

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Today, I will relate to you a brief account of the life of one of the Mahoning Valley's most distinguished residents. As a statesman and a member of the Fourth Estate, Clingan Jackson has contributed significantly to the prestige of our community.

Clingan Jackson is a native of Youngstown, having been born to Mr. & Mrs. John Calvin Jackson in a house next door to his current residence on Jacobs Road. He is of Scotch-Irish descent on both sides of his family, an ethnic group of major importance. During the period of English history known as the Protectorate, which lasted from 1649 to 1660, Oliver Cromwell recruited mercenaries to put down revolts in Ireland. For their services, these soldiers of fortune received grants of land. After the Protectorate fell and the British monarchy was restored, the positions of the mercenaries' descendents were threatened. Between 1710 and 1720, 500,000 of these "Scotch-Irish" emigrated to the New World, as Queen Anne refused to renew any Cromwellian land grants. Mr. Jackson's first ancestor in this country, Isaac Jackson, landed in Baltimore during this period. Jackson's great-great-grandfather, Philip Jackson, left his home in Pennsylvania and looked for better farmland, settling in Ohio around 1800. Also distantly related to Mr. Jackson were Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson and Gideon Jackson of Civil War-era fame.

Jackson's mother was Evalina Clingan, a cousin of John R.T. Clingan of Niles, for whom Youngstown State University's Clingan-Waddell Hall is partially named. A distant ancestor, William Clingan, was one of the signers of the Articles of Confederation. Other forebears include Samuel Tyler, one of the original settlers of Hubbard, and a family named Augustine, which traced part of its line to George Washington.

Clingan Jackson attended the University of Colorado, where he majored in History and English. Graduating in 1929, Jackson worked for a time in the accounting department of Ohio Edison.

Also in 1929, he applied for his first job with the Youngstown Vindicator. Hired by William F. Maag, Jr. himself, Jackson had previously written articles for the Vindicator, these dealing with the history of Carbon, Pennsylvania's Quaker Falls, and other topics. In his early days with the paper, Jackson did a little of everything, no matter how menial the task, such as writing stories around "cuts," which are old pictures kept on file by the Vindicator. Eventually, he came to be involved in more meaningful events. Jackson served as a labor reporter during the Steel Strike of 1937, at which time he was condemned by the C.I.O. as "anti-Union." While living in Lowellville, a town councilman named Dr. Erskine died while in office. Jackson wrote his obituary for the Vindicator. The citizens of Lowellville were so impressed by this piece that they chose Jackson as Erskine's replacement. Thus began Clingan Jackson's role in politics.

In 1928, the Democratic Party experienced a period of revival, with Al Smith leading the way as its Presidential candidate. Though Hoover and the Republicans won the day, the Stock Market Crash of 1929 and the resulting depression helped the Democrats gain political ground. In 1934, Jackson was chosen by the Democrats to be their candidate for State Representative. Jackson won and served for two years. Later, he stood for the U.S. Congress, but was defeated in the primary.

Between 1944 and 1950, Jackson served as Ohio State Senator. During this time, Senator Jackson served on the Ohio Programs Commission and authored a bill that created the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. In the 1950's, Jackson travelled all 18,000 miles of Ohio's state highways as Chairman of the Ohio Highway Construction Council and played a major role in the building of Ohio's interstate highway system in the 1960's. Jackson has also been a member of Ohio's Pardon & Parole Commission and served on the Ohio Civil Rights Commission for more than 22 years.

Simultaneously, Jackson worked for the Vindicator, eventually as political editor. In such a capacity, he has interviewed every President from Herbert Hoover to Ronald Reagan. Other dignitaries he has met have included Alf Landon, H.L. Mencken, Haile Salassie, Charles de Gaulle, and Will Rogers. After 54 years with the Vindicator, Jackson retired and lives in a house that he built in 1939 on land inherited from his family. However, he has remained active, serving as a member of the Youngstown Charter Review Commission and as Chairman of the Multi-Purpose Senior Citizens Center.

As a journalist, public servant, and concerned citizen, Clingan Jackson serves Youngstown and the Mahoning Valley as a model of integrity, courage, and moral perseverance. He has been (and continues to be) the incarnation of public spirit and a man worthy of our accolades.

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