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SAMUEL PRINCE AS A LAWYER

THOMAS FRANKLIN WATKINS*

Samuel Lander Prince was born with an inherited yen for teaching.

His maternal grandfather, Dr. Samuel Lander, a century ago founded, and maintained until his death, an excellent college for women, the Williamston Female College, which in those early years made a lasting impress on the education of women in Piedmont, South Carolina. There he taught and well.

Samuel Prince's father was a teacher for some years before he began the study and practice of law. He was George E. Prince, who was a lawyer in full practice for a generation before he was elected judge of the tenth judicial circuit, where he served for some twenty years until his death. In the opinion of this writer, this judge was the ablest circuit judge of his time, a man of the highest probity, a superior mind and a student of the law throughout his life.

Upon his graduation from Wofford College, Sam entered the teaching profession at Lander College, Greenwood, South Carolina, to which the Williamston Female College was removed after the death of its founder and which in greatly expanded resources flourishes today. There for several years Sam was a member of the faculty, teaching mathematics and some of the sciences. In 1913, he married Leila Barr, who was his devoted companion and inspiration for the rest of his life. She taught for some time in the Music School of Lander College.

Sam's father was ambitious for him to enter the law. Sam had given hostages to fortune by laying the foundations of a family and he thought he could not take the time and money at this juncture to attend a law school. Judge Prince, who had some intervals between courts, undertook to ground Sam in the law. They worked diligently together. The Judge, starting with Blackstone and Street's Foundations of Legal Liability, followed the son's progress carefully with long hours of mutual discussion day after day.

Judge Prince had been for many years almost a father to the writer in the study and practice of law, and it was but natural that when Sam took his entrance examination that he should enter the writer's office and become a member of the firm in

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1913. There Sam worked mightily until 1946, when out of a clear sky came the invitation to become Dean of the Law School of the University of South Carolina. He had, a year or two before, confided to his partners his yearning, if opportunity offered, to retire from the practice and teach law. With this opportunity came the fulfillment of his dream.

We practiced together until he went to the Law School and, after his retirement as Dean, on account of his age, he accepted our unanimous invitation to come back to our firm in the relation of "of counsel" in which he worked until the time of his death.

He was throughout his life diligent, able and dedicated to the science of the law. He had little fascination for trial work but in handling many questions of our practice, he was outstanding.

He had capacity for real estate practice, the handling of accounting and problems of estate and probate practice.

Probably his best work was in the field of corporation law—the organization, re-organization, merger and transfer of corporate properties.

As a public servant, he was throughout his life active in the community interests. His leadership in the promotion of public schools of the county, the formation and development of the Anderson Memorial Hospital, and the Anderson Airport Commission was conspicuous and effectual, and this continued until the week of his death.

Sam was, however, not solely a bookworm, but a genial and beloved all-round companion. He was devoted to his fine family, and had three grandsons in training for the practice of law. In the Law School of the University of South Carolina, he took abiding interest and joy. He had exceptional social qualities and enjoyed giving many exceptional dinners.

He was an intellectual who had a lively interest in the sports of the field and stream. He gave up golf because he didn't think he could excel in that, but was an ardent angler until his last days.

With all, and above everything else, he was a lawyer with marked capacity for analysis, methodical, accurate and sound in his judgments. He never left a litigated case, an estate, a corporate merger or an accounting until it was finished, all the details recorded and bound up, so that it can be said of him, as was said of another great lawyer, "Whatever record leaps to light, he never shall be shamed."