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IN MEMORIAM

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Archie M. Simon
April 12, 1909 -- May 30, 1997

DEPUTY CLERK

I first met Archie Simon over 20 years ago when I came to work at the firm which was then located on the 9th floor of the Lane Building. However, I had heard about Archie earlier while I was working in Bossier City.

There were 3 other lawyers in the office, and I can safely say with certainty that none of them had ever read the Bankruptcy Act. I suspect that was the case with a large percentage of the Bar at that time.

I learned as a new lawyer that there were essentially 3 ways to practice bankruptcy law:

First, if the client was going to file a chapter 7, the secretary made the interview and typed the schedules;

Second, if the client was going to get into a chapter 13, he or she was told to go first to ML Bath Company to buy the set of forms and then take them to the chapter 13 trustee's office so he could fill them out.

I suppose both of these techniques were intended as a shield against malpractice.

The third way applied when anything else came up. Standard practice was "Call Archie."

Paul Cooke told me that I would be helping Archie with some bankruptcy projects, so it was with some trepidation that I presented myself to work at the firm. I think I said, "Mr. Simon" only one time.

I was immediately at ease and at the start of a long association with one of the most admirable men or women I have ever known.

It turned out that Archie was our own private law school professor available for assistance on short notice any time.

After a day or two of settling in, I remember telling Archie I was ready to start work and to help him with his projects but I was a little short on background.

He shot me an Archie grin, left and came back with a paperback book. It was a copy of the Bankruptcy Act, the predecessor to the Bankruptcy Code. As some of you will recall, the Bankruptcy Act was an arcane collection of legislation. Some sections of it probably dated back to the Magna Carta.

As it turns out, Archie had not only read the Bankruptcy Act but he was well acquainted with all of its idiosyncracies, including the mysterious "Chapter XI" or Chapter 11.

Archie handed the book to me and said with a wink, "Here, read this and let me know if you have any questions."

Although I didn't realize it, at that point I undertook an apprenticeship with Archie which really didn't end until shortly before his death.

Archie was an astute legal scholar. But beyond that, he was more than generous to all of us with his time and encouragement. Actually he was pretty much that way with any other attorney who needed help in person or on the phone, often dropping his own projects without complaint.

Archie was a good friend to many other attorneys and non-attorneys, especially his Tuesday night poker buddies.

I think you can learn a lot about an attorney from the opinion of him or her held by secretaries and staff members. Some of Archie's former secretaries continually dropped by year after year on his birthday or just to say hello.

Archie was scrupulous when it came to his obligations to clients and the profession, and I believe it all started with his time sheet.

Not ever having seen a time sheet, I paid close attention to Archie's instruction. He continually stressed the necessity for accurate records. The form of his time sheet was remarkable. In effect it was a timeline which forced you to account for all the activities for the day but prevented you from "accidentally" being creative in billing matters. In other words, not every phone call could last 10 or 15 minutes.

The second lesson I learned was not to expect to bill and be paid for everything that was done. I learned it is not appropriate to charge a client for your own education or for wasted time or for duplications.

Often Archie would make suggestions and appropriate reductions were made. I believe these days this is something called "billing judgment." Archie just thought it was the correct way to conduct your work.

Finally, Archie was courageous. Most of you know about his disability that slowly worsened over the years. I found out recently that the disability probably was diagnosed about the time I came to work at the firm, 1976. Even when the disease would have been an ample excuse for anyone to be mean spirited, depressed, or irritable, Archie maintained his good spirit and optimism.

Even though it took him an hour or two to get ready in the morning, he came to the office 3 or 4 times a week, especially on Tuesdays, which was Rotary day.

On behalf of myself and the members of my firm, I would like to express my thanks for all the concern and kindnesses which were extended to Archie over the last several years.

Archie M. Simon, 88, passed away on Friday, May 30, 1997. Since entering the practice of law in 1934, he was a continuous resident of Shreveport, except for a period of military service in World War II.

Born in Crisfield, Maryland, and a graduate of Merryville, Louisiana High School, Mr. Simon received his preparatory education at Louisiana State University. He then received his legal education at New York University School of Law, graduating with an L.L.B. in 1934. In that year he was admitted to the Louisiana State Bar Association and joined the law firm of Pugh, Grimmet and Boatner. Except for a period of military service in World War II, he was continuously associated with the same law firm. In 1946 he was admitted to the practice of law in the State of California. He served as President of the Shreveport Bar Association in 1964. He was cited as one of the best lawyers in America in a 1979 reference book "The Best Lawyers in America."

Mr. Simon entered military service in 1942, was commissioned Lieutenant in Infantry and then served in the Army Air Corp Air Materiel Command as a contracting officer. He stayed in this capacity until discharged as Captain in April, 1946.

Archie Simon was an active member of numerous civic organizations, including the Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club of Shreveport, Shreveport Association of Defense Council, American Legion, Elks Club, and the Shreveport Chapter of the American Cancer Society. In addition, he was a lifetime member of the Shreveport Association for the Blind and served as President in 1963-1964. Mr. Simon was a member

of B'Nai Zion Temple and B'Nai Zion Men's Club. He served on the Education and Navigation Committee of the local Chamber of Commerce in the 1960's, and was also affiliated with the Gas Light Players. He was a charter member of the Wabash Syndicate and investment club founded in 1957.

Survivors include his two children, Wayne Simon of New York City, and Ronnie Jo Simon Ross, of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and his two grandchildren, Erica Michelle Ross and Meredith Simone Ross.

Other surviving family members include two brothers, Walter Simon of Walnut Creek, California, and Melvin Simon of New Orleans, and one sister, Evelyn Edwards of Boca Raton, Florida. Mr. Simon's wife, Henrietta Mayer Simon, passed away in 1991 and his brother, Fred Simon, in 1993.

THUS DONE for the Shreveport Bar Association this 30th day of October, 1997.

Chatham H. Reed
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