

CHAUNCEY D. HOWELL, ESQUIRE  
MEMORIAL  
DECEMBER 1, 1969

FOR THE BAR:

William C. Cassebaum, Chairman;  
Bernard M. Goodman, Esquires

May it please the Court.

It is with a deep feeling of loss and regret that I report to the Court the untimely death of Chauncey D. Howell, Esquire, on September 12, 1969, and request leave to offer some remarks and present an appropriate resolution.

Chauncey D. Howell was born January 16, 1907, the son of Stanley and Bertha May Vanatta Howell. He spent his childhood in the Village of Martins Creek, and after attending Kutztown State College, he was graduated from Lafayette College in 1928. Among his classmates at Lafayette were two other distinguished members of our Bar, Bernard M. Goodman, Esquire, and John Francis Goldsmith, Esquire. He received his Degree of Bachelor of Laws from the University of Pittsburgh Law School.

Chauncey was admitted to the Bar of the several Courts of Northampton County in 1932, thus embarking upon a career that spanned nearly two score years. Very few lawyers in the history of our Bar have had so wide a practice.

Although his law offices were located in the City of Easton, his clients also came from all of the neighboring boroughs and townships. Indeed, the entire eastern half of Northampton County was his office.

He had an unequalled faculty for attracting clients; and he would not refuse the petition of anyone seeking help. As a result, his huge workload was a continual burden on his shoulders.

The nature of his practice was varied, and he was skilled in all facets of the practice of the law. His particular field of excellence, however, was in that specialty that has come to be known as Family Law. He was a keen judge of human nature

and a sympathetic, understanding counsellor to people under emotional stress, whether it involved a family quarrel, a wayward child, a recent bereavement, or a divorce proceeding.

He had no trouble with the "generation gap;" he was equally at home advising the young and the elderly.

Chauncey was blessed with a completely disarming geniality which broke down the barriers of hostility or indifference that so many lawyers find in the public. Yet, when the chips were down, he could be firm and coolly efficient on behalf of his client.

Many of you will recognize his gambit of underselling himself in negotiations, claiming that his opposing counsel knew far more law than he did and was his intellectual superior to boot. Woe betide the opponent who fell into this trap!

Despite all of his protestations that he did not have the time for legal research, he had an uncanny basic understanding of what the law really was, whether or not he had looked it up.

Chauncey served as Solicitor to several municipalities, a semi-judicial role as arbitrator and counselor, for which he was especially well suited.

He served the Borough of Wilson as its Solicitor for nearly a quarter of a century, and was forced to retire shortly before his death because of ill health. He also served as Solicitor and Director of Fairview Savings & Loan Association and was instrumental in its continued growth and success.

Chauncey was a family man, and his loyal wife and three children were a constant source of comfort for him, especially during the last years of his illness.

He was especially proud of his three children, Chauncey, Jr., known as Chip, for his literary accomplishments; his daughter, Sally Gundy, for her theatrical ability; and his younger son, David, who followed in his father's footsteps by becoming a lawyer.

Perhaps the most significant tribute to Chauncey is the affection and absolute loyalty his clients had for him. He was not just their lawyer; he was their advisor, friend, and indeed, a member of the family. I, and, I am sure, many others

in this room, have observed the true sense of sadness and loss evidenced by his former clients, for whom he is no longer available for assistance. We, his fellow members of the Bar, feel the same loss.

On behalf of the Northampton County Bar Association, this Committee, comprised of Mr. Goodman and myself, respectfully offers the following Resolution in memory of the late Chauncey D. Howell and moves its adoption:

RESOLVED, that the foregoing remarks and this Resolution be entered in the Minutes of this Court, that copies thereof be sent to Mrs. Howell for herself and her children, and that when this Court adjourns this day, it does so out of respect for the memory of Chauncey D. Howell.

FOR THE COURT:

Honorable Richard D. Grifo, Judge

It is my duty as a member of this Court to eulogize Chauncey D. Howell, Esquire, deceased, a member of the Bar of the Court of Common Pleas of Northampton County.

For those of us who knew him intimately and were privileged to have his friendship, our sense of bereavement is deep and long lasting and needs no reminders. I do not deem it the purpose of these exercises, however, to give expression to the grief felt by those left behind. Rather, we are here that we may make a record for this court which shall stand for those who come after; that they may know the manner of man he was and how he was regarded by his colleagues and friends, and that they may be encouraged by his example as a citizen, a father, a lawyer and a member of the community of this Third Judicial District.

We are gathered also for remembrance and recollection and to rejoice in the privilege that was ours in being associated with him in our profession and in our everyday social life. As a husband and father of a good family, as a busy lawyer with a wide general practice, and as a citizen in our community, Chauncey D. Howell will long be remembered.

Since Mr. Cassebaum and his committee have admirably recounted Mr. Howell's personal and family life and activities

and his legal practice, I will not mention them further except to say that we may be certain that no one would have been quicker than Chauncey himself to acknowledge that his lovely and gracious wife was a tremendous help to him throughout their married life, and his children a constant source of pride and contentment.

What was it about this man that attracted people to him? He was loved by everyone. He was loved for what? His engaging personality, born of his happy disposition; his simplicity and warmth of nature; his unfailing courtesy, his freedom from the slightest trace of self-exaltation or arrogance or affectation; his earthy sense of humor and his ready wit, all qualities nurtured in his rural upbringing and admired by everyone.

Although Chauncey had been ill for a long time, his death was a severe shock to the Bench and Bar of this county who held him in high regard and deep affection.

Chauncey D. Howell will be remembered with warmth and affection for many years to come, not in an ordinary way, because he was truly an individual. His individuality sets him apart.