

Louis Prashker (1891-1959): A Memorial Tribute

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in 1950, had charge of the morning and late afternoon classes and James B. M. McNally, now an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, Appellate Division, First Department, and I, taught the evening sections.

Louis and Bill, as members of the full time staff, also gave many other courses and they, under the able leadership of the late Dean Matheson together with the late Vice Dean Maloney and Frederick A. Whitney, now Vice Dean Emeritus, worked hard toward the building of the young Law School.

In addition to his outstanding contribution to the School in the field of practice, Louis Prashker also devoted much time as a Consultant to the Judicial Council in the revising of practice provisions in the Civil Practice Act, many of his learned studies appearing during the years in the annual reports of the Council. Lately he served with his accustomed ability and devotion as a member of the staff of the Advisory Committee on Practice and Procedure in the drafting of a proposed new Civil Practice Act.

Professor Prashker's interests, however, were not confined to the field of procedure. He also found time to publish books on Corporation and Partnership Law. In fact he was at the time of his untimely death assisting a Joint Legislative Committee on a proposed revision of the corporation laws of the State of New York. His interest in the *St. John's Law Review*, of course, was always very keen, having been one of its founders, a frequent contributor, and the Review's faculty adviser during several periods of its existence.

The Law School has lost a dedicated and outstanding scholar. The members of the Faculty have also lost a devoted friend.

WERNER ILSSEN.*

* * *

My association with Professor Louis Prashker commenced when I studied under him at *St. John's Law School*

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during World War II. Those wartime days were difficult ones for St. John's as they were for all law schools. The bulk of the student body and faculty melted away under the impetus of total mobilization, and upon a few remaining professors rested the burden of teaching all the courses. Thus it was that I and my fellow students were privileged to have the benefit of Prof. Prashker's instruction not only in New York Practice and Corporations, subjects in which he was a recognized authority, but also in Wills and Administrative Law, courses which he had undertaken under the pressure of wartime necessity. It was characteristic of the man that, so thorough was his preparation for class and so broad his range of legal scholarship, his teaching in Wills and Administrative Law was just as incisive and fruitful as was his instruction in the fields in which he had specialized. He was a tireless and energetic worker, and his teaching, like his writing, was marked by an extraordinary precision of language, doubtless a product of his long experience in drafting statutes and rules.

I came to know Prof. Prashker well during those wartime days, and this association with him continued when, in 1946, I joined the faculty at St. John's. As a faculty member I occupied an office immediately adjacent to his, and on numerous occasions I made use of his advice in preparing law review articles and in shaping the content of my law school courses. Six years ago, with the aim of determining the appropriate relationship in my Torts course between procedural and substantive aspects of the law, I audited Prof. Prashker's course on New York Practice, and found it just as stimulating as it had been when I was a student almost a decade before.

I also had many occasions to ask Prof. Prashker for assistance during the period from 1950 to 1956 when I was serving as faculty adviser to the St. John's Law Review, a post in which he succeeded me. By virtue of his work as consultant to a number of New York State agencies concerned with improvements in the law, he was always conversant with the troublesome areas of the law, and he gave freely of his time to me as well as to student editors who

were preparing comments on recent court decisions and legislative matters.

It is no exaggeration to say that Prof. Prashker was my teacher not only in my student days but also during the dozen years that I served with him on the St. John's faculty. I found him to be always generous and considerate, and possessed of a strong religious feeling. He had a keen awareness of moral values, and was, in the truest sense, a cultured gentleman. His passing removes from St. John's a man who was a leader in scholarship and an example to his students of the best traditions of the law.

HAROLD F. MCNIECE.*

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The untimely passing of Louis Prashker has taken from our midst a scholar of the law whose vocation and avocation were a fighting devotion to law reform and whose gentle spirit left a personal impress of a life of goodness.

In the field to which he devoted the major portion of his professional energy, Prashker left a lasting testimonial both in his printed works—which serviced countless members of (and applicants for admission to) the Bar of the State of New York—and in the minds of the thousands of students who took his courses. I was not privileged to be one of Prashker's professional colleagues at St. John's but—frustrated teacher as I count myself—I was happy indeed that he accorded me the honor from time to time to ask my advice about some problem in the law to which he was then devoting his probing and analytic mind. Nor did I have the opportunity to sit in Professor Prashker's classroom, but the many times I had occasion to refer to his volume on New York Practice led me to consider myself as one of his lucky students. This treatise was (as I have elsewhere indicated) no mere compilation of rules of procedure but an effective exposition and helpful elucidation of an important and difficult subject.¹

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¹ Levy, Book Reviews, PRASHKER, NEW YORK PRACTICE, 29 ST. JOHN'S L. REV. 172 (1954), 132 N.Y.L.J., Nov. 30, 1954, p. 4, col. 2.