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Tribute to Judge Blume

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TRIBUTE TO JUDGE BLUME

The following is the foreword appearing in the 1962 *Annual Survey of American Law* dedicated to Judge Fred H. Blume. The foreword is reprinted here with the permission of the New York University School of Law and is a great tribute to one of America's finest jurists.

With this volume the *Annual Survey of American Law* commences its third decade of publication. Each year the contributors to the *Survey* have dedicated their work to a leader of the American legal profession who has made a significant contribution to our tradition of government through law as a practitioner, a legislator, an administrative reformer, a teacher, or a federal judge. Now, with keen appreciation and delight, we turn to the state judiciary to pay tribute to Fred H. Blume who has just completed forty-two years of service on the Supreme Court of Wyoming.

Born in Germany in 1875, Fred H. Blume retired this year as Chief Justice of Wyoming at the age of 88. He is the last of that line of judicial giants, famed in American legal history, who moved west in the vanguard of civilization, helped mold the jurisprudence of the youthful states which came to commercial age during the first half of this century, and injected into the mainstream of American Law the sprightly breeze of a favonian current.

Though contemporary in thought and modern in learning, Judge Blume's career recalls nostalgic echoes of our legal past. Trained in a practitioner's office rather than at a law school, and admitted to practice in Iowa during the last year of the old century, he began his career as did so many leaders of the early bar as a city solicitor and a county prosecutor. In 1904 he again followed the pattern of folklore by moving west to a newer, rawer state. Within three years he was elected to the Wyoming House and later served two terms in the State Senate. Finally, in 1921 he began the long tenure on the Supreme Court which not only saw him emerge as the chief draftsman of Wyoming law, but as a contributor to the legal development of the nation. His decisions have been equally erudite and sensible, many of them spicing the casebooks of our law schools and finding their way into the *Annual Survey*. Perhaps his most unique achievement, however, was to acquire the wide reputation which he has earned as a student of Roman law. Without special training, Judge Blume translated the entire Code and Novels of Justinian from Latin into English. Indeed, he has done more for he has taken this most academic of all our legal studies and has put it to practical use in some of his finest opinions by using principles and doctrines of the Romanist tradition to expound and enlighten the common law of Wyoming and of the United States.

During the expansion of the American legal system across the vast continent from ocean to ocean, each state and each jurisdiction in turn underwent an epoch of development known as its formative era. The

cast of its future was often shaped in the form of one man who served on the highest court from which he implanted the seed of his judicial philosophy to influence the course of law for decades to come. Just as New Hampshire has always been influenced by Jeremiah Smith, Massachusetts by Theophilus Parsons, and New York by James Kent, so the pattern was carried westward where Arizona bears the stamp of Lockwood, Colorado of Burke, and Washington of Dunbar. So also will history link the jurisprudence of Wyoming to the service of Fred H. Blume, a scholar on the bench."