

MEMORIAL TO JOHN A. RICHARDSON

SHREVEPORT BAR ASSOCIATION

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MAY IT PLEASE THE COURT:

Honorable Judges, fellow attorneys, family members and friends. I consider it an honor and privilege to stand before you today to present the memorial to John Richardson. Those of us who worked for him affectionately called him "the Boss". I had the pleasure of knowing him for most of my life. We attended the same church. His daughter Pam and I were friends in high school and college. During those years, I called him Mr. Richardson. Then I worked for him as an Assistant District Attorney for four years. I called him "Boss". Since then he has been my main consultant whenever I had a legal question particularly in the areas of property law and successions. For the last twelve years we have been fellow members of the Shreveport Optimist Club. He has been my friend and I called him John.

John Richardson died on February 2, 1999, at the age of 83 years. He was a graduate of Byrd High School, LSU undergrad and LSU Law School. He was admitted to the practice of law in 1937. He is survived by Gene, his loving and devoted wife for 58 years. He had two children, Stephen, who predeceased him, and Pam Richardson Hayes, who lives in Cedar Falls, Iowa. Gene has recently moved to live close to Pam.

John Richardson served as an Assistant District Attorney from 1942 until he was elected District Attorney in 1960. He retired in 1978 after having served three terms. After retiring, he did not

simple go home to do honey do's for Gene, go fishing and play golf. He associated with the law firm of Smitherman, Lunn, Chastain and Hill and continued to actively practice law until shortly before his death. His primary areas of practice were real estate and successions. He was a fixture in the record room at the courthouse where he almost daily did title exams and kept his title notes on those small pieces of white paper he carried in his shirt pocket.

During his lifetime, as DA and an active community leader and volunteer, John Richardson made an enormous contribution to the quality of life in our community. He cared for the youth of our community. He missed being a charter member of the Shreveport Optimist Club by only several months when he joined in the year 1941. The motto of the Optimist Club is "Friend of Youth". He served as President of the local club and as governor of the State Optimist organization. At the age of 75 years, he was still working on the Optimist Christmas tree lot helping raise money to support the club's youth activities and projects.

He was active as a volunteer leader for the Boy Scouts of America and was awarded the Silver Beaver award for his many years of service.

He was a devout Christian, a good steward who gave his time and talents to serve the Lord. As an active member of the First Presbyterian Church of Shreveport, he served as a teacher, elder and Chairman of the church's Board of Trustees. Shortly before his death, he was elected to be an elder emeritus in recognition of his many years of faithful service. Retired Judge Charles Lindsay reminded me that the Boss said a prayer before each trial. He prayed that a just and right result be reached and that Justice be done.

As an attorney, John Richardson will most be remembered for his years as a dedicated public servant as an Assistant and then as DA for 18 years. As DA, he was an effective prosecutor. He was a master politician, yet he avoided politics in making decisions affecting the discharge of the duties of his office. He was honest, fair and tough. I think my friend Larry Johnson, who also worked for the Boss as an Assistant, accurately describes the tough nature and yet gentlemanly qualities of the Boss as a prosecutor when he refers to him as "an iron fist in a velvet glove". To me the boss truly lived what he promised at the conclusion of the optimist club meeting every Friday for 48 years when he recited the first and last lines of the Optimist Creed, "PROMISE YOURSELF, To be so strong that nothing can disturb your peace of mind, and To be too large for worry, to noble for anger, too strong for fear, and too happy to permit the presence of trouble." As a lawyer, the Boss exemplified what today we call true "Professionalism" according to Judge Gene Bryson.

During his tenure as DA, John Richardson helped organize the Louisiana District Attorneys Association and served on the Board and as President of this Association. He also served on the Board and as a Vice-President of the National District Attorney's Association. He served on the Governor's Commission of Law Enforcement for 12 years. He and Ray Herd were instrumental in creating the Northwest Louisiana Crime Laboratory, which today serves as a vital part of our criminal justice system.

I want to suggest to you that one of the most important legacies that John Richardson has left the legal community is what I will call the gift of "Opportunity".

In each of our lives, there have been people who have given us the opportunity to do or be something that has contributed to make us who we are today. We all have what I will call an opportunity tree. John Richardson is a branch in the opportunity tree of many lawyers and Judges in our community. As DA for 18 years, he gave the opportunity to many your lawyers, including myself, to work for him and gain valuable experience, particularly trial and courtroom experience. Some of the Assistants became judges, namely, C.J. Bolin, Garner Miller, Fred Sexton, Charles Lindsay, Gene Bryson, Bobby Waddell and Andy Gallagher. These Judges have given the opportunity to many young lawyers to work for them as law clerks. Paul Carmouche started his career as an Assistant on the staff of John Richardson. This experience helped him be elected DA to succeed John Richardson. Paul has given the opportunity to many young attorneys to work as Assistants in his office over the last 20 years. In an indirect way, although many of them did not know him, John Richardson is in the opportunity tree of these law clerks and Assistants.

John Richardson was a man for all seasons, a true leader, counselor, teacher, family man, friend and role model, who lived a full life. His daughter Pam has written this about her dad:

"An aspect of Dad's full life was his profligate sharing of his many gifts and abilities. The ones that were perhaps most publicly shared were his sharp and penetrating intellect and his ability to communicate well. Dad used these gifts for sixty years as an attorney, first as assistant district attorney, then as district attorney and finally in private practice. All of these positions were ones of great trust, and I can think of no one more worthy of people's trust. Day after day, Dad used his intelligence, his acute sense of right

and wrong, his commitment to justice and mercy, and his discipline to serve the community."

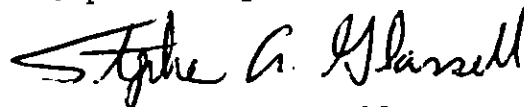
In conclusion, I want to quote my friend Woody Nesbitt. We both went to work for the man we called the Boss in early 1975.

Woody wrote this as part of a proposed editorial shortly after the death of the Boss.

"It is indeed rare that a community is blessed to have had a leader who, over 50 years of public service, set and maintained the highest levels of honesty, integrity and professional excellence, all while "discovering", then inspiring and mentoring many others who in turn, would serve their community in many ways. But always, the "bar of excellence" was set by "the Boss".

I say "Amen".

Respectfully submitted,



Stephen A. Glassell