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## Tribute to Daniel George Sampson

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## TRIBUTE TO DANIEL GEORGE SAMPSON

ANNE MCKAY DUNCAN\*

As one in a series of well-deserved tributes to Professor Sampson on the eve of his completion of thirty years of unsurpassed service in the School of Law at North Carolina Central University, the students dedicate the current issue of their law journal to him.

I am pleased to have this opportunity to write this tribute to Professor Sampson for the editors of the *Journal*. I was introduced to D. G. Sampson almost twenty-eight years ago in August of 1952 when I joined the North Carolina Central School of Law staff as Law Librarian. I found this learned man to have a great depth of knowledge, integrity, initiative, and enthusiastic willingness to work cooperatively. These impressions have been continuously reinforced during subsequent years.

Professor Sampson, who has been frequently designated “distinguished professor of the year” in the law school, is proclaimed an excellent teacher, as evidenced by student comments throughout the years, and more recently summarized as follows:

Good instructor. Concerned. He always prepares clear, concise examples of how the law applies to various fact situations. Dr. Sampson is a solid, articulate professor who knows his subject matter well. He is interested in all students who cross his path.

Mr. Sampson is perhaps the most outstanding professor in this entire institution—not only does he possess a wealth of knowledge to share with students, but he also has the ability to get this information across to the most timid or gregarious student. His style is both motivating and stimulating.

It is impossible to assess accurately the extent of this professor’s profound influence in the law school. He is compassionate and interested, and is generous with his time and talents. Totally devoid of arrogance, Sampson is very low-keyed, tending toward self-effacement, and more than a trifle shy. He possesses an ability to perceive trivia, which he quickly trims away to arrive at the principal issue or issues in a given situation. He analyzes logically, methodically, and accurately. He prepares classroom presentations with diligence and care.

His understanding of students’ problems forges a strong link which is

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inseverable. Students are never made to feel uncomfortable in his presence. His concerned awareness of their needs contributes immeasurably to the rapport he enjoys with them. Returning graduates and former students generally seek Professor Sampson upon their return to campus. To them, as well as to current enrollees, he is a fixture of the Law School, without whom the school would be very different.

Professor Sampson's legal expertise is not limited to the classroom. This favorite professor is flexible without being soft, and will fight relentlessly for a cause in which he believes, no matter how unpopular. During the 1950's, he was often a ghostwriter for NAACP briefs in school desegregation suits. In the 1960's, he played an important role in developing legal strategy in civil rights movements in the South. He has participated in workshops at Case Western Reserve University, University of California, and New York University. In 1965, Professor Sampson was appointed Dean of the Law School. He served in this position until 1968 when he became legal advisor to the University Chancellor. For many years he has served as guest speaker and lecturer on and off campus.

Serious-minded though he appears, Daniel Sampson occasionally exhibits a surprisingly ready wit and keen sense of humor, including the ability to laugh at himself. His precise memory of pertinent case citations is phenomenal, but he frequently fails to recall where he has laid his cigarettes or if he wore a topcoat to work. Fortunately, he can joke about being the typical absent-minded professor. Slow to anger, once his ire is aroused, Professor Sampson is not thereafter vindictive; rather, he is quick to forgive. His untiring efforts to deal fairly with others often results in his agonizing over decisions, scrutinizing and painstakingly weighing all evidence in order to arrive at a conclusion with which he can feel comfortable.

Because of his pedagogical expertise, philosophical concepts, articulate communication, sincere interest, and understanding, this "reasonable and prudent man" has earned the love, admiration, respect, and gratitude of countless students who have attended the School of Law at North Carolina Central University since 1950. These sentiments are also shared by his peers. When time and opportunity permit, (upon his retirement, he says), Professor Sampson will write the torts text he now carries around in his head. This prospect should please many of his former students and colleagues who know him to be truly gifted with an ever-broadening knowledge attained through dedicated service during the past thirty years, and who know him as a law professor, administrator, and friend.