
HARD TIMES AND
BEST OF TIMES:

THE UNIVERSITY OF
CONNECTICUT
SCHOOL OF LAW
AT 39 WOODLAND STREET

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39 WOODLAND STREET
(Thomas J. Dodd Research Center)

THERE WAS A SENSE OF EXCITEMENT IN THE AIR IN 1940 AS THE Hartford College of Law stood ready to move to its new quarters at 39 Woodland Street. Professor Aaron Nassau remembered the stately house, former home of M. W. Jacobus, Dean of the Hartford Seminary, as a veritable “mansion” compared to the previous quarters on Niles Street. For Nassau, his colleague William Starr, Dean Edward Baird, and the part-time instructors who had carried the teaching load during the Depression days, 39 Woodland symbolized a promising future. As Nassau put it, “the days of struggle were finally coming to an end.”¹

And there was every reason to be optimistic — thanks in large part to the vision and determination of George Lillard. In many ways, Lillard seemed an unlikely “founder.” While he had a law degree

¹ Unknown, *Faces, Times Remembered: A Conversation with Aaron Nassau*, STARR REPORT, Fall 1980, at 1-2.



WILLIAM BROSMITH
(Family of Dorothy Brosmith McEvoy)

— even subbing as librarian until Caroline also took up that job.

Until 1935, when the board of trustees hired William Starr as a full-time professor, the teaching was done mainly by local attorneys and members of the state judiciary, who, like their students, reported for duty either before or after a day's work. Courses met five nights a week, four after 1924-25, and from 1921 to 1926 took place in a series of temporary quarters in downtown Hartford. Students who stuck it out for two years — and not all of them did — received a certificate for their efforts. Those who wanted to take the bar exam had to attend an accredited law school or study for three years with one of the lawyers in the area who would then vouch for their qualification to take the bar. In short, during this early period, Lillard's school was a 20th-century version of a 19th-century proprietary law school, with an exclusive focus on insurance law.

Lillard soon realized that something more was needed, or at least possible. Almost certainly he read the bumptious headlines of *The Hartford Courant* celebrating the city's many advantages: its civic pride, its location between New York City and Boston, and its many cultural and educational institutions. Conspicuously absent from the latter, however, was a law school. Yale Law School was close by to be sure, but it was small, exclusivist in tone and expensive, and in any case did not consider itself a Connecticut institution. Also, Yale Law School in the 1920s was not yet the great institution that it has since become. In any case, the challenge was not to rival Yale but rather to do what Yale disdained doing — which was to offer a wide range of basic courses in law to Connecticut students of modest means who were willing to work overtime to better themselves.

To build even a modest school from scratch, Lillard had to garner support from the leaders of the Hartford legal and business community. It was an uphill battle since many of the leaders of the local bar were outright hostile to the idea of upgrading a mere night school. Indeed, even as late as 1940, a partner in one of Connecticut's leading firms was adamantly opposed on the grounds that the state bar was already overcrowded, and that upgrading the

from Georgetown Law School, he had no experience teaching law, much less founding a law school. When he came to Hartford he was a special agent for the Justice Department with a reputation for exposing fraud. As a lawyer in the claims department of Travelers, however, he realized that the burgeoning insurance business of Hartford desperately needed more trained lawyers.

Thus it was that Lillard's Hartford College of Law, founded in 1921, was a night school, or more accurately a series of night classes, for young men interested in insurance law. Most of the students were already working full-time in one of Hartford's several insurance companies — and as it turned out, an unusual number of these students would end up running the companies they worked for as young men.

Lillard's school was incorporated in 1925. There were few requirements — a high school diploma got you admitted — and even fewer perks. There was no law library, and no administrative staff except Lillard's wife, Caroline, who served as registrar. Indeed, in the fledgling years, Lillard was sole proprietor in every sense of the word



LAURENCE ACKERMAN,
ACTING DEAN 1942-1946
(*Thomas J. Dodd Research Center*)

commencement address. Shortly thereafter, under the guidance of Dean Thomas Larremore, the college's first full-time dean, the school upgraded its library holdings, hired a full-time librarian, raised admission standards, and hired its first full-time faculty member. Improved teacher-student ratio was achieved by acquiring additional part-time teachers from the local legal community. Accreditation by the American Bar Association came in 1933, that of the Association of American Law Schools in 1937. No less important, a cluster of loyal graduates began to occupy positions of prominence in Connecticut's legal and business community.

Looking at the 219 graduates of the Hartford College of Law from 1930 through 1942, one sees several vice presidents of Hartford's leading insurance companies, numerous judges (including one chief justice of the Connecticut Supreme Court), a federal district court judge, and one congressman. Hartford College of Law graduates also occupied key positions as senior partners in some of the state's leading law firms; and this is not to mention the many dozens of lawyers pursuing private practice in all parts of the state. If each of these well-placed lawyers recommended the law school to aspiring students, the future was secure indeed — and they seemed to have done just that.

George Lillard, who died one month after the school moved to 39 Woodland Street, lived to see his dream come true. Whether his school could survive the devastating impact of World War II was another matter. Several part-time teachers enlisted in various branches of the service. And in the six months following Pearl Harbor, the student enrollment plummeted. Edward Stephenson, who would be one of the school's most memorable teachers, recalled that his graduating class of 1946 had only six students. Students who had registered called in to cancel their registration, assuming that the school was folding; indeed one of the first jobs of acting Dean Lawrence Ackerman was to call every student personally and try to persuade each one to come back. One of those who did come back, Ackerman remembers proudly, was Alva Loiselle, who went on to

Hartford College of Law would not “serve the interests of the public and society.”² Lillard was more successful when he took his dream to Hartford's civic leaders, many of whom were his friends in the insurance business.

Among this group none was more influential than William Brosmith. As a poor immigrant in New York City, Brosmith got his early education in night school, followed by an apprenticeship in a New York City law office. He arrived in Hartford in 1895 after several years of law practice in New York City. By the 1920s, he was one of the nation's leading insurance lawyers, an important figure in the American Bar Association — and no less important to the Hartford College of Law, a leader of the Hartford community. As a member and then president of the Board of Trustees of the Hartford College of Law, he not only helped keep the school afloat in the early days of the Great Depression but also guided its emergence as a full-fledged nationally accredited law school.

The first evidence of the school's upward march came in 1932, when Dean Roscoe Pound of Harvard Law School delivered the

² Letter from Edward Day, Founding Partner, Day, Berry & Howard, to Farwell Knapp, Dean, Hartford College of Law (March 28, 1940) (on file with the University of Connecticut School of Law Library).

become a justice of the Connecticut Supreme Court.

By the end of the war, there were only twenty-nine students enrolled. Had it not been for the evening division, which continued during the war years, the school would surely have folded. As it was, the decline in overall enrollment meant that the primary source of funding could not cover the costs of operation, modest as they were. John North, president of Phoenix Fire Insurance Company and a leading member of the school's board of trustees, summed up the situation concisely when he said, "We're losing all of our students; we have no money, we have a lot of debts. It's a nightmare."³ When the Board of Trustees decided to put a moratorium on day courses from 1944 to 1946 the downward spiral seemed irreversible.

As it turned out, thanks to a chance remark — or perhaps an inspired vision — of acting Dean Ackerman, a major change was already underway, one that would rescue the school from the brink and define its future. Ackerman was a force to reckon with. He came to the University of Connecticut in 1941 with a law degree from Columbia, a penchant for Greek literature, and several years of college teaching in business law and insurance. President of the University of Connecticut Albert Jorgensen appointed him dean of the newly created School of Business, a position he held for a record 23 years. Jorgensen in his usual forceful way also persuaded Ackerman to serve as acting dean of the Hartford College of Law and the Hartford College of Insurance, both of which shared quarters — and sometimes students — at 39 Woodland Street.

Ackerman recalls the epiphanic moment that changed the destiny of the dying law school. He was on a train trip to New York City when he struck up a conversation about the law school with his friend John North, who was travelling to the same insurance conference. North's assessment, as noted above, was grim. Ackerman reacted to the bad news with a rather off-handed, spur-of-the-moment suggestion: that North as a leading member of the Board of Trustees might consider turning over the law school to the University of Connecticut. North replied, also off-handedly, that he

would think about it. So it stood until a few weeks later, when much to his surprise, Ackerman received an invitation from North to meet with a group of prominent Hartford lawyers and insurance company executives to consider the terms of an understanding between the university in Storrs and the struggling Hartford College of Law.

Ackerman was President Jorgensen's man in Hartford during the long and increasingly "tiresome" months of negotiations that followed. The Hartford group wanted the university to lease the college of law (along with the college of insurance) for the duration of the war — and then "give it back to them" when things improved. Jorgensen was adamantly opposed and Ackerman, who by then was in full charge of the negotiations, all but demanded that the two colleges join the university on a permanent basis. This arrangement was formalized by legislative action on June 1, 1943. The informal understanding at that time was that the law school would remain in Hartford, and that evening classes would continue. It was also understood that the university — that is, the state of Connecticut — should assist the colleges financially until such time as fiscal affairs could be normalized.

This arrangement gave the University of Connecticut School of Law a new lease on life, but that was about all. Not even the school's most ardent champions could have guessed that the next twenty years would be "the best of times" — indeed that the law school would enter one of the most uniquely constructive and memorable periods in its history.

What gave the law school its unique identity, what made it memorable to those who attended it during the Woodland period? There was no elaborate master plan. In fact, there would be no master plan at all until 1957, and then it was modest by modern administrative standards. Another thing that did not advance the school during these years was lavish funding. Indeed, the state could be shortsightedly penurious, as for example when it refused to come up with a modest outlay to acquire two outstanding law

³ Interview by Sharon Fowler with Laurence J. Ackerman, Acting Dean, University of Connecticut School of Law, 1942-1946 (1982-1983).



SHIRLEY RAISSI BYSIEWICZ,
PROFESSOR OF LAW 1956-1989 AND
LAW LIBRARY DIRECTOR 1956-1983
(*Thomas J. Meskill Law Library*)

book collections for the new library — one of which went to Notre Dame and the other to the Southwest Insurance Law Library, both at bargain-basement prices. Professors Stephenson and Starr received modest compensation and new construction was kept at a minimum, although the Woodland “mansion” was expanded to accommodate an enlarged library. In every respect, the school was a pretty bare-bones operation.

What defined the school and made it distinctive was the fortuitous confluence of two factors: first was the post-war influx of returning veterans who were hell-bent on learning law and making up for lost time; and second was the presence in the classroom, waiting for them, of two remarkable teachers. The “plan” was simply to recognize the possibilities and to seize the moment.

As for the students: most were the returning veterans, who came in unexpected numbers. Dean Ackerman, who had pleaded with students to stay the course in the dark days of World War II, was astonished by the “tremendous upsurge the minute the war was over,” a veritable “cascade of applications.” Ackerman was certain, a bit too certain perhaps, that the new students were “just as good as the quality of the students that you have at Yale or Harvard or

Columbia” — the only distinction being “they don’t have the money.” With tuition at \$275 a year for day school and \$220 for the evening division, the new state school was a bargain.⁴

Many who took advantage of the deal went on to distinguished careers in business and law. Among the many success stories Ackerman mentioned were Bob Googins, who rose to be executive vice president of Connecticut Mutual Life Insurance Company; Lew Rome, senior partner of Rome McGuigan, P.C., and one of Connecticut’s most highly regarded political leaders; and William R. Davis, one of Connecticut’s leading trial lawyers. If this wasn’t enough, Ackerman had the sister of Katharine Hepburn in his class.⁵ Another “celebrity” was eminent poet Wallace Stevens, who taught insurance law briefly.

Not all of the new students were veterans, of course. One distinguishing feature of the post-World War II cohort was the steady increase in the numbers of women. Female students had been present in the 1920s and 1930s, which put the Hartford College of Law far ahead of giants in the field like Harvard (which did not admit female law students until 1950). And although the post-World War II numbers remained small, many female graduates from those years went on to successful careers in the law. Among the early graduates to distinguish themselves was Fannie Hammelstein ’31, who was associated with the firm of Albrecht & Richman for 38 years and who was Hartford’s first Legal Aid director. Elizabeth Hutchins ’39 was another pioneer who became the first female lawyer in Eastern Connecticut.

Another “first” was Ethel Sorokin ’53, who was the first female editor-in-chief of the law review. She and her husband, Milton, started their own law firm in 1956, which later merged with Gross Hyde & Williams and Pullman & Comley. Ethel was remembered as a tenacious defender of women’s rights and for her life-long championship of freedom of speech. In 1993 she and her husband founded the Center for First Amendment Rights, whose purpose was to educate the public about the First Amendment.

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ *Id.*

Shirley Raissi Bysiewicz graduated in 1954 and stayed on to play a significant role in the history of the law school. As the director of the law school library from 1956 to 1983, she fought valiantly for — and oversaw — its expansion and modernization. She was also the school's first female tenured professor, teaching and publishing in the fields of legal research and writing, family law, elder law and gender discrimination. Bysiewicz was also the first woman to hold an elective office in the Connecticut Bar Association.

Increased diversity notwithstanding, it was the returning vets who set the tone of the school during the post war years. Many went to school on the GI Bill and many of them, even those who had the Bill, also worked part-time, especially those who were married with small children. As it had been during the war, the feeling was one of camaraderie, of being in “the same boat” as one veteran recalled — or the same foxhole, or on the deck of an aircraft carrier under Kamikaze attack.⁶

Adding to the life of the school, many of the veterans were also married with young children. Tom Collins and his wife lived in a tiny apartment with a pull-down Murphy bed. Collins recalled staying up late with “a book on one leg, and the baby on the other.” His wife worked to supplement the GI Bill and so did he, in a part-time job at Aetna, which was walking distance from his apartment and the law school at Woodland Street. There was little time for socializing.

What mattered most, what set the tone of the law school on Woodland Street, was, in addition to a sense of gratitude for the opportunity to get an education, an intense sense of purpose. Most of the students were older: “twenty-three, twenty-four, twenty-five, six or seven or even more,” recalled Ackerman. “They felt that they had given three or four years of their life,” and had “exposed themselves to all kinds of dangers . . .” “When they came back, they never smiled; they were just deadly serious students, very intense. If there was a professor who kind of played around, and wasn't very well-prepared, they went for him — or came down and complained about it to me.” The same sense of dedication and drive also characterized the evening



THOMAS LANE ARCHIBALD,
PROFESSOR OF LAW 1937-1997
(*Thomas J. Meskill Law Library*)

⁶ See Interview by Kent Newmyer and John Khalil with Henry B. Anderson, Class of 1948, University of Connecticut School of Law (June 4, 2014). See also Interview by John Khalil with Thomas Collins, Class of 1951, University of Connecticut School of Law (Aug. 2, 2014).



STUDENT BOARD OF EDITORS 1947
(Henry B. Anderson Collection)

students, who were also older. Ackerman recalled that after putting in a full day's work, they still came up three or four nights a week from "as far south as Stamford" and "in all kinds of weather."⁷

As in the pre-war days the curriculum was strictly law with no frills. Everybody took the same courses, too, and sat in the same cramped classroom. "We all sat in the same room, went to the same subjects," recalled one student, and "we would all take the same exam . . ." There was no sense of competition, either, particularly among those who made it through the first year, which not everyone did in those days. During this period class ranking and class honors were not important matters, although it should be noted that in 1947, a Board of Student Editors was chosen to select articles for publication in the *Connecticut Bar Journal*. In 1959, the Board of Editors became the *Connecticut Law Review*, which went on to become an independent publication in 1968.

Being a student editor was an honor, but it did not detract from the egalitarian good will that generally prevailed. During his oral interview Collins, for example, nearly forgot to mention that he had been class president. And he was out of law school 30 years before he even knew the identity of his class valedictorian. Top honors it turned out went to Jim McNamara, who just happened to be one of Collins's best friends. "Nobody really cared much about it," Collins explained. "We were all working toward the same goal . . ."⁸

And so were the teachers. Still on board after the war were some of the old-timers from the 1920s, 30s and 40s. Ed Stephenson fondly remembered "men like Wallace Brown, who had been with the School since 1922 and was there until 1960; Saul Berman, the state Referee in Bankruptcy; and Warren Maxwell, one of the last of the old-time orators who quoted Shakespeare and the Bible, with a booming voice . . ." Berman, who not surprisingly taught bankruptcy, was remembered for his kindness as well as his knowledge of bankruptcy law. In addition to spouting Shakespeare with gusto, Maxwell also happened to be "the dean of the Connecticut trial lawyers at that time."⁹ Part-time faculty — they were not yet called adjuncts —

⁷ See Ackerman interview, *supra* note 4.

⁸ See Collins interview, *supra* note 6.

⁹ Unknown, *A Feeling of Quality: A Conversation with Ed Stephenson*, STARR REPORT, Summer 1977, at 3-4.



HENRY B. ANDERSON, CLASS OF 1948
(Henry B. Anderson Collection)



WILLIAM FLAVIUS STARR
 PROFESSOR OF LAW 1936-1966
(Thomas J. Meskill Law Library)

continued to be counted as integral parts of the enterprise even as the size of the full-time faculty grew from three (when the law school merged with the university in 1943) to seventeen when it moved once again, this time into more commodious (if less charming) quarters on Asylum Avenue in West Hartford.

Part-timers, most of whom were sitting judges or established practitioners, grounded the curriculum in Connecticut law, especially staples of local law like real property, evidence, and bankruptcy. They also used their connections to guide newly minted graduates into promising career paths. Take Thomas Gallivan, Jr., for example. Gallivan, who taught the course in real property law from 1946 to 1982, was also a partner in a major Connecticut law firm and founder of the Connecticut Attorney's Title Guaranty Fund, Inc. Hank Anderson remembered Gallivan as a special friend — “a wild Irishman” who ordered his steaks burned to a crisp. Anderson also recalled that when he began his small town practice in Sherman, Connecticut, it was Thomas Gallivan's personal influence that made the difference. Anderson added with a chuckle, “I didn't even have Real Estate with him.”¹⁰ Gallivan not only helped law school

¹⁰ See Anderson interview, *supra* note 6.



EDWARD L. STEPHENSON,
PROFESSOR OF LAW 1946-1982
(*Thomas J. Meskill Law Library*)

of Washington in 1933 with the intention of practicing in Seattle. Then back East once more, this time to Yale Law School where he got his J.S.D. in 1935 and without missing a beat, accepted a full-time appointment at the Hartford College of Law. He intended to leave after one year; instead, he stayed 27 years until his retirement in 1962. The struggling Hartford College of Law and then the University of Connecticut School of Law became a challenge, a labor of love, and his life's work.

Edward Stephenson, who was Starr's student and for 27 years his colleague, summed it up at Starr's retirement banquet in 1962 with the affection that was so much a part of their collaboration. Starr was "Mr. Law School," said Stephenson, which meant that Starr did it all. Even though scholarship took a back seat to teaching in those days, Starr was an acclaimed expert for his "efforts on behalf of the Uniform Commercial Code." He was also the de-facto administrator-in-chief for much of his tenure. "Although he didn't have the title," recalled acting Dean Ackerman, "he really was the dean in fact," shouldering without complaint the day-to-day operations of the school. "He wanted a weekly status report," recalled Shirley Bysiewicz, perhaps with a smile on her face, "and he wasn't even dean." Stephenson stated it somewhat differently when he noted that Starr was the man, dean or not, who "almost single-handedly . . . built quality and a unique spirit into the School and preserved them through the perilous times of World War II." He also played a key role, along with Ackerman, in the negotiations with the university in Storrs.

Above all else, Bill Starr was a devoted teacher — in the classroom, after class, even on weekends, any time there was a student in need. In class everyone agreed he was a bear; shoddy preparation, slovenly performance were simply unacceptable. He just wouldn't let go of slackers — or give up on them. Looking back from 1986, Richard Sugarmann '62, former president of the Connecticut Law School Foundation, remembered Starr as Professor Kingsfield of the original "Paper Chase." "He used to sit up there and say, 'Bale of Hay Saloon,'" which meant "that somebody was going to be made into

graduates like Hank Anderson, he was also a generous supporter of the school itself. Appropriately, the first endowed professorship was created in Gallivan's honor in 1981.

Part-timers were a vital part of the school, but it was full-time professors William Starr and Ed Stephenson, working in sync with Dean Bert Hopkins, who set classroom standards and who also charted the institutional course of the new law school. Their individual personal and intellectual strengths complemented one another to a remarkable degree. And hardly less important, Starr, Stephenson and Dean Hopkins — all westerners as it happened — worked in harmony and with the same sense of purpose that characterized and energized their students.

Indisputably, the center of gravity in this new galaxy, "the coalescing force of the school," as Dean Hopkins put it, was William Starr.¹¹ And like so much else in the history of the school, his long and eventful career was fortuitous. Born in Nevada, Iowa, in 1897, he came East to study, graduating from Harvard in 1922 with a B.A. Heading back West, he received his LL.B from the University

¹¹ Burke Marshall, U.S. Assistant Attorney General, Remarks at the University of Connecticut School of Law Alumni Banquet (May 1, 1962).



JUDGE THOMAS J. MOLLOY HOLDS CLASS WHILE
CHARLES O'CONNOR PRESENTS CASE, MARCH 1948
(Henry B. Anderson Collection)

a legal example.”¹² Stephenson once referred to Starr as “the master of inquisition” and recalled his contract class, where “he badgered us and bewildered us; he drove us and he stretched us; he laid bare our shoddy preparation and our shallow thinking. He condemned our sins, but loved the sinner.”

Like his colleague’s, Stephenson’s career as a law professor was by his own reckoning “an accident.” He attended Wesleyan with the idea of teaching English and received a B.A. with honors in that field in 1933, followed by an M.A. in 1935. Pursuing further graduate work, however, proved financially impossible due to the Depression. After several dead-end and “frustrating” jobs in state and federal government, Stephenson entered night classes at the Woodland Street law school, graduating in 1946 with the highest honors of any student up to that time. The records don’t show it, but there is little doubt that it was Stephenson’s teacher William Starr who recognized his potential as a teacher and got him hired as professor at the law school the year he graduated. The “accidental” professor stayed 25 years until his retirement in 1971.

In his description of the post-war school, Ed Stephenson revealed a great deal about his own contribution. The program he remembers was “very restricted” in its offerings and could easily “have become a rather second-rate operation.” It excelled instead because it had a mission, with a phalanx of talented teachers on board. Their mission was simply to teach law, which meant that the school “was completely student-oriented; the faculty had no time for anything other than teaching and administration.” Stephenson excelled in both. As an administrator he claimed curriculum as his domain. Contradictory though it was, he was also the man who insisted that the school, if it were to achieve national recognition, should have a faculty that, with balance and moderation, should publish as well as teach. As if to prove his point, his own book *Connecticut Civil Procedure* grew directly out of his seminar teaching. In fact, the scholarly output of Stephenson’s colleagues during these years was remarkable, given the heavy teaching responsibilities.

¹² Richard Sugarman, Dedication of the former Avery Hall as the William F. Starr Hall, University of Connecticut School of Law (Oct. 23, 1986).

Teaching was Ed Stephenson's love, however, and his forte. Hear his colleague Nathan Levy: "I've never seen a man more devoted to teaching than Ed, and one of my fondest memories of him is when he came out of class flexing the muscles in his arms. He'd look at me and say, 'Flexing muscles, feeling good.' Well that meant that he'd had a very good class. I don't think anything gave Ed more of a 'high' than having a really good class." If the class wasn't so good, well, "that was the time to stay out of his way."

In addition to being a man of generosity and warmth, Ed Stephenson could also be impatient, intolerant of stupidity, and combative — like all people who believed deeply in something. What Stephenson believed in most was the law school and its students. If the new faculty, the "Young Turks," needed advice, they went to him. If his friends needed some copy-editing and editorial assistance, they went to the former English major. Whether the problem was legal or personal, "Ed was the man to turn to."¹³

And if the students wanted to learn some law, Ed Stephenson was their guide; and the same was true for his colleagues. As a new professor, Nathan Levy turned to Bill Starr, Tom Archibald, and Bert Hopkins for help. "All these brains I picked daily. But no teacher I ever had taught me as much as Ed Stephenson did during the fifteen years we were colleagues."¹⁴

And what does it mean to be a great teacher? Stephenson pondered the issue himself, when praising Bill Starr, only to conclude that the quest was hopeless. What made great teaching so elusive and so personal, he reasoned in terms that applied to himself, was that it was an art — by which he seems to have meant that it was a mixture of intellect, knowledge, imagination, dedication, and rigorous standards. In class he was no less demanding than his friend Starr. One student remembered him as a master of the Socratic method. "He would build up an argument, piece by piece, and through most of the hour-long class you kept wondering where all this was going to lead. Then in the last five or ten minutes he would wrap up all the salient points. When he was through, you felt you had wrestled with

the point mentally."¹⁵

And like Starr, Stephenson was tough. One student, Peter Gillies '63, who later became Insurance Commissioner of Connecticut, recalls his "searching" questions — and also his impatience with students who somehow missed the point. One such student was Gillies himself, who on one occasion "felt put upon" because "he kept at me with questions." After class, however, Stephenson put his hands on Gillies's shoulders, pronouncing "I think they're broad enough."¹⁶

And after class, Stephenson continued to teach if students needed help. One of his colleagues, Professor Lester Snyder, recalled how Stephenson "could get students excited and debates would go on for hours. Sometimes I'd go downstairs to the cafeteria at 1 p.m. for a cup of coffee. I'd see Ed talking with students. When I went down again at 4 p.m. they'd still be there debating."¹⁷ As a student of language, Stephenson was particularly insistent on good writing. Like Starr he would read and correct every paper until he was satisfied, no matter how much time it took. "There was almost never a time, evening or weekend," remembered his colleague Cornelius Scanlon, "that if one dropped around you would not find Ed Stephenson, most often correcting essays or gabbing with a bunch of students."¹⁸ His students never forgot those moments and neither did he.

Ed Stephenson stayed on for seven years after the school moved to its new quarters on Asylum Avenue. For him, however, the real law school would always be the one at 39 Woodland Street. And why not? After all, it was the school he and Bill Starr, Nathan Levy, Burt Hopkins, Lawrence Ackerman, Judges Berman, Molloy and Wright, and other members of the "dedicated corps of part-time teachers" created — not from scratch, but against the odds.

In the summer of 1977, six years after his retirement in 1971, Stephenson was asked what it was that most characterized the Woodland Street school, what made it so memorable. Without hesitation he declared that it was dedicated teaching that counted most. He acknowledged that much of the law taught was Connecticut law, especially that taught by part-time faculty who were

¹³ Brian Burke, A Conversation with Nathan Levy, POCKET PART, Dec. 9, 1972.

¹⁴ *Id.*

¹⁵ *Id.*

¹⁶ *Id.*

¹⁷ *Id.*

¹⁸ Brian Burke, *supra* note 13.



CLASS OF 1948 AS OF MAY 1947.
(Henry B. Anderson Collection)

working in that area. It followed that the majority, although by no means all, of the graduates stayed in Connecticut or New England. The school didn't try to do everything, but as Stephenson noted with pride of creation, what the school did, it did superbly — "a whale of an educational job," in his words.

The records bear him out. Despite the growing number of students, their quality remained high — in part because of the meticulous process of admission, including personal interviews by the dean of each applicant.

Emphasis on college grades continued, but the admission process was supplemented by a selective use of the LSAT, available for the first time in 1948. The high casualty rate among first-year students was a constant concern, but those who lasted it out were well-prepared; witness the fact that almost all of those who graduated passed the bar on the first try. And almost all of them found jobs, thanks to concerted efforts of the faculty, including the part-timers who were conveniently located in the legal and business community.

Not surprisingly, law school graduates from these years remained loyal, which meant that they supported the school financially, as well as through their recommendations. Such loyalty kept new students coming through the doors. For two decades the stars were aligned — that is to say there were eager students aplenty, and inspired, dedicated teachers, a supportive administration in Storrs, and an outside legal community that welcomed the product.

The outside legal world was changing, as it always has done, and so was the student body, especially in the 1960s; and so of necessity, were the aspirations of the school itself. Indeed, during the last several years at Woodland, there was evidence that overdue institutional adjustments were already underway. In 1956, President Jorgensen informed Dean Hopkins that there were ABA accreditation problems related to student-faculty ratio, library holdings, and classroom space, among other things. In response, Dean Hopkins, Stephenson and Starr and other members of the faculty drew up a plan of development, the first in the school's history. The plan promised that

the goal of the school would continue to be a practical one, as it had been for the past two decades: “the training of men and women for the practice of law.” The plan also pointed with pride to “the reputation the school of law has been achieving in the legal profession in the State of Connecticut” — a reputation which “rests securely. . . upon the achievements of our graduates.”¹⁹ That said, more attention would be given to expanding the influence of the school beyond Connecticut, especially to the New England region — this while retaining a practical focus on state and local law.

So far continuity was the dominant motif. But to extend the school’s reach to neighboring states, even if there was no intention to train lawyers for Wall Street — which there wasn’t — inevitably meant revising the curriculum — integrating it with the needs of New England as a whole and bringing it in line with external changes in legal education. There was also the problem of an expanding student population, which meant that first-year courses would have to be taught in sections, which in turn meant an increase in full-time faculty; less and less dependence on adjuncts followed. More full-time faculty also meant that no one or two individuals, no matter how wise or dedicated, could settle matters of internal policy.

While the 1957 plan promised that the teaching standards achieved during the post-World War II decades would be preserved, it seemed clear that the personalized teaching exemplified by Starr and Stephenson would be difficult to maintain. It also followed that a more elaborate administrative apparatus would be required and in 1962 a new assistant dean, in the person of William O’Hara, arrived in time to usher in the new age. New office and classroom space was placed high on the agenda and even the possibility of a resident dormitory to house out-of-state students was broached.

By 1962, when the school prepared to relocate to its new quarters on Asylum Avenue, the review committee of the ABA concluded that the earlier problems had been adequately addressed. Once again the school had redefined itself. What Bill Starr and Ed Stephenson thought of the pending change is not precisely clear. Progress, upward



LEFT TO RIGHT, PROFESSOR CORNELIUS SCANLON,
PROFESSOR LESTER SNYDER, PROFESSOR WILLIAM F.
STARR, PROFESSOR SHIRLEY RAISSI BYSIEWICZ '54,
DEAN BERT E. HOPKINS.
(Thomas J. Meskill Law Library)

¹⁹ Plan for the Development of the School of Law of the University of Connecticut (July 1957).

mobility if you will, had always been a feature of the school from its early days. And after all it was Starr and Stephenson more than anyone who transformed the proprietary school of George Lillard into the University of Connecticut School of Law. Bill Starr retired in 1962 before the planned innovations were fully in place. Ed Stephenson, however, stayed on until 1971, which meant that he witnessed many of the changes suggested in 1957, many of which he opposed. Not surprisingly, he dug in his heels, thundered and fumed, as it was his wont to do. Nathan Levy recalled that Stephenson was unhappy with “some of the fundamental changes” that were going on and with the breakdown of that personal connection between faculty and students in the decade of the 60s. Stephenson, who single-handedly managed the curriculum for many years, could hardly have been pleased with course changes designed to fit the ideas and needs of new faculty.²⁰

Ed Stephenson’s sense of loss reminds us that history moves by generations; the law school was no exception. He missed the generation of students who fought in World War II and who passionately wanted to learn some law; he was not so pleased with the students who opposed the war in Vietnam, even though they too wanted to learn law. He missed his friend Bill Starr, who retired in 1962 and who died two years later. Ed Stephenson missed the glory days at 39 Woodland Street. He retired in 1971, ten years before he had to, and thereafter until his death in 1982, had nothing further to do with the school.

Whatever Ed Stephenson may have thought in his later years, the law school continues to bear his imprint — as well as that of his friend Bill Starr, and also that of their colleagues from the Woodland Street days. What Starr, Stephenson and company bequeathed, what survived through the school’s continuous expansion and various transformations, was a tradition of inspired teaching and dedicated service. While the present school on Elizabeth Street, with its elegant Gothic campus, its outstanding faculty, and its nationally and internationally acclaimed programs, seems light years away from

39 Woodland Street, it would be comforting to think that somewhere the incomparable team of Starr and Stephenson are looking on with the pride of creation. Thanks be to them. ❧

²⁰ Brian Burke, *supra* note 13.

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APPENDIX

GEORGE W. LILLARD, FOUNDER, HARTFORD COLLEGE OF LAW; BIRDSEYE CASE, FACULTY MEMBER; CAROLINE E. LILLARD, FOUNDER, HARTFORD COLLEGE OF LAW; DEAN EDWARD GRAHAM BAIRD

Leon Alvah Bradbury	Lecturer in Law, 1952-1953
Wallace Winthrop Brown	Lecturer in Law, 1925-1965
Joseph B. Burns	<i>Class of 1942</i> ; Lecturer in Law, 1947-1973
Shirley Raissi Bysiewicz	<i>Class of 1954</i> ; Professor of Law, 1956-1989; Law Library Director, 1956-1983
Francis C. Cady	Lecturer in Law, 1947-1962; Professor of Law, 1962-1980; Acting Dean, 1972-1974; Professor of Law Emeritus, 1980-1984
Franz John Carlson	Lecturer in Law, 1945-1950
Sherman Bacon Carpenter	Lecturer in Law, 1954-1956
Birdsey Erksine Case	Original Incorporator Hartford College of Law, 1921; Instructor in Law 1921-1973
Thomas Christy Chapin	Associate Professor of Law, 1946-1958
Kimberly Cheney	Lecturer in Law, 1944-1950
Robert C. Danaher	Lecturer in Law, 1951-1973
Frederic W. Dauch	Instructor in Law, 1942-1945
Merriam Davis	<i>Class of 1948</i> ; Lecturer in Law, Evening Division, 1953-1989
James F. English	<i>Class of 1956</i> ; Lecturer in Law, 1956-1958; Graduate Distinguished Award, 1982
Joseph V. Fay	<i>Class of 1938</i> ; Lecturer, 1956-1957
John R. Fitzgerald	<i>Class of 1953</i> ; Adjunct Professor of Law, 1953-1991
Theodore H. Focht	Assistant Professor of Law, 1963-1969
William C. Fox	<i>Class of 1941</i> ; Lecturer in Law, 1944-1954

Laurence Ackerman	Acting Dean, 1942-1946; Professor of Law, 1942-1953; Received University Medal, 1990.
Robert J. Affeldt	Assistant Professor of Law, 1957-1958
Thomas Lane Archibald	Lecturer in Law, 1937-1942; Professor of Law, 1942-1971; Professor of Law Emeritus, 1971-1997
Millard Bartels	Instructor in Law, 1936-1940
John R. Batt	Assistant Professor of Law, 1960-1961
Charles Bertrand Bayly	Assistant Professor of Law, 1946-1947
Honorable Saul Berman	Instructor in Law, 1935-1955
Edward Graham Baird	Instructor in Law, 1933; Dean, 1934-1942

Thomas F. Gallivan, Jr.	Lecturer in Law, 1946-1982	Arnold H. Loewy	Assistant Professor of Law, 1963-1967
Caroline E. Lillard Gideon	Co-founder Hartford College of Law, 1921; Law Librarian, 1940-1942	Francis V. Manion	<i>Class of 1940</i> ; Lecturer in Law, 1959-1964
Reinhart Lang Gideon	Instructor in Law, 1938-1956	Warren Maxwell	Instructor in Law, 1926-1942
Reese Harvey Harris, Jr.	Instructor in Law, 1937-1942	Maxwell Mills Merritt	Lecturer in Law, 1939-1962
Edward Holland Heilman, Jr.	Instructor in Law, 1941-1942	Charles Edwin Moller	<i>Class of 1958</i> ; Lecturer in Law, 1960-1962
Bert Earl Hopkins	Dean, 1946-1966; Professor of Law, 1946-1972; Dean Emeritus of Law, 1972-1989; Connecticut Law Review Award, 1967	Thomas J. Molloy	Lecturer in Law, 1935-1957
Edward C. Krawiecki	Lecturer, 1953-1961	Eileen M. Murphy	Associate Professor of Law, 1955-1956; Law Librarian, 1955-1956
Robert L. Krechevsky	<i>Class of 1948</i> ; Adjunct Professor of Law, 1955-1965	Aaron Nassau	Lecturer in Law, 1937-1967; Distinguished Service Award, 1974
C. Merritt Lane	Instructor in Law, 1942-1944	Louis E. Nassau	Lecturer in Law, 1943-1957
Margaret Taylor Lane	Assistant Professor of Law, Librarian, April 1944-1946	William T. O'Hara	Assistant Dean, December 1963-1967; Assistant Professor of Law, 1963-1967; Director Avery Point campus, 1967-1972
Joseph Albert LaPlante	Professor of Law, 1957-1981; Professor Emeritus of Law, 1981-1990	Andrew Joseph O'Keefe	<i>Class of 1956</i> ; Lecturer in Law, 1957-1983; Adjunct Professor of Law, 1985-present
Nathan Levy Jr.	Professor of Law, 1956-1992; Professor of Law Emeritus, 1992-1994	Paul William Orth	Lecturer in Law, 1960-1980
George William Lillard	Co-founder Hartford College of Law, 1921; Instructor in Law, 1921-1940; Law Librarian, 1939-1940	Richard N. Pearson	Associate Professor of Law, 1963-1965
Leon M. Liddell	Associate Professor of Law, 1946-1948; Law Librarian, 1946-1947	Karl William Punzak	Assistant Professor of Law & Librarian, 1948-1951; Associate Professor of Law & Librarian, 1948-1955; Professor of Law 1955-1960
Neil O. Littlefield	Professor of Law, 1962-1970	Harold E. Read, Jr.	Lecturer in Law, 1962-1964
William Sheridan Locke	Lecturer in Law, 1925-1962	Horace Ensign Rockwell	Lecturer in Law, 1945-1956
		Richard C. Sanger	<i>Class of 1961</i> ; Lecturer in Law, 1962-1967

- Cornelius J. Scanlon** Professor of Law, 1958-1991; Dean (Acting), 1966-1967; Professor of Law Emeritus, 1991-2002; Distinguished Service Award, 1992
- Craig Shea** *Class of 1955*; Professor of Law, 1958-1980; Professor Emeritus of Law, 1980-2012
- Lester B. Snyder** Professor of Law, 1957-1983
- Ethel Silver Sorokin** *Class of 1953*; Lecturer in Law, 1956-1959; Distinguished Service Award, 1989; President of Law School Foundation, 1978
- William Flavius Starr** Professor of Law, 1935-1962; Dean (Acting), 1957; Professor Emeritus of Law, 1962-1966; Connecticut Law Review Award, 1962
- Edward Liddell Stephenson** *Class of 1946*; Professor of Law, 1946-1971; Professor of Law Emeritus, 1971-1982
- Thomas H. Tamoney** *Class of 1949*; Lecturer in Law, 1953-1972
- S. George Trager** *Class of 1957*; Lecturer in Law, 1961-1966
- Thomas R. Wagner** *Class of 1943*; Lecturer in Law, 1947-1958
- Albert Baldwin Walker** Instructor in Law, 1940-1954
- Donald T. Weckstein** Assistant Professor of Law, 1959-1962; Professor of Law, 1967-1972
- Douglas Brownell Wright** *Class of 1937*; Adjunct Professor of Law, 1949-1992; Adjunct Professor of Law Emeritus, 1992-2010; President Alumni Law School Association, 1960; Distinguished Alumnus Award, 1972

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