

Judge Howe, Veteran Jurist, Dies

W.D. Howe, Dies

Walter Dunn Howe, 79, judge of the 34th District Court since Dec. 1, 1916, died Saturday in a local hospital after a long illness. He had entered the hospital Tuesday.

The widely-known jurist was one of three ranking district judges in Texas, along with Judge Ballard Caldwell of the 65th District Court, appointed in 1915.



JUDGE HOWE

Judge Howe was born in Bloomington, Ind., June 16, 1870. He was educated in the public schools. In-ternity Law School. He turned to law after an earlier ambition to be a newspaper reporter, and soon after being admitted to the bar in Knoxville, Tenn., to begin the practice of law.

On June 1, 1898, he married Miss Marie Hobson Shelton, one of five beautiful daughters of the late Mr. and Mrs. E. A. Shelton, early El Paso pioneer family. The couple celebrated their golden wedding anniversary in 1948.

He had joined his uncle, the late Judge Frank E. Hunter, and served briefly as justice of the peace, United States commissioner and district attorney. His selection as district judge first came from the local bar group, Judge Dan Jackson had given his resignation, effective Jan. 1, 1917, but he left the bench earlier. His appointment was made by Gov. James Ferguson and he had been re-elected continually.

A powerful advocate of civic reform, Judge Howe in 1923 launched an attack on the proposal of Gov. Pat M. Neff to do away with the county grand jury system. Calling the grand jury the "safest value of our system of law enforcement," he was re-elected continuously.

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Judge Howe instructed the local venire that "disorderly and gambling houses must be investigated with diligence." He called on El Paso citizenship to be "willing to sacrifice a little time to an intelligent interest in public affairs."

His marriage was in the Old First Presbyterian Church on Myrtle Avenue, and the late Rev. Henry W. Moore officiating. The wedding was a prominent social event, Judge Howe having been one of the city's most eligible bachelors. Flowers were brought in from California for the event, and local Greenwood and other desert vegetation was used in decorations.

E. B. Eilers, president of El Paso Bar Association, voiced a real personal loss over a "great judge co-operating over a long period of time." Eilers has asked that the entire bar group meet at Harding and Orr funeral home at 1:45 p. m. Monday to enter the chapel in a group. Funeral services will be at 2 p. m. The Rev. Stewart Hartrichter will officiate.

Active pallbearers will be Louis Fox, Elmo Payne, William Clayton, Roy Jackson, Frank Hunter, Ed W. Haight, honorary pallbearers will be Judge P. R. Price, J. C. Orain, Judge D. E. Mulcahy, Judge Ballard Campbell, R. L. Holliday, Judge R. E. Thompson, Brig. Gen. W. J. Glasgow, John C. Brooke, Harris Walthall, Dr. E. H. Irwin, Dr. James T. Gorman, Dr. John Morrison, Judge Joseph McGill, Chris P. Fox, J. H. McBroom, E. E. Neff and Ben Levy.

Gov. Allan Shivers will appoint a successor to Judge Howe. He is expected to follow the recommendation of the local bar.

Eilers, also a graduate of Indiana University, had served with Judge Howe as assistant district attorney when the judge was named to the district court.

The judge was often outspoken in his attacks on what he believed to be wrong. During the height of the power of the Ku Klux Klan he classed the organization with murderers.

He was an entertaining storyteller who always had a stock of anecdotes to relate during lulls in his courtroom.

Judge Howe first became serious-ly ill exactly two years before his death. He underwent facial surgery at that time for a condition that eventually led to his death.

He was a member of Beta Theta Pi Fraternity, Phi Delta Phi honorary law fraternity, and the First Presbyterian Church.

Surviving are his widow, two sons, Walter S. Howe of El Paso, and Richard E. Howe of Long Island, N. Y.; two daughters, Mrs. Francis C. Broadus and Mrs. James E. Rogers of El Paso; two brothers, Capt. Alfred G. Howe of the U. S. Navy (retired) Charleston, S. C.; and George M. Howe of Cambridge, Mass.; and eight grandchildren.