The Heritage Series: An Important Message from Thomas J. Boynton, US Attorney for Massachusetts, James M. Swift, Former Attorney General of Massachusetts, and Five Others, 1919

Suffolk University Law School

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An Important Message

From

Thomas J. Boynton
United States Attorney for Massachusetts

James M. Swift
Former Attorney General of Massachusetts

And Five Others

1919

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SUFFOLK UNIVERSITY
LAW SCHOOL

Suffolk University
Historical Pamphlet
Series # 1
Boston, October 29, 1919.

Mr. Public Spirited Citizen:—

Did you ever stop to think of the Billions of Dollars of Endowment that a generous public has provided for the education of the relatively small number of youths who can attend day schools?

And then—

Have you paused to consider the plight of the hundreds of thousands of ambitious young men who are supporting dependent relatives and who hunger and thirst for education but for whom there is not a single endowed evening school of professional grade in America!

Did you ever stop to think that lack of education will not prevent a man from being a leader of men if he was born with the spirit of leadership?

Did you ever stop to think that the ignorant leader is a grave menace to this and to every other community?

Did you ever stop to think that to endow schools for the favored few and utterly to neglect the multitude is to prevent the masses from having sound leadership, thereby delivering them over to designing agitators?

If not, then look around you and see what is transpiring in America today, and what is likely to transpire in the future.

Behold! Millions upon millions of endowment are being added at this moment to the countless millions of endowment that exists in our great universities for the training of youths whose influence in most cases will not be felt in the community for years, and never a dollar of endowment to educate the leaders of the masses in whose hands the present fate of the nation rests?

Bear in mind, we are not decrying the giving to the day schools, but we do insist that
there is a tenfold greater duty to give to a
ten fold greater cause—the cause of our
nation in present peril, the cause of Ameri-
canization of the strong men of the laboring
classes who are leading us as the blind lead,
without the guiding light of knowledge.

We are not pleading for one school mere-
ly, but for all evening schools engaged in a
similar work.

We are standing in the breach. We are
performing your duty as well as our own.
In simple justice we ask your aid.

It is teaching them to think; to see both
sides of a question; to understand and
respect the foundation principles of our Re-
public.

Thus it is that every lecture in Suffolk
Law School has direct and immediate effect
upon the public. Its influence is felt where-
ever its students are. It is Americanizing
the virile leaders of the foreign born. It is
building for law and order in this com-

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THOMAS J. BOYNTON
President, Suffolk Law School Corporation
(U. S. Attorney of Massachusetts, formerly Attorney General of
Massachusetts.)

JAMES M. SWIFT
Member Suffolk Law School Corporation
(Former Attorney General of Massachusetts.)

But—and here is where your duty comes
in—we are fairly overcrowded with men—
men seeking law to guide them in their
public duties; men seeking law to make
their lives count for humanity, and not
primarily to become lawyers.

We have three hundred such in our
Freshman class alone—a number equal to
the total attendance of the three upper
classes combined.

In short—we need, and need urgently, a
new building. We need a building that
will accommodate a thousand students.
Such a building will cost one hundred and
twenty-five thousand dollars.

We ask the public for forty percent of
that amount, or $50,000.
The school has assets to the extent of twenty thousand dollars that can be applied to the new building. A long term mortgage will carry the rest of the burden until the school can meet it from its own savings. Will you, Mr. Public Spirited Citizen, give, and give as liberally as your means will permit?

WHAT IS SUFFOLK LAW SCHOOL.

Unless you are already familiar with the school, you naturally desire information.

Suffolk Law School is a charitable educational corporation, chartered by a special act of the Legislature of Massachusetts with power to confer law degrees. It is the largest law school in New England with the exception of Harvard. It is the largest evening law school with one exception in the world. Its faculty, staff of workers and executive departments include some forty-five individuals.

The uniform ability of faculty and workers is abundantly attested by the phenomenal success of the school.

It has a method of teaching all its own—a method especially designed for the needs of evening students. It maintains early and late divisions of classes. Weekly problems and monthly examinations in all subjects stimulate enthusiasm and mental growth of its students.

There is a spirit of democracy and mutual cooperation between the faculty and students that renders this institution unique among law schools.

ITS PHENOMENAL RISE

Suffolk Law School may truly be said to have had a miraculous birth. It was founded in 1906 by a young lawyer of lofty ideals and indomitable will, who had fought his own way from childhood; who had educated himself through his first year in college; who had broken down under the strain of working his way through the endowed day schools, and who was rescued in the nick of time by a member of this board of Trustees, thus enabled to complete his legal education.

Such a man it was who founded Suffolk Law School—to provide a means of professional training evenings for men whose lives, like his, had been handicapped by circumstance.
He started it with nine students in the parlor of his modest apartments. He practiced law days and lectured nights. He worked to the limit of endurance and the school grew because of the intensity of his purpose.

In the second year he gathered other teachers, lawyers who have since proved to be teachers of marked ability.

But days of hardship continued for eight years. To found a law school in a great city, in the face of powerful opposition and competition of other schools, and without financial backing, is a well nigh impossible task. Only by loans, for which the founder's personal credit was pledged, did the school survive to that day in March 1914, when Massachusetts yielded it recognition and a special charter giving it power to confer degrees.

By that charter this present corporation was created. To the corporation the founder, by a deed of gift, conveyed the school which he had created.

The corporation then appealed to the public for endowment to enable it to purchase a school home, for the rental of a suitable building was found to be impossible. But the public did not sufficiently respond.

Only because the founder again worked a miracle did we purchase our present home—he pledged all his worldly goods and even his life insurance to raise funds to purchase the equity at 45 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston.

Now after five years we have outgrown that home. Our building is already overcrowded to overflowing, although our upper classes are small, having entered during the war. Another large entering class cannot be accommodated in the building. We must act now. We must make ready for next year. We need help. We ask you to identify yourself as a benefactor of this institution that represents such heroic devotion to the cause of the working man.

The founder is still the guiding spirit of the institution. He is the author of seven law textbooks, some of which enjoy international renown and are selling in as widely separated points as Holland and Japan. He is still a young man—thirty-nine years old. He has accomplished what he has without a dollar of financial backing. What other school has such a history? Will you not aid him and us in the heavy responsibility that circumstances have thrust upon us.

Our corporation has neither stockholders nor capital stock. Its property is held as a public trust.
A permanent memorial, containing the names of the donors to our Endowment Fund will be installed in the main lobby of the new building.

Very truly yours,

SUFFOLK LAW SCHOOL CORPORATION.
THOMAS J. BOYNTON, President
JOSEPH F. O'CONNELL, Vice-President
GLEASON L. ARCHER, Treasurer
WILMOT R. EVANS, JR., Clerk
JAMES M. SWIFT
JAMES H. VAHEY
GEORGE A. FROST

SKETCHES FROM LIFE.

By Gleason L. Archer, Founder and Dean.

The Trustees have requested me to give the public a glimpse into the lives of some of the men to whom Suffolk Law School has brought the magic key of knowledge that unlocks the gates of circumstance.

It has been my high privilege for thirteen years to look deeply into the lives of young men. Could I but picture truly the heroism, the nobility, the self-sacrifice that I have seen so continuously among “my boys” the public might well gain new faith in the future of this nation, because these men are typical. But I cannot do more than touch the outer garment of the subject.

More than two hundred and fifty men have been graduated from Suffolk Law School, the bulk of them during the last three years. From the list I will select five trusting that the lesson of their lives may be a sufficient excuse for the liberty I am taking in each case.

James F. O’Brien of Fall River.

My door bell rang. I answered the bell and found a roughly dressed man, covered with dust and grime from his work. He had called to seek admission to Suffolk Law School, which I had started one week previously, for this was in September, 1906.

His appearance was not prepossessing, but his earnestness commanded attention. I invited him into the little schoolroom which, during the first year of the school, was the parlor of my modest apartments. He told me his story, a story not unlike that of thousands of poor boys:

Obliged to leave school as soon as he was old enough to work, he had joined the U. S. navy and had seen service in the Spanish War and the Philippines. He had returned to his old home in New Bedford with awakened ambitions, but lack of edu-
cation was a grave handicap. Then like the ardent sailor that he was, he married, with little but hope to live upon.

He had come to Boston some weeks before to seek education in law, but no law school would accept him. Rather than return home and confess defeat, he had taken the only job that was open to him, one that required brawn and muscle, the wielding of a pick and shovel in the streets of Boston.

Having seen the school sign in the window, he had come to me direct from his work, so great was his eagerness. I could not but sympathize with him. I fancied too that I had gotten a glimpse of the indomitable spirit and earnestness of the man. He was admitted on probation. Two months later I felt it my duty to advise him to quit, because of the unpromising nature of his school work. He pleaded for another trial, got it, and made good!

No man ever worked more faithfully than did he during the balance of his law school course. By janitor service in the school after it removed to 53 Tremont Street, Boston; by work in my office, and even at a restaurant, he managed to meet the financial problems of his student life. But lack of general education handicapped him in the bar examinations after graduation. This obstacle too, he overcame. Upon his admission to the bar, law practice was immediate and gratifying.

His success in court brought him important cases. Within a few years he had become one of the most prominent lawyers in southern Massachusetts. He had served as chief counsel in various murder trials. He had become Judge Advocate of the Spanish War Veterans of Massachusetts.

Then in 1917, although beyond the draft age, he promptly volunteered for naval service. Having been gunner's mate in the Spanish War, he was assigned to the Newport Naval Station as instructor in gunnery. He has recently returned to his law offices in Fall River and New Bedford, leaving the navy with the rank of lieutenant.

He has a brilliant future before him. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is vastly better off with this man a leader of his community and a power for law and order than if he had remained, with ambition thwarted, a day laborer, discontented and rebellious at fate, a factor in our industrial unrest.

O'Brien's Classmates.

There were five men in Mr. O'Brien's class—the first class to graduate from the school. It is interesting to note how fate has dealt with each of them. All of them became lawyers, although but three of them went into active practice. George L. Bush, when last heard from, was practicing law in Wisconsin. George A. Douglas is a well known Boston lawyer with offices at 6 Beacon Street. For eight years he has been a member of the faculty of Suffolk Law School and one of the most popular professors in the school.

Of the two who remained in business, Carl Collar is occupying an important position with the White Star Line in New York City, while Roland E. Brown has found the inducements held out by his employers, the Barbour Stockwell Company of Cambridge, too attractive to be forsaken for law practice.

Abraham Lelyveld of Rockland, Mass.

Thus it will be seen that the school opens the door of opportunity in business life as well as in the profession of law. Numerous instances could be cited. Every graduating class proves the rule anew. A large proportion of our students seek law as a business asset.

Take the case of Abraham Lelyveld of Rockland, Mass.: Mr. Lelyveld graduated in the class of 1912. Having been a clerk
in a shoe store during his student days, he put his law training to a practical test by opening a store of his own. The store speedily became one of the most flourishing in the city. Mr. Lelyveld is now branching out into the wholesale trade and is acknowledged to be one of the most promising young business men in the city. For several years he has been the highly popular President of the Merchants’ Association of the city of Rockland.

Bernard J. Killion, Esq., of Boston.

To be an instalment collector of insurance among the very poor did not satisfy the ambition of one young man who came to me in the autumn of 1907. His general education was faulty. He was not of the intellectual type. But he expressed a fervent desire to study law. I admitted him on trial. By hard work he succeeded in passing one course after another until the day of graduation. He passed the bar examinations in due course and for several years continued his work for the insurance company, having been promoted to a position of responsibility. But he was at the same time developing a law practice through an evening office. The day came when he cast loose his insurance ties and gave all his time to the profession.

He is today a highly prosperous and successful attorney, and enjoys the distinction of having been the first graduate of the Suffolk Law School to argue a case before the United States Supreme Court in Washington.

Harry E. Burroughs, Esq., of Boston.

In the long procession of applicants that have passed through my office during thirteen years have been representatives of every race and creed and of nearly every occupation known among men. The humble newsboy has not infrequently figured in our classes. One in particular deserves special mention—a Jewish boy, who came from Russia when a child and attended our public schools, day and evening.

In March 1909, the Boston Traveler conducted a voting contest and offered as prizes, scholarships in Suffolk Law School. To this young immigrant, a newsboy with many patrons, the contest made great appeal. He announced his candidacy and conducted a characteristically energetic campaign. Needless to say, he won, for it is a habit of his. He entered Suffolk Law School and continued for three years, when he suddenly quit. The reason was not far to seek. He had passed the bar examinations and now sent out announcements that Harry E. Burroughs would hereafter be found at his law office at 18 Tremont Street.

As a newsboy he had made many friends and law practice came swiftly. He has since found leisure to complete his studies in Suffolk Law School, from which he received the degree of Bachelor of Laws in 1915. As a lawyer he has emphatically made good. The newsboy of former days has become an able man of affairs and a credit to the land of his adoption.

John N. O’Donohue, Esq., Sharon.

Mr. O’Donohue entered Suffolk Law School in September 1914, being then a clerk in the office of the Collector of Internal Revenue. So rapid was his progress in the law and in the duties of his office, that within a year he had become the recognized expert of the department. I gleaned this information in an amusing manner. Having an intricate problem of income tax law to solve, I put it to Mr. O’Donohue one evening at the school and he gave me a very lucid reply. The next day I went to the Internal Revenue Office and, desiring to know the exact interpretation of the law, applied for information. I was informed that their expert, a Mr. O’Donohue, was the
only man who could pass upon it. I went
to the office indicated and found to my
astonishment our Sophomore O'Donohue
dealing out sage advice to the “crowned
heads” of Boston. Bank Presidents and
leading lawyers of Massachusetts were con­tent to sit at his feet. I quietly withdrew
and returned to my office, satisfied that
O'Donohue the student had advised me as
wisely as could O'Donohue the expert.
But Mr. O'Donohue has been making his­
tory ever since then. In December of his
Senior year, he received an offer from the
United Shoe Machinery Company to be­
come their income tax expert at a salary
far in advance of what the government
could pay him. He accepted.
He graduated from the school in 1918 and,
as may be expected, immediately passed the
bar examinations.
A few days ago John F. Malley, the
Collector of Internal Revenue, resigned his
office to resume law practice as an expert on
Income Tax Law. His office partner is to
be the former clerk in his department whom
Suffolk Law School helped to make a fit­
ting partner for any lawyer in Boston, John
N. O'Donohue. They have opened offices
at 15 State Street, Boston.

CONCLUSION.

Much as we have accomplished, we could
have accomplished more had we possessed
financial resources. We have given tuition
to needy students when the school itself
was struggling to keep from bankruptcy.
But it is my hope and prayer that soon we
shall have adequate public support in our
endeavors to uplift and strengthen the most
truly noble of our citizens—the men who
toil and sacrifice self daily for the sake of
those who are dependent upon them for
support.

GLEASON L. ARCHER.
October 21, 1919.

IMPORTANT

Suffolk Law School is a charitable edu­
cational corporation.

It has neither stockholders nor capital
stock.

No individual can reap personal profit
from its success.

Its trustees serve without pay.

The Dean and all his co-workers are paid
modest salaries.

Its tuition charge is the lowest of any
evening law school in New England.

Any margin in revenue above current
expenses and interest charges goes into
additional equipment or the school mort­
gage (as witness the accumulation of a
$20,000 equity in our present building in
five years).

The school equips business men with a
lawyer's foundation of legal knowledge.

It trains lawyers who are a credit to the
community. No graduate of Suffolk Law
School has ever been even accused of dis­
honesty or dishonorable conduct.

It has made good from the start.

It is rendering a most vital public service
in Americanization of potential leaders of
the masses.

It needs your help NOW.