one who appears to be hard to approach. Nothing could be further from the truth. Burnett was an extraordinarily warm and compassionate person who valued and respected the work of all members of the Law School community. A member of the secretarial staff once told me that he was the first person who made her feel that what she was doing was important.

Burnett resigned as Dean in the fall of 1970, while on leave in Africa. Then he returned to Bloomington for the balance of that academic year. During this period, I was serving as Acting Dean. Although he did not agree with everything I was doing, he gave me his unconditional and complete support. Not once did he embarrass me with public criticism or disapproval. He was too kind for that and I have always been grateful for his restraint.

Burnett left Indiana University almost thirty years ago. We kept in touch and saw each other occasionally. Indeed, we were in active correspondence shortly before his death. He was a class act and I shall miss him.

"BUT SINCE THEY GOT BURNETT HARVEY . . . ."

ROGER B. DWORKIN***

What a wonderful way to begin a career in legal education—having Burnett Harvey as my Dean!

When I went onto the teaching market in late 1967, I was blessed to have the guidance of two wonderful mentors, the late Herbert L. Packer and Indiana’s distinguished alumnus, J. Keith Mann. Herb and Keith helped me get interviews and then offered advice about how to proceed. When the field of available choices had narrowed, they both proffered the same advice: Go to Indiana. Keith Mann put it most memorably, telling me, “Indiana has always been a good law school, but since they got Burnett Harvey . . . .”

Keith’s meaning was plain, and he was right. Burnett Harvey brought the Indiana University School of Law in Bloomington a new spirit of excitement, enthusiasm, and shared intellectual enterprise. Something good was going on here, and we were all in it together. The force of Burnett’s intellect plus the gentle way that he brought us newcomers along created an esprit de corps that saw us through difficult times as well as good ones. Burnett did not do well in the role of subordinate, but he was a fantastic person to work for. He got my career off to a good start, and I shall remain forever grateful to him for teaching me the values of the academy—intellectual integrity, hard work, and commitment to one’s students and to the life of the mind. Our Law School and the world of legal education lost a great man when we lost Burnett Harvey.

***Robert A. Lucas Professor of Law, Indiana University School of Law—Bloomington; Nelson Poynter Scholar and Director of Medical Studies, The Poynter Center for the Study of Ethics and American Institutions, Indiana University.