

BIOGRAPHY OF WILLIAM H. BROWN

William H. Brown, Jr. ("Bill") was born in Glasgow, Scotland, March 21, 1913. His parents had emigrated from Glasgow to Casper, Wyoming prior to his birth. His mother, while pregnant, had returned to Glasgow to visit her family and remained there though the birth of her son. Bill had two sisters and two brothers.

Two children were born of Bill's marriage to his first wife, Dorothy. His son, Gary, resides in Casper. His daughter, Janice, a Doctor of Medicine, resides in Main County, California. Bill is survived by his second wife, Mary Alice. Bill passed away at the Wyoming Medical Center in Casper on November 21, 1991.

William H. Brown, Sr. had been apprenticed as a grocer in Scotland. He owned and operated a grocery business in Casper. As a youth, Bill assisted in his father's grocery store.

Bill attended public schools in Casper, graduating from high school in 1931. He then attended the University of Nebraska, after which he returned to Wyoming for law school. He received his J. D. degree from the University of Wyoming College of Law in 1936. Colleagues who took the bar examination at the same time recall that Bill was called before the examiners for oral examination. They had become concerned that he had cited precedents by book and page in formulating his written responses. He was able to repeat the performance in the oral examination and was duly admitted to the Bar, after which he began practice in Casper in 1936.

Bill began practice in the office of a sole practitioner, where he performed legal

services and, in addition, was paid \$1 per day for typing services. Subsequently, he examined abstracts for the office of G. R. Hagens and William J. Wehrli, a Casper law firm, as part of a general practice. Through these early years, Bill supplemented his income by playing the trumpet in a dance band which performed in the area.

After service with the Office of Price Administration, in Cheyenne for a time in World War II, Bill resumed a general practice in Casper. In 1949, he was joined by Don Chapin after Don's graduation from law school. In 1953, Don joined Charles M. Crowell (who also died in 1991) and is still active in practice as the senior partner in Chapin and Dixon, LLP. After his graduation from law school, George M. Apostolos joined Bill in 1953. Also in 1953, William F. Drew, who had been employed by Stanolind Oil and Gas Company, became associated. A partnership of Brown, Drew and Apostolos was formed in 1955. In 1957, this partnership merged with the partnership of Harold H. Healy and William B. Barton to form the firm of Brown, Healy, Drew, Apostolos and Barton, now Brown, Drew & Massey, LLP. He was admitted to practice before all Wyoming courts, the United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit and the United States Supreme Court.

For Bill, the practice of law was a full-time occupation, involving many evening and weekend hours. He did find time to play golf and worked as hard at the game as he did at the practice of law. He expected hard work and dedication from new associates but was always generous and understanding of the needs of young lawyers who became associated with him.

Bill had a keen analytical mind and was able to get to the heart of an issue with no

waste motion. Although never confined to trial practice, he developed considerable courtroom skills. A long time judge of the U.S. District Court for the District of Wyoming, T. Blake Kennedy, impressed with his courtroom skills, appointed him in several criminal defenses (which were not compensated at the time). Bill recalled the jury trial of one of these criminal defendants, who had been charged with the theft of an oil field pump. The trial went well but to the surprise of observers, the jury rendered a verdict of guilty. A post-trial interview with one or more of the jurors yielded the information that the jury would have acquitted except for the fact they thought the defendant would get to keep the pump, which they thought was unfair.

In the post-World War II period, Wyoming experienced an oil boom. This yielded a transactional practice, many major oil companies having opened offices in Casper. An independent oil and gas operator, Fred Goodstein, became a major client, whom Bill served through his life and then probated his estate.

During the course of his career, Mr. Brown served on a number of corporate boards. He provided dedicated service as a member of the Casper College Board of Trustees and served as a Trustee of the Goodstein Foundation. He was a Fellow of the International Academy of Trial Lawyers and was admitted to the Order of the Coif when a chapter was established at the University of Wyoming.

The quotation of a statement made in his obituary by former Chief Justice of the Wyoming Supreme Court, Robert R. Rose, summarizes the regard in which William H. Brown was held:

Rose said of Brown's impact on the law in the state was not so much a matter of

winning important cases or developing a particular area of expertise. Rather, “the stamp Brown put on all of us was a standard of excellence.” Brown was “one of the most outstanding lawyers I ever knew,” Rose said. “It’s safe to say (that) feeling represents the general view of the Wyoming State Bar and the courts, including the Supreme Court and all the district judges who knew him,” Rose added.

The lawyers who have been associated with William H. Brown in the practice of law hold him in the same esteem expressed by Justice Rose.