

CHAPTER L

HARVARD LAW SCHOOL

By Charles

Charles entered Harvard Law School in September 1919 and Gerry Albrecht, who graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in the same class, roomed together at a rooming house at 37 Langdon Street. Among the other roomers in that house were Ted Simpson and Earl Marshal, both of whom were studying in the Graduate School of Business Administration. The following year Charles and his friend Gerry took rooms with the Misses Parsons at 54 Garden Street, where they stayed for their second and third years. George, who came to law school in the fall of 1924, joined them there and spent all three years at this house.

54 Garden Street is now gone and its site is occupied by a Radcliffe dormitory. It was an old mansion built by Theophilus Parsons, a leading member of the Boston Bar of many years ago and one of the early professors at the Harvard Law School. It was the volume on "Contracts" written by Theophilus Parsons that Abraham Lincoln carried with him in his mail bag and read as he made his journeys by horseback. As the years had elapsed, the two unmarried daughters, Miss Kitty and Miss Carrie, found themselves handicapped in going out socially for lack of gentlemen escorts and they solved this problem by renting a limited number of rooms to law students and then inviting them to escort them to parties.

Miss Carrie was approximately eighty but enjoyed being out with her friends. She always refused to ride in a taxi but had a horse cab which would call for her and bring her home. Charles was fortunate enough to accompany her on many parties. In this way he came to know old President

Eliot of Harvard, Roscoe Thayer, the biographer, Alice Longfellow, Mrs. Gray, the widow of the former dean at the Harvard Law School, and many others of the old group of Cambridge aristocracy to which Longfellow, Lowell, Eliot and the other literary people of Cambridge belonged. Unfortunately Miss Carrie died before George came to Cambridge.

Both of the Misses Parsons were outspoken in their belief that it was a mistake not to marry, and in order to prevent any of the young men of their household falling into this error, they had teas from time to time during the winter months to which they invited the debutantes of the season to meet the law students who were living in their house. The girls thought this was a very unusual procedure and the boys did too, but somehow they always managed to have a good time.

Both Charles and George were members of the Langdell Club. This was one of the law clubs organized for the purpose of training in the arguing of cases. A given set of facts would be assigned to two of the first year members of the club who would write briefs and prepare an oral argument. Then on a stated evening the entire club would meet at one of the members' rooms and the two first-year men would make their arguments with a member of the third-year class sitting as judge. After the judge's decision, the law involved in the particular case would be thrown open for general discussion and there would be some light refreshments. Both Charles and George won the first-year prize of the Langdell Club for briefs and arguments in their respective years, and were chosen as members of the team to represent their club in the inter-club contests of the second and third years.

At Harvard Law School there were few social events unless the fact that cider and doughnuts were sometimes served at the club meeting could give the club a social rather than an academic standing. In the fall, however,

the boys often went to the football games and on week-ends sometimes went to parties at Wellesley or at Newton. Perhaps it should be noted at this point that Charles on a number of occasions took to football games a Wellesley student - Miriam Boyd.

The year that Charles finished law school Ruth finished high school, and the following fall entered Wellesley as a Freshman. Grandmother had a conference with Ruth's Housemother and succeeded in having George appointed an official chaperon for Ruth, which meant that he was able to take Ruth to many parties in Cambridge and in Boston.

But life at Harvard Law School was mostly study. Each day there were about two hours of classes, generally from ten to twelve in the morning. Then after lunch the boys would go to the school library and work until about five-thirty, then go to the gym for an hour of basketball or other sport, then to dinner and then back to the library until the closing hour - ten o'clock - then back to the rooms for a cup of tea and half hour of sociability and then more study until after midnight.

At the Harvard Law School there is one goal only - to pass with credit the exams at the end of the year, and all the students work to this end. One of the Harvard College professors once said that if he could get his Sanskrit students to study as hard as the students in the law school, all of his students would be reciting Sanskrit poetry by Christmas time of their first year. The students at the law school not only studied law in their classes and in the library and in their rooms every night, but also discussed law in groups at the restaurants during breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Occasionally the boys would decide to take a vacation from the discussion and atmosphere of law and a group would go to Boston together for

dinner. Sometimes they went to a German restaurant known as "Jakey Worthy" but usually to a Chinese restaurant called "Joy Hung Low", but invariably the discussion would turn to principles of law before the meal was over.

The entering classes at Harvard Law School at about this time were about six hundred, but only about one hundred twenty-five diplomas were eventually given. The competition was on a severely competitive basis and each year only the men with the higher marks were allowed to return. Fortunately Charles and George both stood high in their respective classes.

On graduation Charles secured a position with Simpson, Thacher & Bartlett of New York City, and George, upon his graduation two years later, secured a position with Cravath, Henderson & De Gersdorff, one of the largest and best known corporation law firms in the country.

Both Charles and George feel that they enjoyed their three years at Harvard Law School more than any other three years of their entire schooling.