

# TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM F. SWINDLER

Warren E. Burger

*Chief Justice of the United States*

Professor William F. Swindler was a colleague and personal friend for a long time. We worked together on historical matters and on the founding of the Supreme Court Historical Society, where he later was Director of Publications. We will all miss him greatly.

Bill Swindler was a product of the Midwest. Born in Missouri, he graduated from Washington University in St. Louis and received a master's degree from the University of Missouri. He began his career in journalism and several years later came to the law when he obtained a law degree from the University of Nebraska. His second career was as a law professor and for twenty-five years he was associated with the Marshall-Wythe Law School at William & Mary. Upon his retirement in 1979 he was named John Marshall Professor of Law Emeritus.

An analyst and historian of first rank, Bill Swindler contributed to the American Bar Association, the American Law Institute, the American Judicature Society, and to a wide readership his many ideas. He was prolific in the creative sense, and a careful scholar. I always found him to be an optimist, looking ever on the bright side of things. He was warm, generous, and caring. He was hard-working, but he experienced such joy in what he was doing that he presented no image of a work addict. In the last 15 years of his life, Bill Swindler wrote more than a dozen books. I remember especially his 1978 publication *The Constitution and Chief Justice Marshall* because he asked me to prepare an introduction for it. Typically, at the time of his sudden death, Bill was working on three additional books. One was a treatise on constitutional law, another was on the Continental Congress, and the third was on the Supreme Court during the era of Chief Justice Earl Warren.

During the coming half-decade our Nation will celebrate the Bicentennial of the Constitution. It is our loss that he will not take part in it for he had much to contribute and would have enriched our knowledge and understanding of this great event. Only four days before his death, Bill wrote to me, "I hope in the coming five-year period climaxing in the bicentennial of the Judiciary Act in 1989, we can indeed collaborate frequently on 'matters historical.'" In all my tentative plans, I envisioned a role for this fine scholar-historian.

A teacher of law is trustee of great traditions and Bill Swindler was a trustee who kept that trust. His teaching, scholarship, and professional activities earned the respect of the legal profession and of generations of students. He will be missed.