

Memorium: Caroline Chandler Heriot

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CAROLINE CHANDLER HERIOT

MEMORIAM

CAROLINE CHANDLER HERIOT

The five and a half year tenure of Caroline Chandler Heriot as librarian of the Marshall-Wythe School of Law might generally be characterized as a time of quiet but significant progress. Professor Heriot's death last December, after a long and painful illness, moves us to examine the magnitude of her contribution to this law school. When one stands in our library and reflects back to the summer of 1976, when Miss Heriot arrived in Williamsburg, the degree of her accomplishment comes more sharply into focus.

Professor Heriot came to us with an impressive professional background. After receiving a graduate library degree, she worked on the staff of the law library of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill while earning her law degree. She joined the staff of the library of the University of Iowa, then moved on as librarian of the Supreme Court of New Mexico, and later became librarian at the Loyola School of Law in New Orleans. Miss Heriot's reputation among those responsible for the accreditation standards of law libraries was such that she was frequently called upon to inspect or consult. We were fortunate that Caroline applied for and accepted a position at William and Mary.

Almost from the day Miss Heriot was interviewed, her abilities were tested. The plans for our new building had been in readiness for some time, awaiting approval of funds for construction. Miss Heriot reviewed the plans for the new library, immediately recognized serious defects and omissions, and in a thorough, precise memorandum advised a new Dean what should be done to avoid near calamity. Those suggestions, when implemented, resulted in a more functional library, avoided an almost instant replay of the crowded shelves at the old facility, and provided the type of study space essential to a law student body.

It is not uncharitable to observe that our crowded library in the old building was a center of confusion, chaos, and permissiveness. Miss Heriot reorganized her staff, imposed regulations, revised the layout of the library, and, despite student protests, restored order

and calm to a cramped and overcrowded facility. Order reigned under her quiet, determined direction. Faculty members, long used to privileges not in the best interest of maximum use of library resources, soon learned there were rules that they, too, must obey.

The moving of a law library of many thousands of volumes is a major undertaking. Miss Heriot had participated in three moves of library collections to new buildings. That experience was invaluable in preparing for the move to the new Marshall-Wythe building in the summer of 1980. No military campaign was planned with the logistical thoroughness that went into the proposal for dismantling the old Marshall-Wythe Library, housed in three buildings, and moving, then shelving the collection in the new facility. No Prussian or Confederate commander ever executed a plan with the precision that marked that moving operation. Within ten days the library staff was ready to receive and serve students and faculty at the new building.

Professor Heriot approached the tasks of revising plans for the new library, reorganizing and providing stability to the old library, and moving thousands of volumes from the old to the new site with quiet determination and unyielding vision. Resolute in her quest for excellence, patient with those less talented, and possessed of far more humor than one might initially suspect, Miss Heriot was, with all of this, a lady.

It was shortly after the move to our new building was completed that Miss Heriot first learned the nature of the illness to which she eventually succumbed. She endured that illness with the same quiet spirit of resolve that had marked her entire life, remaining in touch with the daily activities of the law library until the very end. Professor Heriot was buried on the last day of December in the family graveyard at Old Rembert Church, near Bishopville, South Carolina.

The faculty of the Marshall-Wythe School of Law has authorized the placing of a memorial table near the front desk of our library. The inscription reads as follows:

In Memory
of
Caroline Chandler Heriot
1918 - 1981
Professor of Law - Law Librarian
1976 - 1981

Her remarkable abilities and her unyielding vision shaped irrevocably, and for the better, the character of this law library. Those who enter here—be they students who come to learn the law, scholars who seek to clarify our understanding or lawyers who would serve a client's cause—owe her a debt which can neither be measured nor repaid.

WILLIAM B. SPONG, JR., Dean
Marshall-Wythe School of Law
College of William and Mary

I first met Caroline Heriot in 1954 while she was a student in the School of Library Science at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill. Even then she was interested in the possibility of becoming a law librarian. After graduation in 1954, she went to Washington as reference assistant in the Bureau of Ordnance Technical Library, Department of the Navy. Knowing the importance of a law degree if she were to become one of the best qualified people in the profession, she began her study of law in the evening program at George Washington University, while continuing with her full-time employment. In July 1956, still working for a law degree the hard way (as a full-time employee and a part-time student), she became Assistant Law Librarian at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. In 1959, after completing two years, it was possible for her to become a full-time student and the Law School regretfully accepted her resignation as Assistant Law Librarian.

Her first law library position, after receiving her J.D. degree from the University in 1960, was an Assistant Professor and Law Librarian at the University of Iowa. In 1956 she moved to a judicial library when she became Law Librarian at the New Mexico Supreme Court. A return to academic libraries took her to Loyola University in New Orleans in 1967 as Assistant Professor and Law Librarian where she was quickly promoted to Professor and Law Librarian. In each of these positions she was responsible for moving the law library, and at Loyola she planned the library facilities for the new law school building, supervised its construction, and, on completion, moved the library into its new quarters.

Her experience in planning and moving libraries made her unusually well qualified to undertake that responsibility when she

joined the faculty at the Law School of the College of William and Mary in 1976. Last year I told Caroline that I thought she was a real "glutton for punishment." After helping to plan and then move only one library, I had had enough, while she eagerly accepted positions where such responsibility was to be an important component of the work for several years. She responded, "I think I'm a frustrated architect. I love the planning, the blueprints, and all that goes with it."

A frustrated architect she may have been, but she was also a fine law librarian with a great capacity for performing at a high professional level. The law libraries she helped to plan and build are lasting proof of her fine work. She was active in the work of the Association of American Law Schools and in the inspection programs of both that association and the American Bar Association. Her expertise soon gave her opportunities to serve as consultant to new and developing law libraries. Under her leadership, first as Vice-President/President-elect and then as President of the Southeastern Chapter of the American Association of Law Libraries, the chapter grew, reaching greater numbers of law librarians through stronger professional programs. She was also active in the national organization where she served on numerous committees, chairing several of them.

Caroline was never one to refuse a challenge, whether it was law school (at a time when there were few women in the student body), a demanding position as law librarian, important professional responsibilities, or those challenges encountered in her personal life. She met these challenges with courage, humor, and a determination to do her best. And she did.

MARY W. OLIVER
Professor and Law Librarian
University of North Carolina

On December 28, 1981, the faculty of the Marshall-Wythe School of Law lost a beloved member, Caroline Chandler Heriot. After a heroic struggle, Caroline died due to complications caused by cancer. This is our faculty tribute to Caroline. Mine is the writer's pen, but the tribute is truly a composite of the memories and reflections of her faculty colleagues regarding Caroline as a

dedicated member of our faculty and as a very special friend.

Caroline came to us in 1976, at a time of transition for Marshall-Wythe. We were soon to start building a new law school, with a major portion of it to be a new law library facility. Indeed, since the immediate termination of many archaic practices in library administration and operation was also necessary, one could say we were establishing a new law library in all respects. To this herculean task of cleansing the Augean Stables of our law library came Caroline Heriot. She was the right person. Her prior professional life as a law librarian had been unique in that she had had substantial experience in setting up new libraries. Caroline's manifest devotion to creating at Marshall-Wythe the finest possible law library, and at the earliest date, rapidly endeared her to us on the faculty.

Soon, we faculty members who dared enter the intriguing maze of the old law library in chivalric quest for a book were wont to seek rest and recuperation by cadging a free cup of coffee and some splendid conversation with this lovely Muse of Marshall-Wythe. Caroline was an excellent conversationalist on a wide range of subjects. She read widely, enjoying everything from good mysteries to first-rate nonfiction and the Greek and Roman classics. Often, the conversation turned to the question of the appropriate role of a law library. Caroline's vision was broad and on a high plane. She once said, "A law library should mean more than just law books." She was interested in broadening our collection in jurisprudence, moral philosophy, foreign affairs, and interdisciplinary works that unite law and other fields.

As a person, Caroline was gentle and compassionate, yet firm in standards set for herself and her staff. She wanted the best a person could give but was not judgmental or harsh. Caroline saw the individual not in the abstract, but in the context of present circumstances. Believing that she herself could still improve, she was very much interested in what other persons could become and wanted to help in that process. Born in South Carolina, Caroline was a true daughter of that grand state. She was a "Southern Lady" in the finest meaning of that term: a kind, gracious, charming woman in any setting, lovely and poised, with a spirited but highly disciplined disposition, and possessing the highest order of personal integrity and of dedication to her society and to her

profession.

In faculty and committee meetings, Caroline was quietly persuasive. She knew where she stood and she spoke in a quiet, straightforward, and convincing manner. In all her relations with her faculty colleagues Caroline invariably showed a high level of civility and respect for others. Despite her heavy work burden, and even after becoming quite ill, a mischievous glint of humor usually was in Caroline's eyes. However, when she became serious about a matter, we soon learned that under her soft-spoken demeanor was a will of high tensile steel. That indomitable will stood Caroline in good stead when her illness occurred.

The personal remembrance of Caroline I most treasure is seeing her one day, standing in her office in the old law building, one hand holding a floor plan of the new library and the other holding a copy of the library budget (both eminently unsatisfactory for our needs). A portrait of Caroline standing there preparing for battle against her two principal professional challenges—securing an adequate physical library facility and securing adequate financial resources for operating a modern, first rate law library—would symbolize perfectly her years at Marshall-Wythe. Here on the eve of decisive battle was the intense general appraising the foe and deciding on a plan of attack. Caroline looked up at me, and with quiet exasperation in her voice sounded her call to arms: "We simply *must* do something about this!" In her years at Marshall-Wythe, whether she was shaping a new library facility out of the mess of the original plans, or squeezing maximum value out of each dollar available for library support, or recruiting and training an excellent library staff, or adding substantially to our book collection, Caroline indeed did "something about this."

The last time many of her faculty colleagues saw Caroline was at the moment of her triumph as our Law Librarian. Marshall-Wythe in late August, 1981 hosted the joint conference of the Southeastern Conference of the Association of American Law Schools and the Southeastern Chapter of the American Association of Law Libraries. Caroline was radiant as she showed the new law school, and *especially* the new law library, to the visiting law librarians and law teachers. Dean Spong is fond of saying that we are a law school attached to a law library, and surely on that day, Caroline reigned "as lovely Monarch o'er the realm."

Somehow, Caroline had summoned up from some deep reservoir the strength to have the law library ready for the conference. Her indomitable will had beat back the enemy at the gates. Never had we seen this woman of mature years more lovely, more confident in the fullness of her success in establishing a first rate library for Marshall-Wythe. This was the capstone to her professional career. Knowing the critical price in energy she had paid, we could yet smile and congratulate her in unfeigned pleasure at her success and her happiness, for we knew that for Caroline the victory was worth the price.

However, Caroline's opponent was not to be gainsaid. The onslaught of her illness soon grew rapidly more severe. Death called on Caroline one wintery day, but found no fearful creature shrinking in a corner. Caroline departed this life the way she had lived it, with grace, with calm fortitude in adversity and, yes, with continued hope.

I think of Caroline's death not as a final ending, but as a passage to a new beginning. The last time I saw Caroline we talked and then joined in prayer. Caroline believed in God, a God that knew when each sparrow fell, a God that cared. Her faith, like all else about Caroline, was a quiet faith rooted in deep confidence in God and a reality beyond the grave. Her faith was a great help to her in this time of trial. Caroline knew that she had run well the race, had given her best in this life. If departure time had come, she was ready for new challenges. She who had presided over so many library transitions was now ready to accept her own transition with serenity and courage. With Saint Paul, Caroline could say that, "Death has lost its sting!"

Shakespeare tells us not to mourn the dead, but rather, to note their contribution to the living. In a sense, the dead live on in our lives to the extent that they and their deeds have invigorated, inspired, or instructed us. Caroline's final and most imperishable gift to us, her faculty colleagues, is an heroic example of a life well lived in dedication to legal education and a death well met in spite of great suffering. Humbled by Caroline's example, we can but hope that one day it will be also said of us that, "Made weak by time and fate," we were yet "strong in will to strive, to find, and not to yield."

Ave, Ave, Caroline!
Now in Elysian Field,
Live you ever in our hearts
And in our memories sealed.

WALTER LESLIE WILLIAMS, JR.
Professor of Law
Marshall-Wythe School of Law
College of William and Mary