

MEMORIAL TO THE HONORABLE

E. C. (BUD) YOKLEY

On July 15, 1980 life ended for E.C. Yokley, 71 years after it had commenced. As his minister emphasized at the funeral service, Mr. Yokley was a good man. It is admittedly important that a member of the Bar be learned in the law, diligent in his professional undertakings, and active in those pursuits which improve the administration of justice. Mr. Yokley was all of these - and more. Goodness characterized him as a lawyer, as a political leader and as a citizen.

Mr. Yokley's full name was Emmet Clinton Yokley. Perhaps the number of people who knew him by his full name was relatively small, many more knew him as E. C. Yokley. But the great majority of his friends and acquaintances and the public knew him simply as Bud Yokley.

Bud was a native of Murray County, Tennessee. He moved to Nashville when he was ten years of age. He graduated from Hume Fogg High School. Subsequently he studied law at Cumberland University Law School in Lebanon, Tennessee, a very excellent law school, from which he graduated in 1930. For 50 years thereafter he successfully practiced his profession as a member of the Nashville Bar.

From the day he was licensed to practice law, Bud Yokley was deeply interested in affairs of Government. When he was a young lawyer the Honorable Hilary Howse was Mayor of the city of Nashville. Mayor Howse was the head of a quite potent political organization or machine, dependent upon your point of view. Those interested in the political life of the city quite naturally united either with or against the Howse organization and Bud cast his lot with the opposition. Upon the death of Mayor Howse in the late 1930's the Howse Organization supported Jack Keefe, first Assistant City Attorney for mayor and he was opposed by Thomas L. Cummings, a lawyer engaged principally in the practice of criminal law. Bud Yokley took a very prominent part in this campaign as a friend and supporter of Thomas L. Cummings. Thomas Cummings was elected Mayor, Bud Yokley was appointed an Assistant City Attorney and during the 13 years that Thomas Cummings served as Mayor Bud Yokley was either the City Attorney or one of the Assistant City Attorneys and was recognized as being one of the most influential friends of Mayor Cummings.

An interesting situation developed in the city government during the last two years of Mayor Cumming's second term. The county political organization elected its ticket to the State Legislature. At that time the legislature had the power of life and death over municipalities. The legislature increased the membership of the city commission, the form of the city government at that time being the Mayor Commission form, made such appointments as to give the anti-Cummings group control of the commission, removed one of the assistant city attorneys, installed another city attorney. The result of all this was a house divided against itself. The commission was divided, the council was divided and City Attorney's Office was divided and there was plenty of fireworks in the day to day operation of the city government. Mr. Yokley, however, was retained. He remained 100% loyal to Mayor Cummings but he was courteous to and respectful of the opposition. Due in part to his reasonableness and his conciliatory attitude, his ability to get along with anyone that was reasonable and due in part to the fear of each group that it might lose the next election. Mr. Yokley, Mayor Cummings and their group

made a remarkably fine trade or deal as some people might call it by which Mayor Cummings was re-elected, all city attorneys stayed in office, with perhaps some increase in salaries, and the forces of righteousness prevailed for another four years.

While serving as city attorney Bud Yokley was required to deal extensively with the law of zoning, subdivisions, and other branches of municipal law. During the 1940's he authored the first edition of Yokley's Zoning Law and Practice. After leaving the city attorneys office he continued his interest in the field of municipal law and a short time before his death completed the fourth edition of Zoning Law and Practice, a work which has received national acclaim. He was also the author of a four volume set entitled Municipal Corporations and in 1963 he wrote a book entitled Law of Subdivisions. As a practitioner, he confined his practice in latter years principally to zoning cases and cases involving other phases of municipal law. He was widely known and respected as an expert on zoning matters and participated in many important cases involving questions of zoning not only in the State of Tennessee but in many of the other states of the union.

Another significant achievement of Buy Yokley's was the writing of the Charter for the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County, Tennessee. He was employed to do that work by the Charter Commission. His endeavors in that task were not limited to the duties of a draftsman. On the contrary the commission sought and received from him advice on the basic structure on which the new government was to be established.

For many years commencing in 1960 Mr. Yokley was an instructor at the YMCA Night Law School here in Nashville.

At one time after leaving the city attorneys office Mr. Yokley practiced with Mr. Robert C. Boyce, Jr., Mr. Jack P. White and other associates under the firm name of Yokley, Boyce and White. He last practiced as a member of the firm of Dale Thompson and Miles. He continued his membership in the American Bar Association, The Tennessee Bar Association, The Nashville Bar Association and The American Society of Planning Officials.

Bud Yokley was a sincere adherent of the christian religion. For many years he taught a Sunday School Class in Blakemore United Methodist Church of which he was a faithful member. He enjoyed his work in the Masonic order, being a 32nd degree Mason, a Shriner, a member and past Supreme Watchman of Shepherds of the order of the White Shrine of Jerusalem and a member of the order of the Amaranth. He was past Master of the Clayborne Lodge. In 1938 he was past Royal Patron of the order of the Eastern Star.

Bud Yokley was a good community man. He was a good family man. He was temperate in all things.

To his wife, Ethel Jewell Holt Yokley, his son E. C. (Buddy) Yokley, Jr., and to his grandsons Clint Yokley and Steve Yokley the Nashville lawyers sincerely say: "We are honored in the privilege of sharing with you some of the memories of this good man."

Claude Callicott

Robert H. Jennings, Jr.

Wilson N. West
