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W. S. Wilkinson
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SHREVEPORT BAR ASSOCIATION

October 28, 1985

In Memoriam

William Scott Wilkinson

We are here today to honor the memory of our brother, William Scott Wilkinson, who departed this world on June 19, 1985. His long life was marked by excellence in every area; he rendered distinguished military service in two world wars, he was a dedicated servant to his church, a devoted husband and father and earned the reputation of being one of the finest lawyers in the south.

Mr. Wilkinson, who was known as Scott to his friends, was born in Coushatta, Louisiana on February 5, 1895, the son of John Dallas Wilkinson, (himself a distinguished lawyer, who also served in the state legislature and was a member of the Constitutional Convention which framed the Louisiana Constitution of 1898) and Alice Mai Wilkinson. He was reared in Shreveport and during his collegiate career at Louisiana State University was first captain of the cadet corp and president of both the Senior Academic Class and the Senior Law Class. In athletics, despite his small physical stature, he was captain of the varsity basketball team. He graduated from the Louisiana State University School of Law in 1917, and, on the same day that he was admitted to practice, he also took the oath of an officer in the United States Army and served in France with the American Expeditionary Forces during World War I, being discharged with the rank of Captain in 1919. Upon his return to civilian life, he formed a law partnership with his father and another young Army captain, Charles Huffman Lewis, under the name of Wilkinson, Lewis & Wilkinson, and practiced with that firm, now Wilkinson, Carmody & Gilliam, until his death.

In 1919, he married Margaret West of Corsicana, Texas and during the 66 years of their marriage life she remained a constant source of strength and support.

Mr. Wilkinson was elected to the Louisiana legislature in 1920 and served 4 years in the House of Representatives. He was the co-author of the bill creating the Louisiana Highway Commission. During the 1920's and 30's he was involved in much of the litigation, including all of the so-called "Tyson suits" which shaped the course of Louisiana mineral law. His reputation and skills were such that he was appointed a Special Assistant Attorney General of Louisiana and served under four different governors and state administrations, taking a leading part in the litigation between the United States and the State of Louisiana involving the title and ownership of the vast mineral deposits underlying the submerged lands in the Gulf of Mexico seaward of Louisiana's coastline. His skills as a lawyer are reflected in the results of two major libel suits which he tried during the 1960's; in one he recovered the first million dollar judgment in behalf of a plaintiff in a libel suit, and, in the other, he obtained the landmark decision holding that a lawyer is entitled to a qualified immunity from suit for statements made in legal pleadings so long as he is in good faith.

In 1940, a year before Pearl Harbor, he was recalled to military duty as a reserve officer and served as the Base Adjutant, under Generals Omar Bradley and George Patton, of Fort Benning, Georgia. In December of 1941 he was promoted to commander of Fort Barrancas, Florida, as Lt. Colonel. He was later promoted to Colonel and placed in command of several artillery regiments in which he served with distinction. He returned to civilian life in 1945.

Scott Wilkinson approached everything he did in life with not only dedication, skill and ability, but also with a certain flair and elan. He had a strong straight-forward

character and it was never plagued by self-doubt or insecurity. He refused to camouflage or make cosmetic his opinions because of expediency or popularity. He was loyal to his family, friends, colleagues and clients and stood for those things in life which are good and true. He engendered pride and self-confidence in those men and women who were privileged to work with him in the practice of law.

Mr. Wilkinson brought to the practice of law a keen mind coupled with good judgment. His hallmarks as a lawyer included not only skill and ability, but diligence, indeed a passion for research, and an easy working relationship with the courts and lawyers.

While Mr. Wilkinson could be stern and firm on occasion, he is remembered mostly by his colleagues as a man possessed with a warm smile and a gentle courteous manner. Mr. Wilkinson reasoned logically and with force. He knew well Dean Rosco Pound's admonition that, "Logic does not give starting points," and where the Constitution, either state or federal was involved, he believed that starting points were not to be devised by judges, but believed that history and precedent were the linchpins for interpreting law and not some predetermined view of social desirability. Many of the qualities which Scott Wilkinson possessed are not taught in school. He easily met and understood persons from all walks of life and freely gave to those less fortunate. Kindness and understanding, along with knowledge and courage are required to make a great lawyer and he had those qualities in abundance.

Mr. Wilkinson was a member of many legal societies and organizations, including the International Bar Association, the Louisiana and American Bar Associations, the American Judicature Society, the Federal Power Bar Association and the Louisiana Law Institute. He also served as president of the Shreveport Bar Association. He was a speaker and author of several published papers for the Louisiana

Institute on Mineral Law and the Tulane University Program
of Mineral and Tidelands Law.

He was a member of the Blair Society of Edinburgh,
Scotland and the Selden Society of London, England. He was
one of the first fellows elected to membership in the American
College of Trial Lawyers, a select group composed of leading
trial lawyers in the nation.

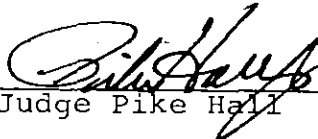
In the business and civic world Mr. Wilkinson was a
director and Chairman of the Board of the Lee National Life
Insurance Company, a director of the S. D. Hunter Foundation
and the Frost Foundation. He also served as president of
the Shreveport Chamber of Commerce and the Shreveport Rotary
Club, and as a director of the LSU Foundation.

He is survived by his beloved wife, Mrs. Margaret West
Wilkinson, two daughters, Mrs. Susy Belle Lyons of Shreveport
and Mrs. Margaret Wilkinson Wilson of Austin, Texas, 10 grand-
children and 10 great grandchildren.

WHEREAS, the passing of William Scott Wilkinson has
taken from the ranks of the Shreveport Bar one of its oldest
and most distinguished and respected members, a leader in
the professional, civic and business life of this community;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Shreveport Bar
Association adopt and record this memoriam as a testimonial
and tribute to the memory of its late departed brother and
friend, William Scott Wilkinson, and that copies of this
resolution be delivered to his bereaved family.

Arthur R. Carmody, Jr., Chairman



Judge Pike Hall



Charles B. Peatross

October 28, 1985