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“THE SYLLABUS IS THE LAW”

In *Koonce v. Doolittle* the Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia said:

“This court only makes *the more important points of law* a part of the *syllabus for the general information of the legal profession and public.*”¹

This little-known but significant statement by our court of last resort is perhaps the best short description of the purpose and function of the syllabus in West Virginia. Thus in the recent case of *Drake v. Parker*,² the Supreme Court of Appeals held, among other things, that certain witnesses were not competent to testify concerning the contents and acknowledgment of a writing because

¹ 48 W. Va. 592, 594, 37 S. E. 644 (1900). (Italics ours.)

² 7 S. E. (2d) 651 (W. Va. 1940).