



Stillwater Pioneer Athlete Memorial



ELMER CHILTON SWANK

April 4, 1918 - March 20, 1969

Stillwater High School Class of 1935

6th Annual Memorial Induction Ceremony

September 29, 2001

Elmer Chilton Swank was born on April 4, 1918 in Guthrie, Oklahoma to Arthur R. and Margaret Swank. In 1921, the Swank family moved from Guthrie to Stillwater where, except for his military service years, Chilton lived for the rest of his life.

Chilton was an outstanding athlete, and athletics were an important part of his life while he was growing up. While attending Stillwater High School, Chilton played and lettered in football (#60) and basketball for four years. He also lettered in baseball one year. With fond

memories of his high school athletic experience, he often talked of the iron-handed discipline of Coach Ralph Hamilton, who often enforced his rules with a bamboo rod.

In addition to athletics, Chilton also participated in many other high school activities including the mixed chorus and the boys' glee club. Always a leader in everything he did, Chilton served as Senior Class President, President of the Boys' Glee Club, and a Boy Rotarian.

After graduating from high school in 1935, Chilton attended the University of Oklahoma where he was a member of the Kappa Sigma Fraternity. In 1939, he received his Bachelor of Arts degree. Continuing his education at the OU College of Law, he received his Bachelor of Laws degree in 1941.

On July 16, 1940, Chilton married Dorothy Nell Penner who had also graduated from the University of Oklahoma. They had two children, Nan and Charles.

Chilton practiced law in Stillwater most of his adult life. Upon graduating from law school, he joined his father and older brother in the firm of Swank and Swank. Later, he was a partner in the firm of Sater and Swank. During the years he practiced law, Chilton had the reputation of being an outstanding trial attorney. Although he was always competitive and served his clients well, he always played by the rules, a lesson he learned on the athletic fields at Stillwater High School.

Chilton proudly served his country as an officer in the United States Army in two wars. During World War II, he served in the Quartermaster Corps. While serving as a member of the 45th Division during the Korean conflict, he commanded the 120th Combat Engineers in Japan and Korea. At the time of his death, he was a retired Lt. Colonel in the United States Army Reserves.

Active in public service, Chilton was the County Attorney for Payne County from 1946 to 1949. In 1952, he was elected to the Oklahoma House of Representatives where he served one term. He also served as the Secretary of the Payne County Election Board for 14 years from 1955 to 1969.

A member of the Presbyterian Church, Chilton was also a member of the American, Oklahoma, and Payne County Bar Associations, the American Legion, the Frontier Masonic Lodge in Stillwater, as well as the Scottish Rite Consistory at Guthrie and the India Temple Shrine in Oklahoma City.

Chilton loved his family, his country, his community, his vocation, and Stillwater Pioneer Athletics. The lessons he learned while playing sports at Stillwater High School served him well for the rest of his life.

Presenter
Charles Swank
Stillwater High School Class of 1967