

Washington Law Review

Volume 28

Issue 4 *Annual Meeting of the Washington State Bar Association*

11-1-1953

In Memoriam—John Burrill Sholley

R. H. Nottlemann

University of Washington School of Law

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.law.uw.edu/wlr>

Recommended Citation

R. H. Nottlemann, In Memoriam, *In Memoriam—John Burrill Sholley*, 28 Wash. L. Rev. & St. B.J. 247 (1953).

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.law.uw.edu/wlr/vol28/iss4/2>

This In Memoriam is brought to you for free and open access by the Law Reviews and Journals at UW Law Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Washington Law Review by an authorized editor of UW Law Digital Commons. For more information, please contact cnyberg@uw.edu.

WASHINGTON LAW REVIEW

AND

STATE BAR JOURNAL

VOLUME 28

NOVEMBER, 1953

NUMBER 4

IN MEMORIAM — JOHN BURRILL SHOLLEY

John Burrill Sholley's sudden death on October 9th ended all too soon the productive career of a scholar and teacher. Born in Minneapolis September 12, 1902, he had his early pre-law education at the University of Minnesota. He entered the Law School of the University of Washington in 1929 and after a brilliant record graduated with honors in 1932. The following fall he went to Stanford University Law School for graduate work but interrupted his study after a few months, in order to accept an offer from the University of Washington Law School to become a member of its faculty. He began his teaching in January of 1933 and remained here continuously except for one year of graduate law study at the University of Chicago where he received his doctor's degree in 1937 and for the period from 1942-45, during World War II, when he was on leave of absence from the University to serve as price attorney for the district office of Price Administration.

His great promise as a student reached full fruition during his teaching career. His scholarly work was evidenced by various legal articles, a co-authorship of annotations in Conflict of Laws, and especially by his "Cases on Constitutional Law" published in 1951 and a supplement thereto completed this past summer. This volume enhanced his recognition as an authority in Constitutional Law. The work represents an approach to the subject by the historical method which had been em-

ployed by him for several years in his scholarly exposition of the principles of this field of law, to his classes.

John Sholley was not only possessed of a fine analytical mind but also of great industry. He had an exceptional power of clear statement and an ability to arouse his students' interest. He knew that education in the law consisted primarily in stimulating the search for truth and cultivating the spirit of individual and independent analysis and investigation. Clarity, imagination and wisdom were characteristics of his teaching which won the admiration of students.

The integrity of his intellect made him intolerant of easy acceptance of legal propositions as things established by authority, without inquiring into the extent and nature of the authority, and yet at the same time he could not tolerate shallow attacks on established legal doctrine. His gifts, though many, were not showy as he disliked unnecessary display. Although a man of strong likes and dislikes, he was intellectually honest.

As a colleague, his associates enjoyed his companionship and valued his counsel. His convictions were deep. He was forthright and fearless in arriving at them and asserting them, even though they might not be those generally accepted or approved. In faculty deliberations on matters of policy he was a tower of strength. The effectiveness of his well considered suggestions, the wisdom of his general counsel, his remarkably accurate analyses and just and open minded criticism, will be sorely missed. He was a tenacious adversary. Colleagues sometimes left a discussion in disagreement with him but always with an increased understanding and with the definite knowledge that such disagreement would have no effect on their happy relation with him, for there was nothing petty in his make-up.

His passing at a time when he was at the peak of his powers is a severe loss to students and faculty alike. In his death we have lost a brilliant and forceful scholar and teacher, a wise and respected counsellor and a congenial colleague and friend.

*R. H. Nottelmann**

* Professor of law, University of Washington.