

Winter 1949

# Dean Konop: A Quarter of a Century at Notre Dame

Aaron H. Huguenard

Follow this and additional works at: <http://scholarship.law.nd.edu/tfkonop>



Part of the [Law Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

Aaron H. Huguenard, Dean Konop: A Quarter of a Century at Notre Dame, 24 Notre Dame Lawyer 145–148 (1949).

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Law School Deans at NDLScholarship. It has been accepted for inclusion in 1923–1941: Thomas F. Konop by an authorized administrator of NDLScholarship. For more information, please contact [lawdr@nd.edu](mailto:lawdr@nd.edu).

Bridge to the Past: Kenneth Konop '29, '31 J.D.  
pp 18-19.

# LAWYER



**Fall 2004**



UNIVERSITY OF  
NOTRE DAME

The Law School

A large, faded, sepia-toned portrait of a man with a mustache, wearing a suit and tie, serves as the background for the page. The man is identified as Kenneth Konop.

## BRIDGE TO THE PAST: KENNETH KONOP '29, '31 J.D.

Imagine having been at Notre Dame when it enrolled its first freshman class of 1,000. Imagine listening to radio broadcasts of the 1924 Democratic Convention with professors and priests in one of the cornfields that surrounded the campus. Imagine being at Notre Dame for the legendary Notre Dame-Ohio State football game of 1935, which Notre Dame won, 18-13. Imagine having Knute Rockne as your track coach. And imagine being a member of the Law School class of 1931, the first to graduate from the present Law School building.

Now imagine having the opportunity to share the memories and stories you have of all these experiences at Notre Dame with Dean Patricia O'Hara, whose office is the same office that was your father's, Thomas Konop, when he was Dean of the Law School from 1923 until 1941.

**Early in his career, he worked 44-hour weeks, including Saturday mornings, for \$30 a week. When the mandatory Saturday time was dropped, his salary was cut by \$2.50 a week.**

Such is the experience of Kenneth Konop '29, '31 J.D., who is possibly the Law School's oldest living alumnus. In many ways, Mr. Konop serves as a bridge between the past and the future of the law school, a bridge embodied by the present Law School building, designed and completed under the direction of Mr. Konop's father, Law School Dean Thomas Konop.

On June 8, 2004, Dean Patricia O'Hara, Director of Law School Advancement Glenn Rosswurm, and Director of External Relations Carol Jambor-Smith traveled to Kansas City, Missouri, to meet, speak, and reminisce with Mr. Konop, a visit prompted by the congratulatory letter he sent to Dean O'Hara upon her appointment as the Law School's ninth dean.

Mr. Konop is a gracious host who lives independently and who admits to enjoying a glass of wine every day. He clearly relished the opportunity to share his Notre Dame stories.

The majority of Mr. Konop's legal career was spent at AT&T, beginning with work for Indiana Bell in Indianapolis. With a twinkle in his eye, he said he worked for 38 years and has been retired for 35 years: "I guess I've benefited from their retirement plan!"

Early in his career, he worked 44-hour weeks, including Saturday mornings, for \$30 a week. When the mandatory Saturday time was dropped, his salary was cut by \$2.50 a week. His work took him from Indianapolis to Cleveland, Ohio, to Kansas City, Missouri, and involved buying land rights for the company's open wire lines. For a few years following his retirement from AT&T, Mr. Konop practiced aviation and admiralty law in Kansas City.

The stories he told were many and varied. He revealed some information about the first Dean of the Law School, Colonel Hoynes, about whom not much is known. "I remember old Hoynes," he said. Evidently, both the Colonel and Dean Konop were wine aficionados, difficult in the days of Prohibition. The two men would drive out to Cleveland Road in a buggy and buy jugs of wine from a bootlegger, the Colonel allegedly purchasing the larger, three-gallon jug. Colonel Hoynes lived on the main floor of the Main Building and ate with "high-toned priests." Mr. Konop remembers a time when the Colonel had to be pulled away from such a meal to attend a banquet that was being held in honor of the Law School.

Because Dean Konop had had an illustrious political career before his academic career, Mr. Konop had wonderful stories to tell about the political events he remembered. Dean Konop won his 1910 congressional race by 10 votes, a victory that was certified by the Wisconsin Supreme Court. In part because his district included two Indian reservations, Dean Konop eventually became Chair of the Congressional Committee



Clockwise from left: Dean Thomas, William, Phillip, and Kenneth Konop.

on Indian Affairs and received occasional Washington, D.C. visits from members of the Oneida and Menominee tribes, who would sleep on the living room floor of the Konops' home.

The Congressman took his young five-year-old son to the White House to say goodbye to President Taft at the end of the President's term. Mr. Konop remembers being lifted by Taft, a "huge man," and placed in the big, black chair that sat behind the presidential desk.

While he was dean, Thomas Konop brought many changes to the Law School. During his tenure, the Law School was admitted to the American Association of Law Schools and accredited by the American Bar Association. He increased the academic requirements for admission to the Law School twice: in 1925, requiring a high school diploma plus two years of college work and in 1928, increasing the requirement to three years of college work. Under Dean Konop, the first issue of the *Lawyer* was published in 1925, the size of the faculty was increased, and the curriculum was expanded to include

elective course work.

The most visible accomplishment of Dean Konop was the construction of the present Law School building, which was completed in 1930. Mr. Konop believes the building cost \$400,000 and took one year to complete; he also remembers that an attorney from Fort Wayne, Indiana, provided the lead gift. Archbishop Patrick Joseph Cardinal Hayes of New York traveled to South Bend to participate in the building's dedication.

Mr. Konop's days at Notre Dame, in many ways, seem far removed from 2004: buggies with runners were used for

**Mr. Konop's days at Notre Dame, in many ways, seem far removed from 2004: buggies with runners were used for transportation; cornfields surrounded the campus; a round-trip train ride to a football game against Minnesota cost \$14.25, including the price of a ticket.**

transportation; cornfields surrounded the campus; a round-trip train ride to a football game against Minnesota cost \$14.25, including the price of a ticket; legends like Rockne and the Four Horsemen were on campus. The Law School was quieter, with "five or six" professors, one part-time student assistant who worked for the dean, and a class with 115 members (only 44 of whom graduated).

But the study and aspirations of those people echo in the same halls as the study and aspirations of today's Law School faculty, staff, and students. The vision of Dean Konop for the Law School has carried through the intervening years to merge with the visions of Dean O'Hara for a new, larger Law School building that will meet today's demands of a legal education.

We all look forward to greeting Mr. Konop on his 75th Reunion, which we are confident he will attend in 2006.



Dean Patricia O'Hara and Kenneth Konop.