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REMEMBRANCE OF PROFESSOR DAVID GREGORY

*Melvyn Zarr**

David and I were colleagues for over 27 years. In one sense I knew him quite well; in another sense I did not know him well at all. David liked to present himself as a man of mystery. For a number of years he had a license plate on his car that read "MI-5" (or perhaps it was "MI-6"; I forget). I once asked him the significance of the plate and he replied that it was the designation of the British Secret Service. With someone other than David, the next logical question would have been: "Why that?" But I knew not to ask because I knew that I would not get a straight answer.

But in a more important sense, I knew David very well, because I knew what drove him. What drove David was a deep commitment to the enterprise of teaching law students. David was fond of the following quotation from Justice Holmes:

So I say the business of a law school is not sufficiently described when you merely say that it is to teach law, or to make lawyers. It is to teach law in the grand manner, and to make great lawyers.¹

But how do you *do* that? You can go to the library, but there is no book there on *How to Teach Law in the Grand Manner*. You just have to find your own way.

We all know that David found a way. How he did it we cannot say for sure. It could not have been easy. But he never let us see him sweat. The closest I ever came was seeing him in his office one day looking glum. He said that he had witnessed earlier in the day the worst law school class he had ever seen. "Whose was it?" I asked. He replied, "Mine." We both knew that he was exaggerating—as I told him. But he set high standards not only for his students but for himself; when he thought he had failed to meet them, it hurt.

Such was his commitment to the enterprise. It mattered deeply to him that law students be taught well. It mattered deeply to him that law students be given the tools to become great lawyers. It mattered deeply to him that law students be shown that a life in the law could be important, exciting—could be a life well lived.

David knew for some time that his days were numbered. So he chose to live those days doing what he loved best, and he continued to teach until he was no longer physically able to carry on.

The other day I saw something that I knew would interest him and I momentarily set it aside—until I remembered. The sense of loss that we feel will spread itself over time—for each of us and for the Law School.

He was one of a kind, and he is irreplaceable.

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1. The Use of Law Schools. Oration Before the Harvard Law School association, at Cambridge, November 5, 1886, on the 250th Anniversary of Harvard University.