

David L. Ladd

David Lowell Ladd was appointed Register of Copyrights effective June 2, 1980, upon the retirement of Barbara Ringer. He was the first person appointed Register of Copyrights who had also served as Commissioner of Patents.

Born in Portsmouth, Ohio, on September 18, 1926, Mr. Ladd attended public schools in Ohio and spent one year at Kenyon College. He served in the U.S. Army from 1945 to 1946. In 1949, he graduated with a bachelor of arts degree from the University of Chicago. Mr. Ladd attended Illinois Institute of Technology before returning to the University of Chicago, where he received his J.D. degree in 1953. He was admitted to the Illinois Bar the same year and the Ohio Bar in 1970.

Upon graduation from law school, Mr. Ladd practiced patent, trademark, and copyright law in Chicago until 1961, when he was appointed U.S. Commissioner of Patents by President John F. Kennedy.

His two-year tenure as Commissioner of Patents was marked by a comprehensive reorganization of the Patent and Trademark Office, establishment of a training program for examiners, and initiatives in research for documentation and information retrieval, including cooperative research with other national patent offices.

From 1962 to 1963, while Commissioner, Mr. Ladd was adjunct professor of law at Georgetown University in the District of Columbia. In 1963, Mr. Ladd returned to his law practice in Chicago. He held a position of counsel to a law firm in Dayton, Ohio, from 1969 to 1977 and, during most of that period, served as adjunct professor of law at Ohio State University.

From 1975 to 1977, Mr. Ladd was visiting professor at the University of Miami in Coral Gables, Fla., before joining the law faculty there in 1977. He was also codirector of the Olin fellowship program at the Law and Economics Center at that university.

Mr. Ladd lectured both in the United States and abroad on industrial property subjects and contributed to numerous legal periodicals. He was a U.S. representative on the Consultative Committee of the International Bureau for the Protection of Industrial Property in Geneva from 1961 to 1962 and coauthored a paper that led to the formation of the World Intellectual Property Organization. Also, Mr. Ladd was a founder of the Committee for International Cooperation in Information Retrieval among Examining Patent Offices.

In 1984, Mr. Ladd was the first Register to visit The People's Republic of China. He gave the keynote speech at the 34th annual Meeting of the International Confederation of Societies of Authors and Composers (CISAC) and was awarded the organization's gold medal for distinguished contributions to the field of copyright and intellectual property.

Mr. Ladd resigned his position on January 2, 1985, and returned to the private practice of law with the firm of Wiley, Rein & Fielding in the District of Columbia. He retired in 1987 and died October 12, 1994, at his home in Alexandria, Va.