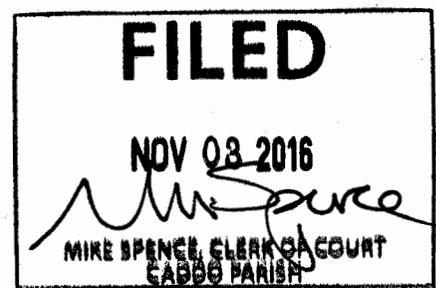


**MEMORIAL FOR
JACKSON BEAUREGARD DAVIS
PRESENTED AT THE MEMORIAL AND RECOGNITION
CEREMONY
HELD IN THE FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT
NOVEMBER 3, 2016
UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE
SHREVEPORT BAR ASSOCIATION**

May it please the Court; members of the Davis family; friends and colleagues: today it is my very great privilege to recall the life of Jackson Beauregard Davis, a member of our Bar for 72 years.

Jackson B. Davis was born in 1918 in rural Louisiana, just outside Lecompte in Rapides Parish. He excelled as a young student, graduated from high school at 14 years of age and four years later received an undergraduate degree in history from LSU. He then earned a Master's Degree and later graduated from the LSU Law School, having served as a member of the very first Louisiana Law Review and having been elected President of the Law School student body.

By then it was 1940. His application to join the FBI as a special agent had been accepted, but this student of history knew that the dark clouds of war over Europe would in time reach the United States, so he instead volunteered for military service. The United States Navy commissioned him as an officer and in September 1941 sent him to the Fourteenth Naval District at Pearl Harbor. Three months later, in December 1941, he survived the Japanese surprise attack. Jackson remained in Hawaii working in Naval Intelligence for the duration of the war, and his unit's success at deciphering Japanese coded communications was instrumental in the decisive American naval victory at the Battle of Midway, the turning point for the United States in the war in the Pacific.



When the war ended, Jackson and Rosemary came home and settled in Shreveport to build a life: together they raised four children, while Jackson built a law practice and a political career that resulted in six consecutive terms in the Louisiana State Senate.

For more than 70 years, Jackson practiced law in this courthouse, with an office across the street in the Slattery Building. He loved everything about being a lawyer. He was 92 years old when he decided to retire and instantly regretted having done so. He said many times afterwards that it was the worst decision he ever made.

He practiced law the way he lived his life. First, he was a gentleman in the true sense of that word. He was gracious, well mannered, and most important of all, treated everyone with decency and respect, no matter who you were or what your job was, or what side you were on. It would never occur to him to do anything else. And it would certainly never occur to him that just because two or more parties fell into a dispute that it was cause for the lawyers to fall into a dispute. He considered it the lawyers task to help the parties work through their dispute and reach a fair and just resolution.

Second, because he genuinely liked his colleagues at the Bar and considered them his friends, he was particularly interested in young lawyers. If he was here he would want to meet every one of the newly admitted lawyers being recognized today. He would want to hear your plans and would wish you well, and I promise you he would most likely know your parents or grandparents. It was for the purpose of helping to train and educate young lawyers that he and his wife endowed the Rosemary Slattery and Jackson B. Davis Professorship at the LSU Law School.

Finally, everything he did he did with great integrity. He had a fairly simple approach to life: in any situation, figure out what is the right thing to do and then do it. When he was first elected to the State Senate in 1956, one of the most controversial issues before the Senate

was newly elected Governor Earl Long's effort to have the Legislature vote to remove from office members of various state boards that were appointed by Governor Kennon, his predecessor, so that he could replace them with his own appointees. Freshman Senator Jackson B. Davis, serving in his first legislative session, didn't see any cause to remove these men before the end of their term and signaled his intention to vote against Governor Long's wishes.

One day a page came to the Senate floor to deliver a message to Senator Davis:

"The Governor would like to see you in his office." As Jackson told the story, the conversation with Earl Long went something like this:

Governor Long: "I hear that you're voting against us on the state boards."

Senator Davis: "Yes, Governor. I just don't see any reason to vote these people out of office."

Governor Long (*sighing heavily*): "Alright, what do you want?"

Senator Davis: "Sir?"

Governor Long: "I said what do *want*?"

Senator Davis: "Uh, sir, I don't want anything."

Governor Long: "How many people did you promise jobs to during the campaign? We can try to find something for them."

Senator Davis: "I didn't promise anyone a job."

Governor Long: "Well, how much campaign debt do you have. We can help you raise some money."

Senator Davis: "I don't owe any money from the campaign."

Governor Long: "Well, what banks up in Shreveport do you have an interest in. We can move some state accounts into them."

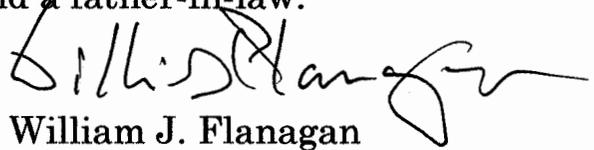
Senator Davis: "You can put the state money in any bank up there you like. I don't have an interest in any of them."

Governor Long (*exasperated*): "Well, look, I need your vote. Tell me what it is you want for it."

Senator Davis: "Governor, I don't want anything. I'm going to be with you when I think you're right, but I have to be against you when I think you're wrong."

Governor Long: "Son, let me explain. I don't *need* you when I'm right."

In a long, full, productive, memorable and interesting life, Jackson B. Davis always sought to do what he thought was right. He practiced law the way it should be practiced. He kept the faith. I was honored to have him as a role model, a mentor, and a father-in-law.


William J. Flanagan