

MEMORIAL RESOLUTION HONORING SIR JOHN CLIFFORD MORTIMER

WHEREAS, John Mortimer, barrister and author, died on Friday, January 16, 2009, at the age of 85; and

WHEREAS, Sir John Clifford Mortimer, CBE, QC (21 April 1923-16 January 2009) on taking silk in 1966 undertook work in criminal law, particularly cases of obscenity charges, successfully defending publishers John Calder and Marion Boyars in their 1968 appeal against their conviction for publishing Hubert Selby, Jr.'s *Last Exit to Brooklyn*, and three years later, unsuccessfully, for Richard Handyside, the English publisher of *The Little Red Schoolbook*; and

WHEREAS, In 1976 he defended Gay News editor Denis Lemon (*Whitehouse v. Lemon*) for the publication of James Kirkup's *The Love that Dares to Speak its Name* against charges of Blasphemous libel and Lemon's conviction was later overturned on appeal; and

WHEREAS, His defense of Virgin Records in the 1977 obscenity hearing for their use of the word bollocks in the title of the Sex Pistols' album *Never Mind The Bollocks*, and the manager of the Nottingham branch of the Virgin record shop chain for the record's display in a window and its sale, led to the defendants being found not guilty; and

WHEREAS, Mortimer may be best remembered for his character Horace Rumpole, the barrister who defends those accused of crime in London's Old Bailey, using that character in *Rumpole* and the *Reign of Terror* published in 2006, to challenge the erosion of liberty in the name of national security; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the American Library Association:

1. Salutes the life and legacy of Sir John Clifford Mortimer.
2. Send a copy of this resolution to the family of Sir John Clifford Mortimer.

Adopted by the Council of the American Library Association
Tuesday, January 19, 2010
In Boston, Massachusetts



Keith Michael Fiels
ALA Executive Director and
Secretary of the ALA Council