

MEMORIAL FOR THE HONORABLE LOUIS I. DRECKTRAH

It is an honor for me to address this TRI-COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION in a remembrance to the HONORABLE LOUIS I. DRECKTRAH, former County and Circuit Judge for Jackson County, Wisconsin.

LOUIS I. DRECKTRAH was born at Black River Falls, Wisconsin on August 31, 1916, and he died on July 1, 1999. He graduated from the Black River Falls High School in 1934 and attended the University of Wisconsin where he received his BA and LLB. He began his career as a practicing attorney in 1940 under the tutorage of Barlow & Fugina in Arcadia, Wisconsin. He was very proud to have served under Elmer Barlow who became a member of the Wisconsin Supreme Court and Casey Fugina who was to become a founding father of this bar association.

In March, 1941 he was admitted to the Wisconsin bar and on March 4, 1942 entered the United States Army. He was trained as a tail gunner and flew 35 missions with the 8th Air Force in England and Europe. He was discharged in October, 1945 having been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters and Presidential Citation. True to the tradition of those who served this country in World War II, Louie was reluctant to recount the memories of those experiences, but, it was evident that he considered himself a very lucky man - not a hero.

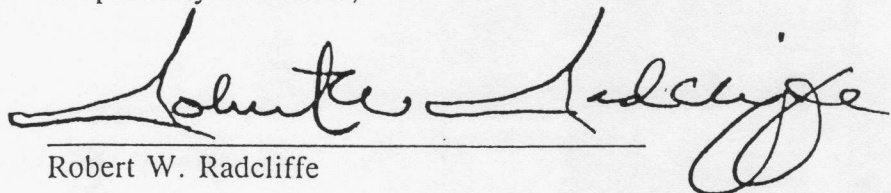
On December 6, 1944, Louie married the former Helga Larson of Northfield, Wisconsin. They had two children, a son, Louis F. Drecktrah and daughter, Carla Drecktrah Neilson; and 5 grandchildren. I'm told that Helga taught Louie to drink martinis, although I suspect it was rather a mutual learning process.

Upon returning from the service in October, 1945 he was employed in the law offices of Donald M. Perry at 348 Main Street in Black River Falls. He served as City Attorney for Black River Falls from 1950 to 1970 and as District Attorney for Jackson County for one term, having been appointed by Governor Walter Kohler, Jr.. In December, 1970 he was appointed as County Judge by then Governor Warren Knowles to succeed Judge Richard Lawton. With court reorganization in 1978, he became the Circuit Judge and served in that capacity until his retirement on July 31, 1984. He also served as Family Court Commissioner for approximately 10 years. In his legal career, Louis I. Drecktrah earned the respect of his peers by his honesty, integrity and dedication to the law. He served the community and his chosen profession well.

Louie was active in many community affairs, the American Legion, VFW, Lions Club and the Republican party. He was a member of the State Bar of Wisconsin and the Tri-County Bar Association. He was also well known for his generosity.

Let a copy of this Memorial be placed in the records of the Tri-County Bar Association and the Secretary be directed to provide a copy to the family of LOUIS I. DRECKTRAH.

Respectfully submitted,


Robert W. Radcliffe

