

Resolution
In Memoriam
of
The Honorable William C. Hanson
United States District Court Judge
Northern and Southern Districts of Iowa

Judge William C. Hanson was born May 14, 1909, in rural Greene County, Iowa, the son of Willis and Pearl Ann Hanson. He resided in Greene County all of his life. He died June 6, 1995, following a brief illness. He was eighty-six years of age and had served on the Federal bench since July 25, 1962.

Following graduation from Jefferson High School in 1928, Judge Hanson worked his way through undergraduate studies and law school at the University of Iowa earning his law degree in 1935. Following graduation, he returned to Jefferson to practice law. He continued to practice law in Jefferson until 1955. He was elected county attorney of Greene County in 1939 and served in that capacity until 1946. In 1955 Judge Hanson was elected as a state district judge.

He was appointed by President Kennedy to the Federal District bench in 1962 and became Chief Judge of the Southern District of Iowa in 1971 serving in that capacity until he took senior status on August 9, 1977. He continued to remain active in that role and regularly tried cases until 1990. He also frequently served by designation on the Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit until 1992.

He was married to Ruth Hastings September 18, 1938. Judge and Mrs. Hanson had six children: James, Thomas, Jay, Cynthia, Elaine and Robert. His family was of paramount importance to Judge Hanson. It was a point of special pride to him that his children all obtained professional degrees (two medical doctors and four juris doctors). His wife and children were at his bedside at the time of his death.

Judge Hanson was a member of the Greene County, Iowa State, American, and Federal Bar Associations. He received an honorary selection to Order of the Coif from the University of Iowa College of Law in April 1966. He was a member of the Judicial

Conference Committee on the Administration of Criminal Law from 1975 to 1981. He was a leader in his community and among other honors was elected to the Jefferson Alumni Hall of Fame and the Bell Tower Award of Fame.

During his more than fifty years devoted to the law, some thirty-five of which years were in the role of a judge, Judge Hanson made substantial contribution to the body of law in Iowa and in the Eighth Circuit. He maintained a firm control of his courtroom and the participants therein. He left no doubt as to his feelings and position in the matters with which he dealt. His firmness and candor, however, were matched by his understanding, common sense and compassion. He had grown up in poverty and hardship during the depth of the depression and never forgot his common roots or in making the law a workable reality. In addition to his love for his family and the law, Judge Hanson included in his many interests hunting, fishing, rock collecting, woodworking and avocational farming.

As a result of his innate nature and broad sphere of interest, Judge Hanson's decisions reflected not only faithfulness to the Constitution and the laws but also common sense and understanding.

The bench, bar and citizenry are the beneficiaries of Judge Hanson's service and his life.

We respectfully move the adoption of this resolution and request that it be made a part of the records of this conference with copies to be transmitted to Mrs. Hanson and the members of his family.