

Review Articles

Wills of the Justices

The Wills of the Justices; a Collection of the Wills and Testaments of Twenty-Three Justices of the United States Supreme Court. Ed. by John C. Hogan. Los Angeles: Ray Fielding Productions, 1956. Distributed by Oceana Publications, New York. \$20. (Microfilm.)

This collection, which I am informed is the first installment of what is to be a complete publication of the wills (or of information concerning interstate administration of the estates) of all justices of the Supreme Court of the United States about whom such information is obtainable, is extremely interesting. I do not know how great will be its practical value. However, I should think that, at least when it is completed, the collection could be a mine of information to biographers, historians, and commentators on the social scene in past years. In the present selection, attention has been focused on the Chief Justices, ending with William Howard Taft, on the members of the court participating in the Dred Scott decision, and on a group of other Associate Justices—David J. Brewer, John M. Harlan (the first), Horace H. Lurton, Stanley Matthews, Joseph McKenna, John McKinley, Samuel F. Miller, William Strong, and William B. Woods.

The first two wills, those of John Jay and Oliver Ellsworth, offer an interesting contrast. Jay's is verbose and detailed, with an elaborate introduction giving thanks to the Deity for numerous specific benefits to John Jay as well as for His general care of mankind. Ellsworth, to the contrary, put his entire will on a single pithy page, with no exordium whatever. These two types of draftsmanship we still have with us. The other wills afford examples of various styles of composition, as well as of variant states of fortune, and concern or unconcern with affairs of business and of domestic property.

After reading this microfilmed collection, I infer that the function of microfilming is the reproduction of material which, for one reason or another, cannot be published

profitably in conventional form. However, at the end of the reading process, my eyes were much more tired than would have been the case after reading ordinary material in good light for a like period. Certainly, despite the amount of space which could be saved, I shall not advocate putting all our libraries into microfilm. Where the material consisted of photostatic reproduction of handwritten documents, particularly if the writing was either obscure or unique, it was almost impossible to decipher. This must be considered a defect of the microfilm device at present, though obviously one would be foolish to predict that it never will be overcome. However, even though the reproduction were perfect, I believe that there would be less strain in reading a conventionally manufactured book. Nevertheless, as to rare and otherwise unobtainable matter, let us, by all means, have it on microfilm.—*Maurice H. Merrill, University of Oklahoma.*

Filing Rules And Practice

Filing Rules for the Dictionary Catalogs of the Library of Congress. By Processing Department, U. S. Library of Congress. Washington, 1956. 274p. \$2.25. (Available from the U. S. Superintendent of Documents.)

In a foreword, John Cronin, Director of the Processing Department, explains that this printed and bound book of rules originated in a loose-leaf edition for the Library staff, begun by James K. Boyland, revised by several committees, and compiled into a comprehensive code by the late Linn R. Blanchard. Others at the Library of Congress have assisted in gathering examples, editing the final copy, and preparing the index. The work truly exemplifies corporate authorship, and if anyone deserves the major credit, it is Charles A. Cutter, the fourth edition of whose classed rules (1904)