

# *Memorial Resolution*

## **Honorable Alex Whitefield Darnell**

**September 9, 1929 – November 24, 2020**

**June 2021**

Alex Whitefield Darnell (September 9, 1929 to November 24, 2020) was born in Montgomery County to the late Elliott Sinclair and Anita Whitefield Darnell. He graduated from Clarksville High School where he was an outstanding football player. He went on to receive his undergraduate degree from Vanderbilt University in 1951, where he played offensive tackle on a football scholarship. After receiving his undergraduate degree, he attended and graduated from Vanderbilt Law School and during his time in law school time he coached the Vanderbilt freshman football team.

In 1952 he married the former Sarah Anne Howser, whom he began dating in high school. After graduating Vanderbilt Law School in 1954, he served two years in Germany during the Occupation in U.S. Army intelligence activities. He returned to Clarksville, where he was in private law practice until appointed Clerk and Master of Montgomery County Chancery Court by Chancellor William Leach, Sr. He served as President of the Tennessee County Officials Association, where he helped modernize the County Officials Retirement System.

Alex Darnell loved farming. In 1981 he and Sarah moved to Port Royal, on the Red River, where they built one of the earliest solar-heated homes. There Alex raised cattle, grew fruit trees and kept a garden. His favorite things were cooking, politics and telling stories. Chancellor Darnell was a faithful member of Port Royal United Methodist Church.

In 1975, Alex was appointed Chancellor of the then 6th Chancery District, which covered eight counties, including Stewart, Houston, Dickson, Humphreys, Hickman, Cheatham, Montgomery, and Robertson. In 1984 he was elected Chancellor of the (new) 19<sup>th</sup> Judicial District consisting of Montgomery and Robertson Counties, where he served until his retirement in 1997. He served over 20 years on the bench. Chancellor Darnell was kind to lawyers. He mentored and protected young lawyers. He was respected by the legal community and was always willing to discuss almost any topic at the “coffee pot” in the Clerk and Master’s office. He had a love of literature and would often quote Shakespeare or the King James version of the Bible in rulings from the bench. His legacy continues. He is missed.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Tennessee Judicial Conference on this 16<sup>th</sup> day of June 2021, that this resolution in honor of our departed colleague and friend Alex Whitefield Darnell be entered on the minutes of this conference, that a copy be furnished to West Publishing Company for publication in **Tennessee Decisions**, and that a copy be furnished to the family.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Judge Kathryn Wall Olita  
Circuit Court Judge, Division V  
19<sup>th</sup> Judicial District