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A Tribute to Judge Richard S. Arnold

Cover Page Footnote

The UALR School of Law and the UALR Law Review honor the life and accomplishments of Judge Richard Sheppard Arnold by including this and four other essays paying special tribute to a remarkable man. The essays present a small sample of the impact Judge Arnold had on those who knew him while he served more than a quarter century on the federal bench. Although he will be missed by family, friends, and the legal community, Judge Arnold's legacy will undoubtedly endure.

A TRIBUTE TO JUDGE RICHARD S. ARNOLD

*Philip S. Anderson**

May it please the Court:

We are here today in memory of an enormously talented and rare person, and I have the temerity to attempt to articulate some of the qualities that endeared Richard Arnold to so many people of so many different stations in life.

To state the obvious, Richard was different. He knew it, and so did everyone else. He used his gifts wisely and quietly. That is what is rare. He was a polymath of extraordinary modesty and humility. He was a gentleman. He didn't show off.

Well, maybe he showed off a little once in a while when he delivered Fourth of July speeches in Latin at the annual Texarkana picnic, but that was all in good fun and it delighted his audiences.

What I mean is that he didn't show off in order to cause someone to suffer embarrassment and humiliation. When the occasion arose when he could have done so—and there must have been many such occasions—he kept quiet.

On a questionnaire that he completed not long ago, he was asked to list his interests. He listed, "Golf, classical music, reading and being quiet."

He treated everyone—friends, acquaintances, strangers, lawyers and litigants—with the utmost civility, courtesy, and kindness. And, I should add, patience. Richard suffered fools gladly.

That is unquestionably one of the secrets of his universal appeal.

He spoke at the Annual Meeting of the American Law Institute in May, 2001, and the point of his speech was that we should all pay more attention to people.

That is such a simple message, and in its simplicity it is profound. Richard had time for everyone.

He told me once that his mother, Janet Sheppard Arnold, had told him that if she were a man, she would at least be a member of Congress. Her father was Morris Sheppard, who represented Texas in the United States Senate from 1913 to 1941. Since 1896, in four of the past five generations, someone from Janet Sheppard Arnold's family has been in Congress.

Richard's cousin, Connie Mack, is a former United States Senator from Florida, and he is here today. His son, also named Connie, was elected this

* Mr. Anderson was president of the American Bar Association in 1998–1999. He is a partner in the Little Rock law firm of Williams & Anderson PLC. What follows are the remarks made by Mr. Anderson at the memorial session of the United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit in honor of Richard Sheppard Arnold, St. Louis, Missouri, January 10, 2005.

past November to represent his district in Florida in the United States House of Representatives.

As it turned out, Richard did not go to Congress, but his distinguished career in public service with his contributions to jurisprudence and the federal judiciary would have warmed his mother's heart. Richard and his brother, who is named for Senator Sheppard, are the only two siblings to serve together on an appellate court in the federal system.

What a remarkable family!

My role in this ceremony today is that of a friend, not a former clerk, or a colleague on the bench, or a mentor as Senator Bumpers was. Friendship is a personal relationship and so these final remarks are necessarily personal.

My wife, Missy, and I first met Richard one hot, summer night in Hot Springs at the Annual Meeting of the Arkansas Bar Association. The three of us began talking around nine o'clock or so, and we continued to talk until about two o'clock in the morning of the next day. We talked about everything in the world. We began a conversation that first evening that lasted for forty years. Like all of life, those years had joy, pain, and sorrow. We remember the joy.

What I am going to say now is not only for myself, but also for the hundreds of his friends who would tell you the same thing.

Richard was funny, witty, serious and inspiring. He made all of us feel like we were better than we really are.

There has never been a more congenial companion or a better friend than Richard Arnold.