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Tribute to John Pickering

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TRIBUTE TO JOHN PICKERING

*Raymond C. Clevenger**

This is my homage to John. I ask you to summon up in your imagination today a grand circus, a sort of Cirque du Soleil of lawyers: full of shining talents performing legal feats of wonder, but presided over by a grand ringmaster. This ringmaster knows his performers very well. He knows how to train and stroke them to high achievement. He knows how to groom the younger workers. He can keep his stars in check. He knows when to sit back with a smile, letting his charges perform and claim the applause, even when the applause rightfully belongs to him. When his performers bicker, as they often do, he cajoles them back into their act. When they sulk, he cheers them up. John Pickering is this ringmaster.

In my judgment, he was the but-for cause of the firm's great success. Without John, I do not think the firm could have made it past its heady early days. He embodied the firm's conscience, and I hope he still does. Even far beyond the firm, John stood as a model for all lawyers to emulate. I hope he still does.

* Judge, United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit.

