

James A. Walsh has been United States District Judge for the District of Arizona since 1952. He was born in Massachusetts in 1906, attended St. Anselms College in Manchester, New Hampshire, and received his law degree from Georgetown University in 1928. He was admitted to practice in the District of Columbia and Arizona and opened a law office in Mesa in 1928 where he practiced until 1941. He held a number of public positions which included serving as City Attorney of Mesa, Administrative Assistant to United States Senator Ernest McFarland, Assistant United States Attorney, Maricopa County Attorney, and Judge of the Superior Court in Phoenix. In 1947 he left the bench to form one of Arizona's leading law firms, now known as Snell and Wilmer. In 1951-52 he was chief counsel to the Arizona Code Commission which completely revised the statutory law of Arizona.

Judge Walsh was appointed to the United States District Court by President Harry S. Truman in 1952 and has sat primarily in Tucson since that date. In 1961 Judge Walsh became Chief Judge for the District of Arizona and served in that capacity until 1973. He continued to carry a full work load until his retirement on September 1, 1981.

Less publicly noticed, but far more important than these formal accomplishments, are the human qualities that have enriched all those who have known him. Judge Walsh is recognized throughout the federal judiciary as one of the finest trial judges in the United States. His example of calm, judicious temperament has been a model for federal and state judges everywhere. His diligence and impartiality in carrying out the duties of his office have earned him the respect of all who have appeared in his court.

Countless lawyers, both in Arizona and throughout the West, have learned from him the high values to be placed on hard work, thorough preparation, and the civility with which the work of lawyers and judges should be conducted.

No books or other forms of publicity extol the virtues of this truly modest and wise man. The monuments to his life exist in the knowledge of hundreds of people that Judge Walsh devoted his life to the law and that, in his unassuming but firm way, he did justice. The example he has set of human understanding and devotion to the rule of the law has been a powerful influence in the lives of many people, and particularly in the lives of the young lawyers he has touched.

It is fitting that the University of Arizona recognize the rich lifetime of service of this truly dedicated public servant by conferring on him the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws.



The Editors of the Arizona Law Review respectfully dedicate this issue to the Honorable James A. Walsh upon his retirement from the Federal District Court, District of Arizona, after 29 years of service (1952-1981).

