A Veteran’s Thoughts About Veterans Day

By: Todd Blasdel

Veterans Day is observed annually on November 11. The day was established to honor military veterans that have served in the United States Armed Forces. It is distinct from Memorial Day, which honors those who have died during military service. The first national celebration of Veterans Day was in 1947. However, observance of Veterans Day was officially signed into law in 1954 by President Dwight D. Eisenhower.

As lawyers, we have many veterans as fellow colleagues in our bar association. I spoke with one of those veterans, attorney Charles Watts, about his thoughts on Veterans Day. Charles joined the Army reserves in 1964 at age 17 and served until his discharge in 1992. He served as an infantry officer in Vietnam and obtained the rank of Major in the Army Special Forces.

Q: When you think of Veterans Day, what first comes to mind?

A: I immediately think about all of the people that have served our country and the sacrifices that they have made. I also think about the sacrifices made by the families of service members. It is very important the sacrifices of those families are honored as well.

Q: What is the best thing a civilian can say to a veteran on Veterans Day?

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THE BRIEFCASE
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From the President

By: Shanda McKenney
President, OCBA

As a rock-solid member of Generation X, my childhood was formed, and informed, by over-the-top materialistic excesses of the 1980s consumer culture. My youth was filled with Yuppies, the Sears Toy Catalog, and ridiculously overpriced dolls with alleged origins in a Cabbage Patch. Shirts were silk, pants were pleated, and bangs were sprayed sky high. In rural areas, rockies and ropers ruled the high schools, and country music crossed over into the pop/rock genre for the first time.

Ah, the music! Probably the most memorable part of my youth. With baby boomer parents and grandparents from the greatest generation, there were the usual gaps in our respective musical tastes. I distinctly remember listening to Glenn Miller and his Orchestra on an old Victrola with my Grandfather, and also have vivid memories of my parent's 'mix tape' of 50s and 60s music, which would play on a loop for the entire 10-hour drive to my grandparents' house every summer.

Many of my memories have a correlating soundtrack with specific memories accompanied by specific songs or music. For example, as a small child, my favorite part of Christmas was lying underneath our real tree, listening to the Mormon Tabernacle Choir sing carols on my parent's Hi-Fi. In first grade, my class sang the theme song to "The Greatest American Hero," and in third grade, we spent many recesses perfecting our dance moves to Ghostbusters by Ray Parker, Jr. When I was in 5th Grade, our school newspaper did a poll which landed Livin' on a Prayer by Bon Jovi as the #1 song. And that is the instant my love for hair bands was solidified.

Although I maintain a deep-seated love for the entire genre of hair band music (sometimes referred to as "glam rock") to this day, my favorite sub-section of this genre is the ballads. As an avid reader growing up, I've always had a love for words, so the lyrics to songs tend to shape my musical preferences, often more so than the tune itself. Within this sub-genre lies one of my very favorite songs from that era - Something To Believe In, by Poison. The lyrics to this particular song move me every single time I hear them, and if you haven't listened to the song before, I invite you to do so now (you can find the original music video on YouTube for free).

Originally composed as a tribute to a dear friend of the band's lead singer who passed away unexpectedly, each verse describes a different situation and the struggle to find some positive meaning out of tragedy or wrongs done them by others. The repeating chorus is plaintive, searching, and never answered. It just repeats, over and over - begging for SOMETHING to believe in.

I listened to this song recently for the first time in a long time, and it struck me particularly hard, for some reason. Let's face it – the last eighteen months have been REALLY difficult, for a multitude of reasons. Uncertainties in work, kids' school schedules, health problems, concern for elderly family members, and a host of other issues that were not typically present in my day-to-day life have taken a toll on me, and I suspect it has on many of you, as well. Finding something to believe in, when times are desperate and it looks like there is no hope, is key to maintaining mental and emotional well-being during any societal strife, but it has become particularly relevant over the last eighteen months.

Luckily, your Bar Association is here to help! Working with the OCBA over my 20-year career has always been rewarding, but over the last two years in particular, this work has provided me with a center of stability, and something to truly believe in. Not only does the OCBA offer some of the most fulfilling opportunities to perform community service you are likely to find, but there are innumerable ways to enjoy yourself, relieve some stress and tension, and find something to "believe in," even if it's only for a single day or a weekend. You can help pick up litter, donate or help raise funds for the YLD Harvest Food Drive, or read to elementary school kids on a weekly basis. You can participate in the YLD “Strike Out Hunger” bowling tournament and come to the Holiday Reception with your hats and gloves to donate to the kids. For larger doses of fun and CLE, sign up for the Winter Ski Trip (more info on that coming soon!) or The bi-annual Bench and Bar Conference in early April, 2022.

If you're looking for something to believe in, there is no better place to start than your friendly neighborhood County Bar, where some group is always doing some kind of good for someone in our shared community. I would love to see you find something to believe in at one of our upcoming events, or give someone else something to believe in by participating in one of our many worthwhile activities. And if you happen to have any good music recommendations, I am all ears.

1 The song Something to Believe in was originally released by the band Poison in 1989 on their Flesh & Blood album. It was re-released in 2001 with revised lyrics as part of the Best of Bawh & Blood collection.
Dear Roscoe: I am preparing to meet with a prospective client regarding a defamation and/or tort of outrage case. In Brief, my clients, a talent agent, along with one of his clients, a rising musician, is implicated in connection with an alleged series of kickback schemes paid to radio stations and booking agents nation-wide. The book, published last month, strongly suggests my clients’ complicity in the alleged scheme and depicted them in photographs with casual acquaintances of theirs who have previously pled to some of the charges alleged. To date, both State and Federal prosecutors have declined to bring charges against my guys. Another attorney with whom I discussed this case told me I better watch out for the “Barbra Streisand effect.” I was clueless but didn’t want to admit it. Do you have a clue? RJ Edmond.

Dear RJ: For starters, first thing I’d like to clue you in on is that “I don’t know” is an acceptable answer, especially when it’s the truth. Knowing some might want to split ethical or philosophical hairs over this, any answer is appropriate when it’s the truth. More to the point the “Streisand Effect” holds that efforts to suppress information sometimes has the opposite effect of working upon the fancy of another or to reviving your nervous system like this.

The autonomic nervous system uses the hormone adrenaline, a neurotransmitter, or chemical messenger, to send signals to various parts of the body to activate the fight or flight response. This physiological response in large amounts; it damages the visceral (internal) organs such as the heart, lungs, liver and kidneys. It is believed that almost all sudden deaths are caused by damage to the heart. There is almost no other organ that would fail so fast as to cause sudden death. Kidney failure, liver failure, those things don’t kill you suddenly.

There is this specially adapted system of muscle and nerve tissue in the heart—the sinoatrial (SA) node, the atrioventricular node, and the Purkinje fibers—which sets the rhythm of the heart. If this system is overwhelmed with adrenaline, the heart can go into abnormal rhythms that are not compatible with life. If one of those is triggered, you will drop dead.

Can fright bring on death result in homicide? At least insofar as felony murder goes, the answer is “yes.” For example, in State v. Stewart, 300 A.2d 676 (MD 1985), the victim died several hours after a hold-up, albeit a robbery of her employment money rather than her own, and she suffered no physical injury. In fact, the thief concealed her by saying that if she did as directed, she’d be okay. The court discussed several cases cited by each side, and affirmed the conviction holding:

“We believe that the evidence was sufficient to support the jury’s finding that fright or shock of the robbery committed by the appellant had caused Mrs. Pizzamiglio’s adrenaline induced heart failure. We conclude that any rational trier of fact could have found beyond a reasonable doubt, from the evidence, that the surge of adrenalin was in response to the fear Mrs. Pizzamiglio encountered as a result of having been placed in fear and robbed by the appellant.”

Among the cases cited was one from here in the Garden State: State v. McKeiver, 89 N.J. Super. 52, 213 A.2d 320 (1965), wherein the court found:

“Fright, or other “mental force” as it had been called, 1 Bishop, New Criminal Law, (8th ed. 1892), sec. 562, will receive judicial recognition if it is accompanied by physical force. Physical force does not necessitate physical contact, because one can exert physical force over another by “working upon the fancy of another or treating him harshly or unkindly,” as by certain actions which might cause him to “die of fear or grief.” 1 HALE P.C. 429; 1 East P.C. 225.

For an even more scholarly approach see Brackett v. Peters, 11 F.3d 78 (7th Cir. 1993) the court discusses death by fear from both the criminal and civil standpoints, the latter as species of “egg shell skull.”

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I’ve earlier mentioned that after the Basile murder – the Auto Parts Slaying as the media branded it, none to my liking – I found both the Hughes’ and all three of the Sgrorano Brothers – occupying my office. Tommy Hughes, pater; immediately accosted me, saying “You started all this, Roscoe, now you gotta get it.” In addition to the five principals, some young upstart occupied my chair. He cut a neat figure in black leather jacket, skinny jeans, and a hair style patterned after ramen noodles. I asked him to vacate my seat. He said nothing but indicated an empty visitor’s chair. What can you say t such a charming invitation in your own office? Nothing.

So, I grabbed his head with one hand and drove the middle knuckle of the other into his mastoid process, propelling him forward as he rose. I then graciously indicated that he was free to use the visitor’s chair himself. He shot me a “wait-till-next-time” look but took the seat.

“What’s going on?” asked Tommy Hughes, Sr. blustered. “A pound of flesh is about to fall due and it ain’t coming from anyone of us. This is on you. You gotta make it good or make it end.”

“In the short term, yeah. But you also need to resolve it. If we gotta make you the scapegoat we will.”

I looked over at Tony, Johnny, and Joe. They looked at each other as if to agree Hughes went to far, but the seemed to agree with the direction he was going.

“Sounds like we need some of the boys in blue involved here as well.”

“What can the cops do?” cried the young Hughes. “Take a report. Eat a donut. Repeat.”

“Sounds like they served you pretty well when it was a question of going after my license,” I remind them. That shut them up for moment. The phone rang. I picked up.

“Mr. Pound?”

“Yeah,” I said.

“You know me, and we’ve seen each other, but we’ve never really met. I’m sorry to interfere with your meeting, but we need to meet. Soon. And after that much, if not all, shall become clear. I suggest you adorn your confab there and meet with me at 7:00 this evening.”

“Where?” I asked.

“You are familiar wit the VFW on Oakley?”

He hung up before I could say I did.

Quote of the MONTH

“If you want to be a true professional, do something outside yourself.”

-Ruth Bader Ginsburg
Book Notes

Hero of Two Worlds: The Marquis de Lafayette in the Age of Revolution

By Curtis Thomas

As busy practitioners, it is almost cliché to state that reading for “pleasure” tends to decrease as our days are filled with reading and analyzing statutes, regulations, and reported decisions. Framing our reading in such a way, however, marginalizes those who enjoy reading and analyzing legal documents (which, at some level, is most attorneys). Even so, in order to be knowledgeable and well-educated members of society, we need to continue to read a variety of books that inform, educate, and challenge us.

For those interested in the history of the United States, especially the American Revolution and the founding era of the United States of America, Hero of Two Worlds: The Marquis de Lafayette in the Age of Revolution, presents an approachable foray into the world of biographies, a category of books that, at least to me, presents a formidable challenge (this is aptly illustrated by the half-read copy of Ron Chernow’s GRANT that sits on my bookshelf). The difficulty of reading biographies is not a reflection of the quality of those biographies, rather than a result of the difficulty for busy professionals to find the time necessary to truly absorb the level of detail that goes into most biographies (Chernow’s biography of Ulysses S. Grant comes in at 1,104 pages). Hero of Two Worlds, by comparison, comes in at 502 pages. The comparative brevity of Hero of Two Worlds, however, should not be mistaken for a lack of quality or original insight. Instead, Hero of Two Worlds is an eminently readable biographical sketch of the life of Marie-Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert du Motier, Marquis de Lafayette (“Lafayette”) who lived from September 6, 1757 to May 20, 1834. Lafayette, among his many accolades, is the author of the “Declaration of the Rights of man and of the Citizen,” a core statement of democratic principles inspired by the Declaration of Independence which still informs the governance of France to this day. Lafayette is one of the most unique figures in the history of the United States, the history of France, as well as Europe as a whole.

Mr. Duncan is a “self-taught” historian (not to be confused with the “I do my own research” type) who hosted a podcast entitled “Revolutions” covering the great revolutions in world history such as the American Revolution, the French Revolution, the Haitian Revolution, and the Russian Revolution, among others. In these podcasts, Mr. Duncan employs a frank and straightforward tone interspersed with bits of dry humor and wry observations about the historical record on which he is speaking. Mr. Duncan’s writing style maintains that direct approach with cogent and wry observations interspersed throughout the text actively engaging the reader and providing keen analysis of Lafayette’s unique character, and how that character helped Lafayette achieve what he did as well as recognizing Lafayette’s human limitations and the contradictions within Lafayette’s own life.

Hero of Two Worlds deftly moves from Lafayette’s birth to a minor French noble family to, through tragedy, luck, and Lafayette’s own commitment and fortitude, Lafayette seeking to make a name for himself through his actions as an officer in the Continental Army. Hero of Two Worlds illustrates the combination of wealth, political connections, and some extremely good luck that was necessary for Lafayette to become an icon of the American Revolution, and accordingly an icon in the history of the United States (this Wikipedia article purports to identify all places named after Lafayette many of which were named after his tour of the United States in 1824-1825: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_places_named_for_the_Marquis_de_Lafayette).

Hero of Two Worlds also nimbly details Lafayette’s role in the French Revolution, and the circumstances leading up the French Revolution where, despite his noble status, Lafayette recognized that France needed to fundamentally change France’s hierarchical structures, end corruption, and provide a representative body for all of the people of France. From 1789 until his death in 1834, Lafayette was instrumental in fighting for principles of liberty and equality to be applied in France, even enduring exile and imprisonment when the French Revolution Lafayette had helped start began “to eat its own” leading to Lafayette fleeing France and becoming an exiled political prisoner for almost 5 years. Despite this setback, Lafayette never wavered in his support of democratic ideals, and Hero of Two Worlds recounts in detail how Lafayette continued to be at the center of the tug of war between republican and monarchial rule in France,
Abel, Dacia
Abel, T. Luke
Abney, Mary
Abby, Ashley
Albert, Michelle
Aiden, Charles
Alley, Bryan
Allen, Tracy
Anthony, Elliott P.
Antonisse, Jami
Rhoades
Angel, Angela
Baker, James R.
Barrett, Alan
Barr, Sarah
Beeler, Jeff R.
Bell, Sheila
Bishop, Kelly
Blom, Michelle
Blake, Mike
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Bloyd, Jamie
Bloyd, Jeffery
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Corby, George
Court, Todd
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Craig, Richard
Craig, Kate
Creed, Janis
Beeler, Jeff R.
Creed, Marlen
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Cunningham, Ryan
Curran, Dillon
Curran, Jeffrey A.
Curran, John D.
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Cute, Bob
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Denni, Billy
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Davis, Cooper
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Dawkins, Grace
Day, Seth
Deffendall, Ryan
Devaughn, Pepper
Dever, Brier
Dias da Silva, Wagner
Dilbeck, D.H.
Dietz, Jon
Doddle, Kate
Donchin, David
Donnell, Brad
Dougherty, Clifford C.
Duncan, Alex
Dunn, Teena
Durnin, Jerry
Eady, Rand
Edwards, John
Edwards, John
Edwards, Sally Ketchum
Edwards, Sarah B.
Eggm, Wil
Elliot, David
Elliot, Charles
Ellison, Kara
Emg, Will
Epps, Kaela
Envern, Dylan D.
Envern, Leslie
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Evans, Greg D.
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Fischer, Amy Sherry
Ford, Richard C.
Frohle, Mike
Froge, Greg
Fulkerson, Sam
Gallagher, Robert
Gates, Blake
Gateswater, Evan
Gallagher, Francis
Geist, Charles E.
Gelina, Steve
George, Kelly A.
Germany, DeeAnn L.
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Giddens, Jared
Giele, Matthew
Gille, Sean
Gillo, Michael
Ginsberg, Linda
Ginn, Andrew
Glass, Emily
God, Simon
Good, Sadly
Good, Paige
Gordon, Kevin
Gorke, Joseph K.
Goss, William
Gray, Mike
Green, Gerald
Greenawath, Joshua
Grose, Justin
Gott, Jeffery C.
Gunn, Andy
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Hardin, Lloyd
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Luttrel, Bob
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Masters, Paige
Maslin, Tony
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McCrimmon, Michael
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McCune, Kate R.
McDaniel, Cheryl
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Oldfield, Ryan
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Pritchett, Edd
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Ross, Michael E.
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Rupert, Kurt
Rust, Andrew
Ryan, Jason
Ryan, Patrick M.
Sanders, Sean M.
Sapelanfrel, Christopher
Schall, Andrew
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Sessler, Jordan
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Shinn, Ron
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Smith, Chelsea
Smith, Josh D.
Smith, Mackenzie
Smith, Michael F.
Sposor, Chri
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Spradlin, T. Scott
Stark, Christopher
Stakem, Ronald E.
Stain, Patrick
Stinson, David
Stipe, Amy M
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Stringer, Martin
Sublett, Scott C.
Suddoth, C.
Sweet, Kyle
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Taylor, Amy M.
Taylor, Brad
Teague, Derrick J.
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Wells, Bryan
West, Leilah A.
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Whaley, Philip G.
Whaley, Nathan L.
Wheeler, Peter L.
White, Elshay
White, Weston
Whitfield, William W.
Wiggin, Joseph
Williams, Paula
Willoughby, Lauren
Wills, Brett
Winfand, Lori
Wolfe, Anna
Woody, C. Russell
Yll, Robert
Young, Drew D.
Zistol, Clay R.
Zistol, John P.
Zuckerman, Harold

We Support Judge Anthony Bonner for District Judge
By Okla. County Asst. Dist. Atty.
Jeffrey W. Massey

In early March 1917, the wind blew cold across the assembled mourners at the Whitehead Cemetery just outside Paul’s Valley, Oklahoma. Orban Chester Patterson, promising young attorney, watched the casket of his younger sister, Vernon (Vernie) slip into the cold, damp red clay. Orban pondered the two deaths that were now directly attributable to one family: the Williams. Orban knew the blood feud would continue, since each side had capable males of carrying on the carnage. Three weeks later, the United States was at war with Germany.

Orban felt that his war began long before April 1917.

* * * *

Young Patterson went back to the Pruitt law offices. The summer of 1917 was miserably hot in Oklahoma City. Moman Pruitt had offices on the fifth floor, west side of Robinson Avenue. He and Orban in front of the Lee Building. He and Orban had offices on the fifth floor, west side of the building overlooking Robinson. In late September, state fair-goers thronged the streets of Oklahoma City.

Samuel L. Williams was also in Oklahoma City that fateful morning, staying at the Stewart Hotel, a mere block from the Pruitt-Patterson law offices. At 9:45 AM Sam Williams, the “old wolf” of the Williams clan, strolled westward from the Stewart Hotel at 17 North Broadway to get a haircut. He arrived at the Manhattan Barbershop for a shave and cut from barber Samuel L. Williams was also in Oklahoma City that fateful morning, staying at the Stewart Hotel, a mere block from the Pruitt-Patterson law offices. At 9:45 AM Sam Williams, the “old wolf” of the Williams clan, strolled westward from the Stewart Hotel at 17 North Broadway to get a haircut. He arrived at the Manhattan Barbershop for a shave and cut from barber Williams."
We Support the Re-Election of Judge Timmons

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Luke Abel
Mary Abernathy
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Cindy Allen
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Old “Friends” Still Around

By Kurt Ockershauser

Several months ago I prepared an article which appeared in the newsletter outlining some of the interesting items in the then current session of the legislature. In a fit of nostalgia, I decided to check back on a few of those old friends and see what was done with them.

The uniform abortion act of Oklahoma was in the Senate Judiciary Committee preparatory to going back to the floor for approval. Apparently, it received Senate approval and has been sent to the House for their action. It is currently in the House Committee on Criminal Jurisprudence and after passing that committee will go to the floor of the House for consideration.

The Municipal Court Reorganization Act of 1973 has had some trouble in the Senate. The overall purpose of the Act is to modernize Oklahoma’s Municipal Courts. The bill left the Senate Judiciary Committee but was referred back to the Senate Judiciary Committee for further study.

The monumental Oklahoma Criminal Code which is an attempt to consolidate and clarify our present criminal laws [is] going rough in the Senate also. It left the Senate Judiciary Committee and was referred back for interim study. It will be considered next session in that committee.

Senate Bill 208 which would elevate all but one Associate District Judge in Oklahoma County to a full District Judge has been put to sleep in the Senate Appropriation and Budget Committee, for further study. We may hear more of this issue next session.

One proposal to increase District Attorneys’ salaries to match that of their respective District Judges’ has passed the House and been sent to the Senate Judiciary Committee. It has also been under review in the Senate Revenue and Taxation Committee and will be placed on the floor next session. If this fails, the House has cleverly introduced another bill which specifically increases the D.A.’s salaries by a certain amount depending upon the size of the District.

Of course many significant pieces of legislation were acted upon and many passed. We will soon be faced with the refinements of comparative negligence here in Oklahoma. Also, the legislature finally decided to act on cleaning up the street and plat vacation process which should be in the session law supplement. Finally, I am contented to discover that all of my old friends will still be around next session. Indeed, due to the nature of several of the bills, I suspect that they may be around for several sessions to come.
We Support Judge Don Andrews for Re-Election

Laura McConnell-Corbyn
Treasurer
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l Oklahoma City, OK 73102
The new ‘old’ courthouse for Oklahoma County, on Monday, February 18, 1918. W. Clark, District Judge of Oklahoma, salacious gossip. Speculation swirled with lurid details and wrote them? Why were they so important? What was in them? Who letters that held captive the audience of capital offense.

On Monday, October 22, 1917, newly-re-ered Orban Patterson walked the half block from the Oklahoma County Jail, back to his office on the 5th Floor of the Lee Building. But the prosecution was concerned about case on multiple levels. At the preliminary hearing, the State demand-ed that Moman disclose the contents of the two letters retrieved by Orban from his deceased sister’s hotel room. Moman declared the State was not entitled to any evidence beyond the self-defense current-ly invoked. Rumors swirled. Soon there-after, the County Attorney (now District Attorney) announced it would request a 1st Degree Murder Charge, as Williams was alleged to have been killed from ambush, a capital offense.

But it was the rumors surrounding the letters that held captive the audience of public opinion. What was in them? Who wrote them? Why were they so important? Speculation swirled with lurid details and salacious gossip.

The trial began in front of the Hon. George W. Clark, District Judge of Oklahoma County, on Monday, February 18, 1918. The new ‘old’ courthouse for Oklahoma County was located on the southeast corner of Main Street and Dewey. The courtroom was packed early and the largest court-room could not hold the throngs of curious citizenry. The assembled trial teams were probably the greatest trial lawyers that the state could produce. For the defense, Moman Pruitt, EJ Giddings, Judge Jean P. Day of Oklahoma City, Ben F. Williams of Norman, James H. Mathers of Ardmore. For the State of Oklahoma, Judge John W. Scott (Assistant County Attorney), Judge Samuel L. Harris and L.C. Andrews of Purcell. The legal minds and grand ora-tions by both sides was expected to eclipse every Oklahoma courtroom drama since the Senator Gore sexual harassment suit of 1913 (starring for the defense, Moman Pruitt).

With the jury empaneled, the State began in earnest its prosecution against Patterson on Tuesday, February 19. The State called several witnesses showing that Old Mr. Williams was palsied on his left arm, blind in his left eye and walked with a cane for support. Pruitt’s rapier cross-examination revealed the ‘old man’ could shoot crows on the wing, had just ordered a new pist-ol to use and his dexterity in retrieving his cane from the barbershop. But all the direct and cross examination of the State’s witnesses was mere window dressing for the forth-coming event: Moman’s Case-In-Chief.

Historically, Moman Pruitt likened any defense premised upon 3 major trial strate-gies. First was self-defense, which any jury could be persuaded was the defendant’s only option: meet force with force. Second was “insanity” which required weaving a tapestry for the jury of behavioral maladies and unsound mind demeanor. Third was Moman’s secret weapon on difficult cases, the “unwritten law.” Today’s bar examina-tion holds no place for the prominence of this theory of law born in common law but ripened during the Victorian and Edwardian Ages. The unwritten law, in its shortened version, comes down to the old saying of the victim “just needed killing.”

The State, knowing Pruitt’s propensities for theater and flair, produced a string of character witnesses for the victim Sam Williams. This included a special appearance by Oklahoma Supreme Court Chief Justice attesting as to him being a good citizen and family man.

The trial itself is deserving of a sepa-rate article for the trial tactics and use of modern evidentiary techniques, including over-sized photographic exhibits, forensic testimony and actual visitation by the jury to the sidewalk murder sight on Robinson Avenue. The jury even got a day off to go to the movies on Washington’s Birthday, since the courtroom was closed for the holiday.

But it was Monday, February 25, for which Moman and his trial team awaited. Moman’s rebuttal witnesses the previous week had stalled the State’s case. Williams had indeed possessed a handgun in his trou-sers that morning. Testimony from rebuttal witnesses said Williams dropped his cane and grabbed for his gun. (How else did those trousers get twisted and bunched up, like the coroner testified?).

On Monday, in an overcrowded court-room, the Maestro of the Podium, started his concerto. He led with the Widow Patterson, who identified the notes possessed by the defense as having been written by her daughter. Mrs. Patterson then began the bombardment from which staggered the victim and the State’s case. The widow detailed the courtship that deceased daugh-ter Vernon had initially with Wade Williams. But it was not Wade that wooed the 15-year old Vera out to the ranch for romance. It was Wade’s father, Sam Williams, 40 years her senior, that had corrupted young Vernon. Mrs. Patterson detailed the shame the family endured, which then culminat-ed in Williams directing Wade to kill Doc Patterson on the streets of Mayesville in 1916. It was Sam Williams that had defiled Vernon. It was Sam Williams that wrote a note to Vira Patterson in an effort to seduce the second Patterson daughter. It was the adulterous Sam Williams that had caused Vernon to visit the doctor for the “illegal operation.”

The salacious bombshells caused feverish stage whispers to echo through the court-room gallery. Orban sat at the defense table and silently wept as the lurid details of the...
We support the election of Judge Sheila Stinson.
family were revealed by his mother, sister, and brother. The remainder of the trial was similar to watching a giant oak slowly fall, as the State’s case collapsed. The defense team’s case-in-chief lasted only three days, but it was all they needed. Witness after witness related favorable defense testimony or had done their damage in rebuttal testimony. Finally, the statutory and fact-finding wrangling ended.

In closing statements, Defense Counsel James H. Mathers, sensing blood in the water, inspired the angry jurors with the opening of “the seducer of virtue should die!” As he called for the death of the deceased Sam Williams, Mathers blasted the old banker as a “betrayor of that young girl’s virtue.” He railed upon Williams for almost two hours. He detailed the alleged seduction starting while Vernon Patterson was a mere 14 years old. Several jurors were noted to have been openly weeping during portions of his closing. Moman spoke last, being the last of the four defense counsels [each was afforded up to two hours for the defense]. Pruitt’s summation of the evidentiary matters paled in comparison to the strength of the demand for justice through the Unwritten Law. His blistering attacks upon the ‘persecution’ of Orban Patterson and the travesty of justice which occurred to the Widow Patterson. It was Moman at his finest. That evening, it took the jury a mere two hours of deliberations to return with a firm ‘not guilty’ for Orban Patterson. The gunning down of a Paul’s Valley banker on Robinson Avenue is pretty much lost to history. But you dear reader, know the circumstances of his untimely demise. So the next time you go lunch and walk the Robinson sidewalk down toward Main Street, by the old Lee Building. The Lee Building still stands, and you can look upward and imagine Moman Pruitt and Orban Patterson smoking on the 5th Floor. You can recall that vengeful murder that occurred 104 years ago as you enter the old barbershop where Sam Williams enjoyed his last moment on earth. The barbershop has been replaced, but the doorway is still there. Enjoy your lunch at Sweet and Eats at 101 North Robinson [formerly the Manhattan barbershop] and try not to stare at the curb immediately in front of the door where Sam Williams died so many years ago.

A: “Thank you for your service.” I think that is always welcomed and it lets service members know that their sacrifice is appreciated by those outside of the military.

Q: Why is it important that our country continues to celebrate Veterans Day?
A: It is a time to reflect on the last ing principals of our country. For me, that means God, country, freedom, respect for your fellow man, and a willingness to fight to defend those core principals. Our citizenry has a duty to pay attention. Our system of government can very quickly be taken over by a more disciplined and committed power.

Q: Do you have a favorite quote or adage about the military?
A: “There are no atheists in foxholes.” I have found that to be a pretty accurate assessment during combat.

Q: How do you reflect on your time in the military?
A: I always take great pride in my time in service. It taught me so much and provided me with skills that helped me throughout my personal and professional life.

Q: What would you tell a young person that was interested in serving in the military?
A: I would tell them that my service in the Armed Forces gave me incredible opportunities, especially at a young age. I learned about discipline, leadership, accountability, stress, and teamwork. There is no better place to learn life skills than our military.

Q: What do you wish more civilians understood about the military and military service?
A: How vitally important it is to our country and to our freedoms that we have citizens that are willing to sacrifice to protect those freedoms. Sometimes I think that is too easily forgotten.

BOOK NOTES continued from page 4

and who, while not always the most politically savvy actor, was always committed to the principles of liberty, and worked to secure liberty for the citizens of France and the United States, and encouraged the liberty of citizens all around the world.

Finally, Hero of Two Worlds illustrates Lafayette’s deep and sincere commitment to the principle of liberty without falling into the trap of hero worship by acknowledging the tremendous role luck and good fortune played in Lafayette’s successes, and recognizing that Lafayette was in a unique position given his inherited wealth and connections to political power in France. Hero of Two Worlds also takes time to detail that while Lafayette was a committed abolitionist, there was a history of interactions with slavery that Lafayette did not wish to highlight. This history includes Lafayette’s purchase of a slave during his time in the Continental Army (prior to his becoming an abolitionist) as well as slaves whom Lafayette had set free being sold back into slavery by the Napoleon regime as the result of Lafayette’s need for money after his exile and imprisonment.

Hero of Two Worlds concisely provides the historical context for an approachable, engaging review of Lafayette’s unique and incredible life, and it is recommended for anyone interested in the history of revolution, democracy, governance, and liberty.

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OU PARALEGAL STUDENT RECEIVES CROWE & DUNLEVY SCHOLARSHIP

University of Oklahoma paralegal student Alicia Merrick was recently named the 2021 recipient of the Crowe & Dunlevy B. Jo Balding Scholarship.

The $1,000 scholarship is named for long-time Crowe & Dunlevy paralegal B. Jo Balding, who spent more than 50 years with the firm.

The Crowe & Dunlevy Foundation established the annual scholarship in 2013. Scholarship applicants must be enrolled in the Legal Assistant Education Program at the University of Oklahoma College of Law and be in good academic standing with at least an 8.1 grade point average in legal specialty courses.

Merrick is a student in the University of Oklahoma Law Center’s Legal Assistant Education Program. She earned her undergraduate degree from the University of Central Oklahoma.

ERIC EISSENSTAT JOINS PHILLIPS MURRAH’S LEGAL TEAM AS SHAREHOLDER

Phillips Murrah P.C. is proud to welcome Eric S. Eissenstat to the Firm’s legal team as a Shareholder, bringing the total number of Shareholders to 35.

Prior to joining Phillips Murrah, Eric most recently served as Senior Vice-President, General Counsel, Chief Risk Officer and Secretary for publicly traded Continental Resources, where he also served as a member of the Executive Leadership Team and as legal and governance adviser to the Board of Directors and its Committees. He was appointed the company’s first Chief Risk Officer, served as Chair of the Risk Oversight Committee and was responsible for the company’s Enterprise Risk Management. Among other duties, Eric served Continental as a partner to the board, C-suite executives, and other leadership. He also served over 15 functional and business units, and was responsible for all legal, governance, compliance, and enterprise risk issues and matters.

Eric has tried over 50 cases to verdict and has extensive experience in appellate arguments and SCOTUS filings. His litigation experience in federal and state courts include landmark, novel, and impact litigation, and Eric has obtained numerous multi-million-dollar verdicts representing plaintiffs and numerous defense verdicts in cases seeking millions and tens of millions of dollars.

Eric has presented over 30 keynote speeches, general counsel roundtables, presentations, panels, and other events on many areas, including cybersecurity, securities, and derivative litigation, antitrust, corporate governance, corporate law, intellectual property, energy law, litigation, class actions, business torts, and trial skills.

In addition to serving on dozens of bar association, business, leadership, and civic boards and committees, Eric has been recognized with numerous service awards and honors. He has been featured in Profile Magazine and Vanguard Law Magazine for his services at Continental. Eric has been married to Sandy for more than 38 years and has three children.

GRIFFIN ADDED TO CROWE & DUNLEVY’S OKLAHOMA CITY OFFICE

Former law clerk joins firm as associate attorney

Sally Griffin has joined Crowe & Dunlevy’s Oklahoma City office as an associate attorney.

A graduate of Washington and Lee University School of Law where she graduated magna cum laude and was selected in the Order of the Coif, Griffin joins the firm’s Bankruptcy & Creditor’s Rights, Banking & Financial Institutions and Litigation & Trial Practice Groups. Before joining Crowe & Dunlevy, Griffin served as a law clerk to the Honorable District Judge Kristi K. DuBose of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Alabama.

Griffin earned her undergraduate degree from the University of Oklahoma, graduating summa cum laude with a Bachelor of Business Administration degree.

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KRISHAN PATEL JOINS PHILLIPS MURRAH’S LEGAL TEAM IN OKLAHOMA OFFICE

Phillips Murrah is proud to welcome Krishan Patel to the Firm’s legal team.

Patel is a transactional attorney representing clients in a wide range of commercial transactions, including entity structuring, business acquisitions and divestitures, mergers and acquisitions, commercial leasing, and general real estate matters.

Krishan has represented clients ranging from owner operators, multi-unit owners, and investment groups in a wide variety of transactions. Krishan regularly works in the hospitality sector drafting and reviewing various agreements for clients in their purchase and sale, lease, and general business matters. In addition, Krishan has experience negotiating with franchisors and lenders to secure the best terms possible for his clients. Krishan also advocates for his client industries at the local, state, and federal levels.

Krishan was raised in Shawnee, Oklahoma, which he and his family have called home for over 25 years where they were owner-operators of an independent hotel. Krishan’s experience growing up in the hotel and small business industry gives him a unique perspective on client needs. Krishan relocated to Norman, OK for his undergraduate at University of Oklahoma Michael F. Price College of Business and post-graduate studies at OU College of Law.

In his spare time, Krishan enjoys spending time with his wife and daughter, travelling, attending Sooner football games, playing sports, and volunteering in the community.

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