IN MEMORIAM

ALBERT PEARSON JONES

Albert Pearson Jones, Joseph C. Huteson Professor Emeritus in Law, died in Houston, Texas, on September 9, 1992. He is survived by his two sons, Dan Pearson Jones and Lewis Avery Jones, and four grandchildren.

Albert Pearson Jones was born in Dallas, Texas, on July 19, 1907. He attended public schools in Dallas and graduated from Bryan Street High School in January of 1924. He spent one semester at Southern Methodist University in the Spring of 1924. The next Fall he went to Austin and enrolled in the University of Texas. He attended undergraduate school at the University of Texas through December of 1926 and graduate school through August of 1927 receiving both his Bachelor of Arts degree and his Masters of Science degree in Economics. He was a member of Phi Beta Kappa. The following Fall he entered law school at the University of Texas where he continued to excel. He became an Associate Editor and, then, Editor-in-Chief of the Texas Law Review. For his academic achievements, Albert Jones was made a Chancellor of the Law School, indicating one of the highest grade point averages, and a member of the national academic honorary society, the Order of the Coif. He was also a member of Phi Delta Phi fraternity and the Friar Society. Albert Pearson Jones received his Bachelor of Laws in June of 1930.

Upon graduation, he began practice with the firm of Baker, Botts, Andrews and Wharton in Houston. He remained there until 1943 when he and Shirley Helm formed their own firm: Helm and Jones. In this new firm Albert Jones's ability as a trial lawyer began to shine brightly. He was the first Texas lawyer to be elected a fellow in the American College of Trial Lawyers. He served on numerous committees and bar groups. He was named to serve on the Supreme Court of Texas Advisory Committee in 1951 and continued to serve on that committee as long as he was able — into the 1980's. In December of 1979 (after retiring from his law teaching career) he wrote a letter to then Dean John Sutton apologizing for not being able to attend an alumni meeting in Houston. He stated in that letter:

I have been on the Supreme Court Advisory Committee since 1951 and I have never missed or been late for any meeting. I do not want to spoil my record at this late date.
Albert Jones became a legend in his own time as a plaintiff’s personal injury trial lawyer before that group became as famous or infamous as it has now become. It is reputed that when he left the active practice of law in 1962 to join the faculty of his alma mater, several defense law firms put him on a retainer basis to prevent any plaintiff’s firm from obtaining his services in a workers’ compensation case.

During his illustrious career Albert Pearson Jones was on the Board of Directors of the State Bar of Texas and served as its president in 1950-51. He was admitted to practice in the State of Texas and before the United States District Courts for the Southern, Eastern and Western Districts of Texas, the United States Court of Appeals for the 5th Circuit, and the Supreme Court of the United States.

After 32 years of extraordinary success as a trial lawyer he decided to retire from the active practice and return to the academic halls to teach law. Apparently several schools were interested in acquiring him. In a letter from then Dean Page Keeton to then Vice President of the University of Texas, Norman Hackerman, Dean Keeton wrote:

I am enclosing herewith biographical information about Albert Jones, and moreover, I am sending to him a biographical data sheet as a basis for sending through a formal recommendation at an early date. It will be noted that he is 54 years of age, and normally we would not employ a person at this age. However, he is one of the outstanding trial lawyers of Texas, was certainly the outstanding person in his class of 1930, having graduated with Highest Honors, and having been Editor-in-Chief of the Texas Law Review at this time. He is a legal scholar as well as one of the foremost trial lawyers in Texas. There are several members of the Board of Regents who will know him well, and undoubtedly they will be interested in knowing why he has indicated to us a desire to be on the Law Faculty.

He came to me some eight months ago indicating that he intended to discontinue the practice, and expected to teach at one of the law schools, and that he preferred to go first-class here at this Law School. I happen to know that both Baylor and the University of Houston, which is likely to have a state-supported law school shortly, have sought his services, and I
feel that it would be a great mistake for us not to take advantage of the opportunity that we have to secure him here. In fact, I suspect that we would be criticized for not taking advantage of it.

In 1962 Albert Jones became Professor Jones at the University of Texas School of Law. Although he received the second highest salary at the law school: $15,000 (the highest was $16,000), Professor Jones also accepted an almost 90% reduction in his previous earnings to begin his teaching career.

After one year of teaching, Professor Jones was loaned by Dean Keeton to the new Attorney General of Texas, Waggoner Carr, to help set up his administration. He retained the position as First Assistant Attorney General for one year.

Professor Jones was the first person named to the Joseph C. Hutcheson Professorship in Law. Along with his colleagues, Professors Gus Hodges and Frank Elliot, he co-authored two classic casebooks in Texas Procedure. They were G. HODGES, A. JONES, and F. ELLIOTT, TEXAS TRIAL AND APPELLATE PROCEDURE and G. HODGES, A. JONES, and F. ELLIOTT, TEXAS JUDICIAL PROCESS PRIOR TO TRIAL. These were the standard casebooks on Texas Procedure for many years. Professor Jones was known for his insistence on preparation — for class as well as for trial — for his technical expertise, and for a warm and generous personality, but he was also recognized as a tough grader. His students deeply respected and admired this scholarly professor with so many years of real trial experience.

Although his students publicly referred to him as "Mr. Jones" (at this time most professors at the Law School did not use the title "Professor"), he was affectionately called "Pappy Jones" in private. One of his former students remarked:

We looked upon him as old-fashioned, a courtly gentleman. He was a great teacher with tremendous presence. The general opinion prevails that he was one of the best law professors at Texas. Mr. Jones was a warm, generous person.

One quality which Professor Jones possessed in abundance, but did not advertise, was his generosity. For many years he lectured in bar review courses. He contributed his pay for these lectures to the Law School Foundation (then the Keeton Fund) and did the same with his royalties for the casebooks he co-authored. At his retirement he created the Albert Jones Scholarship Fund (contributing $50,000) to provide financial assistance based on need to
members of the BOA (Board of Advocates). This law school student organization sponsors a variety of competitions including appellate moot court, mock trial, and client counseling both within the University of Texas School of Law and outside against other law schools.

Professor Jones retired (because of the then-existing mandatory provision) in 1977. That year the law school held Law Week in his honor. He was named the Joseph C. Hutcheson Professor Emeritus. When asked what it took to be a good lawyer, Professor Jones replied:

Intelligence, of course, is the basic commodity, but it goes beyond that. I would say desire to work, prepare, to do legal research. Without that knowledge and ability to prepare and research, a lawyer may well find himself in trouble.

Professor Jones was delighted to see more and more bright, young women attending law school near the end of his teaching career. He was saddened by one thing, however, and stated:

What the Texas Law School needs is more black students. We simply don't have enough blacks.

Professor Emeritus Jones returned to Houston and became counsel to the firm of Helm, Pletcher, Hogan and Burrow. He continued to be active, especially in bar related activities such as the Supreme Court Advisory Committee. In 1978 he was named as a distinguished alumnus of the University of Texas School of Law.

Albert Jones was not, however, just a great trial lawyer and outstanding law professor. He was a family man. He was married for 53 years to Annette Lewis of Houston. She died on March 22, 1990. Albert and Annette had two sons, Dan Pearson Jones and Lewis Avery Jones, and four grandchildren. He was very active in the Episcopal Church. He had been a vestry man, a junior, and a senior warden of Christ Church Cathedral in Houston. He was trustee of numerous Episcopal trusts in Austin and active in St. David's Episcopal Church. After his death on September 9, 1992, Albert Pearson Jones, attorney, scholar, teacher, benefactor, husband, father, and devoted Christian was buried at Forest Park Lawndale Cemetery in Houston following services at St. David's Episcopal Church in Austin.

Albert Pearson Jones is sorely missed by those who were his colleagues, his students, his clients, his family, and his friends. Those who knew him well will never forget his warm greeting and his twinkle.
This Memorial Resolution was prepared by a special committee consisting of Professors J. Patrick Hazel (Chair), Charles Alan Wright, and Lino A. Graglia.
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