VI. OF THE LAW LIBRARY AND ARTHUR PULLING

Should you offer yourself as a candidate for a position as director (head librarian) of the law library at any accredited law school today, you would be expected to indicate three earned degrees, from college, from a school of library science and from a law school — invariably, A.B., (B.S.), M.S. in LS. and J.D. Arthur Pulling had no degree, having gone to work in the Harvard Law Library at age fourteen, yet he was justifiably recognized as one of the greatest and most respected law librarians in the United States. That he acquired such eminence is a tribute to his keenness of mind, dedication, extraordinary capacity for work, and his warm and friendly personality which attracted and retained friends. He was ever ready to offer invaluable assistance to all using his libraries — student, faculty and practicing lawyers.

As indicated, Arthur Pulling began his career as an apprentice librarian at the Harvard Law School. At age 25, he was recruited by the Dean of the University of Minnesota Law School, William Reynolds Vance, to direct and to build its library. Shortly after World War I erupted, Pulling was commissioned in the Army as a captain in the Judge Advocate General’s Corps with the mission of assembling a working law library from the undisciplined collection of law books and historical material scattered in the various offices of the War Department. From all accounts he was highly successful in this assignment. Dean Reuschlein recalls that during his time at the Pentagon, during World War II, senior officers still serving recalled Pulling’s work and spoke appreciatively of him. After the Armistice, upon his return to Minnesota, the President of the University characterized his contribution to the building of an outstanding library as being of greater value than the contribution of any other member of the law faculty. And yet, because of his lack of formal education, he was denied promotion in rank. Today, the rare book room at Minnesota is dedicated to Arthur Pulling and proudly bears his name. In 1942, Pulling returned to Harvard Law School as associate librarian and curator of rare books. Shortly thereafter he became Director of Harvard’s Law Library and so served until his mandatory retirement at age 65. The year was 1953 and the Villanova Law School was on the drawing boards.

When, in 1953, Dean Reuschlein, who was searching for a law librarian, heard of Arthur Pulling’s situation, he betook himself at once to Harvard and proposed that rather than accept a position with the Library of Congress, which Mr. Pulling was considering, he should come to Villanova as a full professor and undertake the building of its law library. In no small degree swayed by his great love for law students and attracted to the challenge of Villanova, Pulling came and for more than
nine years performed brilliantly in putting together an outstanding law library collection. After he had completed his first year of service at Villanova, the University conferred the degree Doctor of Laws, honoris causa, upon its distinguished law librarian. Thereafter he was, deservedly, Dr. Pulling.

The high regard in which he was held is best attested to by people who knew him, worked with him and, without exception, loved him. On his retirement from Villanova in 1962, Professor Edward M. Morgan, who had been a Professor of Law and an associate of Pulling at Minnesota from 1912 until 1917, and Professor of Law and acting Dean and once again an associate with him at the Harvard Law School from 1925 to 1950, wrote: “Since 1953 the Law School of Villanova University has had the best law librarian in the United States and has enjoyed the benefits of his wide experience not only in the art or science of selecting, caring for and using law books, but also in making provisions for the housing of them . . . . An institution, as well as an individual, may profit from the mistakes of others. It has been said that the people have profited more from the folly of the powerful than from the wisdom of the weak. Certainly Harvard profited from the mistake of Minnesota in failing to recognize Pulling’s service by promotion of rank, and Villanova profited from the mistake of Harvard . . . . It is hoped that his influence at Villanova will be of lasting benefit.”

Dr. Pulling would himself ride a University truck and with students load books, deliver them and supervise their shelving. Judge Carroll enjoyed referring to Pulling as the David Harum of the book stalls. Associate Dean Garbarino ’56 loves to recall Pulling bartering for books and his indefatigable activity in exchanging with other law libraries, near and remote. Maura King Buri, one of the original library staff and now the person longest in service at the School of Law recalls his great joy in introducing students to the library and guiding them in legal research. Two years before his retirement from Villanova, Arthur Pulling was honored by the Law Library Association of New York as one of four “great librarians.” Dean Reuschlein reports, “Arthur characteristically responded with a paper entitled ‘The Pleasure of My Work.’ ”

In the short period of nine years the library had grown to maturity. It should be noted that upon leaving Villanova after his second retirement in 1962, Dr. Pulling went to the University of Maine and again began the work of building a law library for a new law school. His labors were terminated by his death in 1963 in the midst of his beloved law books.

At the dedication of the new wing to Garey Hall, John Cardinal Krol, Archbishop of Philadelphia, blessed the library and christened it in honor of the first librarian, Arthur Clement Pulling. This was done at the suggestion of Pulling’s protégé and successor, Jane Hammond, director of the law library at that time. As the library doubled in floor space in 1972, the collection had grown to nearly 160,000 volumes, with a seating capacity doubled to accommodate 325 students in the main
reading room. The number of carrels available to students was greatly increased. Microfacsimile reading and printing facilities had been installed. There was a rare book room (fulfilling a dream of Dr. Pulling), a periodical room on a lower level, a new Law Review suite and at the basement stack level, a bindery.

All in all, Professor Jane L. Hammond, '65 served Villanova for 17 years, ten of those years as Director of the Law Library. During that period she figured prominently in the work of the Association of American Law Libraries, serving as the Association’s secretary and later, as its president. She also had been a member of the Depository Library Council of the United States Government Printing Office. Not only was Professor Hammond the Director of the Law Library, she taught Legal Bibliography to first year students and served as confidante and counselor of women students. In addition to all those duties, she studied law and received her J.D. degree from Villanova in 1965. Indeed Jane Hammond served the School of Law with distinction and devotion for seventeen years until 1976 when she left to assume a professorship and the office of Law Librarian at Cornell University. Happily, she continues to serve Villanova as a member of the Board of Consultants to the School of Law.

Charlie R. Harvey succeeded Professor Hammond. She had been librarian for the Anti-Trust Division of the Department of Justice in Washington. During her term of office, 1976 to 1981, the collection increased to 200,000 volumes, the first computerized document retrieval system, LEXIS, was installed and training was afforded students in its use.

During an interim period in which a search for a successor was conducted, Regina Smith, now librarian of the Jenkins Memorial Law Library of the Philadelphia Bar Association, the then Reference Librarian at the Law School, took charge of the collection.

In 1982, Alan Holoch, the Associate Director of the Law Library at the University of Southern California, assumed the directorship of the Pulling Law Library. Under his administration the collection grew to over 270,000 volumes. The collection of microforms was expanded and computer facilities were augmented by adding an additional LEXIS terminal and subscribing to the WestLaw Computer Assisted Legal Research System. Significantly, an extensive training program in the use of computers in legal research is now available to all students. The library participates in the On Line Computer Library Center (OCLC), a computerized bibliographic data base providing instantaneous catalogue information from more than 100 major American library collections. The library is also a subscriber to the nonlegal information data base, DIALOG. Professor Holoch left his post at Villanova in July 1987 to become Director of the Law Library at Ohio State University. During his tenure a great many physical improvements were made in the library, enhancing
its usefulness and attractiveness to an appreciable degree.

During an interim period, Elizabeth Devlin, Esquire, served as Acting Director of the Law Library. She now serves as Associate Director of the Law Library.

With the beginning of the 1988-89 academic year, Professor William James became Director of the Pulling Law Library. Professor James came to Villanova after serving with distinction from 1977 to 1988 as Director of the Law Library at the University of Kentucky. Professor James earned his B.A. at Morehouse College, his M.S.L.S. at Atlanta University and his J.D. at Howard.