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Foreword

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FOREWORD

Hon. Mark C. Dillon*

Welcome to this special edition of the Pace Law Review, which pays tribute to the accomplishments of the law school's former dean, Hon. James D. Hopkins. It is an honor and privilege to introduce you to the first-rate scholarship contained in the pages that follow.

My first impression of Justice Hopkins was during the summer of 1982. I had just completed my first year of law school at Fordham and was working as a summer assistant at the firm of Clark, Gagliardi & Miller in White Plains. Justice Hopkins had known members of my family and played a role in my landing the summer job. To show my appreciation, I invited Justice Hopkins to lunch at what was then the Jockey Club on Court Street, now known as Mulino's.

The two of us at lunch might have seemed like an odd pairing. He was white-haired, well-known, and eminently accomplished. I was young, immature, and my knowledge of the law was only slightly above that of diddily squat. Yet, Justice Hopkins spent over an hour of his day with me. I mentioned to him that in my first-year torts class we had studied the case of *Nal-lan v. Helmsley-Spear, Inc.*,¹ in which Justice Hopkins was the sole dissenter at the Appellate Division and which the Court of Appeals reversed for reasons consistent with Hopkins's dissent. The moment I mentioned the case, Justice Hopkins retrieved from his mind all of its facts and issues of law, as if he had reviewed the appellate record only an hour before, even though his dissent had been written years earlier. His computer-like recall of the details of the case was flawless as he professorially evaluated the arguments of each side of the case, and it left an impression that I still visualize today. Now, as one of his successors at the Appellate Division, I appreciate and even envy

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1. 412 N.Y.S.2d 650 (App. Div. 1979).

the quickness and brilliance of Justice Hopkins's legal mind which many people, myself included, cannot match.

Years later, while I was a trial judge at the Supreme Court, Westchester County (2000-2005), Justice Hopkins's name would occasionally be raised in my presence by an attorney or court clerk, always with great reverence, even though "Jimmy" had been off the trial bench since 1962. I specifically recall one instance at which the speaker credited Justice Hopkins's ability to move along his calendar efficiently and fairly. His reputation continues to resonate in the halls of the Westchester County Courthouse despite the passage of time. At the Appellate Division from 2005 to present, I have encountered the same reverence for Justice Hopkins, who is known and admired by the court's "lifers" in Brooklyn, even though the judge has not worked there since 1981. I have been a member of appellate panels where colleagues have given decades-old precedents great deference and controlling respect, merely from observing James Hopkins's name as among the jurists that decided them. In whatever courthouses Justice Hopkins walked, respect followed. Justice Hopkins embodied all of the qualities that make not just a good judge, but an exceptionally great one.

Pace Law School is to be commended for this edition's tribute to its former dean. Dean Hopkins is a notable part of the school's rich and developing history. Having previewed portions of this edition, I can attest that readers will enjoy the descriptions of Justice Hopkins's life and accomplishments as an attorney, legislator, executive, trial judge, appellate judge, and as an academic and dean. The life of Justice Hopkins personifies the benefits that flow from the intersection between law and academia. James Hopkins is a "gold standard" for both subject areas. This tribute edition of the Pace Law Review reflects the respect that several generations hold for the man, which will continue to reverberate for years to come through his judicial writings that are permanently etched into our law, and through his pioneering work during his deanship at Pace.

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