

RESOLUTION

JOHN JAY HOOKER

Having been designated by the Nashville Bar Association for this purpose, the undersigned present this expression of tribute and appreciation to the memory of John Jay Hooker, with the request that it be adopted by and made a part of the permanent records of the Association.

John Jay Hooker was born in Lebanon, Wilson County, Tennessee, on September 9, 1903. He died at his home, Hooker Hill, in Williamson County on December 24, 1970. He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Effie Saunders Hooker; his mother, Mrs. A. W. Hooker, of Lebanon, Tennessee; his daughter, Mrs. Hooker Buchtel, of Lebanon, Tennessee; and his two sons, John Jay Hooker, Jr., and Henry W. Hooker, of Nashville, Tennessee, and seven grandchildren.

After his graduation from Castle Heights Military Academy, he attended Cumberland University and was graduated with an A.B. degree in 1923 and an LL.B. degree in 1924. This university bestowed the honorary degree of LL.D. on him in 1946. He practiced law in Lebanon from 1924 through 1927. During that time, he was elected Representative from Wilson County and served a term in the House of Representatives. He then moved to Nashville where he joined his beloved friend and partner, Seth Walker, in the practice of law and with whom he continued to enjoy many happy years in the practice of law until Seth died in 1951. The firm of Walker & Hooker quickly became one of the outstanding law firms in the State of Tennessee, and after Seth's death, John continued to enjoy his active, successful and brilliant career as the senior partner of the firm and with his partners and close friends, David Keeble, Harlan Dodson and Tyree Harris, until the time of his death.

He served as President of the Nashville Bar Association 1939-40, and President of the Tennessee Bar Association 1940-41. He was a Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers, and a Fellow of the International Academy of Trial Lawyers. He was a member of the Nashville Bar Association, the Bar Association of Tennessee, American Bar Association, American Judicature Society and the Federation of Insurance Counsel. He served as a member of the Board of Trustees of Cumberland College of Tennessee, Cumberland School of Law, Howard College and The American Law Institute. He was chairman of the Tennessee Railroad Association and held membership in a number of social clubs, fraternities and Masonic organizations.

He was regarded as one of the ablest and most successful lawyers in America. He attended the Presbyterian Church.

In his practice, as in everything else, he had an obsession to successfully complete everything he started. He was patient and even dogged in preparation. He never went into a lawsuit without a haunting apprehension of something he had not discovered or for which he was not prepared. Once in trial, nothing missed his eye or ear. From then on to judgment, he prosecuted his contention with a sound legal knowledge, the vigor of a sincere advocate, the fairness of true justice and the grace of a gentleman. These qualities won him verdicts, the affection of his contemporaries and the respect of his community.

John easily found a place in the hearts of those who came to know him. Men sought him out for his company. He was so amiable that he was constantly liable to imposition. He exercised kindness with an open hand and a closed mouth. He was a

charitable man--beneficent to the needy, compassionate to the wretched, patient with the bad, and hopeful for the impenitent.

As a lawyer and as a man, he was respectful to his superiors and courteous to his inferiors. Every man was comfortable in his presence. No human being, however bad, was beneath his notice or beyond the limits of his sympathy.

As a friend, he was a rock. His relation to Seth Walker was a lesson and a model in love, devotion and respect from one man to another. Had he lived in their day, King Arthur and Robin Hood would have fought for his allegiance.

John's friendship improved our happiness, his loyalty increased our faith, and his sense of honor made us better men.

One would have never inquired of John's religion. You felt it. His capacity to restrain his proper indignation and wrath, to moderate his passions and speak gentle words was evidence of God's hold upon him.

Robert Hall has said:

"The friendship of a high and sanctified spirit loses nothing by Death but its alloy; failings disappear, and the virtues of him, whose face we shall behold no more, appear greater and more sacred, when beheld thru the shades of the sepulchre."

Though John, during his distinguished career, enjoyed the friendship and counsel of many in the highest offices of this nation, there was a tie of sympathy between him and the lowliest thing that breathed. It is impossible to conceive of a man or woman, however humble, or a child, however timid, who would not instantly have been put at ease by a smile or a kind word from him.

Though he handled some of the most celebrated cases of his time in this state, and indeed in the nation, he was never too busy to personally represent his clients in the most run-of-the-mill cases to which he devoted the same strength, courage, skill and effort.

Thus did he achieve his often expressed ambition--that at his death, his only epitaph be

"JOHN JAY HOOKER--LAWYER"

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Nashville Bar Association that the foregoing record of appreciation of the exemplary life, character and service of John Jay Hooker be spread upon and made a part of the minutes and records of the Association in recognition of the fact that in his passing the Bar, the Court and the community have lost a loyal, able and useful member; and further that a certified copy of this tribute and resolution be furnished by the Secretary of the Association to his family.

Respectfully submitted,

D. L. Lansden

Thomas Wardlaw Steele

Jack Norman
