

ISSUES IN VERMONT LAW

DEDICATION

JULIEN AND VIRGINIA CORNELL LIBRARY

VERMONT LAW SCHOOL

On September 21, 1991, the Julien and Virginia Cornell Library was dedicated. The Cornell Library is a substantial new resource for Vermont Law School and the larger Vermont legal community. *Vermont Law Review* is pleased to print the following excerpts from the library dedication speeches:

Dean Douglas Costle

Law school is a place with buildings, ambiance, and, of course, the library is at the very heart of that. It is a place to study. It is a place for scholarship. It is a place for people in an academic community to come together, to meet, to greet, to talk, to get to know one another, to explore the intellectual world and common interests. It is a place which ultimately captures and nourishes the spirit of the people that it serves, and this library does that. I am terribly pleased with the way that this turned out. . . .

I thank Julien and Virginia Cornell whose support and faith in this law school came at a time in its history when it needed strength. And so to them I am particularly grateful. I leave this morning with wonderful feelings and an enormous sense of pride, and I invite you to enjoy this building behind me. . . . I will feel enormously gratified every time I pass by this place, and I see this new landmark for Vermont Law School. . . .

Julien Cornell

It is with great pleasure that my wife, Virginia, and I take part in the dedication of this splendid library. It is really glorious. . . . It was through strange coincidence that I became interested in Vermont Law School. My grandson Keith went here, and has now

graduated and is a lawyer. When he came home on summer vacation one year he showed me the catalog, and I realized that the dean of the law school was a man whom I knew out in Colorado, Jonathon Chase. . . . [I] discovered from the catalog that there were aspects of this law school that were very appealing: first, its rural setting in a beautiful part of the country; second, its Environmental Law Center, which I think is quite outstanding—in fact, according to a recent poll, it has made this school the number one environmental law school in the United States; and third, its emphasis on actual practice in writing courses, clinical courses, and so on. . . . It's for all of these reasons that Virginia and I have supported the General Practice Program and this library. . . .

In the early days of this country, law books were not much of a necessity. I believe Abraham Lincoln had only two: Blackstone's Commentaries and the Illinois Statutes. He got along pretty well with those two. Now we need many more This library will furnish a place for students to study and for the collection of books which now fills the shelves and the many more to come. . . .

In closing, I want to pay my respects to an old friend, namely *stare decisis*. If you don't know what *stare decisis* is, you better come back to school. The Supreme Court seems to think it's something to kick around like a football. But, in essence, *stare decisis*, the reliance on precedents in law, means that we have to look at the books to see what has gone before. In a library we learn to respect the law as it has been enunciated and as it is written down, and we can find out what happened in earlier years and pay our respects. Thank you.

Galway Kinnell, Vermont Poet Laureate

On this great occasion, I would like to read . . . *The Tragedy of Bricks*. If I had written a poem called the tragedy of hammering and sawing, I would read that, because our new library is made of wood. But I grew up in a mill town where all the public and industrial buildings were made of brick. Each brick was placed in its spot, by a man. I would like to acknowledge those men who placed each nail in its spot, in this building. I would like the poem also to offer a metaphor for those who made the books that the library contains. I would say each book is shaped like a brick, but I don't, lest that imply that the building holds a ton of bricks. Let's say each book is shaped like a door, or a window, and has something of

the same function.

The Tragedy of Bricks

1

The twelve-noon whistle groans
 its puff of steam high up on the smokestack.
 Out of the brickwork the lace-workers
 come carrying empty black lunch-stomachs.
 The noontime composition consists
 of that one blurry bass note
 in concert with the tenor of the stomachs.
 The used-up lace-worker bicycling past,
 who is about a hundred, suction together mouth-matter,
 tongue-hurls it at the gate of the mill, rattles away.
 A spot of gold rowels its trajectory
 of contempt across a boy's memory.

2

Overhead the sea blows upside down across Rhode Island.
 slub clump slub clump
 Charlie drops out. Carl steps in.
 slub clump
 No hitch in the sequence.
 Paddy stands down. Otto jumps up.
 They say Otto in his lifetime clumped into place
 seven million bricks,
 then fell from the scaffolding,
 clump.
 slub clump slub clump
 Jake takes over from Otto, slubs mortar onto brick, clumps
 brick onto mortar.
 Does this. Does it again. Wears out.
 Topples over. No pause.
 Rene appears. Homer collapses. Angelo springs up. No break
 in the rhythm.
 slub clump slub clump
 They wear in they wear out.
 They lay the bricks that build the mills
 that shock the Blackstone River into yellow froth.

3

Here come the joggers.

I am sixty-one. The joggers are approximately very young.

They run for fun through a world where everyone used
to lay bricks for work.

Their faces tell there is a hell and they will reach it.

4

Fall turns into winter,

poplars stand with their pants down.

The five o'clock whistle blurts.

The lace-workers straggle out again
from under the tragedy of bricks.

Some trudge off,

others sit between disks

of piano wire and wobble into the dusk.

5

A bricklayer walks the roof of the mill.

He carries a lantern, like a father,

which has a tongue in it, which does not speak, like a father.

He is there to make sure no brick fails in its duty.

A boy born among the brick walks

on packed snow under the walls of the mill.

Under each step the snow sounds

the small crushed shrieks

of the bricklayers, who lie stacked

somewhere hereabout. Suddenly the full moon

lays out across the imperfect world
everything's grave.

From the mill

comes slub clump slub clump. The boy knows

his father and mother will disappear

before the least brick cracks or tells its story,

an antecedence once known as infernal corrosion.

When the boy grows up it will have laid the footing for the concept
of the neutron bomb.

Which eats first the living forms,

and after that the windows and doors.

From *When One Has Lived a Long Time Alone*, by Galway
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