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Carl Hawkins Tribute

Robert E. Riggs

I first met Carl Hawkins and other members of the faculty when the law school was in its second year, meeting in a rented building on 900 East that had originally housed the St. Francis Catholic school. I had come to be interviewed for a possible appointment in the law school and to help me make a decision whether I wanted to come, if invited. During that visit I was impressed with the quality and the dedication of the faculty and could not help catching some of their enthusiasm for this rare opportunity to participate in the establishment of a new law school.

Among the faculty were three experienced senior teachers from other law schools—Carl Hawkins (Michigan), Ed Kimball (Wisconsin), and Dale Whitman (UCLA). Coming from a background of teaching political science, I was not acquainted with any of them either in person or through their professional work and writings. After I joined the faculty the following year, I quickly became aware of how important they were in establishing the credibility of the J. Reuben Clark Law School. I subsequently heard it said, more than once, and most recently in a speech by Elder Bruce Hafen at the August 2007 (law school) Founders Day dinner, that President Oaks, Dean Lee, and Bruce Hafen, assistant to President Oaks, breathed a great sigh of relief when Carl Hawkins—after much prayer and deliberation—agreed to join the new law school. With his acceptance, they felt assured that the enterprise would be a success.

Over the years I came to appreciate why they felt that way. I of course became better aware of his reputation within the legal community and his impressive legal scholarship. I also came to recognize him as a wise, thoughtful, and considerate colleague. He appeared never to speak without giving careful thought to the impact of his words—never half-baked, always to the point, always courteous, and invariably helpful to the discussion.

In 1986 the Dean (then Bruce Hafen) asked me to be in charge of selecting a candidate from the law school for one of the Karl G. Maeser Distinguished Teaching Awards. After discussion with other faculty members I settled on Doug Parker. Carl Hawkins was clearly

another logical choice but, when I mentioned it to him, he said he had been honored on a number of occasions already and suggested I not consider him for this one. We were able to make a strong case for Doug and had the great satisfaction of seeing him receive a Maeser Award in the fall.

Five years later (1991) I volunteered to prepare a similar proposal for Carl, recommending him for the University's Wesley P. Lloyd Administrative Service Award. Carl had served as law school dean for several years in Rex Lee's absence. When Carl learned that Martin Hickman (a good friend of most of us and long-time liberal arts dean) was also to be proposed for the award, he asked the law school not to submit his name in competition with Martin. Upon inquiry I was informed by the chairman of the University Awards Committee that Martin was not eligible because he had retired the previous year. So I went ahead with the proposal.

Early in March the Awards Committee chairman, Howard Van Fleet, called to inform me he had two applications that were head and shoulders above the rest—Carl's and Martin Hickman's—and two people had written letters in support of both candidates. I had previously assured those two people that they could endorse Carl because Martin was ineligible. Apparently, without my knowledge, the rule against awards to retirees had been rescinded. More to the point, Professor Van Fleet asked if I would be willing to have Carl's name submitted for the Phi Kappa Phi Award (for outstanding teaching and scholarship), instead of the Wesley P. Lloyd Award. I quickly agreed, and everyone was happy. This included the Phi Kappa Phi chapter, which was extremely pleased to have such a strong candidate to honor.

Carl retired in 1991 but continued for a time to accept visiting appointments in other law schools, where he was much in demand. He also wrote a history of the law school, which he was so eminently qualified to do, by both experience and temperament. His legacy to the school did not receive the treatment in the book that it deserved, but all of us who knew him and served with him know how much the present condition and reputation of the J. Reuben Clark Law School have benefitted from his decision in 1973 to become a part of it.