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### Frank W. Hanft

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## FRANK W. HANFT

The retirement of Frank Hanft from the law faculty puts a final period to the active teaching of a remarkable group of men. Maurice Van Hecke (who left in 1923 to return in 1928) and Robert Wettach joined the faculty in 1921 and later, between them, occupied the Deanship for nineteen years. Albert Coates and Fred McCall came in 1923, Millard Breckenridge in 1927, Frank Hanft in 1931, and John Dalzell in 1937. Breckenridge retired and Van Hecke died in 1963; Wettach died in 1964; McCall, Dalzell, and Coates retired, respectively, in 1966, 1968, and 1969. Thus, the entire group served together for twenty-six years, and the association of some of them spanned a much longer period.

On other occasions I have called them, with precision if also with pride on behalf of the School, "The Great Seven." If, as I believe, we have today an excellent Law School (now inevitably staffed with younger though not lesser men), the opportunity for continued excellence was provided by these seven. Their work, ability, and character resulted in fine instruction for students and earned for the School a favorable reputation among law teachers everywhere.

During the thirty-two years that Frank Hanft served with five of the other six (as during the nine years since the first replacement for any of them was needed), he has contributed his full share to the achievements of this unique group and has carried his full share of the work load of the School. Originally a Minnesotan with no local contacts, he rapidly made a significant place for himself in the governmental, professional, religious, and civic life of North Carolina.

He served as a part-time member of the Utilities Commission and for many years has represented our faculty on and was the first law teacher ever to chair the General Statutes Commission.

A practicing Christian, he has been active in his church and has authored a significant book, *You Can Believe—A Lawyer's Brief for Christianity*. His insights were particularly prized by that mature, hard-working group of combat veterans who became law students immediately after World War II, and at their request he was called upon to lecture on the basic principles of Christianity.<sup>1</sup>

No student of his has ever doubted his thorough grasp of the subject

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<sup>1</sup>At this time he had himself just returned from service in Europe as a Lieutenant Colonel in the Army after having volunteered when well beyond draft age.

matter that he has taught. Many a graduate of the School owes his success on the bar examination to the sound grounding he received in the Hanft courses, particularly that in Credit Transactions. Yet, Frank Hanft has never conceived of himself as a prophet whose wisdom should be universally heard and heeded, and when (with a student body of more manageable size than at present) I strongly advocated that his course in Jurisprudence should be required for all law students, he vetoed the idea.

Still in character when last year he published in this *Review* the definitive article on the rules of evidence in North Carolina administrative proceedings, he regarded it as inappropriate to attempt to say what the rules *should* be, since he and his fellow members of the General Statutes Commission were then scheduled to consider recommendations on the subject.

As lumberjack, scholar, attorney, teacher, military officer, public servant, and citizen, and strongly supported by Jennie, his wife and companion of forty-eight years, Frank Hanft has, as nearly as any man that I have known, done—and done only—what he conceived to be right. In a complex of admirable characteristics, this is the one that shines most steadily and brightly. The light that it casts has a life of its own and will surely survive his active service.

I have many personal and professional reasons for gratitude to Frank Hanft, but I sometimes think that the greatest of them lies in the fact that in my days of deaning and schedule-making he was one of those extraordinarily rare pedagogical lambs of God who were willing to teach an eight o'clock class.

HENRY BRANDIS, JR.