The Yale Law Journal
Volume 76, Number 5, April 1967

Arthur Linton Corbin

Memorials by

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Arthur L. Corbin

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To the bench and bar of the nation, Arthur Corbin was the paradigm of the great law professor. Those lawyers who studied under Corbin were privileged to know and revere, at first hand, his intellect, his judgment, his integrity and his humanity: in his classroom they learned that these are the qualities which mark the profession of law, when practiced at its highest level of aspiration, as a worthy calling—one which, in his words, "will continuously render the service that our ever-changing human life requires."[1] Tens of thousands of lawyers who never saw Corbin learned from him, and of him, through his writings—the myriad books and articles which culminated in the great treatise whose first volumes appeared when Corbin was in his mid-seventies, and whose last volumes appeared in his eighty-ninth year. A year ago, when he was presented with the Research Award of the Fellows of the American Bar Foundation, Corbin was rightly called "the dean of the teachers of law in America today."[2]

To this School Corbin has been rafter and roof-tree. Beginning not long after he joined the faculty in 1903, he bore chief responsibility for setting the standards and recruiting the new professors required to change a backward law school into a great one. It is proper to say of Corbin what he said of Judge Simeon E. Baldwin exactly forty years ago, upon the death of that stalwart of another era:

> The Yale Law School owes more to [him] than to any other person. This is not the debt of an abstraction to a name; it is the debt of several thousands of law students to a strong and steadfast human personality.
>
> No one living knows the whole story of [his] service to this School. For [over] sixty years his name has been on the roll of the faculty; and for more than forty of these years he played the part

* Dean of the Yale Law School.

1. *Arthur L. Corbin Honored*, 12 YALE L. REP., Summer, 1966, at 21.
2. *Id.*

> of an active teacher. . . . [H]e renewed and expanded the faculty. . . .
> . . . The Yale Law School will be proud to continue to build upon the broad and massive foundation laid by this man throughout his long and noble life.[3]

3. *Simeon E. Baldwin*, 36 YALE L.J. 680-82 (1927). The memorial essay on Judge Baldwin is neither signed nor initialled; but in Professor Corbin's set of the *Law Journal* there appears, at the close of the essay, the written signature "Arthur L. Corbin." The essay has, therefore, been attributed to Professor Corbin in the definitive bibliography which appears at 74 YALE L.J. 311 (1964). *See id.* at 314 n.3.