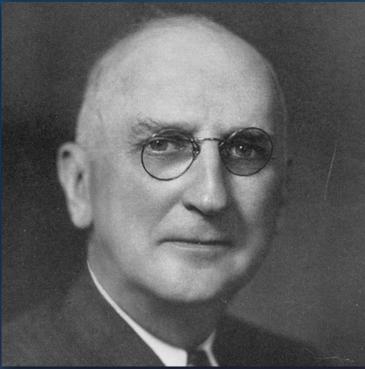




225th Anniversary
1789-2014



John Clark Knox

Born:

October 13, 1881
Waynesburg, PA

Received Commission:

April 12, 1918

Died:

August 23, 1966
New York, NY

John Clark Knox was the son of a locally prominent lawyer in Waynesburg, PA, and therefore his exposure to, and subsequent interest in the law began at an early age. The elder Knox had been appointed United States Commissioner for the Western District of Pennsylvania and at age 8 young John attended several hearings before his father. Knox attended Waynesburg public schools. Upon being asked by a teacher if he had misbehaved, Knox demonstrated his early grasp of the law when he 'pled the Fifth' by refusing to answer. He later graduated from Waynesburg College and read law until he entered the University of Pennsylvania Law School. His family's limited finances (his father died when Knox was just 10) prevented him from attending law school for more than two years, but he received a Certificate of the Law School, passed the bar exam, and was admitted to practice in Pennsylvania (1905).

Judge Knox's professional life began as an attorney in the Law Department of Title Guarantee and Trust Company in New York City. He worked there until 1913, when he was named an Assistant United States Attorney. His caseload included many sabotage and espionage cases during the era of World War I, and his success in these led to his appointment to the S.D.N.Y.

As a judge Judge Knox decided matters ranging from national Prohibition to the obscenity Hedy Lamarr's 1935 movie "Ecstasy" to the Alcoa anti-trust litigation of the 1940's. Many of his contributions to the legal system occurred outside the courtroom, such as the 1929 hearing into the bankruptcy laws that led to reform of bankruptcy practices. He also advocated for higher pay for federal judges. He served as Chief Judge of the District Court from 1948 to 1955.

Sources:

Biographical Directory of Federal Judges, available at <http://www.fjc.gov/>

"John C. Knox, U.S. Judge, Dies at 84", New York Times, August 24, 1966, pg. 51

In Memoriam: Honorable John Clark Knox, November 7, 1966, 2:30 P.M., Room 506, United States Court House, Foley Square, New York, N.Y.