

## ROBERT HAYS COWAN

Robert Hays Cowan was born on July 28, 1925 in Nashville, the third son of Margaret Hays and Claude C. Cowan. He spent his formative years in East Nashville where he attended Inglewood Elementary School. In the fall of 1939 he enrolled at Duncan College Preparatory School near the Vanderbilt campus, graduating from Duncan with high honors in 1943. While there he served as president of his senior class, captain of the baseball and football teams his senior year, and president of his high school fraternity, Sigma Alpha Delta. Following graduation from Duncan Mr. Cowan attended Carson Newman College in East Tennessee and later Vanderbilt University, receiving a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1948. He then entered Vanderbilt Law School where he received a Doctor of Jurisprudence degree in 1951. He served on the Vanderbilt Law Review while there.

A veteran of World War II, Mr. Cowan served as an Ensign in the United States Navy, seeing service in both the continental United States and the Pacific Theater.

After graduating from law school and being admitted to the practice of law in Tennessee, Mr. Cowan served as a Deputy Clerk & Master in Chancery Court at Nashville and was law clerk to the late Chancellor William J. Wade.

In 1954 Mr. Cowan was a founder of the law firm of

Gracey, Buck and Cowan. He became an outstanding labor lawyer and consultant, specializing in the field of motor carrier transportation matters. Indeed he was recognized nationally for his expertise in labor law and served for a time as counsel for the Southern Motor Carriers Labor Relations Association. Early in his legal career Mr. Cowan became an expert on the law of adoption in Tennessee, and wrote a guideline on that subject for members of the practicing bar. For the last few years of his life Mr. Cowan served of counsel to the Nashville law firm of King & Ballow.

He was a member of the Nashville and Tennessee Bar Associations and was a life member of the Sixth Circuit Judicial Conference. He was a member of the World War II Review Group, a literary club. He was active in community affairs and the arts, and was an ardent ice hockey fan.

Mr. Cowan, widely known as Bob to his family and friends, was an unpretentious, quiet-spoken and gentle man. He was regarded as a man of high honor and integrity, admired and respected by those fortunate enough to have known him. He was blessed with a wonderful sense of humor.

Mr. Cowan died in Nashville on September 26, 1998, survived by his wife, Cleo, whom he married in 1972; two fine children of a former marriage, Wade Cowan and Lisa Cowan, both practicing lawyers at the Nashville bar; two

grandsons, Sam and Ted Bryant, who were a source of great pride to Bob and Cleo; and two brothers, Claude and John. Bob Cowan was an asset to his community, the state, and the nation. He will be sorely missed.

Respectfully submitted,

*George H. Cate, Jr.*  
George H. Cate, Jr.

*Ward DeWitt, Jr.*  
Ward DeWitt, Jr.

*Tom H. Proctor, Jr.*  
Tom H. Proctor, Jr.

November 19, 1998

