

SPECIAL SESSION OF COURT: )  
 )  
UNVEILING OF THE PORTRAIT ) OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT  
OF HON. WILLIAM LEE KNOUS )

Proceedings before the HONORABLE ALFRED A. ARRAJ, Chief Judge, United States District Court for the District of Colorado, the HONORABLE HATFIELD CHILSON, Judge, United States District Court for the District of Colorado, and the HONORABLE WILLIAM E. DOYLE, Judge, United States District Court for the District of Colorado, beginning at two o'clock p.m., on the 29th day of March, 1968, in Courtroom A, United States Courthouse, Denver, Colorado.

## PROCEEDINGS

JUDGE ARRAJ: This special session of court is convened for the purpose of unveiling and displaying the portrait of the late Judge William Lee Knous of this Court, which portrait will eventually hang alongside those of the other distinguished former Judges of this Court.

We acknowledge with pleasure the presence today of Mrs. William Lee Knous and her three lawyer sons: Bill, District Attorney of the Seventh Judicial District, Bob, former Lieutenant Governor of the State of Colorado, and Judge Merle Knous of the Second Judicial District of the State of Colorado, together with Betty Lou and Burdette Knous. I think Peggy, Bill's wife, was detained at the ranch to look after the horses and the acreage. Is that right, Bill?

Also, among others seated within the bar of the court, are Justices Day, Pringle, Kelley, Hodges and former Justice Mortimer Stone, of the State Supreme Court, on which court Judge Knous sat, and Judges Steele, Horan, McNamara, Flannigan and Bowman of the State District Court, Denver District Court; also, former Governor Steve McNichols, Peter Holme, President Elect of the Colorado Bar Association, Maurice Reuler, Vice-President of the Denver Bar Association, George Hopper, President of the Federal Bar Association, Bill Erickson, President of the Denver Bar Association, Bill Miller, Executive Secretary of the Colorado

and Denver Bar Associations.

And, among others, are Duke Dunbar, Attorney General of the State of Colorado, Bob Cartwright, former Clerk of the Court of Appeals, Bill Whittaker, Clerk of the Court of Appeals, Lawrence Henry, United States Attorney, Bill Terrill, United States Marshal, Leslie Reed, Chief Probation Officer, and Dick Matsch, Referee in Bankruptcy.

We are also very happy today to have Miss Lorraine Corazza, who was Judge Knous' long time and faithful secretary, and Walter Heath, his court crier and a loyal friend.

Others, particularly those of our Congressional delegation, who were unable to attend, sent their regrets, but I think it not inappropriate that I just read one letter of regret, this from former Governor and Senator Ed. C. Johnson, who was a close personal friend of the late Judge Knous:

"I am most grateful for the invitation to attend the ceremony when the portrait of my dear friend, William Lee Knous, is unveiled. He was a great judge and I should like to pay tribute to his memory. However, we were delayed in going to Arizona this winter and just could not make it."

Men have always wanted to perpetuate in some way the likeness of their fellow man. We believe we know more about a man if we know what he looked like.

Judges Chilson, Doyle and I were pleased when we were

able to engage a western artist, Juan Menchaca, Curator of the Cowboy Hall of Fame at Oklahoma City, to paint this portrait. Mr. Menchaca was born on a farm in Texas and attended the Texas School of Fine Arts at Fort Worth. He came to Denver in the early Thirties and in 1936 was appointed Supervisor of Dioramas in the State Museum at Denver. Recognized as one of the west's outstanding artists, he has done historical art work for museums throughout the west. While on the Colorado Museum staff, he produced over fifty highly accurate, minutely detailed dioramas, paintings and portraits that graphically retell Colorado's past.

In this portrait we believe the artist has depicted many of the inherent, fine qualities of this native Coloradoan, whose portrait we shall today unveil; but a painting, even an excellent one, portrays only what the artist conceives to be the personality of his subject, and it is often helpful for the full appreciation of a portrait to know something of the life, the work and the character of its subject.

We have asked Circuit Judge Jean Breitenstein, a former Judge of this Court and a colleague of Judge Knous, to give us a verbal sketch of the man.

Judge Breitenstein.

JUDGE BREITENSTEIN: On this important occasion, it is appropriate to recall briefly the remarkable career of the man whose memory we honor.

William Lee Knous was born in Ouray, Colorado, in 1889. He was educated in the public schools, graduated from the Law School of the University of Colorado in 1911, and admitted to the practice of law in the same year.

He began his public service in 1912, when he was appointed Deputy District Attorney of Ouray County. Later, he served there as County Attorney.

In 1915, he married his hometown sweetheart, Marie Grabow, who is here today. In 1917, he moved to Montrose, and became a member of that well known law firm, Monahan, Hughes and Knous. He served several terms as a member of the Montrose School Board and for four years was that city's Mayor.

His career as a state official began in 1929 as a member of the State House of Representatives. In the next year, he was elected to the State Senate, where he served for six years. In the Senate, he was Floor Leader for his party for four years and President Pro Tem for two years.

In 1936, Lee Knous was elected to the Colorado Supreme Court for a ten year term. In 1946, he was Chief Justice of that Court.

By the choice of the people, he left the judicial branch of government in 1947 to become Governor of Colorado and was re-elected to that office in 1948.

The faith which the voters had in Lee Knous is

emphasized by the fact that he never lost an election.

After the retirement of Judge John Foster Symes, Lee Knous was appointed United States District Judge for the District of Colorado in 1950 and became the fourth man to hold that office in the history of Colorado. When a second judgeship was created for the Court in 1954, he became its Chief Judge and served in that capacity until his death in 1959.

Lee Knous met the challenge of the office of United States District Judge with the experience gained from a lifetime of public service. He was patient, courteous and understanding, mindful of the rights of litigants, learned in the law and willing to hear all sides of every question. Lee Knous held the respect of both lawyers and litigants.

That indefinable and intangible quality sometimes referred to a judicial temperament is not found in all men, indeed, not in all judges, but Lee Knous possessed it in such measure that to many he typified Justice itself. One the bench, he was kind, fair, wise and courageous.

Throughout his long career as legislator, executive and jurist, he served Colorado and its people with a devotion and dedication which assure him a place among the State's immortals.

JUDGE ARRAJ: The Court takes pleasure in asking Robert Knous and Judge Merle Knous to now unveil the portrait.

(The portrait was unveiled by Robert Knous and Judge Merle Knous.)

JUDGE ARRAJ: At this time, the Court will ask William Knous to make a response for the family.

MR. WILLIAM KNOUS: Your Honor, Judge Arraj, Honorable Judges present, Distinguished Guests, Members of the Bar, Ladies and Gentlemen:

We of the William Lee Knous family, of course, revere the memory of my father, and it is indeed heartwarming at this gathering this afternoon to observe the great number of people who were associated with him during his varied career, as Judge Breitenstein has just outlined.

This, therefore, is indeed a very, very pleasant occasion. We are extremely proud that his portrait will hang in this beautiful new courtroom of the new United States Court-house in Denver.

It is, indeed, in my opinion, an excellent likeness of my father, and certainly it demonstrates a fine quality of work.

Judge Arraj, on behalf of my mother, Mrs. William Lee Knous, and my brothers and the entire Knous family, I wish to humbly thank you and express our appreciation to you and all others who have been responsible for making this occasion possible.

The artist, Mr. Juan Menchaca, is not present. However, I believe I should express our gratitude to him for the fine workmanship demonstrated in this portrait of my father.

Thank you very much.

JUDGE ARRAJ: Thank you, Bill. Our Court is indeed proud to have this magnificent portrait of an eminent American, who served on this Court with distinction for nearly ten years. Soon, it will be placed on the walls of this courtroom to join the portraits of Judges Hallett, Lewis and Symes.

We believe that it will serve as an inspiration in the future to judges, lawyers and litigants in what an exemplary and devoted life to country, state and fellow man can mean. It will always keep fresh in our minds and hearts our admiration of and our affection for Judge William Lee Knous.

I think I should also express at this time the Court's appreciation to Dr. Otto Karl Bach, Director of the Denver Art Museum, and Mrs. DeGraw and Mr. Melton, of the Museum staff, for the assistance they have given us in connection with this portrait, its veil, and in the hanging of the portrait, which we hope will be accomplished early next week.

This concludes our brief ceremony, ladies and gentlemen. Those who wish may, after we recess, come within the bar of the court and thereby have a closer view of the portrait. Those particularly in the back, haven't had an opportunity to see it,



and if you care to, you may do so immediately after Court adjourns.

Mr. Bailiff, you may announce recess.

(Whereupon, the proceedings were concluded.)

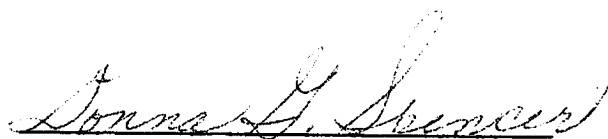
## REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, Donna G. Spencer, Certified Shorthand Reporter and Official Reporter to this Court, do hereby certify that I was present at and reported in shorthand the proceedings in the foregoing matter;

Further, that I thereafter reduced my shorthand notes to typewritten form, comprising the foregoing Official Transcript;

Further, that the foregoing Official Transcript is a full and accurate record of the proceedings at the time and place set forth.

Dated at Denver, Colorado, this 10th day of April, 1968.

  
Donna G. Spencer  
Certified Shorthand Reporter