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1938: AN ERA BEGINS

ILUS W. DAVIS*

Willard Eckhardt joined the faculty of the School of Law at the University of Missouri at Columbia in 1938. He has remained a professor and an important member of the faculty since that date. Hundreds of lawyers who have graduated from the School of Law since 1938 gained their knowledge of property from Bill Eckhardt. In a lucid, straightforward manner with a perceptive amount of dry wit, Bill Eckhardt has undertaken for over forty years to transmit the heritage of property law to the untrained minds of his students. Year in and year out he has poured out his knowledge of the law into the variety of student receptacles that sat in his classes. His patience and his perseverance have been rewarded by seeing hundreds of Missouri lawyers graduate from his law school, enter into the practice, and make use of the talents that he passed on in his classes. His orderly teaching of property law has been transmitted to an entire generation of aspiring lawyers. The results of his teaching cannot be measured but are reflected in the myriad decisions of the hundreds of graduates he taught.

For over seven years, Bill Eckhardt served as Dean during one of the most difficult periods that the School of Law has seen. With an insufficient building, an inadequate budget, and a heavy demand for student spaces during a period of inflating faculty salaries, Bill Eckhardt struggled successfully with the administrative responsibilities of maintaining a first rate law school.

As a student of property law in the midwest and a recognized authority in the field, his scholarship made its impact on appellate court decisions across the country. His writings in the field of property law have added a new chapter to the development of law in our state and in other parts of the country. Bill Eckhardt has left his mark as a professor, an administrator, and a scholar. He also has been a good friend and a delightful companion. For over forty years, he has served the student body, the faculty, the University, and the people of the State of Missouri. He has made a record of which he can be proud and which will remain an important part of the history of the School of Law at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

* Dietrich, Davis, Dicus, Rowlands & Schmitt, Kansas City, Missouri. A.B., 1937, University of Kansas; LL.B., 1939, University of Missouri.