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JOHN ROGERS

It is fitting that a number of people have been asked to write something memorializing the life of John Rogers, as he was so many things to so many people. It is well known that he was a member of the Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma, a member of the Oklahoma Board of Regents for Higher Education, Dean of the Law School of The University of Tulsa, Fellow of the American Bar Foundation, Patron of the Oklahoma Bar Foundation, and so on indefinitely.

If these were the only achievements in the life of John Rogers, one might read a copy of *Who's Who in America* and be informed of his life-long accomplishments; but the things that made him unique are not in any book.

Many young law students sought his advice; almost every civic group in this City depended on him when they had to decide on policy or even a budget. His interest in our YMCA and YWCA kept them both alive during depression days and later, when they expanded, he guided their interests toward all races and religions. Our present state of tranquility in Tulsa is largely due to his attitude of friendship, jobs and housing for all. During World War II, he headed the Organization of Civil Defense, and hundreds of volunteers met with him every week to report on the many agencies that used them to carry their instructions to the people of Tulsa. His own church was dear to him, but his work was not confined to his own beliefs as many a young minister in Tulsa was encouraged and helped by him.

His practice of law was principally in the field of "office practice" but on occasions he participated in litigation. One such occasion was the case of *Boxley v. Wright*.¹ In that decision, the Supreme Court of Oklahoma expressed the rule, which he advocated, that our courts must be above suspicion, as disclosed by the following quotation from the Court's Opinion:

Courts of equity are charged with too sacred a mission to allow shadows upon their scale beams, and the chancellor who holds the scales should keep himself above all just

1. 84 Okla. 45, 202 P. 306 (1921).

grounds for suspicion as to his honesty and fairness. No condition could be fraught with graver consequences than that litigants and the public should lose confidence in the integrity of courts of justice.

. . . .

Courts must maintain a standard of justice which leaves no valid reasons for a lack of faith in them.²

Perhaps these are my own thoughts, as I think of John Rogers from our Oklahoma University days through the more than 60 years that we practiced law in Tulsa, but I venture to say that many old friends will recall the past experiences I have had and perhaps many more. He was indeed a Man for All Seasons.

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2. *Id.* at 46, 202 P. at 307.