

RESOLUTION IN MEMORY OF
THE LATE DON R. BINKLEY
OF THE NASHVILLE BAR

Born at Fort Wayne, Indiana

Admitted to Practice Before the
Supreme Court of Tennessee, 1963

Died at Nashville, January 3, 1980

It is the memory of an unusual man that we honor today as one of our departed brothers at the Bar during the past year.

Don Binkley combined the unique qualities of the aggressive newspaper reporter with a career as an outstanding judge and a capable, vigorous advocate.

Don's family moved to Tennessee when he was a child and he attended public schools at Springfield and Kingsport, Tennessee. He held the first Tennessee Press Association scholarship from East Tennessee, and received a journalism degree from the University of Tennessee in 1955.

While a UT student he was ordered to active military duty with the 278th Regimental Combat Team of the Tennessee National Guard, and spent two years in the Army, including one year in Korea during the Korean War.

Also while at UT, Don Binkley began his newspaper career on the staff of the Knoxville Journal. After graduation he joined the Atlanta Journal. Shortly before entering military service in 1950, he was a reporter for the Kingsport News, where his brother Ellis was executive editor.

Don then came to Nashville as an editor and as a reporter for the Associated Press. In early 1959, Don became Press Secretary to Governor Buford Ellington and, in such role, was known for his candor and thoroughness. His unique capabilities were reflected in the outstanding image of Governor Ellington's first administration.

While holding the full time position as Press Secretary to the Governor, he managed to finish his law school studies at the School of Law at Vanderbilt University. Upon his graduation in 1963, he entered the practice of law with the firm of Barksdale, Hudgins, Leaver, Gilbert and Frank. From 1965 to 1967 he was general counsel for Nashville Electric Service and was instrumental in the continued progress of our public utility.

Governor Ellington, in 1967, appointed Don as Judge of the Third Circuit Court of Davidson County, Tennessee, at which time he was the youngest judge of a court of record in the community.

Judge Binkley was known as an astute and perceptive Judge but having once made up his mind on a matter, he would rule decisively and with conviction. He was extremely popular with the Bar and his wit and his perception gained him the respect of both the Bar and litigants. He was re-elected for a six year term in 1968.

Soon thereafter, in 1969, Don left the bench. He yearned for the active combat role of a trial lawyer and, as he phrased it to me, "I just want to get back down in the pits and fight it out every day."

He became a partner in the firm of Gracey, Maddin, Cowan and Bird and continued his life ambition of trial counsel throughout the long and trying episodes of his last illness. He gave of his time as a member and past president of the Nashville Barristers Club and of the Capitol Club of Nashville. He was a member of the Nashville and American Bar Associations and the Tennessee Defense Lawyers Association.

He was a member of Brook Hollow Baptist Church. He was a Scottish Rite Mason, a Shriner and a member of the Nashville Exchange Club.

Throughout his legal career, Don continued a love and fascination with politics. Whenever there was a political matter being discussed, his eyes would brighten and his sharp mind would go to work figuring out a solution to every knotty political problem.

He is survived by his loving wife, Nancy, his daughter, Missy, his son, David, and his older brother, Bink.

The courts and our profession have lost a good and faithful lawyer and servant. He was a good citizen and a dear friend.

BE IT, THEREFORE, RESOLVED that this resolution be adopted at this assembly of the Nashville Bar Association and be spread upon the minutes of the Memorial Book of the Association.

Respectfully submitted,

Harris A. Gilbert