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My Friend Maurice Culp

*Fletcher R. Andrews**

The retirement this year of Professor Maurice S. Culp from the Law School after so many years of devoted service fills me with sadness, coupled with amazement at the swift passing of the years.

My memory goes back to the autumn of 1929 when young Mr. Culp arrived at the Law School as a transfer student from the University of Illinois School of Law. Previously, that university had granted to Mr. Culp the Bachelor of Arts degree (with Honors in Political Science) and the Master of Arts degree (in Political Science).

Maurie Culp's transfer from Illinois to Western Reserve (now Case Western Reserve) Law School was due in part, at least, to an opportunity to serve as an Assistant in Political Science to Professor Earl Shoup, head of the department. With law school tuition at \$300 per year (honest to goodness!), this small teaching job, in Maurie's own words, "provided enough support to sustain a person rather frugally in law school."

Maurie needed no more than frugal sustenance during his law school days, for he was a young man of simple tastes, who shunned tobacco, liquor, gambling, and all other habits causing a drain on the pocketbook. Moreover, his meager income was slightly enhanced by his engaging in some research work for a member of the faculty and in occasional editorial work for a local publishing firm; and in the summer of 1930 he served in an undisclosed capacity at the Cleveland Municipal Court.

Mr. Culp's academic accomplishments, especially in courses taught by me, may be of interest to our readers, as they are to me. Because of his transfer from Illinois, several conflicts between required courses arose in his schedule. For instance, the second semester in my two-semester course in Criminal Law gave rise to a conflict with a second-year subject. Being willing to help this earnest young student, I gave him special permission to take the Criminal Law examination for the second semester without attending classes.

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(Caveat to present-day students: I doubt if you can get away with this now.)

The result? Mr. Culp's second semester grade in Criminal Law, when he attended no classes, was 91, whereas his first semester grade, when he was assiduous in his class attendance, was a mere 84. This incident conjures up two possible conclusions: (1) Andrews was a lousy teacher; or (2) Culp was an ultra-brilliant student. Both Maurie and I prefer the latter explanation, although the evidence on the other side appears mighty substantial.

Maurie's overall record, including my other two courses (in which he was not excused from classes), is consistent with the "ultra-brilliant" student explanation. He graduated on June 18, 1931, second in his class and a member of the Order of the Coif.

From Western Reserve, Maurie migrated to the University of Michigan Law School on a graduate fellowship, receiving his S.J.D. degree in June 1932. Thereafter, from September 1932 to June 1935, he served as a Teaching and Research Assistant to Dean Henry M. Bates of that law school. Some of his research projects were published in the Michigan Law Review as lead articles. Moreover, he gained teaching experience as a substitute teacher for professors on leave or out of town and came under the influence of many of the great law teachers of the day.

With this background, Maurie was appointed to the faculty of the Emory University Law School in 1935 and rose up the ladder of success from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor to Professor, also serving as Acting Dean in 1949.

From 1942 to 1946, Professor Culp was regional attorney for the O.P.A., in Atlanta, and during 1951 and 1952, he was regional counsel for the O.P.S. in the same city. Don't ask me what the initials stand for. These were two of the innumerable "alphabetical" agencies created by the Government during and after World War II to help solve the complex problems of the times. I do know that the "O" stands for "Office". This is the extent of my knowledge on the subject.

In arranging for the summer session in 1948 at Western Reserve, I bethought myself of that bright young lad who had attained a grade of 91 in Criminal Law without attending classes. I had followed his career, and decided to invite him to come to Reserve to teach Taxation—an invitation which he accepted. During the summer, I discussed with him the possibility of his coming here on a permanent basis whenever the budget (that "ogre" which plagues the lives of

deans) was flush enough to permit the hiring of a teacher of his stature and experience.

Such an opening did not arise until 1952, when Professor Norman Lattin resigned from our faculty to accept a position at New York University. Parenthetically, "reliable sources" (as our newspaper friends say) have recently informed me that Professor Lattin, now retired, refers to his period of service at Reserve as the "Golden Days."

However that may be, in July 1952 I executed what must be one of the quickest faculty hirings on record. I called Professor Culp long distance to Atlanta and offered him a professorship. Next day he called me back and accepted. And so my old friend and I were joined in a common endeavor.

Dr. Culp has taught so many different subjects that surely he must be one of the most well-rounded law teachers in the profession. Among them are such diverse courses as Administrative Law, Business Associations, Civil Procedure, Conflict of Laws, Creditors' Rights, Trade Associations, Criminal Law, Criminal Procedure, Legislation, Equity, and Taxation. In addition to his regular teaching positions, Professor Culp has taught as a visiting professor at various law schools, including the prestigious Hastings (1968-1969).

Besides numerous law review and bar journal articles, Professor Culp has published cases and materials in the legislative and administrative fields. In addition, he was chosen editor of the important *Selected Readings on Conflict of Laws*, published in 1956, in which endeavor I served under him as a lowly associate editor.

On the administrative side, Professor Culp's activities were also multifarious. To list a few of his administrative positions, he was Acting Dean for Academic Affairs, 1961-65; Assistant Dean, 1965-66; Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Faculty; Secretary, then President of the League of Ohio Law Schools; and Director of the Income Tax Institute, held in Cleveland for the benefit of practicing lawyers.

Throughout our years as colleagues, and in the years subsequent to my retirement, Maurie and I have been steadfast friends. A more sincere, conscientious, and loyal man I do not know. Nor do I know any teacher more interested in his students as individuals or more generous in giving up his time to talk over their problems with them.

On an evening in February 1967, ceremonies initiated by students and former students of Professor Culp were held at the Law School in his honor. Unfortunately, I was out of the city and unable

to attend. However, I wrote a letter to him, which was read as part of the program. Because the letter expresses as best I can my thoughts about Maurice Culp, I will close this tribute by repeating it—this time for the record.

Dear Maurice,

When your students and ex-students insist upon paying tribute to you while you are still in active service, you are receiving as high an honor as can be bestowed upon a teacher.

Your understanding, patience, kindness, and sound advice have endeared you to all the people whose lives have touched yours, and I am glad to see that in a world which sometimes worships false gods, your students have the good sense to pause for an evening to honor a gentleman and a scholar whose character is untainted by malice or envy or greed, and whose chief desire is to help those who seek his counsel, and to do his best at whatever task lies before him.

It was a happy day for the Law School when I hired you by long-distance telephone so many years ago. I knew it then, and I know it doubly now.

Congratulations on being recognized for what you are and what you stand for.

Sincerely yours,
(Signed) Fletch
a.k.a., Dean Emeritus Andrews

Happily, at least for the present, "retirement" will not entail the giving up of the work he loves, for he has accepted a teaching position at California Western School of Law in San Diego and has already commenced his teaching assignment there.

All of Maurie's many friends, including the writer, wish Maurie and his attractive wife, Mary Louise, many more happy years and assure them that they will be missed.