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Miles Oscar Price—The Journal Record

By MARIAN G. GALLAGHER*

Miles O. Price was not a man possibly to be forgotten. His record of published scholarship and professional achievement will live beyond those who respected him as a colleague and mentor and cherished him as a friend. That record is conspicuous and monumental. In addition, he left us a less conspicuous record, footprints discernible in the variety of his influence over the law library profession and in the foundations he laid for its members' individual and collective accomplishments. Some of those footprints have been traced, in this issue of the *Law Library Journal*, by his close associates. The following recounts only a portion of the record that appeared in this *Journal* during the years he served the American Association of Law Libraries, its members, and their patrons.

It has to be acknowledged that this is a faint tracing, even a badly broken one, compared to the known imprint this man made on professional minds and human hearts; it should have been expected, however, that a quarterly journal could not record every task accomplished and every problem solved by this most active of association members, nor, through the partial record, reflect adequately his colorful personality and magnetic charm.

A selection of *LLJ* references by and about Miles O. Price nevertheless seems likely to contribute something to an accounting of the debt the profession owes him:

FOR HIS LEADERSHIP IN THE CONTROL OF LEGAL LITERATURE

Appraising the *Price Catalog for a Law Library of 15,000 Volumes*, the reviewer asserted that this book, together with the subject heading list published earlier and the *Basset Cataloging Manual*, had resulted in Columbia University Law Library's having given the profession cataloging aids second to none in any field. 35 *LLJ* 502-03 (1942).

Reading a paper entitled "Selection and Training of Law Catalogers" at the annual meeting, he chided his colleagues for having invested law cataloging with an aura of difficulty all its own, by insisting that a law cataloger is a

being apart from all other catalogers. 45 *LLJ* 296-302 (1952).

Spontaneous appraisal came from a colleague who, having first stated that university librarians cannot be expected to catalog law books properly, had been challenged to compare his own cataloging product with that of Columbia University Law Library: "Because they have Miles Price at Columbia, the cataloging [sic] done on his premises. When you get a situation like that perhaps you get a happy ending." 53 *LLJ* 474 (1960).

In panel discussion at the 1949 annual meeting, he called for support of the Library of Congress' tentative commitment to a subject classification for law. 42 *LLJ* 219-22 (1949). At the 1956 annual meeting, he said "I think before we go to the enormous expense and responsibility of adopting our own classification we should take a long look at what LC is going to do within the next 15 years." 49 *LLJ* 464-66 (1956).

On appointment by the Librarian of Congress, he served as a member of the Advisory Committee on the Development of a Library of Congress Classification for Anglo-American Law; for something over a year, he served as principal consultant to the Library of Congress in the work of developing and publishing the schedule for Anglo-American law. 55 *LLJ* 429 (1962); 56 *LLJ* 4 (1963); 57 *LLJ* 366-75 (1964); 60 *LLJ* 404 (1967); and numerous posthumous references in the issue of August 1968.

At a joint session of the National Association of State Libraries and the American Association of Law Libraries, he led the discussion on the emerging problem of control of administrative law materials; he confessed a beginning retreat from his position that Government publications should be cataloged like commercial publications and had taken a "day off" to examine the Northwestern University documents collection. 35 *LLJ* 277-304 (1942).

As chairman of the Joint Committee on Microcards, he provided AALL members with information about cards and reading equipment. 45 *LLJ* 468-71 (1952).

As chairman of the *Index to Legal Periodicals* Committee, he worked toward improvement of the indexing, negotiated and drafted the index-

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ing contract, and wrote a history of the *Index*. 36 *LLJ* 160-62 (1943); 37 *LLJ* 57-60, 87-89 (1944); 40 *LLJ* 135-43 (1947).

He served as a member of the Special Committee on Project Lawsearch and participated in the testing of the system. 58 *LLJ* 18-23 (1965); 60 *LLJ* 42-63 (1967).

He served as director and did the major portion of the selection and editing of entries for the book selection lists of the Association of American Law Schools' Libraries Study Project. 57 *LLJ* 251, 320-22 (1964); 58 *LLJ* 391-96 (1965); 59 *LLJ* 215 (1966).

Supplementing the classic Price and Bitner *Effective Legal Research*, he published shorter contributions to the literature of legal research:

"Noting up British Statutes and Cases" 40 *LLJ* 251-70 (1947).

"Citation Books for United States Treaties" 41 *LLJ* 347-71 (1948).

"Bibliographical Notes on United States Patent, Trade-mark and Copyright Law" 42 *LLJ* 47-59 (1949).

FOR HIS LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATION

He was director of the first Law Librarians' Institute at UCLA in June of 1953 and conducted the sessions on legal bibliography and on the teaching of legal bibliography. A published summary reports that at the closing session he reminded his students that the law library's truly indispensable person is the patron; 46 *LLJ* 333-35 (1953). His "Institutes from the Point of View of a Director," appearing in the Golden Jubilee issue, called for the AALL to continue the institutes as a permanent program. 49 *LLJ* 168-74 (1956).

The law library administration course at Columbia University is the best known and most widely attended of available specialized programs, and announcements appear throughout the *Journal*; his article in the library education symposium issue, "Columbia University's Law Library Course," again emphasized his theme that service to the patron is of paramount importance. 55 *LLJ* 220-28 (1962).

He presided at a panel discussion on the "Teaching of Legal Writing and Legal Research," at the 1959 annual meeting. 52 *LLJ* 350-70 (1959).

He served as the chairman of the Special Advisory Committee on Education for Law Librarianship. 32 *LLJ* 362-64 (1939).

He has been honored, appropriately, by the

awarding of scholarships in his name to young and promising law librarians. 49 *LLJ* 592 (1956); 50 *LLJ* 319 (1957); 51 *LLJ* 355 (1958); 52 *LLJ* 440 (1959); 53 *LLJ* 290 (1960); 54 *LLJ* 310 (1961); 55 *LLJ* 180 (1962); 56 *LLJ* 353 (1963); 58 *LLJ* 365 (1965); 60 *LLJ* 345 (1967).

FOR HIS LEADERSHIP IN PLACEMENT AND CERTIFICATION

As chairman of the Committee on Major Jobs in Law Libraries, and later as chairman of the Education and Placement Committee, he published reports throughout the *Journal*; but their sum does not reflect adequately the impact of his informal placement activities. (In some years, he exchanged an estimated 250 letters, telegrams, and telephone conversations with prospective employers and librarians.) 41 *LLJ* 103 (1948); 42 *LLJ* 156-57 (1949); 43 *LLJ* 334-36 (1950); 44 *LLJ* 239-40 (1951); 45 *LLJ* 257-58 (1952); 46 *LLJ* 303 (1953); 47 *LLJ* 297-98, 340-41 (1954). When he resigned as chairman, the membership at the annual meeting gave him a standing ovation and devoted considerable discussion time to the apparent impossibility of replacing him. 48 *LLJ* 298-304 (1955).

He believed that it is an important function of placement to raise salary standards and status of the profession through the education of both librarians and administrators. He deplored the trend toward weighting down law school librarians with substantive law courses in addition to legal bibliography, followed by pressure on the law librarian to leave library work and become a full-time teacher in order to secure further advancement. He thought the association should exert its influence to make law schools recognize librarians as an integral part of the educational process. 47 *LLJ* 340-41 (1954).

Speaking of the failure to incorporate into the Association of American Law Schools' standards provisions that assure adequate professional help to the law librarian, he said:

The one-man library is an administrative and service monstrosity, inhuman to the librarian and a fraud upon the clientele served. There is no such magic in professional legal or library training as will enable a single qualified law librarian to perform all these duties properly. There are just simply too many hours, too many duties and too many people to be served. In those schools which seek the prestige of AALS membership without its responsibilities the

poor librarian spreads himself out as thin as possible, attempting to do everything, but being able to do nothing really well.

He said the AALL had not worked hard enough at this:

Have we as an association tried, not by talk, but by carefully worked out factual and realistic standards of our own, to show why the one-man librarian needs this help and what he could do with it that students couldn't do as well? Have we tried to educate the deans? We have not. It is the duty of this Association to cast aside fear of its own membership, to formulate standards, and to educate the law schools to demand these standards. 47 *LLJ* 371-74 (1954).

He explored the possibility of inducing able persons to take positions at lower salaries than they otherwise would command if the hiring institution could allow them to attend library or law school while on the job, but this meant no lessening of his pressure for higher financial rewards for law librarians. 43 *LLJ* 334-36 (1950).

He said that an optimist can be defined as a law library administrator who "expects to find and employ the kind of cataloger he wants, at the salary he can pay." 45 *LLJ* 296-302 (1952).

Invited to comment from the floor at a panel discussion on certification, he presented a number of problems standing in the way of AALL's adopting a certification program, spoke for standards rather than inflexible rules, and warned that certification by examination would unduly favor the facile crammer. 52 *LLJ* 414-16 (1959).

Chairing a panel, "Certification and Education of Law Librarians Part II," he said "... We should measure up to our professional responsibilities by defining what a librarian is, and by so policing our organization that a prospective employer may rely upon our designation when hiring a librarian." 53 *LLJ* 423-48 (1960).

He challenged the American Bar Association to include law librarians in the membership of pre-accreditation inspection teams. 53 *LLJ* 486 (1960).

FOR HIS DEDICATION—TO HIS PROFESSION,
TO HIS COLLEAGUES, TO HIS FRIENDS

Appended to his "Notes of a Law Book Scout in South America" is an editor's note quoting a passage from the Price diary, added because it was characteristic of him and exemplified in the highest degree his dedication to his profession:

Returning from South America through the war zone on a ship laden with munitions, this entry in his diary was made after a number of passengers disembarked to return by plane "... I stayed put in the face of a virtual order to go ashore and take my 17 cases of books with me ..." "... the ship will be more of a target than ever for a submarine, and I wish I were home. I'd have left, except for my books. I don't want to lose them after all the troubles I've had with them." So the Captain with his crew, Miles Price with his law books, and a few other passengers "stuck to the ship." She reached New York safely to the great relief of Mr. Price's many friends. 35 *LLJ* 95-99 (1942).

Recurrently, he fulfilled the program committee's need for a best-foot-forward speaker, securely equal to any occasion, as a toastmaster or as responder to official welcome. 35 *LLJ* 163, 366-71 (1942); 40 *LLJ* 116-17 (1947); 45 *LLJ* 449-52 (1952).

He was president of the American Association of Law Librarians during the 1945/46 term. His presidential report showed that it was important to him that the AALL, unlike many other organizations, had remained vital throughout the war. 39 *LLJ* 76-78 (1946).

Many honors came to him, and three, selected from notes in the *Journal*, are reported here:

The Columbia "Price Alumni" toasted him in November of 1954. They had done this frequently before and continued to do it frequently throughout his life. On this occasion, a surprise dinner, they toasted his 25 years at Columbia, and honored him as their "friend and counselor as well as their boss." 48 *LLJ* 79 (1955).

Temple University awarded him an honorary Doctor of Laws Degree. The citation:

Mr. President, when the Temple University Law School wanted the most competent professional advice to be obtained when it first began to plan for a fine law library, it had not far to go. Less than 100 miles away was a man who knew more about that subject than anybody else. He is known throughout the country as the dean of law librarians; his right to that title is unchallenged. Equally at home among librarians and among lawyers, he holds earned degrees in both fields. He has worked in libraries for 40 years, serving the University of Illinois, the Scientific Library of the United States Patent Office, and the Columbia University School of Law. His course in law

library administration, which he initiated in Columbia's School of Library Service, is outstanding in this highly specialized field. The book, *Effective Legal Research*, of which he is coauthor and which was published last year, has a place as important on the shelf of the practicing attorney as it does on the desk of a law librarian. It is an outstanding work. 47 *LLJ* 166 (1954).

The American Association of Law Libraries cited him for outstanding contribution and dedicated service to his profession. The citation, read by President Ervin Pollack:

A citation to Miles O. Price need not be justified. It is just another excuse to express our deep appreciation to the Dean of Law Librarians for what he has done for all of us, collectively and individually and professionally.

Miles Price is a pioneer in education for law librarianship; a fighter for improved

standards for law libraries and a living wage for law librarians; a master of technical library processes; and a law library consultant extraordinary. He has been active for years in the formulation and implementation of AALL policies, through committee cooperation, operations and individual direction. He served as President of this Association from 1945 to 1946. 52 *LLJ* 448-49 (1959).

He was a great man. A fitting final footprint, characteristic of a quality that combined with his intellectual endowment and professional preparation to make him that great man, appears as his response to the presentation of the AALL citation. He said:

If I could be reincarnated immediately, I would want to be a law librarian doing the kind of work I like to do in the company of the people I have been working with. 52 *LLJ* 448-49 (1959).