

Fred Louis, Jr., 91

1910 - 2002

HARLAN - Fred Louis, Jr., was born to Myrta (Edwards) and Fred Louis, Sr. March 31, 1910, at Harlan. He graduated from Harlan High School at age 16. Following high school graduation, Fred attended the University of Kansas, graduating in 1932. He then enrolled in the University of Iowa Law School, and was a member of the Graduating Class of 1934.

He was perhaps best known as a trial attorney, although his practice included a wide range of subjects. He tried over 400 cases in federal and state courts, litigating in 26 Iowa counties as well as in Missouri, Kansas and Nebraska. In 1966, he was selected for membership in the Iowa Academy of Trial Lawyers, a select organization of outstanding Iowa trial lawyers. He served as president of the Southwest Iowa Bar Association, president of the Shelby County Bar Association and from 1982-86 was a member of the Grievance Commission of the Iowa State Bar Association, which hears complaints against Iowa attorneys charged with improper conduct.

It was during law school that he met Louise Carpenter from Marion, an undergraduate at the university. They were married in 1934. Opportunities for young lawyers were non-existent when he graduated from law school in 1934 so he accepted an offer from owner, Hal Campbell to become the editor of the Harlan Tribune. Campbell later sold the Tribune to Louis and Earl Davis. While Louis was editor, the Tribune received several awards for journalism and photography. In 1939 the paper was sold to Mark Cramer. Mr. Louis devoted the rest of his career to the practice of law. He was elected president of the Shelby County Fair Association in 1935. He was elected president of the Shelby County Young Democrats in 1936 and served at that time as the County Red Cross campaign chairman. At the beginning of his practice, he shared offices with Gerald Larson. He devoted many volunteer hours as attorney for the Harlan Municipal Utilities.

In 1943 at age 33, he was drafted as was Mr. Larson. While at boot camp in Idaho, he was selected for Naval Officer's Training. On completion of his training, he was assigned as boat group commander aboard the troop carrier USS Claborne, APA 73, which carried troops from the West Coast to the South Pacific. The ship called at Pearl Harbor, Iwo Jima, the Marshall Islands, Luzon in the Philippines, Guam and Okinawa and landed Marines in Korea, just after the Japanese evacuated.

After his military service, he pursued his career. In time, he became defense counsel for an insurance company, Employer's Mutual, his largest client, which he represented in several counties. He represented many Harlan businesses and individuals throughout the area. In addition to his law practice, he and the late Russ Sorensen developed and remodeled property in Harlan. He also managed farm properties including two farms acquired by his grandfathers after the Civil War. Ed Swank, the late Ron Mortensen and Dalton Jensen were associated with him in farming Louis properties. He found time to act as scoutmaster for his sons' troops. He also taught an adult Sunday School class at the Harlan Methodist Church for over 20 years. In addition to his son, John, he was associated at various times in his law practice with David Moore and Robert Kohorst. After retiring, they traveled extensively. Due to failing health, Fred and Louise moved to Elm Crest Retirement Community in Harlan. Fred died from natural causes at Elm Crest March 28, 2002, at age 91.

His son, John, predeceased him. He is survived by his wife, Louise Louis of Harlan; son, Fred Louis, III (Lona), who practices law in Chicago, IL; four granddaughters, Amy Lujan of Nome, AK; Kit Saunders of Iowa City; Lona Beth Hedger of Oak Park, IL; and Alison Ellis of West Des Moines. There are also four great grandchildren, Tia and Trae Saunders, Anna Jane Hedger and Noah John Ellis. Also surviving is his daughter-in-law, Judy Louis, wife of the late John Louis of Harlan.

A memorial service and reception were held at 2:30 p.m. at the Harlan Methodist Church April 27, 2002. Pauley Funeral Home in charge of arrangements.

