

JUDGE ELIZABETH DAVIS PITTMAN

Elizabeth Davis Pittman might well feel a bit isolated. As a member of Omaha's municipal bench, she is one of the state's few women judges. She is Nebraska's only black judge. She acknowledges the dual rarity of her situation creates certain pressures.

"Sometimes people think you're supporting one side more than another. You've got to walk a fine line."

Not that pioneering troubles the 57-year-old jurist. There was not an oversupply of black women enrolled in Creighton Law School while she was getting her degree. Nor was the field overly crowded with black women when she was appointed deputy Douglas County attorney.

"Betty" Pittman, in fact, should be fairly conditioned to being singled out. She was named Woman of the Year by Omaha Business and Professional Women, received the B'Nai B'rith Citizenship Award and the Hadassah Myrtle Wreath Award, collected an honorary doctorate from Creighton.

Daughter of Charles F. Davis, a prominent Omaha attorney, Mrs. Pittman was born in Council Bluffs. But the family (she has a younger sister) moved across the river "when I was very young," and she considers herself a native Omahan.

She attended Howard Kennedy Elementary School, graduated from North High School, and spent two years at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln before completing her undergraduate studies at Creighton.

She entered practice with her father



Judge Elizabeth Davis Pittman

after getting her law degree from Creighton and remained in private practice alone for five years after his death in 1959.

She joined the county attorney's office in 1964 and was named to the bench seven years later.

Long active in civic affairs, she has served as president of the National Federation of Settlements and Neighborhood Centers, president of Women Lawyers, one year on the Omaha School Board, and has been a member of some half-dozen or more local groups.

Mrs. Pittman acknowledges she is less involved in civic associations now than she has been in the past. Possible conflict of interest is one reason.

She continues to serve as an example of what a determined black woman can accomplish, however, and her close ties to the black community remain.

"The black race has a common heritage. We've all suffered. I think that's a tie that binds."

A.B. HOGAN

A. B. "Buddy" Hogan came to Omaha from Barboursville, Va., when he was 9. He came alone, started school.

"Officials of the public schools of Orange County, Va., said I was not—how should I put it—was not 'allowed' to go to their schools.

"They were white schools, of course. The black school was 12 miles from my home. My father worked on the railroad, so he was gone five out of seven days. There wasn't school busing in those days. My mother didn't drive, so I



A. B. "Buddy" Hogan

didn't get to school until I was 9 years old, until I came here to Boys Town."

Hogan found a new life at Boys Town, a new home.

"I look on Boys Town that way. It's my home. I didn't have any other home."

He entered a seminary in Bay St. Louis, Miss., and continued his studies toward the priesthood until he was a sophomore in college in 1961, then dropped out.

"That was a very turbulent time in our country's history. It was the dawning of the civil rights age. I had this idealistic view about the Roman Catholic Church. Let's just say the performance of the church in those days did not match my ideal of what it should be. It was very much first-hand experience."

Hogan quit the seminary and came back to Omaha. He entered Creighton University, got his degree (in Latin), married a nursing student and went to work for Mutual of Omaha.

"My wife's an Omahan. And I like Omaha. I love it here."

He remained at Mutual for 4½ years. In 1973, he earned a master's degree in business administration.

"I needed some credibility," Hogan says with a smile. "Everyone always laughed when I said I majored in Latin." Hogan also had four years of Greek, six years of French and six years of German. "Out of my experience in the seminary, I got the kind of education you couldn't purchase."