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Report of the Necrology Committee

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REPORT OF AUDITING COMMITTEE

The Auditing Committee of the Wyoming State Bar, on examination of the Treasurer's Report dated August 1, 1957, and the books and records of the Treasurer in support of said report, finds that the report is correct and recommends that the report be approved.

Dated August 27, 1957.

Ernest Wilkerson, Chairman
Robert A. Burgess
Richard A. Tobin

REPORT OF THE NECROLOGY COMMITTEE

During the past year since our 1956 annual meeting, the deaths of ten members of the Wyoming State Bar have been reported. Most of them were long-time active members of the Bar and the cumulative affect of their loss will be felt most keenly by our profession in the state. Of the ten, one had recently retired as U.S. District Judge after over 55 years as a member of the Wyoming Bar, one was serving as a state District Judge after over 30 years in his profession in Wyoming, four had been members of the Wyoming Bar for approximately 50 years each, one had been a member of our Bar for over 40 years, one for over 35 years, and the other two who died in California had each practiced law in the state for some years, although not active in Wyoming practice in recent years. In each case these distinguished gentlemen will be missed most by their families and others who were associated closely with them, but their absence will also be felt throughout the state of Wyoming.

T. BLAKE KENNEDY

T. Blake Kennedy was born in Commerce, Michigan, on April 4, 1874, and died at Cheyenne, Wyoming, on May 21, 1957, at the age of 83. He received his Bachelors degree from Muskingum College, Ohio, and his Law Degree from Syracuse University, New York, in 1897. In 1901, he came to Cheyenne, Wyoming, and commenced the practice of law. He served as referee in bankruptcy for Wyoming from 1903 to 1913 and from 1919 to 1921. He was very active in the Republican party and was chairman of the state Republican central committee from 1918 to 1921. In 1921, President Harding appointed him Judge of the federal Wyoming District, in which position he remained until his retirement in 1955, a period of some 34 years. At the time of his retirement he was the ranking U.S. District Judge in the nation in point of seniority. After his retirement from the bench he continued to help with the court's business until failing health prevented him from so doing during the last months of his life.

He was a member of the Masonic Order, and his civic affiliations included the Rotary Club, Literary Club, and the Presbyterian church.

He was a member of the American Bar Association. He was preceded in death by his wife, and is survived by a sister-in-law, Mrs. E. Stanton Kennedy of Denver, and several nieces and nephews.

Very early in his judicial career he attracted national attention through presiding over the famous Teapot Dome cases, and he subsequently became known widely as a federal judge of great industry and ability. Judge T. Blake Kennedy's legal career spanned over 55 years in Wyoming and he has left an indelible imprint on the jurisprudence of Wyoming. He will be missed greatly by his many friends and admirers everywhere.

SPENCER J. LEWIS

Spencer J. Lewis was born at St. Joseph, Missouri, on September 5, 1895, and died while on vacation at Phoenix, Arizona, on February 18, 1957, at the age of 61. He obtained his legal education at the St. Joseph Law School. In 1926 he commenced the practice of law in Casper, Wyoming, and practiced law continuously until appointed Judge of the Seventh Judicial District in 1951 by Governor Barrett. Thereafter he was elected District Judge in 1952 and was so serving at the time of his death.

Prior to his accession to the bench he was active in the Natrona County Bar Association, and he served as president of the Wyoming State Bar in 1943-44. He was a member of the American Bar Association. For many years he was active in the Republican party and served on many party committees. He served in the Marine Corps during World War I in France, where he was hospitalized as a result of being gassed. He was awarded the Navy Cross for extraordinary service in the line of duty. He was a member of the Masonic Order, and his civic affiliations included the American Legion, Izaak Walton League, Y.M.C.A., and the Presbyterian Church. He is survived by his wife, Nell. He was known to his many friends throughout the state as "Smoky" and was often so addressed informally even after his elevation to the bench, which testified to the democratic nature of his character and the affectionate respect felt for him. Although Judge Spencer J. Lewis was taken prematurely, he had already gained stature as a judge and will be missed by his colleagues on the bench and his many friends everywhere.

CLIFFORD W. AXTELL

Clifford W. Axtell was born at Deposit, New York, on March 11, 1881, and died in Thermopolis, Wyoming, on July 20, 1957, at the age of 76. He received his law degree at Syracuse University, New York, in 1903, after which he came to Thermopolis and practiced law continuously from 1904 until his death, a period of some 53 years. He served at various times as City Attorney of Thermopolis and as County Attorney of Hot Springs County during his career. He was active in the Hot Springs County Bar Association. At the time of his death he was president of the First National Bank of Thermopolis. He was active in the

Republican party in Wyoming and had served on the state committee of that party. He was quite versatile and had many interests, including the writing of poetry. He was active in the Masonic Order and his civic affiliations included the Lions Club, Elks Lodge, S.A.R. and the Episcopal church. He is survived by his wife, Clare, one son, Paul Warren Axtell of Thermopolis, two daughters, Mrs. Mary Louise Burgess and his lawyer daughter, Mrs. Ruth Clare Yonkee, both of Thermopolis, six grandchildren, two brothers, one sister, and several nieces and nephews. Clifford W. Axtell was a widely known and respected pioneer Wyoming lawyer and will be greatly missed by his many friends.

NOAH V. KURTZ

Noah V. Kurtz was born in Nebraska in 1884 and died May 2, 1957, at Sheridan, Wyoming at the age of 72. He studied both law and engineering in college and followed that latter profession for some 20 years after his arrival in Wyoming in 1907, although admitted to the Bar in 1909. After commencing the active practice of law in the late 1920's he was elected County Attorney of Sheridan County in 1931 and so served for 4 terms. He was active in the Democratic party throughout his career, serving at one time as chairman of the state Democratic central committee. He served in the Wyoming Legislature during six different sessions, both in the Senate and the House, and was senior Senator for a time. He was serving in the House at the time of his death.

He served in the armed forces during World War I. He was active in civic affairs, including work with the Boy Scouts, in which he held the Silver Beaver Award, the highest award in scouting. His civic affiliations included the K. P., American Legion, and the Congregational church. He is survived by his wife and six children, Mrs. J. J. Lewis of Story, Samuel P. Kurtz of Rock Springs, Joseph D. Kurtz, Buffalo, N. Y., Mrs. Ivan Culver, Rivera, California, James A. Kurtz, Carson City, Nevada, and Allen E. Kurtz, Seattle, Washington, as well as sixteen grandchildren and one brother. Noah V. Kurtz was a well-known and respected member of the Wyoming Bar for many years, and will be missed by all who knew him.

JOHN R. McDERMOTT

John R. McDermott was born at Omaha, Nebraska, in 1893, and died at Los Angeles, California, on June 18, 1957. He received a Bachelor's degree from Creighton University in Omaha. As a young man he came to Casper, Wyoming, in 1921, and practiced law. Later he went to Kemmerer, Wyoming, and at one time was County Attorney of Lincoln County. He was a member of the American Bar Association. He became interested in oil and mining and at the time of his death was involved in uranium ventures, maintaining his headquarters in Rock Springs. He had been in Los Angeles since last winter. He is survived by three brothers, Dr. W. O. McDermott of Los Angeles, Edwin McDermott, an Omaha attorney, and Paul McDermott, also of Omaha.

R. H. NICHOLS

R. H. Nichols was born in Council Bluffs, Iowa, in 1888, and died at Casper, Wyoming, on September 20, 1956, at the age of 68. He received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Colorado University in 1909, and his Law degree from Yale University in 1911. He first came to Cheyenne, Wyoming, where he practiced law for about a year, coming to Casper in 1912, which remained his home until his death. He served as County Attorney of Natrona County for a 4-year term, and in the State Legislature for 5 sessions from 1937 to 1945, being President of the Senate in 1943. He also served as legal advisor to the State Senate in 1947. He was an active Republican throughout his career. He served as a member of the State Board of Law Examiners for many years, and was a member of the American Bar Association. He was a member of the Board of Directors of the Wyoming National Bank and was active in the development of several oil and mining companies in Casper. He served in the field artillery during World War I.

He was active in the Masonic Order, and his civic affiliations included the Kiwanis Club, Elks Club, Moose Club, I.O.O.F. and K.P. He was a member of the Congregational church. He was active in the Boy Scouts for many years and held the highest award in scouting, the Silver Beaver Award. He is survived by his wife, Verna, and two children, B. Brooks Nichols and Mrs. Ivor Bowen, both of Casper, and ten grandchildren, and one brother. R. H. Nichols was an active and well-known member of the Wyoming Bar for many years and he will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

MICHAEL W. PURCELL

Michael W. Purcell was born in Kansas on December 3, 1863, and died at San Gabriel, California, on August 8, 1957, at the age of 93. He studied law privately and was admitted to the practice of law in Kansas in 1893. Subsequently he practiced law in Kansas, Nebraska, Colorado, Wyoming and California. He practiced law in Casper, Wyoming, from 1917 to 1921, and served as County Attorney of Natrona County during that time. He was a member of the Roman Catholic Church. Although his practice in Wyoming was of relatively short duration, he is remembered by many of the older members of our bar who knew him while he was here. The total number of years of his law practice in the different states in which he lived was nearly 65. His survivors include his wife, five children and three brothers.

JOHN F. RAPER

John F. Raper was born in Monona County, Iowa, on April 8, 1892, and died at Lamar, Colorado, en route home from a vacation on March 27, 1957, at the age of 64. He received his legal education at Sioux City, Iowa, and Chicago, Illinois. He came to Sheridan, Wyoming, in 1921, and practiced law continuously there until his death. During his career

he served at various times as police and juvenile court judge, justice of the peace, U.S. Court Commissioner and city attorney of Sheridan. He was active in the Republican party and had been a candidate for the Wyoming Legislature and for Governor. He also had run for District Judge of the Fourth Judicial District. He was a past president of the Sheridan County Bar Association and had served as a member of the Wyoming State Bar Legislative Committee. He was a member of the American Bar Association. He was active in the Masonic Order and was a member of the Episcopal church. He is survived by his wife and his lawyer son, John F. Raper, Jr., United States attorney for Wyoming, and four grandsons. John F. Raper was well known for his courageous and active interest in civic and public affairs both as lawyer and citizen and will be missed by his many friends.

E. J. SULLIVAN

E. J. (Gene) Sullivan was born on November 22, 1872, in Dover, New Hampshire, and died while on vacation in Boston, Massachusetts, on September 25, 1956, at the age of 83. He studied law at the University Law School at Omaha, Nebraska, and was admitted to the Nebraska Bar in 1897. He came to Wyoming in 1898, first to Cody, and thereafter settled in Basin where he spent many years, being a pioneer in irrigation development in the Big Horn Basin. He was admitted to the Wyoming Bar in 1915. He was elected to the Wyoming Legislature from Big Horn County in 1911, and was elected Mayor of Basin in 1917. He then moved to Casper which remained his home until his death. He served again as a member of the Legislature from Natrona County, serving as Speaker of the House in 1919, and was at one time a candidate for Governor. He was very active and prominent in the Republican party throughout his entire career.

He was closely identified with the E. T. Williams Oil Company, of which he was president. He was active in community affairs, and was a member of the Board of Trustees of the Natrona County Memorial Hospital for many years and was at one time state chairman of the American Cancer Society. From 1944 until his death he was Wyoming vice-president of the Independent Petroleum Producers Association, and was one of the organizers of the Rocky Mountain Oil and Gas Association. Among his civic affiliations were the Kiwanis Club, Casper Literary Club, Y.M.C.A., and the Episcopal church. He is survived by two daughters, Mrs. Monte Brown of Portland, Oregon, and Mrs. Ernest Wilkerson of Casper, and 5 grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his wife. E. J. Sullivan was well known by the members of the Bar and will be missed by his many friends throughout Wyoming.

REUEL WALTON

Reuel Walton was born at Woodruff, Utah, on November 7, 1880, and died at Evanston, Wyoming, on September 16, 1956, at the age of 75. He attended Brigham Young University and was graduated from the Uni-

versity of Utah Law School in 1907. He entered the practice of law in Evanston in 1910 which remained his home until his death. He was elected County Attorney of Uinta County in 1918 and so served from 1918 to 1932. In 1932, he was appointed District Judge of the Third Judicial District of Wyoming and so served from 1932 to 1934. Later he was elected as justice of the peace and so served from 1940 until his death. He also served as state Senator from 1948 to 1950 and was District Court Commissioner from 1943 until his death. He was an active member of the Democratic party. He was active in many civic organizations and was an active member of the Masonic Order. He was a member of the Episcopal church. He is survived by his wife, Florence, and two daughters, Mrs. A. L. Byram and Mrs. Charles N. Bishop, both of Los Angeles, California, three grandchildren, and nine brothers and sisters. Reuel Walton was a well-known and respected Wyoming lawyer for many years and will be missed by his many friends.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Wyoming State Bar at its regular annual meeting assembled in Rawlins, Wyoming, August 29, 30, and 31, 1957, pay its respect to: T. Blake Kennedy, Spencer J. Lewis, Clifford W. Axtell, Noah V. Kurtz, John R. McDermott, R. H. Nichols, Michael W. Purcell, John F. Raper, E. J. Sullivan, and Reuel Walton, and recognize their contribution to the legal profession in the state of Wyoming, that our sympathy be hereby extended to their bereaved relatives and that their memories be perpetuated by extending this resolution upon the minutes of the meeting of the Association.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the families of these ten distinguished members of our profession.

Respectfully submitted,
THE NECROLOGY COMMITTEE
Harry A. Thompson, Chairman
Lee S. Nebeker
William A. Swainson