



*John Humphrey Carlile Morris*

**Essays in Honour of  
John Humphrey Carlile Morris**

**FOREWORD**

JOHN MORRIS is a cruising yachtsman of great renown. This could be, but is not, the reason why so many distinguished lawyers have contributed to this special number of the *Quarterly* in his honour. They have come together in the following pages to honour the man who must rank with Dicey and with Cheshire as the Englishmen who have made outstanding contributions to the study and development of private international law. From 1949 until 1973 John Morris was the general editor of *Dicey's Conflict of Laws*. These were years of rapid movement in the domestic as well as the commercial aspects of the subject. He saw to it that Dicey's classic kept pace with these movements. But *Dicey* under his editorial hand has proved to be much more than an accurate reflection of the law as it developed. John Morris's critical genius ensured that each edition for which he was responsible should develop the law. The depth and range of his learning coupled with his gift of critical analysis brought the flattering consequence that what Dicey said on a point mattered as much to the judges who made the case law as did their case law to the editor of *Dicey*. John Morris's influence on the case law has, therefore, been profound. What counsel would dare to argue, or what judge would wish to decide, a point (for instance) relating to trespass to foreign land, where title is in issue, without consulting *Dicey*? Who would dare set new limits to the "Mozambique rule" without, in effect, consulting John Morris?

Not so well known, perhaps, is the contribution—typically behind the scenes—which he has made to law reform. In my days as Chairman of the Law Commission, I had good reason to be truly grateful for the wisdom of his advice when the

Commission was considering the problem of the domicile of married women. The liberation of women from this particular badge of servitude, and from its accompanying injustices, which the Law Commission achieved, owes much to the vigorous advice we received from John Morris. He had also one glorious quality as an adviser; he was never afraid to disagree.

I have concentrated on his work as an international lawyer, because that is where I had the privilege of working with him. Others will know, better than I, the quality of his other legal work. And many, who care for none of these things, will know him as a lovable man at Oxford, Harvard, in the Navy (during the war)—and, if he will pardon the *double entendre*, at sea (in his yacht, of course). For these, and many other reasons, we salute him—a fine lawyer and Englishman.

**Leslie Scarman.**