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IN MEMORIAM: GEORGE B. FRASER

September 19, 1995 marked the passing of an institution at the University of Oklahoma College of Law. George B. Fraser died that day. Two generations of law students at the college had quaked at the hearing of his name. He was "The Tiger" who stalked the halls and classrooms of Monnet Hall and the Law Center. It was a name conferred upon him by his students. It was a truthful name because "The Tiger" would stalk his prey and pounce upon an unsuspecting student when danger was least expected. But it was a name which was conferred by those who respected and admired the man who bore that title.

He was a master of the socratic method of teaching. He had the unique ability to find a student's weak points in discussing a case or point of law. With only a brief question or two the bravest and the brightest students would quickly wonder if they had ever read the cases that were the day's assignment. The uninitiated who did not understand the love and affection George Fraser had for his students might have thought "The Tiger" was doing this for sport. That was not true. Professor Fraser cared deeply for his students. He wanted each of them to succeed and to become competent and ethical attorneys. He put his students to the test of fire. He tempered their ability in the heat of classroom exchange. "The Tiger" taught each of his students the necessity of being thoroughly and carefully prepared for their daily assignments. His purpose was not limited to the classroom. His goal was to instill the need for rigorous preparation to make his students better attorneys when they left the college. This did not go unnoticed for three times the students selected him to receive the Bandy award as the outstanding teacher at the college.

Inside the classroom, George was a tiger. Outside the classroom George Fraser was one of the most caring professors the college was ever privileged to have. He was always available to provide wise guidance and advice to his students while they were in school and after they entered the practice of law. Almost daily, attorneys would call Professor Fraser to seek his thoughtful counsel on some complex issue of law.

George Fraser was a quiet and unassuming man. Although he was an accomplished teacher and scholar, and provided great service to the legal profession, he was not one to call attention to himself. Seldom would you learn from George what he had accomplished. If credit were to be given for a task well done by Professor Fraser, it had to come from someone else. He never demanded the limelight as others often did.

He seldom spoke of his distinguished military service. In 1941 he joined the United States Navy as an Ensign. He served on two combat ships and participated in seven invasions in the Mediterranean Sea and the Pacific Ocean. These included the invasion of Sicily and Leyte in the Philippines. In 1945 he was discharged as a Lieutenant Commander.

After brief service as an attorney for the Veteran's Administration, he began his teaching career at the University of Idaho Law School in 1946. He taught there for three years. In the summer of 1949 he began teaching at the University of

Oklahoma and continued here for over forty years. He retired in 1984 but soon returned to the classroom as a part-time teacher and taught until 1992.

He was a leader in legislative reform, drafting over seventy bills introduced in the Oklahoma legislature. He was particularly instrumental in changing the laws as they related to civil procedure and he helped draft the present Oklahoma Pleading Code.

Over the years, George worked on countless committees of the Oklahoma Bar Association. He was instrumental in drafting amendments to the Oklahoma Constitution regarding the judiciary. He also served as an ad hoc member on numerous Oklahoma Supreme Court committees; a member of the Governor's Committee to draft ethics legislation for Oklahoma; a member of several American Bar Association sections; a member of the Oklahoma Bar Association and a past president of the Cleveland County Bar Association. In recognition for his service, he received the Golden Gavel Award from the Oklahoma Bar Association in 1983.

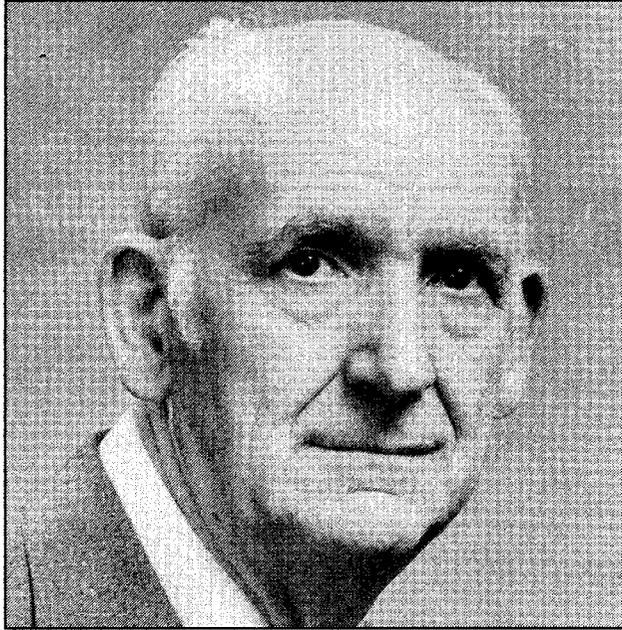
George Fraser was the loving husband of Phoebe Bandy Fraser. Those of us who were at the college when George was courting Phoebe were stunned to see "The Tiger" walking "paw in hand" with Phoebe.

As a new professor, I often worked late hours in Monnet Hall to prepare for class. George was not married at that time. Almost every evening he was in his office, later than I was, working on his classes or some article. Then love and marriage came. After his marriage I do not believe I ever saw him return to his office at night. For the twenty-four years of their lives together a more caring and devoted couple would have been impossible to find.

All his former students have memories about Professor Fraser. As one of them wrote in recognition of his receiving a teaching award, "You are one of those few truly devoted, dedicated, as well as demanding teachers, who students initially awe and fear, but which awe and fear, like the thorn that goes with the lasting beauty of the rose, blossoms into lasting love, respect and admiration, and appreciation for all of your efforts, examples and teachings." Another former student said, "George Fraser never lost his love for the law because he respected it as a path."

Each of us, who were of his students, colleagues and friends, were blessed and enriched to have had the privilege of knowing Professor George "The Tiger" Fraser.

*David Swank
Professor of Law*



GEORGE B. FRASER
1914-1995