MEMORIAL FOR THOMAS O. H. SMITH

Tom Smith arrived on this planet just one year ahead of the 20th century. He left us fourteen years before the end of the century, his death having occurred on September 18, 1986. His full name was Thomas Olsen Hartley Smith. He was frequently referred to as Thomas O. H. Smith, but generally his host of friends simply called him "Tom". He was the son of James Hartley Smith and Emma Stier Smith.

Perhaps his life span of eighty-seven years has been the most exciting and dramatic eighty-seven years in all the history of mankind.

When Tom was born the roads and highways of his home community were used by pedestrians, horses, mules and wagons. It is doubtful if there was a single automobile in his home community. There was not a radio in a single home, not a television in the United States, not a single airplane in the Tennessee sky, no satellites, no flesh and blood man on the moon — and no income tax.

Tom Smith was an eye witness to the most profound changes in our way of life.

His entire life was spent as a resident of Davidson County, Tennessee. After graduating from high school he worked five years as freight agent for the Tennessee Central Railroad. He then attended Cumberland University Law School at Lebanon, Tennessee, and graduated from that institution in 1927. During that same year he married Miss Georgia Shapero.

Following his admission to the bar he commenced practicing with the firm Aust, McGugin and Evans.

Mr. Smith developed a good, diversified civil practice. He enjoyed a successful office practice and also a well-established practice in the Chancery, Circuit and Probate Courts of Davidson County. He listed among his clients Liberty Mutual Insurance Company, American Mutual Insurance Company and Employees of Wansau.
He also represented for several years his personal and political 
friend, the Honorable Garner Robinson, who served Davidson County as Sheriff 
and as Trustee, and who, incidentally, is the father of Judge Muriel Robinson and 
of Judge Gale Robinson.

Tom Smith was highly esteemed by his brother lawyers. He was a 
member of the Nashville Bar Association, the Tennessee Bar Association and the 
American Bar Association. He served as Secretary—Treasurer of the State Bar 
Association for nineteen years. He also served as Chief Clerk of the House of 
Representatives for several years. As a lawyer he was admired by his associates 
and colleagues, he was respected as a worthy foe by his adversaries. When the 
legal battle was over he carried no grudges. He adhered to the rigid standards of 
excellence and probity. He expected others to do the same. In analyzing legal 
problems and in representing his clients in the Court Room Tom was generally on 
the main track and when he was on the main track he was hard to beat. Of 
course, like all lawyers, including especially those on this committee, he was 
sometimes on a side track when he thought he was moving down the main track. 
On those occasions, which were few, he moved with his usual speed and was 
unstoppable but not necessarily unbeatable.

While he was yet young, Tom earned a respected place in the political 
affairs of Davidson County. He did not especially care to serve as an office 
holder. But he did build up a place of power and influence.

There comes to my mind a vivid recollection of an event that 
occurred during the 1942 race for the County's two senators and its five 
representatives in the State Legislature. Our ticket was known as the People's 
Ticket. I was a member of the Ticket, seeking the post of State Senator, Tom 
Smith was the manager of our ticket. We had rallies at several places in the 
county. We tailored our speeches to suit the needs and desires of the people at 
the several locations. For example, I would have a speech to fit Goodlettsville, 
another speech to fit North Nashville, another to fit Belle Meade, and so on.

On this particular night our rally was in South Nashville, and perhaps 
the least desirable part of South Nashville. Tom had arranged for a local ward 
heeler to introduce us. I was to make the principal speech at this particular 
rally. The local ward heeler, not known for his perfect use of the English 
Language, then introduced our ticket saying: "Ladies and Gentlemen, we has 
with us tonight a gang of gentlemens who has qualified theyselves for the State
Legislation." Then I, as one of Tom Smith's "gang of gentlemens," unlocked the gates of my oratory and in a matter of five minutes reached orbit. Somewhat to my surprise, the response to my remarks was subdued. Then Tom Smith, manager of the great People's ticket, started parading back and forth in front of me, waving both arms which indicated to me that I should terminate my speech immediately. Tom then hollered to me "Claude you are making your Belle Meade speech instead of your South Nashville speech." I sat down, and the meeting was adjourned.

Tom got me stopped before we lost the election. Every person on the ticket was elected and the great state of Tennessee was saved again.

Tom Smith had other interests that should not be forgotten. He enjoyed his work in the Masonic Organizations. He was a 32nd degree Mason and was a fifty year member of the Scottish Rite Masons.

He was also a member and past exalted ruler of Elks Lodge No. 72.

Mr. Smith was not indifferent to matters of the Spirit. He was a member of Christ Episcopal Church. He was for fifteen years superintendent of the Sunday School of that church. His entire life, private and public was consistent with Christian principles and he made a conscientious effort to live by the Golden Rule.

He was a man of good habits, clean of speech, temperate in all things.

To Tom's wife, Georgia, and to his two sons Tom Jr. and David, and to his six grandchildren, we the lawyers of the Nashville Bar express our deep appreciation for the life of this good man.

CLAUSE CALLICOTT, CHAIRMAN

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