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JOHN SENTMAN STRAHORN, JR.

A Tribute

By ROGER HOWELL*

This number of the REVIEW is dedicated to the memory of its first and distinguished Faculty Editor, Professor John Sentman Strahorn, Jr., whose death on November 14, 1955, brought great sorrow to his students, law review associates, and fellow faculty members.

Professor Strahorn was born at Elkton, Maryland, April 23, 1905, the son of the late John S. Strahorn, Sr., who was a respected member of the Maryland bar for fifty years, and Juliet M. Strahorn, who was known to Maryland lawyers for a great many years as the Court Stenographer for the Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County. While Professor Strahorn was very young, his parents moved to Annapolis, Maryland, where he lived throughout his youth. After attending the Annapolis High School, he entered St. John's College in Annapolis, from which he graduated in 1922. With such parentage, it seemed almost inevitable that he should study law. He received the LL.B. degree in 1925 from Washington and Lee University and the S.J.D. degree in 1926 from Harvard Law School.

Professor Strahorn began his teaching career in the fall of 1926 at the University of Arkansas Law School where he was a member of the faculty for four years, being successively instructor, assistant professor and associate professor. During this period he met and married Elizabeth Oates, who was also teaching at the University of Arkansas. She survives him as his widow along with a daughter, Janet, and a brother Charles Strahorn of Winetka, Illinois. In 1930 he went to Yale University Law School as a Sterling Research Fellow, receiving the J.S.D. degree in 1931, and in the fall of that year he joined the faculty at the University of Maryland School of Law where he continued as a valued member until his untimely death. During the war years in the forties, he carried a particularly heavy load, joining the rest of the full-time faculty in teaching a full summer session without added compensation to enable students to accelerate the completion of their studies. In many other years, he was a visiting professor in the summer sessions at the law schools of George Washington University (1945,

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1946, and 1950), the University of Wisconsin (1947), the University of Indiana (1948), and the University of Texas (1949), establishing warm memories and lasting friendships in each.

He was admitted to the Maryland Bar in 1926 and was a member of the American Bar Association, the Maryland State Bar Association, the Bar Association of Baltimore City, the American Association of University Professors and the honorary legal society of The Order of the Coif. He was a communicant of the Church of Saint Michael and All Angels and at the time of his death had been for several years a member of the Board of Directors of the Church Mission of Help.

Professor Strahorn was an exceptionally gifted teacher who possessed to an unusual degree the ability to stimulate his students and to arouse their interest. During recent years, his teaching at Maryland was limited to his principal fields of interest, Evidence, Criminal Law, and Domestic Relations. During his teaching career, however, he had taught courses in Agency, Conflict of Laws, Constitutional Law, Criminal Procedure, Legal Bibliography, Negotiable Instruments, Sales, Suretyship, and Wills and Administration. This wide experience enriched his knowledge and greatly enhanced the value of student contacts with him in his chosen fields and in law review writing. He was intolerant of slipshod work and outspoken in his views, but he had a quality in him that won the affection as well as the respect of those who studied under him. His sometimes biting classroom comments were leavened by a keen sense of humor and served if anything to increase his popularity with his students.

He was not only a teacher of rare talents, but also, particularly in his younger days, a prolific and thoughtful contributor to many of the leading law reviews especially in his favorite fields of Evidence and Criminal Law. He had published in mimeograph form a Maryland Casebook on Domestic Relations and an Index of Maryland Statutes and Cases on Criminal Law. In 1935 he was largely instrumental in establishing the MARYLAND LAW REVIEW and served continuously as Faculty Editor thereof until his death. In recognition of his long and faithful service and as a permanent Maryland Memorial to him, the REVIEW has chosen one article from each of his major fields for reprinting herein and in its editorial section has listed his other major writings.

To his colleagues, John Strahorn was a good and well-loved friend, whose companionship was always enjoyed and whose counsel was highly valued. They often relied on his phenomenal memory for cases and found him a never failing reservoir of useful and interesting data of infinite variety. By them, by his students, and by all who knew him, he will be sadly missed and greatly mourned.

The Bar, THE LAW REVIEW, and the Law School have suffered a great loss. One who was truly a gentleman and a scholar has departed from our midst.