Legends in the Law: Ramsay D. Potts

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Ramsay D. Potts is a founding partner of the law firm Shaw Pittman Potts & Trowbridge. A major general in the U.S. Air Force, Potts received the Distinguished Service Cross, the Silver Star, the Distinguished Flying Cross with Two Oak Leaf Clusters, the Distinguished Unit Citation, the British Distinguished Flying Cross, and the French Croix de Guerre during World War II.

A 1948 graduate of the Harvard Law School, Potts has served as special assistant to the chairman of the National Security Resources Board, special assistant to the administrator of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, and associate counsel to the U.S. Senate Armed Services Subcommittee. Potts stepped down as managing partner of Shaw Pittman in 1986, where he is currently an active consultant on management, legislative, aviation, and contract matters.

Bar Report: Where did you grow up?
Ramsay D. Potts: I was born in Memphis, Tennessee, on October 24, 1916. I was the eldest of six children, three boys and three girls. My father was a cotton merchant, and he was a wonderful father. He taught me how to throw a football, a baseball, and how to play golf. And my mother was a marvelous homemaker. She helped me build a miniature golf course around the house with little flags at every hole. We had golf tournaments constantly, where she would give away prizes. Everyone who participated was given the same prize so you knew you weren't special just because you won.

It was a happy childhood, growing up in a close, loving family.

BR: Did you attend public school in Memphis?
RDP: Yes. I went to grammar school and, early on, high school in the Memphis public school system. I was a good student, and my father saw to it that I studied. He had his own special chair and would sit in it and read his books and magazines. I would take my schoolbooks and lie on the floor in the pool of light from his lamp and study. Then I spent my junior and senior years at an all-boys prep school, Darlington School, in Rome, Georgia. I studied hard, but I also spent time secretly playing cards and gambling whenever we could get away with it.

BR: Where did you go to college?
RDP: I went to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where I studied economics and English, and graduated with a bachelor of science degree in commerce.

BR: When did your interest in law arise?
RDP: After college I went to work for my father in the cotton business. I didn't like it, and that was when I decided I wanted to be a lawyer. I didn't have an overriding interest in science or chemistry, but I had a great interest in literature, language, political science, and history. I thought those interests would tie in well with law. But this was 1940 and war had broken out in Europe. I figured the United States was going to get into the war sooner or later. So I took the test to enlist in the United States Army Air Corps.

BR: Were you called to service?
RDP: Yes. I was called to training in early 1941, and sent to flight school in Cuero, Texas, and later to Randolph and Brooks Field near San Antonio. During the ten months of training I learned to fly the AT-6, which was a wonderful little plane. I was scheduled to be commissioned on December 7, 1941, but that morning the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. My commission ceremony was delayed four days. On December 11, 1941, I was commissioned as a second lieutenant and given my wings.

BR: What was your first assignment?
RDP: I ran training exercises with army reconnaissance officers. I was flying the O-52, a single-engine plane with an observation seat in the back. We were supposed to fly over enemy positions so the army observer could determine where the enemy artillery was located. This O-52 was undoubtedly the worst airplane I've ever flown. It tended to ground loop on take off and landing, which means the plane would turn in a tight circle to the right, and it frequently developed engine trouble. One day it broke an oil line, and spilled oil all over the windshield. I couldn't see anything, but I could feel that the engine was about to sputter and quit. I had to make an emergency landing, which I was lucky enough to do without killing either myself or the lieutenant flying with me.

BR: Did you ever fly in combat?
RDP: Yes, I flew many combat missions. My first mission targeted the marshalling rail yards at Lille, France, which was occupied by the Germans. By this time, I was operations officer of my squadron and had been promoted to captain. I was leading an element of three airplanes in a group formation of 24 planes. We headed out, circled around the base, and gathered in formation. We had a tail wind coming from the west, and before we knew it, we were directly over the target area, where we were attacked by German fighters. My best friend, who was flying on my left wing, was shot down. My tail gunner was in shock and wouldn't respond. It seemed as if it took us forever to get away from France and over friendly territory again.

Although a successful mission, we sustained numerous losses. At the base in England, the plane in front of me had to make an emergency landing and skidded off the runway, and broke in two. Afterwards, I went back to the Nissan hut I lived in and sat in front of the potbelly stove. I was cold, so I put on extra clothes and eventually went to the officer's club for a shot of whiskey. I wasn't frightened during the mission, but I was shaken afterward. I wondered if I could keep doing this. Just then Tommy Taylor, an officer from another group who was in my graduating class and on the same mission, walked in. I said, "Tommy, that was one hell of a mission," but he laughed and said, "That was a piece of cake." And I thought, "If he can do it, then I know damn well I can too." I was never in that kind of shock again.

BR: So that incident didn't prevent you from flying combat?
RDP: Not at all. In fact, in November 1942 we were deployed to North Africa.
I remember as we were approaching the African shoreline, I saw hills in the back distance that seemed higher than I thought they should be, so I called the navigator and told him. He examined the map again and realized he had been reading the altitudes in feet, whereas the heights were in meters.

When we finally landed, I was exhausted. As the bomb doors opened below, I heard a voice say, "Captain Potts, report to Group Operations immediately." I didn't like the tone of the voice, so I angrily said, "I'll be there." The voice persisted, and now I was annoyed. And as I came out of the bomb doors, a hand tapped me on the shoulder really hard and I swung around thinking, "who the hell...," and there was my brother Van Dyke, who was in the 12th Air Force. It was a great surprise.

BR: You had not seen your family since you left?
RDP: No, not once. I was back and forth between England and North Africa.

By 1943, I had also gone from squadron commander to group operations officer.

BR: What did you do in this position?
RDP: I was responsible for planning missions, assigning crews, deciding what squadrons flew in what order, and running training missions for the entire group. Later that year I was brought to wing headquarters to be the wing chief of staff, and in January 1944, the 453rd Bomb Group, a new group, came in. I helped with the group's orientation and battle training. But on one of its earlier missions, its commanding officer was shot down. I received a message to report to division headquarters, which was commanded by Major General Hodges, a salty, West Point type. When I entered his office, he told me he had two colonels from Washington on their way to take commands, but General Timberlake, who was my wing commanding officer, said he wanted me—not one of them—as the new group commander.

This was beyond my wildest dreams. I looked at Timberlake, who was nonchalantly blowing on his fingernails, looking up at the ceiling-like nothing was happening. Hodges continued and told Timberlake I didn't have the experience and was not a West Point graduate. But then he asked me, "do you think you can do the job?" I seized the moment and said yes. He looked at Timberlake and said, "I give him six weeks."

BR: That's a lot of responsibility. Were you nervous?
RDP: I had a lot of trepidation because the squadron commanders were older than I was, and many were West Pointers. I shuffled the structure of the group and asked for a new operations officer, somebody from the outside. Low and behold, they sent an officer from another group-a guy named Jimmy Stewart. Jimmy Stewart, the actor, became my operations officer.

BR: Jimmy Stewart?
RDP: Yes, we hit it off very well, even though he was eight years older than I was. He was a wonderful addition to the group and had the same languid style as in his movies. Everyone loved him. We whipped that group into tip-top shape and it quickly became one of the best groups in the Air Force.

But we weren't together long. Sometime later I became the Director of Bombing Operations for the 8th Air Force, a position I held until the end of the war.

BR: The war was almost over?
RDP: Yes, one of our last missions was against a German force of 30,000 holed-up in the Gironde Peninsula near Bordeaux. General de Gaulle wanted to capture the Germans by combining land, sea, and air operations, and asked the 8th Air Force to drop heavy bombs there. But the French ground forces didn't go in as they were supposed to. That night we were told to stand down, which means we weren't to fly any combat missions the next day.

Later that evening I was the duty officer when I received a call from General Doyle, the American liaison with de Gaulle's headquarters. He asked us to bomb the Germans again, and swore this time the French would go in. I said no, and he yelled, "Don't you know there's a war going on? Who's in charge there?" I said that I was.

I tried to find General Doolittle for permission to schedule the mission, but I couldn't. So I called General Partridge, the commanding general of the division that had run the mission, and asked if I sent over a field order to repeat the mission, would he provide the same lead crew and lead navigator? He said he'd do better than that, he'd lead it himself. I sent the field order, setting the mission in motion.

The next morning, I was placing the mission on the map with red ribbons when General Doolittle arrived with high-ranking RAF officers in tow. I hear him say, "Nope, we're not flying combat today." I shuddered. Just then, he saw the ribbons on the map, and exploded. I tried to explain, but he was livid, yelling at me about everything that could go wrong. By now I was fuming, and General Anderson pulled me aside and told me to disappear, or I would be court-martialed.

But the mission was incredibly successful. The Germans surrendered, all 30,000 of them, and General de Gaulle was overjoyed. He awarded General Doolittle the highest French decoration, and Doolittle was kind enough to tell General de Gaulle that I had planned the operation. So the French awarded me a Croix de Guerre, a cross of war decoration.

BR: What did you do when the war came to an end?
RDP: I worked on the strategic bombing survey in the military analysis division, which was headed by my boss at the 8th Air Force, Major General Orvil Anderson. The survey analyzed the effects of our air operations on the outcome of the war. Some of the leaders of the survey included Franklin d'Olier, Paul Nitze, George Ball, Ken Galbraith, Henry Alexander, and Theodore Wright. As chief of staff of the military analysis division, I interrogated some of the surviving German leaders, such as Keitel, Goering, Kesselring, and Jodl about the effects of our air operations. Most of the interrogations went well, except the interrogation of Admiral Doenitz, who was head of the German Navy. As far as he was concerned, the German surrender was an interlude and sooner or later the Germans would get even. Besides Doenitz, the rest seemed resigned that the allies had won, and that the war was over.

BR: The war ended in 1945 and you got married that same year. When did you find the time to meet your wife?
RDP: [Laughing] I met radar officer Veronica Hamilton Raynor, of the RAF Women's Auxiliary Air Force, shortly after I returned from Africa for the first time. My commander had ordered me

to inspect the radar station to find out how it operated. It was the station that sent out air sea rescue when we had a plane down in the North Sea. Section Officer Raynor was one of the officers who explained how the station worked. I wouldn't say there was an immediate chemistry, but I was fascinated by women in these duties. A while later, we were both invited to a party by Mrs. Geoffrey Colman, of the Colman mustard family. At the party, Veronica appeared in an evening dress. She made an entirely different impression.

BR: Were you able to see her much?
RDP: I began to see her from time to time, and had fallen in love with her. In fact, on New Year's Eve 1944, I was supposed to meet her at her radar base in southern England, but I was then at an air force headquarters in Liege, Belgium, helping to direct our air effort to stop the Germans in the Battle of the Bulge. But when I went out to the airfield, there was a lot of snow on the runway and no one would give me clearance to fly. I persisted and took off in the middle of a snowstorm-and flew straight to the RAF base where she was located. I can dramatize it by saying that when I finally got there, the base was closed due to a heavy rainstorm. I buzzed the tower at 20 feet and they gave me a red light, so I went around and buzzed it again until they finally gave me a green light and I landed. She was right there waiting for me.

BR: When were you married?
RDP: We were married on December 22, 1945, after I had been to Japan with the U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey. Then I brought my new wife to the United States for the first time. I had been thinking, "What do I want to do now? I don't want to be in the Air Force unless there's a war going on." (Little did I know in the not too distant future there would be a war and then another) In the mean time, I'd interviewed at Harvard Law School and was accepted. I began taking classes in February. I thought whether or not I practiced law, it was excellent training. So I brought my new bride to Cambridge, Massachusetts.

BR: Was it a difficult transition?
RDP: It was excruciatingly difficult. I was used to the war and activities that involved action and more action, but now I was in an environment conducive to studying. Plus I had a new bride who was trying to get used to living in the United States, not England.
I didn't do very well that first year, adjusting to life as a student, because I was too wrapped up reminiscing about the past. But I became acclimated to my new life and did much better my second and third year. I graduated in May 1948.

BR: What did you do then?
RDP: I went back to Memphis to practice at Waring, Walker & Cox. I was making $300 a month, plus one-third of the income generated by the cases I was working on. I liked practicing law, but my wife did not. She thought it was a great come down, first from being a colonel in the Air Force to a student at Harvard Law School. Then from being a Harvard graduate to a mere associate in a law firm that paid only $300 a month. But I didn't care, I was determined. I wanted to prove I could be a lawyer.

BR: Do you remember your first case?
RDP: I'll never forget it. A young, attractive woman in Memphis had been in an automobile

accident. It was another man's fault, so she sued him for damages, which included having her teeth knocked out. My partner told me the secret of success in this case would be to have the right expert witness.

Our expert was a noted dentist in Memphis, and he turned out to be a very good witness for us. My partner also said our strategy was that not only did the woman have these physical injuries, but she also had no skills. Our case was that her best hope in life was to marry a well-to-do man in Memphis, and now because of her injuries her chances were nil.

We displayed our witness in court, who dressed in sack cloth and ashes, and the jury was very sympathetic. They awarded us a $9,000 verdict. In those days in Tennessee, damage awards were very low because insurance companies had complete control. The judge said he was going to grant a remititur, which meant he'd cut back the verdict. I was incensed. We had worked hard and fought for this verdict. But my partner explained to me that in Tennessee an award for $9,000 for loss of teeth was so outrageous it would be reversed on appeal. The remititur softened it enough so that on appeal, it wouldn't be overturned. Sure enough, the insurance company brought it up on appeal, and because the judge granted the remititur to $6,000, instead of $9,000, it wasn't reversed.

We also did some cases for Memphis Street Railway and I participated in some of those. But a year after I started, I was ordered back to active duty in the air force.

BR: In what capacity?
RDP: The air force had gotten into a dispute with the navy over something called the B-36 investigation. The fight regarded the division of the budget between the different services. The navy was incensed that the air force had ordered some six engine B-36, long-range bombers. The Navy leaked information to the press, published anonymous documents attacking air force doctrine and the secretary of the air force, and lobbied on the hill. The air force thought it would be a good idea to counterattack since the navy was also maintaining that air force strategic operations in WWII were a great waste of resources. My job was to work with another colonel on the analysis of carrier task force operations in the Pacific and then to prepare the secretary and the chief of staff for appearances before Congress regarding the controversy.

After that, Stuart Symington, the first secretary of the U.S. Air Force, became chairman of the National Security Resources Board, and he asked me to go with him as his special assistant. One of my jobs was to prepare a plan to operate the government in the event of a nuclear attack by an enemy. I organized a task force and prepared a plan, but Symington was unsure of my proposal. He sent me to President Truman, a wonderful, fatherly man, who liked it and wanted it implemented immediately. From then on, it became known as the "Symington Plan," a plan to operate the U.S. government under the stress of nuclear attack.

But when Symington decided to run for senator in Missouri, I decided to leave the government and stay in Washington.

BR: Did you already have a job?
RDP: Yes, I'd been offered a job as president of the Military Air Transport Association, an association of air carriers who provided charter and all types of cargo service. Back then, no air carrier could operate a service domestically or internationally without getting permission from the Civil Aeronautics Board. I represented carriers trying to obtain authority to fly in the United States and abroad. Some had authority to fly scheduled cargo service, such as Seaboard World Airlines. Others, like TransCarribean, American Flyers, Overseas National, and Capitol Airways were looking for different ways to fly passenger charters or scheduled service in the U.S. and abroad.

I battled the giants of the industry, airlines like Pan Am, TWA, Eastern, and United, and I had a hell of a lot of fun.

BR: When did you found the firm?
RDP: We began as a four-man firm in 1958. The original partners were Brackley Shaw, Steuart Pittman, Charles Maechling, and me. Tim Hanlon and Marty Krall were recruited from the air force honors program. Next Ted Rogers joined us to start the tax practice, and Fox Trowbridge came with us to begin our energy practice. My brother Steve Potts, now head of the Office of Government Ethics, was our first associate.

When Brackley Shaw, our managing partner retired, I became chairman of the management committee, which was then called the coordinating committee because no one wanted to be managed. I was in that position for 18 years. I had many interesting clients, including the Investment Company Institute, which consisted of mutual fund companies, its investment advisers and underwriters. It's hard to believe in those days mutual funds were small businesses in the finance and investment communities. We had difficult battles with commercial banks that wanted to move into the business and operate their own funds.

BR: Did you ever imagine the firm would expand to what it is today?
RDP: No. When we brought in Trowbridge, he brought Gerry Charnoff with him and the two of them built a substantial energy practice. Today our firm is a leader in nuclear energy. Over the years, we've expanded and now have three additional offices in New York, Tysons Corner, Virginia, and London with more than 300 lawyers in the four offices. Our information technology practice, banking and real estate practice, diversity counseling practice, and our corporate practice has established the firm as a leader in those fields.

Charnoff succeeded me as managing partner of the firm in 1986, and he in turn was succeeded by Paul Mickey, who is doing an outstanding job in taking the firm into the 21st century. As part of this transition, we have changed the name from Shaw Pittman Potts and Trowbridge to Shaw Pittman to give us a brand name for the future.

BR: Are you still active in the firm?
RDP: Well, I stepped aside in 1986, and became senior counsel. But by the late 1980s, I'd turned all my clients over to other partners. Currently, I serve as an ex officio member of the management committee. I still come into the office every day and assist younger partners on

management, legislative, aviation, and contract matters.
I'm also quite active when it comes to pro bono work on behalf of my alma maters, the Darlington School, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and Harvard Law School.

BR: Do you think the practice of law has changed from when you began?
RDP: Yes. There is more emphasis now on making money out of the law. I see the same degree of determination to serve the client, but with a greater emphasis on profit.
Another difference is the need to specialize. When I began practicing, you would have a client with legislative problems, aviation problems, and other needs, and one lawyer handled all of these problems. Today it's hard to do that because clients demand experts in each field of law to represent them. The degree of specialization is much, much greater.

BR: Who were some of the most influential people in your life?
RDP: There were quite a few. In my military career, I had a particular regard for Jimmy Doolittle, Tooey Spaatz, and Orvil Anderson. But the one who stands out the most is Ted Timberlake. He promoted me to squadron commander in the 93rd Bomb Group, and then convinced General Hodges to give me the assignment as group commander. He gave me the chance to prove myself and my ability as a leader.

Stuart Symington is another. I worked for him on the National Security Resources Board and as his executive officer when he was secretary of the Air Force. There are public figures who stand out in my mind as well: Winston Churchill, who was instrumental in holding the free world together, and President Truman for his decisiveness.

BR: What are some of your hobbies today?
RDP: I'm a student of history, and love to read history and biography. I enjoy spending time with my grandchildren-all six of them. And I still play an occasional round of golf and tennis.

In the winter, I spend long weekends in a little house I have in Florida.

BR: Would you do it all over again?
RDP: Certainly. It's been a wonderful life, full of challenges.

Ramsay Potts; Lawyer and World War II Pilot

By Adam Bernstein
Washington Post Staff Writer
Wednesday, May 31, 2006

Ramsay D. Potts, 89, a highly decorated World War II combat pilot who became a corporate lawyer and founder of a large Washington law firm, died May 28 at Bethesda Memorial Hospital in Boynton Beach, Fla., after a stroke.

After the war, Mr. Potts graduated from Harvard University law school, was a special assistant to then-Air Force Secretary W. Stuart Symington and president of the Military Air Transport Association, a trade organization of charter and cargo carriers.

In 1958, Mr. Potts and three other lawyers formed a Washington firm that, after some changes among top partners, was long known as Shaw, Pittman, Potts & Trowbridge. The firm's portfolio included corporate law, securities regulation, environmental law and nuclear energy issues.

One of Mr. Potts's clients was the Investment Company Institute, a trade group for the then-new mutual fund industry. He also was a specialist on air transportation law.

He retired in 1986 as managing partner and became senior counsel of the firm, which grew to more than 300 lawyers with offices in Tysons Corner, New York, Los Angeles and London.

Last year, the firm merged with San Francisco-based Pillsbury Winthrop LLP to form Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman.

Ramsay Douglas Potts Jr. was born Oct. 24, 1916, in Memphis, where his father was a cotton merchant.

He was a 1941 commerce graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he was a Southern Conference leader in tennis and guard on the basketball team.

During World War II, he served in the Army Air Forces as a combat pilot. Assigned to the 8th Air Force, he flew B-24 Liberator bombers in missions over France and North Africa and participated in a vital raid on oil refineries at Ploesti, Romania, one of the top sources of petroleum to the Germans.

For the August 1943 run at Ploesti, he had to fly at house-top level, enduring what a military publication at the time called "merciless fire from almost every conceivable ground defense weapon. . . . During the target run, a direct flak burst tore away the vertical stabilizer, and another blast shattered the elevator control cables at one point."

The plane, called the Duchess, nearly lost control until the engineer spliced the torn cables with .50-caliber shell links. When the Duchess returned to base, it had more than 50 fist-size holes in the wings and fuselage.

Mr. Potts won many promotions -- he was full colonel at 27. When Mr. Potts was group leader of the 453rd Bomb Group, actor James Stewart was his operations officer. "We hit it off very well, even though he was eight years older than I was," he said of Stewart, with whom he remained friends. "He was a wonderful addition to the group and had the same languid style as in his movies."

Mr. Potts became director of bombing operations of the 8th Air Force and, after the war, was a military adviser to the U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey, which analyzed the effectiveness of bombing missions against the Axis powers. For that work, he interviewed top Nazi leaders, including Hermann Goering, Albert Kesselring and Alfred Jodl.

His military decorations included the Army Distinguished Service Cross, two awards of the Silver Star, the Legion of Merit, three awards of the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Bronze Star and five awards of the Air Medal.

He retired from the Air Force Reserve as a major general in 1972 and was fundraiser for the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum near Savannah, Ga.

He formerly served on the board of Emerson Electric Co., a defense contractor, and was for decades heavily involved in Washington area tennis tournaments as a player and organizer. In 2005, he moved to Delray Beach, Fla., from Arlington.

Survivors include four children, Ramsay Douglas Potts IV of McLean, David H. Potts of Rehoboth Beach, Del., and Lesley Potts and Lindsay Potts-Beckwith, both of Toledo; a brother, Stephen Potts of Chevy Chase; three sisters, Anne Lunde of Bluffton, S.C., Susan Youmans-Whitaker of Sun City Center, Fla., and Penny Bailey of Memphis; and six grandchildren.

His wife, Veronica Raynor Potts, whom he married in 1945, died in 1993.

To court her during the war, Mr. Potts flew one New Year's Eve from his base in Belgium to hers in southern England. She was in the Royal Air Force women's auxiliary.

"I can dramatize it by saying that when I finally got there, the base was closed due to a heavy rainstorm," he said in a 1999 oral history with the D.C. Bar. "I buzzed the tower at 20 feet and they gave me a red light, so I went around and buzzed it again until they finally gave me a green light and I landed. She was right there waiting for me."

Steuart Pittman, a Washington lawyer who was appointed by President John F. Kennedy in 1961 to create enough fallout shelters to protect every American in the event of a nuclear attack, and who resigned in frustration three years later amid heated debates over the feasibility, the cost and even the ethics of such a program, died on Feb. 10 at his family farm in Davidsonville, Md. He was 93. The apparent cause was a stroke, said his wife, Barbara.

Mr. Pittman was appointed the nation's first civil defense chief for nuclear war preparedness at the height of the 1961 Berlin crisis, when words like fallout, megaton and radioactivity became alarmingly familiar to every American schoolchild.

Kennedy's predecessor, President Dwight D. Eisenhower, had made fallout shelters the responsibility of an agency that managed emergency and natural disaster planning.

But Mr. Pittman, appointed assistant secretary of defense for civil defense soon after Soviet and American tanks faced off in Berlin and the wall dividing East and West Berlin started going up, had one mission only. It was to give 180 million Americans access to shelters stocked with enough food, water and medical supplies to get them through the first week or two after a nuclear attack, when exposure to radioactive fallout was most perilous.

From the start, it was a controversial undertaking. Mr. Pittman would later call it one of the most "unappetizing, unappealing and unpopular" jobs ever created.

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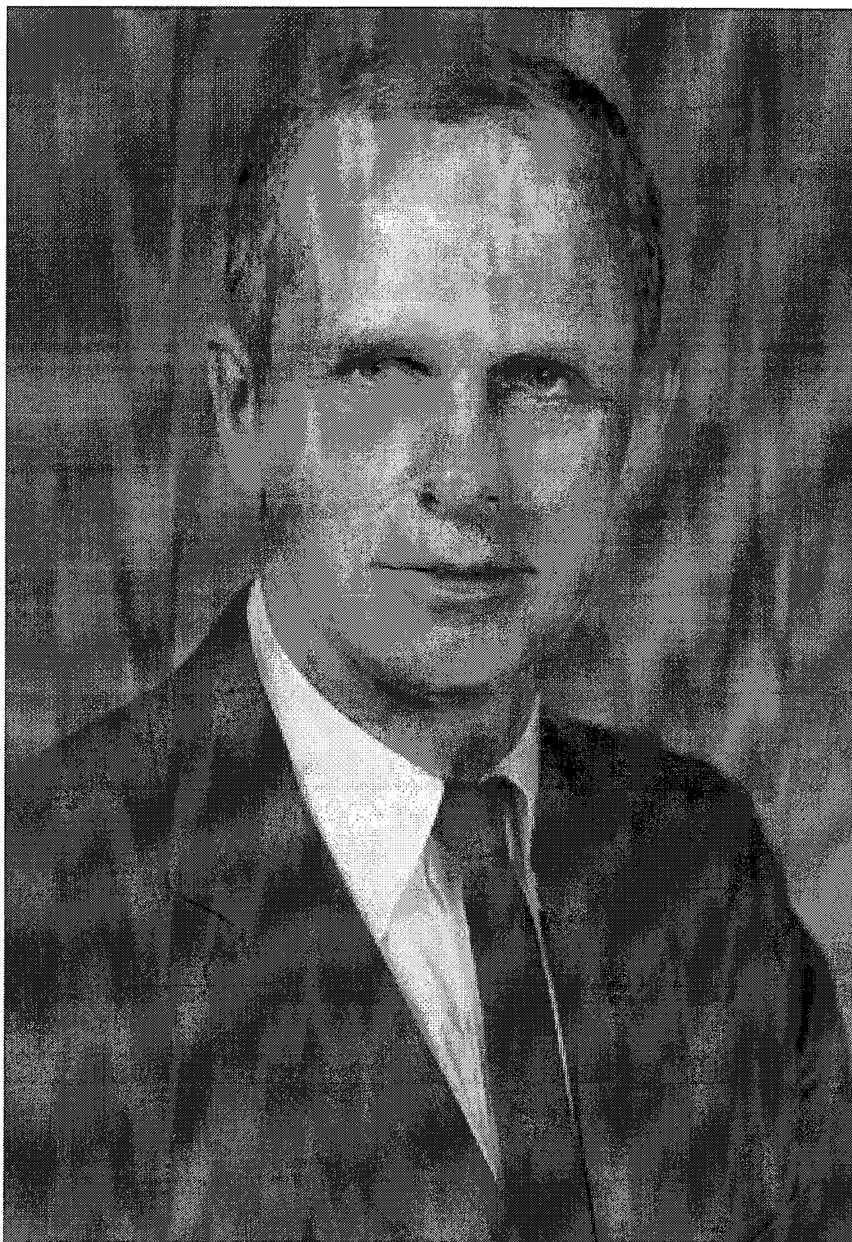
Many members of Congress balked at the estimated $3 billion cost to the federal government. State and local officials cringed at the matching $3 billion they were expected to provide. There was debate in the White House and the Pentagon over the proper balance between public and private, federal and local, and individual and community control of the shelters.

There were also ethical debates about whether it would be justified to use violence to stop a neighbor from forcing his way into someone's shelter. Peace activists warned that building too many fallout shelters would hurt the cause of disarmament.

Mr. Pittman, an international investment banking lawyer, had been chief counsel for the Marshall Plan after the war, but had no domestic government or political experience. Still, within a year he had dispatched federal workers to every part of the country to inventory subway systems and public buildings that might be converted for shelter use; established specifications for shelter construction; collected vast amounts of information on public attitudes about shelters; and stocked about 100,000 model shelters in 14 cities.

Photo


Steuart Pittman Credit Oscar Porter/U.S. Army

During an Armed Services Committee hearing. Representative F. Edward Hebert, a Democrat from Louisiana, told Mr. Pittman: "I don't know which way we are going, but if we decide not to go ahead, it will be in spite of your valiant efforts, and if we do go ahead, it will be because of those valiant efforts."

Yet, hard as it was to combat opposition to the program, Mr. Pittman said, it was harder still to contend with the apathy and resignation he encountered.

"I hate to hear people say that they would prefer to die in a nuclear attack rather than face the horrors of survival," he told U.P.I. in 1961. "This nation was built by people who left Europe to

face the unknown hazards of a wilderness continent. Do we no longer have the courage to face an unknown challenge?"

Steuart Lansing Pittman was born in Albany on June 6, 1919, the second of Ernest and Estelle Pittman's three children. He grew up on the East Side of Manhattan, graduated from Yale in 1941, and worked for two years in Asia for a subsidiary of Pan American World Airways before joining the Marine Corps in 1943. He was sent to China to train and operate with guerrilla groups behind Japanese lines.

Two days after V-J Day, Mr. Pittman was involved in one of the most unusual naval battles of the war, and possibly the last. Mr. Pittman was commanding two Chinese junks carrying guerrillas when they were fired on by a Japanese junk in the South China Sea. Mr. Pittman's forces counterattacked, killing 43 and taking 39 Japanese sailors prisoner. He was awarded the Silver Star for valor.

Mr. Pittman received his law degree from Yale in 1948. In 1954, he became a founding partner of the firm Shaw, Pittman, Potts & Trowbridge (now Pillsbury, Winthrop, Shaw & Pittman), where he remained — with a three-year hiatus to serve in the civil defense post — until he retired in the mid-1980s. He later moved to Dodon Farm, a 550-acre estate in Maryland that has been in his family for more than 300 years.

Besides his wife, Mr. Pittman's survivors include four children from his first marriage — Andrew, Nancy Pittman Pinchot, Rosamond Pittman Casey, and Tamara Pittman; three children from his current marriage, Patricia Pittman, Steuart Jr., and Romey Pittman; and 15 grandchildren.

His first marriage, to the former Antoinette Pinchot, ended in divorce.

Mr. Pittman resigned as assistant secretary of defense in March 1964 after the defeat of a $190 million budget appropriation to subsidize construction of shelters in hospitals, schools and other nonprofit institutions.

Mr. Pittman had always advocated the building of community shelters, rather than individual ones. But after returning to private life, he and his wife decided to build a fallout shelter at their home in Maryland.

"We started it, anyway," Mrs. Pittman said in an interview Friday. "But after half a day's digging, we gave it up."

Correction: February 22, 2013

An obituary on Thursday about Steuart Pittman, the assistant secretary of defense for civil defense in the Kennedy administration, misidentified the location of a fallout shelter he and his wife decided to build after he returned to private life. It was on his family estate, Dodon Farm, in Davidsonville, Md. — not at their house in the Georgetown area of Washington.

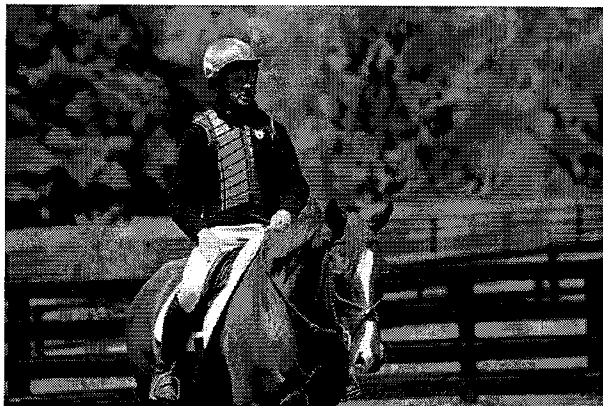
Hero of the Horse: Steuart Pittman

Published: Tuesday, 18 March 2014 16:12

Horse Collaborative/Blogs/Hero of the Horse

By: Jen Roytz
March 3, 2014

The Horse Collaborative is dedicated to creating synergy between the racing and sport horse worlds. We have started "Hero of the Horse," a weekly column that will spotlight a member of the racing or sport horse industry who is making strides in the efforts of responsible Thoroughbred re-homing and retraining.



A life-long equestrian and well-known eventing rider and coach, Steuart Pittman has been an advocate and fan of off-track racehorses for nearly as long as he's been alive. In recent years, however, Pittman has made a name for himself and his Retired Racehorse Training Project across the country and in various sects of the equestrian and racing communities. With an ultimate goal of expanding the demand for ex-racehorses as sport horses and recreational riding mounts, he has definitely made a marked difference in how horse enthusiasts of all disciplines and backgrounds view the OTTB.

"Thoroughbreds declined drastically in popularity among sport and recreation riders between 1970 and 2010," said Pittman. "That was primarily caused by the failure of Thoroughbred advocates to market effectively. We are starting to turn that trend around."

Steuart, Jr., didn't take instruction well from Steuart, Sr.
Eric (aka "King Shit") didn't take instruction well from anybody.

That they are. Pittman's Retired Racehorse Training Project (RRTP) has put on a number of events in recent years aimed at elevating and promoting the potential and versatility of ex-racehorses in all aspects of showing and recreational riding. Starting with their first symposium in 2009, the organization's events, such as the 100 Day Trainer Challenge, in which trainers get horses off the track and have 100 days to train them in their chosen discipline and present them to the public, and the Thoroughbreds for All event, in which various racing and sport horse professionals present demonstrations and discussions about training the retired racehorse, have grown in popularity year after year. The RRTP website (www.retiredracehorsetraining.org) also offers OTTB advocates, owners, and potential owners a wealth of resources, including a trainer directory, bloodline brag, classified ads for off-track Thoroughbreds, and articles on topics relevant to the OTTB owner and enthusiast.

"In the next five years, RRTP will continue building the bridges to second careers and working to increase demand for OTTBs," said Pittman. "The Makeover will most likely hit the road and move to destination tracks across the country. TV coverage will finally happen. We will launch a long-overdue magazine devoted to all things Thoroughbreds do after racing."Pittman's passion for off-track Thoroughbreds stems in part from his talent for bringing out the best in them. Growing up on his family's Maryland-based Dodon farm, Pittman grew up surrounded by Thoroughbreds being used for everything from foxhunters, jumpers and dressage horses to steeplechasers and racehorses.

"Hurricane Hannah was my first OTTB and she made my childhood dreams come true," said Pittman.

"As a professional trainer I work with whatever breed gets sent to me, and I love them all, but over and over the Thoroughbreds with a racing background win me over. I can't get enough of their enthusiasm, trainability and grace."

Pittman credits race training with actually preparing Thoroughbreds for performance and recreational riding careers in ways that other breeds never get to experience.

CALIFORNIA-BRED EX-RACEHORSE, HURRICANE HANNAH WITH 17-YEAR OLD STEUART IN 1979.

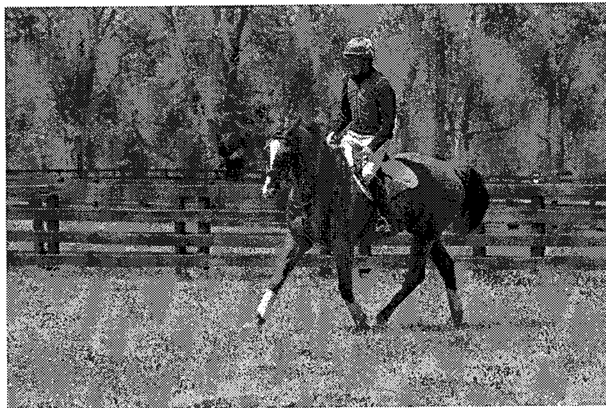
"Track life exposes horses to tractors, cars, crowds, constant handling by professional horsemen, loading, wrapping, vet work, farriery – the list goes on and on," Pittman explained. "Most racehorses go forward and are brave. They rarely get sour because they love what they do under saddle. They love to run. Some of the best horsemanship in the world is on the backside of tracks. It's a magnificent education for a future riding horse."

He also explained the special circumstances a horse fresh off of the track faces. As a racehorse they are accustomed to a much different style of riding and a much faster pace of going. It takes a lot of time and patience to re-educate a horse whose life has been focused on speed and forward momentum.

"The relationship to the bit and to the rider's seat and legs is very different on the track from most other careers, and the horses need time to learn the new way," said Pittman. "Some horses leave the track injured or sore. They perform at a level that stresses their joints, tendons and ligaments.

New owners need to allow time for healing or treatment when this is the case. On the other hand, a horse retiring sound from racing has been physically proven and is therefore more likely to hold up to hard work in other disciplines."

Pittman's over-arching goal is to create and encourage synergy, information-sharing, and collaboration between the racing and equestrian communities. Education is key, and Pittman works hard to try to help organizations and individuals from both sectors of the horse industry to build mutually beneficial relationships that ultimately help the retired racehorse.



"The racing industry leaders seem to have moved from a focus on retirement to a focus on rehoming," said Pittman. "The next step, in my view, is to recognize that rehoming depends on effective training. When a factory shuts down, the workers are offered job retraining programs. Homeless shelters are a last resort. Racehorses certainly need retirement facilities and safety nets, but we will never have the capacity to put them all into rescues of aftercare facilities, even temporarily. They need training and they need increased demand. Once they know a job, there are millions of potential owners for them. Inspiring and educating people to train Thoroughbreds for second careers as a hobby, a business, or a mission is a proven strategy that costs the industry less per horse and is unlimited in capacity."

Brackley Shaw

Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of War for Air, 1946; General Counsel, Department of the Air Force, 1947-49. A collection of his papers from this time are found in the Harry S. Truman Library and Museum

Represented the owner and operator of three mile island after the 1979 accident

Charles Maechling Jr Obituary

Charles Maechling Jr., 87, an international lawyer and State Department official in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, died of pneumonia June 23 at Sibley Memorial Hospital. He had lived in Washington since 1951.

Mr. Maechling was a founding partner in 1956 of the law firm then known as Shaw, Pittman, Potts & Maechling. He left the firm in 1961 when he was appointed to a post in the State Department. Two years later, he became staff director of the Cabinet-level Special Group on Counterinsurgency.

Set up by President John F. Kennedy, its job was to coordinate military and economic aid to less-developed countries threatened with subversion and violence. According to a 1999 article Mr. Maechling wrote in the Virginia Quarterly Review, then-Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy and then-Undersecretary of State Averill Harriman never missed a meeting. Mr. Maechling was also special assistant to Harriman at the time.

In 1966, Mr. Maechling joined the National Science Foundation as deputy general counsel and later was special assistant to the director. He left in 1974 to teach at the University of Virginia's law school for two years and later was a senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, a visiting fellow at Cambridge University's Wolfson College and a guest scholar in international law at the Brookings Institution.

He was born in New York and graduated from Yale University. During World War II, he served in the Navy at sea and as an aide to the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington. After the war, he was an assistant naval attache in South America. He graduated in 1949 from the University of Virginia School of Law, where he was editor of the law review.

Mr. Maechling worked for the Sullivan & Cromwell law firm in New York and then returned to the Washington area in 1951 to work as an attorney in the Office of the Secretary of the Air Force. He was counsel to the Electronics Industries Association until 1956 and outside counsel to the CIA in the late 1950s.

He was a prolific writer of op-ed articles for numerous major U.S. newspapers and a longtime delegate to International Law of the Sea conferences. He advised the National Academy of Sciences and was its representative to the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis.

He was a member of the American Society of International Law, the Yale Club and the Cosmos Club. He enjoyed studying languages.

Survivors include his wife of 62 years, Janet Leighton Maechling of Washington; two children, Philip Leighton Maechling of Missoula, Mont., and Eugenie Elisabeth Buchan of London; and three grandchildren.

-- Patricia Sullivan

GEORGE FOX TROWBRIDGE Washington Lawyer George Fox Trowbridge, 73, a retired nuclear energy lawyer who practiced in Washington for 31 years before retiring in 1985, died of cancer June 17 at his home in Claiborne, Md. Mr. Trowbridge was a native of New Haven, Conn. He was a 1938 graduate of Yale University, where he received a law degree in 1941. During World War II, he worked with the War Production Board and served with the Army in Italy and North Africa. He moved to the Washington area in 1946 when he joined the Atomic Energy Commission as a lawyer. In 1954, he established the law firm of Marx & Trowbridge in Washington. From 1961 until he retired in 1985, he was a partner in the Washington firm of Shaw, Pittman, Potts & Trowbridge. That, he moved from McLean to Claiborne near St. Michael's, Md. Survivors include his wife of 42 years, Ruth Nicholson Trowbridge, of Claiborne; two sons, George Fox Trowbridge Jr. of Oakton and John Nicholson Trowbridge of Alexandria; two daughters, Linda Trowbridge Baxter of Guilford, Conn., and Ruth Nicholson Trowbridge of Amarillo, Tex.; a brother, James R. Trowbridge, and a sister, Harriet G. Trowbridge, both of Philadelphia; and eight grandchildren. (Washington Post, 6/20/1989)

James, Robert A.

From: Nye, Eva-Marie
Sent: Friday, September 01, 2017 1:35 PM
To: James, Robert A.
Subject: Some SPPT history

Rob,

The skeleton of this timeline comes from the mural in the DC office and the oral histories and articles found in the materials we collected for you. I searched through additional news accounts and documents on the Pulse and in NetDocs to find names of attorneys who worked on the matters listed and to flesh out the stories.

I have some feelers out to a few retired and senior partners about the early work of the firm and may be able to fill this in with some more information in coming days.

1934 Ben S. Fisher, formerly of Federal Radio Commission (predecessor of the Federal Communications Commission) formed predecessor to Fisher Wayland Duvall & Southmayd

August 20, 1945, six days after the World War II ended, Lt. Steuart Pittman fought in what is believed to have been the war's last naval battle when a Japanese ship attacked a under his command. He and other American and guerrilla forces overwhelmed and captured the ship. He was awarded the Silver Star. (for an account of the battle, see this)

1952 Ben C. Fisher joined Fisher Wayland & Southmayd.

> Ben Fisher began his career as a law clerk to Judge Learned Hand, U.S. Court of Appeals, 2nd Circuit in New York City. In 1952, he returned to Washington, D.C. to join Fisher, Wayland, and Southmayd (which later became Fisher, Wayland, Cooper, Leader and Zaragoza), a communications law practice his father founded. (http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/washingtonpost/obituary.aspx?pid=179707243)

1954 Shaw Pittman Potts and Maechling founded in Washington, DC

> "Shaw and Potts first met at the Pentagon in 1950. Potts, who rose to become an Air Force colonel during World War II and a major general in the reserves, had been called back for active duty to assist in a case involving a dispute between the Navy and the Air Force over budget divisions. Shaw was the first general counsel of the Air Force, which was created as a separate service in 1947.
> Potts met Pittman when he and his wife bought Pittman's house in North Arlington, Va. They became friends and regular squash partners at the University Club. For a few years, Potts saw the two lawyers socially and they talked about starting a firm together. When they finally decided to give it a go, Shaw, Pittman, and Maechling were sharing office space already. From the start, it was a cohesive and collegial group. In addition to regular lunches at the University Club, the Pottses would have everyone over for buffet dinners at their home.
> Maechling left not long after the firm opened to work with Averell Harriman. And Pittman left the firm in 1961 to serve as assistant secretary of defense in President John F. Kennedy's administration. He returned to the firm in 1964 to resume his international banking and corporate practice.1960 George F. (Fox) Trowbridge joined the renamed Shaw Pittman Potts & Trowbridge, bringing with him nation's first nuclear energy law practice."(Siobhan Roth, "When Covington Met Burling," *Legal Times*, 12/20/1999)
>
> Potts served in the Army Air Corps with actor Jimmy Stewart and the two remained friends. Old-timers recall Stewart visiting the office.

1960 George F. (Fox) Trowbridge joined the Firm.

1961 Steuart Pittman, co-founder of Shaw Pittman Potts & Trowbridge, created America's Cold War fallout shelter program while serving as Assistant Secretary of Defense in the Kennedy administration.

Pittman left the Firm in 1961 to become undersecretary of defense for civil defense tasked with creating an infrastructure that would provide food and shelter to Americans in the first days after a nuclear attack. He later called one of the most "unappetizing, unappealing and unpopular" jobs ever created. Pittman resigned and returned to the Firm in 1964 following the defeat of a budget appropriation to build shelters in hospitals, schools and other nonprofit institutions. http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/19/us/steuart-pittman-head-of-fallout-shelter-program-dies-at-93.html?mcubz=1

1966 Gerry Charnoff joined Shaw Pittman Potts & Trowbridge, becoming the Firm's second Nuclear lawyer.

1968 Les Nicholson joined Shaw Pittman Potts & Trowbridge, which had 10 lawyers at the time.

1970 George (Ted) Rogers joined Shaw Pittman Potts & Trowbridge. Rodgers had a substantial practice representing B. Francis Saul and his family's substantial real estate interests. The B.F. Saul Company became a major client of the Firm.

1972 On behalf of Hughes Aircraft, Fisher Wayland Cooper Leader & Zaragoza successfully lobbied for the issuance by the FCC of "Open Skies" decision, authorizing competition in domestic communications satellite market.

1973 Barbara Rossotti became Shaw Pittman Potts & Trowbridge's first female partner.

Rossotti came to Shaw Pittman from Covington & Burling. It is said that when asked by the name partners who were interviewing her here whether she planned to have more children, she told them softly with a big smile, "Well, gentlemen, if I do, I don't plan to consult with you about it." Shortly later, she was unanimously voted into the partnership (see this for the whole story).

1976 Robert Robbins joined Shaw Pittman, becoming the firm's 41st attorney.

1975 Shaw Pittman moved from 910 17th St. NW to 1800 M St. NW

Among the amenities the neighborhood lacked, aside from restaurants and retail shops, was easy access to the squash courts at the University Club and Metropolitan Club, which was a significant problem for a firm in which a number of the leading partners, including Ramsay Potts, Steuart Pittman, Steve Potts, Ted Rogers and Les Nicholson, were avid racket enthusiasts, two of whom (Ted and Les) were the customary squash champions of those two clubs. This obviously was a situation that demanded an extravagant gesture, so the firm agreed to pay $750,000 to alter the construction plans for the building to lower the foundation at one end so as to permit the installation of two squash courts. Less extravagant, but more meaningful was the addition of a cafeteria on the second floor, since lunch was not available in the neighborhood. (Many here remember that before we finally obtained a Starbucks, there were long lines at all hours for a cheerful barista who operated a little espresso cart that would park on the street in front of our building.) (Excerpt from an email sent to the DC Office by Bob Robbins on the occasion of our departure from 1800 M. St. in Dec., 2014. He is describing the neighborhood around 1800 M. St.)

1979 Counseled the operator of Three Mile Island nuclear facility following the partial meltdown of a nuclear power reactor, the worst accident in U.S. nuclear power plant history (George Trowbridge, Thomas Baxter, Mark Augenblick, Ernest Blake, David Lewis, James Hamlin, Robert Zahler, Deborah Bauser)

1984 Shaw Pittman Potts & Trowbridge opened its Northern Virginia office.

John Engel and Fred Drasner flew over Tyson's Corner in a blue and white single-engine Cessna to study traffic patterns , found a building under construction on a road with good access to the Beltway, Route 66 and Dulles International Airport. They landed the plane, drove immediately to the spot and began negotiating the lease for what would become Shaw Pittman's Northern Virginia office. (Sari Horwitz, "Law Firms Hear Suburbs' Seductive Call; Business Growth Lures Attorneys to N. Virginia," *The Washington Post* 4/1/1985.

1986 Shaw Pittman Potts & Trowbridge moved to 2300 N. St. NW

1988 Helped launch the field of infrastructure outsourcing by advising First City Bank on the first-ever large-scale infrastructure outsourcing deal.

The firm's technology practice began with the firm's representation of AMS, a leading "systems integrator." Most law firms in the computer law field began by representing vendors (sellers). Before the 1990's, customers (buyers) of technology services often did not retain outside counsel to advise them. Until the late 1980's, the term "outsourcing" was not in use.

With the benefit of the firm's early exposure to systems integration, facilities management, and service bureau transactions, we were able to expand our work to the customer side when the outsourcing phenomenon began in the late 1980's. After assisting a number of clients, including First City Bank of Texas, Enron, and First Tennessee Bank , structure what were then called "facilities management" arrangements, the "outsourcing" movement officially began in 1989 with a large-scale outsourcing arrangement between Kodak and IBM and other vendors. (Harry Glasspiegel, "Spotlight on the Outsourcing Group, 1996 found on The Pulse)

1989 Represented government of Corazon Aquino in suit against Westinghouse Electric Corp., and a New Jersey engineering firm accusing them of conspiring to bribe Ferdinand Marcos in the mid-1970s to obtain a contract to build a multi-billion dollar power plant. (Mark Augenblick)

1993 Groundbreaking for Dulles Greenway toll road, first privately financed road in the United States, represented owner and sponsor. (Scott Custer, Mary Jane Dodson, Frank Baltz)

1996 Won U.S. Court of Appeal case establishing Department of Energy's obligation to dispose of nuclear utilities spent fuel. (Jay Silberg)

1998 Shaw Pittman Potts & Trowbridge opened its London office.

1999 Represented Daniel Snyder on the record-setting $800 million acquisition of the Washington football team and its stadium. (Elizabeth Harper, Tom McCormick, Jeffrey Grill, Sheldon Weisel, Susan Longstreet and Robert Sherley)

1999 Shaw Pittman Potts & Trowbridge rebranded itself Shaw Pittman, with the approval of Ramsey Potts, then 82. ("Brand Recognition," *Legal Times*, 6/14/1999)

2000 Represented software company webMethods in its IPO – one of the most successful in history with a first-day share price rise of 508 percent. (Lawrence Yanowitch, John McDonald)

2000 Shaw Pittman opens its Los Angeles office.

2000 Fisher Wayland Cooper Leader & Zaragoza merged with Shaw Pittman.

2004 Shaw Pittman formed a strategic alliance with Chien Yeh Law offices, opening an office in Taiwan.

2005 Shaw Pittman merged with Pillsbury Winthrop, forming Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman.

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