

Memorial: Richard Sloane (1916–2002)

Librarian, Professor, Consultant, Author

¶1 Richard Sloane, 85, librarian, professor emeritus at the University of Pennsylvania Law School, renowned library consultant, and distinguished author died of cancer on Monday, February 11, 2002.

¶2 Dick was born in South Dakota in 1916 and moved to New York as a child. He graduated with a BS in social sciences from City College of New York in 1937 and then earned a BS in library science from Columbia University School of Library Service in 1940. Upon graduation he worked as a reference librarian at Queens College in Flushing, New York, until 1942 when he entered service in the U.S. Army. He was stationed stateside and in the Pacific during World War II, and he served on the staff of *Stars and Stripes*.

¶3 Dick began his career as a law librarian at Cravath, Swaine, and Moore in New York City in 1948. In 1962 his title was changed to attorney in charge of the library when he was admitted to the New York State Bar after having read for the law. He remained at Cravath until 1971. He then assumed his duties as director of the Biddle Law Library and professor of law at the University of Pennsylvania Law School where he remained until his retirement from academia in 1984. During his tenure at Penn, he served as a member of the AALL Executive Board (1975–1976). He also served on the Editorial Advisory Committee of the *Index to Legal Periodicals* until his death.

¶4 Not one to be idle, beginning in 1970 Dick worked regularly as a nationwide consultant on all aspects of libraries, including administration, collection management, book selection, budgeting, space planning, and other topics. Among his more recent clients was the National Baseball Hall of Fame Library. Dick loved baseball and proudly wore the Hall of Fame sweater given to him by its staff.

¶5 In addition to all this, he wrote and taught. Many law librarians remember him fondly as their professor of law librarianship and legal literature at Columbia's School of Library Service.

¶6 His work as an author is notable. In the late 1960s Dick was given an assignment by the ABA Committee on Business Law Libraries to create a list of recommended law books. The result, *Recommended Law Books*,¹ was published by the ABA and honored by AALL as the 1970 recipient of the Joseph L. Andrews Bibliographical Award. In the late 1970s, he began preparation for his major and life-long work, *The Sloane-Dorland Annotated Medical-Legal Dictionary*,² by running

1. COMM. ON BUS. LAW LIBRARIES, AM. BAR ASS'N, RECOMMENDED LAW BOOKS (Richard Sloane ed., 1969).
2. RICHARD SLOANE, THE SLOANE-DORLAND ANNOTATED MEDICAL-LEGAL DICTIONARY (1987).

Lexis searches on the terms listed in *Dorland's Illustrated Medical Dictionary* and then analyzing his results for their legal significance. He continued to supplement and update this work through the years. It is widely cited by attorneys as well as physicians. He was in the process of updating *Legal Research and Law Library Management*³ with his dear friend and coauthor, Julius Marke, at the time of this death. Dick took great pride in the fact that he did all of his own writing and held himself to the highest standards. Until recently, he wrote a regular column on management and technology in the *New York Law Journal*.

¶7 Among his friends Dick was known for his dry wit, his three-piece suit (he never wore anything but), and his love of travel, fine dining, and reading mystery books.

¶8 The Biddle Law Library staff fondly remembers Dick showing up on hot summer days with ice cream sodas for everyone as a spur of the moment surprise. He rarely refused an invitation to lunch and, in fact, was usually the initiator. And he almost always paid. With Dick Sloane, lunch was an event! Restaurants in New York, Philadelphia, and Atlantic City have lost a great patron, and we have lost a great friend.—*Cynthia R. Arkin*⁴ and *Ronald E. Day*⁵

A Friend Is Gone

¶9 My dear friend is gone. No longer do I hear the tap at my office door and see the man in the green felt hat with the bamboo “stick” or walking cane. “Am I bothering you dear?” he would say. “Of course not, come in,” I would reply. He would remove his hat and place it with his overcoat and cane on my sofa and then sit across from me to discuss his latest project. Whether it be what was happening with his *Medical-Legal Dictionary*, a column for the *New York Law Journal*, or a supplement to *Law Library Management* that he wrote with Julius, I welcomed his visits. I always learned something new. I especially remember the day he showed up wearing the Baseball Hall of Fame sweater and sporting a wry grin, telling me he had found his greatest consulting job. I also remember with sadness that day late last summer when he came to tell me that he had an incurable cancer. He handled it rather well and never once complained of discomfort or pain, even in his last days. His outlook was always positive. He was among the last of the great gentlemen.

¶10 Dick became a friend of the staff at the Jenkins Law Library in the late 1990s when he assisted us with several collection appraisals. He was considered

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3. JULIUS J. MARKE & RICHARD SLOANE, *LEGAL RESEARCH AND LAW LIBRARY MANAGEMENT* (rev. ed. 1990).
 4. Associate Director for Collection Development and Special Collections, University of Pennsylvania Law School, Biddle Law Library, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
 5. Head of Reference Services and Lecturer, University of Pennsylvania Law School, Biddle Law Library, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

an honorary staff member and was invited to our annual celebrations. I had come to know him when he was still at Penn. and through the years we worked on a few consulting projects together and served on the *Index to Legal Periodicals* board. We usually traveled to and from the board's meetings together.

¶11 It was during one such trip that he shared a special story with me. When he was about nine or ten years old, his mother removed him and his younger brother from school in Grand Rapids and took them to France for several months. While there, they visited the sights, learned the language, and dined well. When the lire fell in value, his mother seized the opportunity and took them to Italy for three weeks thanks to the better exchange rate. They returned to Paris and eventually to the states. He related that it was unusual for a middle-class woman to travel alone with her children at that time, let alone to travel abroad or to do it when the children were supposed to be in school. Suddenly I understood where he acquired his independence and love of travel, fine food, and dining. I shall miss our lunches and dinners, his wonderful stories, and most of all his friendship.—*Regina L. Smith*⁶

Last of the Titans

¶12 Richard Sloane, who died at the age of eighty-five this past February, was one of the last of the titans who read for the bar. In 1962, he passed the New York bar examination without ever having attended law school by studying law while serving as librarian for Cravath, Swaine, and Moore.

¶13 Professor Sloane, who also taught at the University of Pennsylvania Law School, was library director there from 1971 until he retired in 1984. Upon retirement from Penn, he worked as a library consultant on space planning, book selection, and technology and also wrote columns for the *New York Law Journal*.

¶14 To those who knew him, he was Dick Sloane. Always smartly dressed in full Brooks Brothers attire, he commuted on Friday afternoons from Philadelphia to New York in spring 1978 where he taught "Law Librarianship" to a class of ten Columbia School of Library Service students on the fifth floor of Butler Library. The class met from 4 to 6 P.M. One of his assignments was to design a law firm library. The class also discussed personnel management. His solution to the hypothetical personnel issue—"What do you do with two employees who don't get along?"—was probably based on experience. Sloane was terse. "Fire both of them." He led his students on a tour of the Sullivan and Cromwell law library and later gave everyone a gratis copy of his *Recommended Law Books* that had won AALL's Joseph L. Andrews Bibliographical Award in 1970.

¶15 Professor Sloane cochaired Practicing Law Institute seminars in New York and Los Angeles in spring 1979 with Marie Wallace. The result was a course

6. Director of the Law Library, Jenkins Law Library, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

handbook, *Private Law Library: 1980's and Beyond*,⁷ that constituted one of the seminal pieces of the literature specifically directed at the private law librarian. Sloane wrote the essays on “Business Library Services” and “Coordination of Lawyer Work Products.” Another compendia that addressed this audience was *Legal Research and Law Library Management*, first published in 1982, that Sloane cowrote with Julius Marke.

¶16 Dick Sloane hired Merle Slyhoff for her first professional library position at Penn. Now the document delivery and auxiliary services librarian there, perhaps her recollection of him best sums up this titan of law librarianship. “He was a wonderful mentor, showing me that librarianship isn’t always about the ‘rules’—sometimes thinking like the patron gives the best results. Dick’s quiet charm and grace will be missed.”—*Thomas Duszak*⁸

7. PRIVATE LAW LIBRARY: 1980'S AND BEYOND (Richard Sloane & Marie Wallace, co-chairpersons) (PLI Patent, Copyright, Trademark, and Literary Property Course Handbook Series, No. 107, 1979).

8. Head, Cataloging Section, State Library of Pennsylvania, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.