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Arthur Clement Pulling

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ARTHUR CLEMENT PULLING

WHEN ARTHUR PULLING came to Villanova in 1953, he had said "Amen" not to one distinguished but to a second distinguished career. I had a magnificent teacher when I was a law student at Yale in the person of William Reynolds Vance. He was a man to listen to, a man to emulate and a man to honor. He was a judge of men, but I never realized what a very good judge of men he was until I learned that it was he who took Arthur Pulling to the University of Minnesota in 1912 to build the great law library at that University which, even today, is referred to as "Pulling's library".

After three decades he left Minnesota to begin another career. In 1942 Dean James M. Landis brought Arthur Pulling back to the Harvard Law Library which he had left in 1912. His decade as its Director was an era of great achievement. I need not tell you that it was a decade of great expansion and that he brought his great dream to fruition in the establishment of the beautiful Treasure Room.

When we inaugurated the School of Law at Villanova in 1953, Arthur Pulling had just closed his second career — as Director of the world's greatest law library. To us he came with all the enthusiasm, all the dedication and all the loyalty of the expert determined to rear a law library that should be the proud boast and the joy of the University he was to serve for nine years. Here, in its beautiful setting in Garey Hall, is the great law library which Arthur Pulling has given us — an enviable collection numbering more than a hundred thousand volumes. But he has given us more than books — he has given us himself. To have all of Arthur Pulling is to have the embodiment of skill, ingenuity, industry, dedication and loyalty. We count ourselves blessed by his years of service.

We at Villanova have in times past attempted to express our gratitude and affection for Arthur Pulling. Villanova made him a Doctor of Laws in 1954 and the class of 1960 has placed Dr. Pulling's

portrait where all may see him immediately as they enter the Library which he created and nurtured.

Yes, Dr. Pulling gave us more than books. To the students and to his colleagues and to Villanova he has given his heart — not only his heart but the heart of the gracious lady who is Mrs. Pulling.

And now Arthur Pulling is leaving Villanova. But he is not leaving the service. He goes to build another law library; this time at the University of Maine. We are forever in his debt. Our esteem, our affection and our prayers go with him.

*Harold Gill Reuschlein **

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SPRING 1962]

ARTHUR CLEMENT PULLING

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 provision for the housing of them.

Arthur Clement Pulling was induced in 1912 by Dean W. R. Vance to leave the Harvard Law School library and become librarian of the law school library of the University of Minnesota. He began at once the process of transforming a collection of books into a library and demonstrated that the transformation could be made at minimum cost by one who knew the needs of the school, the sources from which the materials could be drawn and the methods of securing available books in good condition at a substantial discount or in exchange for surplus books. The net profit from employing Pulling during his first few years of service exceeded the amount of his salary.

In 1917 the office of the Judge Advocate General of the Army in Washington had a staff of lawyers who had had large experience in practice, but who had done no work in a law library for years. There was in the department a collection of miscellaneous books scattered in various offices; the elderly gentleman in charge of them knew each book and its location, but there was nothing that could be called a library. Pulling accepted a captain's commission in the JAG Corps, and in a few weeks created a good working library. In a short time he was giving these seasoned practitioners instructions in how to use a law library and soon became indispensable. In the good old Army style, a major, who was totally unfitted for the position, was assigned as his superior and succeeded in making Pulling's job more difficult, but not impossible.

After the Armistice, Pulling returned to Minnesota where his work was so outstanding that a learned educator, then President of the University, declared that Pulling was of more value to the law school than any member of the faculty. But his exceptional value seems to have been less appreciated by the administrative officials of the law school.

In 1942 Dean Landis of the Harvard Law School was on leave, the law librarian had retired and the associate librarian, who had been invaluable as an expert on rare law books, was about to retire. This expert explained that Pulling of Minnesota was his chief rival in competition for rare law books. It seemed clear that Pulling was the man

that Harvard needed and after consideration of the qualifications of some applicants who were graduates of library schools but who had had no experience with law libraries, Pulling was asked to come without particular designation as to title. He came, and soon realized what a tremendous job former librarians had left for him. What he did for the Harvard Law Library is a matter of record and is almost incredible. All that is necessary is to contrast the library and its management when he left with the situation when he arrived.

What is not usually expected of a law librarian is participation in other fields of administration. But one has only to note the following:— In Minnesota the delegation to Pulling of the preparation for the printer of manuscripts of the Law Review in its early days resulted in eliminating most changes in galley and cut the cost of publication to a minimum. And at Harvard he insisted that the excavations planned for the new dormitory buildings could be enlarged at slight additional cost so as to provide adequate space for storing about half a million volumes of law books. This resulted in the adoption of a general plan by the University for such storage space under new university buildings. His plan for using uniform conduits for lighting made unnecessary the cutting of standard-length pipes and the threading of the segments where light bulbs were to be installed. Execution of these proposals of Pulling saved the law school enough to pay the cost of operation of the law library for several years, or to pay his salary for the rest of his life. His contribution to the establishment of the Treasure Room in the Law Library was invaluable. But the rigid enforcement of a rule concerning retirement of administrative officers resulted in his separation from Harvard.

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 in rank, and Villanova profited from the mistake of Harvard. It showed its appreciation of Pulling's value by making him a professor of law and by awarding him the degree of Doctor of Laws. It is hoped that his influence at Villanova will be of lasting benefit.

It is only fair to warn the reader that this note is written by a life-long friend of Pulling who admires his character, his learning and his accomplishments.

*Edmund M. Morgan **

* Rand Professor of Law, Vanderbilt Law School. Professor of Law, Harvard Law School, 1925-50. Acting Dean, Harvard Law School, 1936-37; 1942-45. Professor of Law, University of Minnesota, 1912-17.