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A Dedication to Francis X. Riley

Hon. William J. Bauer*

It is difficult to think of Francis X. Riley as a Professor Emeritus. I have known the man for almost three decades and the idea of him slowing down long enough to be emeritus anything is hard to accept.

I can accept the fact he graduated from Marquette Law School in 1937(!) and even the fact that he has been an Illinois lawyer since that year—forty seven years! What I find hard to believe is that he has become an Elder Statesman (or Very Senior Counsellor).

Francis X. Riley began his Illinois career as a trial lawyer in Chicago with the firm of Monahan and Monahan. In 1941 he was appointed a Field Investigator for the United States House of Representatives Committee on Migration. In spring of 1942 he became, for a short time, a Special Investigator for the President's Committee on Fair Employment Practices, working as an early crusader against employment discrimination.

Without giving up that fight, he entered the military and, for the next four years, served as a Special Agent of the Counter Intelligence Corps of the United States Army. That stint was followed by an appointment as special appellate attorney for the Office of Price Administration, during which he appeared in almost every federal circuit in the United States. For amusement and relaxation during this period he attended Catholic University of America, earning an LL.M. degree in 1949.

Armed with this new academic qualification (and a very heavy overcoat) he accepted the position of Regional Counsel for the Alaska Public Works Program in Juneau, Alaska. He brought with him, in addition, a splendid knowledge of federal law, and became an expert in local Alaskan law.

In 1954, his wanderlust somewhat abated, he returned to Illinois and became Chief of the Appeals Division of the Cook County State's Attorney's Office. Shortly thereafter another joyous event occurred in his life—he met me. (I was then serving as an Assistant State's Attorney in adjoining DuPage County, and the meeting was joyous for me as well.) He remained with the prosecutor's office for seven years and during that period was responsible in whole or in part for five hundred criminal and civil briefs. He also appeared before the Illinois Supreme Court more often than any attorney in the state.

In 1961, seeking greener pastures, he became a partner in the private firm of Ancel, Stonesifer, Houpt and Riley, as a litigation/appellate specialist. In 1965 Francis X. Riley, Benjamin Adamowski and Paul Newey (former State's Attorney and Chief Investigator, respectively) formed the firm of Adamowski, Newey and Riley. That general practice firm remained alive

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until 1973 when Francis went to work for the Illinois Secretary of State, while continuing to do appellate work for the many lawyers who recognized his expertise. Also, he joined the faculty of Lewis University College of Law in 1975, and remained on the faculty during its transition to the Northern Illinois University College of Law.

Having held more positions and accomplished more goals in forty-plus years than one man should aspire to, one would think that he could—or would—gratefully retire. I am willing, on the basis of my knowledge of the man, to say that “it ain’t necessarily so.” I’d also be willing to bet a modest sum (if federal judges were permitted to gamble) that Francis X. is just getting loosened up. It is a fact that good lawyers—particularly good advocates—seem to increase their activities as the years roll on. I believe that the brain is the real part of human anatomy for which the phrase was coined “use it or lose it!” And heaven knows, Frank Riley has always used his.

I have never known Francis X. Riley in his capacity as a member of the law school faculty; that is, I was never pleased by having him as a law school teacher. I can attest to the fact that in a thousand other settings, and places, he has been a tremendous teacher of the law and, not incidentally, of life. The list of lawyers, judges, and clients who have learned from Francis X. Riley throughout the United States is a staggering one. He taught while he practiced, he taught his opponents, he taught the judges before whom he appeared, and he taught his associates and co-counsel. I am frank to admit that I learned a lot of law from Francis X. Riley, and took further advantage of his teaching expertise by hiring some of the young men who learned from their association with him. One example that comes to mind immediately is the present Governor of Illinois, James R. Thompson, who served under Francis X. Riley as an Appellate Assistant from 1959 to 1961, and as my First Assistant when I was United States Attorney, 1970-71.

One of the peculiar descriptions of a good lawyer is that he is a “lawyer’s lawyer.” This strikes me as a bit sappy; Francis X. was a *client’s* lawyer all his life, but he has always enjoyed the respect and admiration of his peers (assuming the existence of peers in discussing him!) and the respect of the judges before whom he has appeared. He is an all-around lawyer, equally at home in simple or complex cases, civil or criminal law. He has been wholeheartedly devoted to his profession, and I know he brought to teaching the same passion for perfection and love of the law that he has exhibited in his life as an advocate.

Now *there* is the real description of a lawyer that is worthwhile: he is an advocate—a real honest-to-God advocate. His search for truth and justice and his unwillingness to accept mediocrity, or less, is the mark of a lawyer. Francis X. Riley has always been his own man, and one absolutely marvelous lawyer. I am proud to have known him, learned from him and worked with him. He is a *lawyer* emeritus and will still be a legal force for many years to come, if we are lucky.