



**PennState**  
Dickinson Law

**DICKINSON LAW REVIEW**  
PUBLISHED SINCE 1897

---

Volume 79  
Issue 2 *Dickinson Law Review* - Volume 79,  
1974-1975

---

1-1-1975

## Edgar I. King

Benjamin Franklin Boyer

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ideas.dickinsonlaw.psu.edu/dlra>

---

### Recommended Citation

Benjamin F. Boyer, *Edgar I. King*, 79 DICK. L. REV. 198 (1975).

Available at: <https://ideas.dickinsonlaw.psu.edu/dlra/vol79/iss2/3>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Law Reviews at Dickinson Law IDEAS. It has been accepted for inclusion in Dickinson Law Review by an authorized editor of Dickinson Law IDEAS. For more information, please contact [lja10@psu.edu](mailto:lja10@psu.edu).

# Edgar I. King

BY BENJAMIN FRANKLIN BOYER\*

I hold every man a debtor to his profession; from the which as men of course do seek to receive countenance and profit, so ought they of duty to endeavor themselves by way of amends to be a help and ornament thereunto.

Francis Bacon, *The Elements of the Common Law, Preface*

Truly it may be said of Edgar I. King that he has been "a help and ornament" to his profession. Since August of 1937 he has devoted his professional life to legal education. In that month he, like I, accepted the invitation of Dean Edward D. Ellison, moved to Kansas City and there joined the faculty of what is now the School of Law of the University of Missouri at Kansas City.

The acquaintance which we formed at that school ripened into a friendship which has lasted through the years. Because it has been my privilege to know Edgar King intimately and well and because I do hold him in high regard, I welcome this opportunity to write about him now. It is most appropriate of the editors of the *Dickinson Law Review* to dedicate this number of the *Review* to him and thus to mark the occasion of his installation as the fifth dean of the Dickinson School of Law. It would be my hope to contribute to the significance of the event by some remarks about the career of the new dean.

As a successor in the tradition of Deans Trickett and Hitchler and Shaffer and Laub, he faces a challenge to maintain the excellence of his school. His career indicates that he will meet that challenge and meet it successfully.

Except for an interlude of service in the United States Navy during World War II lasting from 1943 until 1946, Dean King has been engaged in teaching and administration at five law schools. As one would suppose, his teaching assignments have been varied. Indeed, they have ranged across a wide spectrum. Of late years,

---

\* Professor of Law (65-Club), University of California Hastings College of the Law; A.B. 1926, University of Missouri; J.D. 1928, University of Missouri; LL.M. 1941, Columbia University; LL.D. 1959, Dickinson School of Law.

he has concentrated his teaching in the areas of The Legal Profession (including Professional Responsibility and Legal Ethics), Remedies and Trusts.

His students (both past and present) attest to his skill as a superb classroom teacher. They have appreciated the help and guidance he has given them as they make their way into the fields of law. One might venture the opinion that it is this demonstrated concern for the well-being of those in his classes which has created an excellent relationship with his students wherever he has served.

Dean King and I taught together at Kansas City until the Fall Semester of 1941-42. At that time he left us to answer the blandishments of Dean Jack Lott and joined the Law Faculty at the University of Louisville. His stay at Louisville was not a protracted one. By the spring of 1943, Edgar King had volunteered for service in the Navy, had been accepted and commissioned. Thereafter he sailed from the West Coast for the South Pacific where he served until the end of World War II. During that service, he had earned promotions and when he returned to civilian life did so with the rank of Lieutenant USNR.

Dean King thereafter maintained his interest in the Navy Reserve, and has recently retired with the rank of Commander. He attended the Naval Justice School at Newport, R.I., and has headed a unit of Naval Reserve Judge Advocates.

After release from active duty with the U.S. Navy, Edgar King returned to Louisville and resumed the academic life. The summer of 1946 found him teaching as a visitor at Western Reserve in Cleveland. Because of his demonstrated effectiveness as a teacher, he was asked to join that faculty as a regular member and did so in the fall of 1946.

It was at Western Reserve that recognition of his administrative talents resulted in his appointment as Assistant Dean. He served as such for seven years. Then, in 1958, on the retirement of Dean Fletcher R. Andrews, he was selected as the dean of that law school. Dean King worked closely with the League of Ohio Law Schools while at Western Reserve. That organization's principal efforts have resulted in greatly improving the standards of legal education in the Buckeye State. Dean King's leadership in that cause was recognized by his election as secretary and then president of the League.

During his four years as dean at Western Reserve, Edgar King functioned well. He strove always to increase the effectiveness of the school and its programs and he was constantly concerned with

the welfare of the student body and the faculty. However, in 1962 he decided to give up administration and to return to full-time law teaching. It was then that he resigned as dean of Western Reserve and accepted the invitation of Dean Morris Shaffer to become a professor at Dickinson School of Law.

During his first five years at the oldest law school in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Edgar King again demonstrated his effectiveness as a full-time teacher of the law. In addition, as he had always done, he became acquainted in the community and with the members of the bar as well as with the academic community. He worked in many areas of civic and professional concern.

In 1967, after Judge Burton R. Laub began his service as dean at Dickinson, he asked Edgar King to once again assume administrative tasks. Ed accepted and was appointed Assistant Dean. As such he once more demonstrated his abilities in such work. Despite the duties of his office, Dean King continued also to teach. Thus he still maintained, as he does today, close contacts with the student body.

During the 1971-72 school year Ed King took a sabbatical leave from Dickinson. During that period he taught with us at Hastings College of the Law of the University of California in San Francisco. We enjoyed his being with us, and there on the West Coast, as he had in the Mid-West and on the East Coast, he demonstrated his ability as a teacher. Again he earned the respect and support of his students and his new faculty colleagues. Although urged to stay at Hastings, he returned to Dickinson for he believed that there was where he could render the greatest service. When he did return to Dickinson, he was named as the first occupant of the John Edward Fowler Professorship, a well-merited appointment.

As is well known to all the readers of this Law Review, Dean Laub, after serving most ably as dean for eight years, decided to relinquish the duties of administration. Accordingly, he announced his intention of retiring at the end of the academic year 1973-74 and asked Judge Dale F. Shughart, President of the Dickinson School of Law, to find his successor. Judge Shughart and the Board appointed a Search Committee to recommend a new dean. After spending much time and effort in considering many qualified applicants, the Committee finally made a choice—a unanimous choice, I am told, of the students, alumni, faculty and trustee members. That choice was Edgar King! This was a most happy selection and Edgar King's appointment as the fifth dean of Dickinson School of Law followed.

In the years that have passed since courses in law were first offered in Carlisle, the Dickinson School of Law has grown and developed while its influence and that of its graduates has extended widely through the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the nation. As Edgar King has contributed to legal education by devoted ser-

vice, so has the school of which he is now dean. It is my confident prediction that through the years ahead both Dean King and Dickinson will continue to do so in a most harmonious relationship. Both of them will be a "help and an ornament" to the legal profession. They will meet the challenges of the times and do it excellently. And, the Commonwealth and the nation will be the better for their efforts.