

HONORABLE WILLIAM G. BARTHOLD,
RETIRED PRESIDENT JUDGE,
MEMORIAL
DECEMBER 1, 1969

FOR THE BAR:

H. P. McFadden, Chairman; J. Lawrence
Davis and George F. Coffin, Jr., Esquires

May it please the Court:

The resolution committee of the Northampton County Bar Association wishes to record the deep sense of personal loss which the members of our Bar experienced in the passing of the Honorable William Gregory Barthold.

Judge Barthold, who spent over thirty years on the Bench of Northampton County, was born in Philadelphia on November 12, 1897. As a child he moved with his family to Bethlehem and was educated in the public schools of Bethlehem and did his undergraduate college work at Lehigh University. Judge Barthold's scholastic career reflects the truth so beautifully expressed by Thomas Campbell in Lochiel's Warning:

" 'Tis the sunset of life gives me mystical lore,
And coming events cast their shadows before."

He graduated from Bethlehem High School in 1914 with high honors. At Lehigh University, where he earned a BA degree in 1918, he distinguished himself and won greatly coveted honors in each of his undergraduate years. During his Freshman year he won the Price English Prize. In his second year he won Honors in English. During his Junior year he was awarded the Williams Prize and won the Oratorical Contest as well as First Honors in the Bachelor of Arts Program. In his final year he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. The above are some of the scholastic honors he received and a quick reading could leave one, by whom Judge Barthold was not known with the impression that he was a "grind" and given to all work and no play. Nothing could be further from the truth—while diligently pursuing his studies he energetically gave evidence of his love of people and his talents as an accomplished violinist—participating in the activities of the University's

Orchestra and Musical Clubs for his four undergraduate years. He also enjoyed membership in Alpha Chi Rho social fraternity and the Deutscher Verein and other social organizations.

After successfully completing his law studies at Harvard University from which he received an LLB degree in 1922, Judge Barthold entered the practice of law in Bethlehem and before going on the Bench developed a thriving practice. Moravian College recognized Judge Barthold's merits as a Judge and outstanding citizen and awarded him an LLD degree in 1948, *Honoris Causa*.

Up to this point we have outlined his scholastic and profession attainments, but anyone who knew Judge Barthold recognizes that these are not the full measure of the man.

While Judge Barthold by his tireless application to his duties as a lawyer gave evidence of the truth of the adage that "The Law is a jealous mistress" he never permitted his attachment to the law to come in the way of his love and responsibility to his beloved wife and children and his Church.

He was a husband and father par excellence—his wife and family always came first in his hierarchy of values.

In the area of religion the highest compliment that can be paid to a man is to say that he was a "Practicing Christian".

"Practicing Christian" is the true measure of Judge Barthold. He had a deep and abiding faith in and love for God—from this sprang his devotion to his family and friends and his love of his fellowman.

Few men are able to implement their love of their brother in their professional lives to the degree Judge Barthold did. His tireless efforts first in the Domestic Relations Court and later in the Juvenile Court and the reforms he was able to bring about are enduring evidence of his sincere concern for his less fortunate brother and particularly the children who appeared before him.

While Judge Barthold had great capacity for friendship he never, to the slightest degree permitted friendship or any other consideration to affect his objectivity or color his judgment in applying the law in cases that came before him.

He was indeed a learned, honest and good Judge.

“BE IT RESOLVED, That the Bench and Bar of Northampton County express and record a deep sense of loss at the passing of the Honorable William Gregory Barthold on September 22, 1969. Judge Barthold in the 71 years allotted to him was able by hard work and conscientious application to bring to full fruition the great gifts of mind and heart with which nature endowed him. Before ascending to the Bench of our County he successfully practiced his chosen profession and served the people of Northampton County as a fair and able assistant District Attorney and in other public capacities and later with distinction as our State Senator at Harrisburg.

Immediately upon Judge Barthold's appointment to the Bench in 1938 his profound knowledge of the law, innate sense of fairness, thirst for justice and judicial temperament as well as his love for his fellowman became apparent not only to his fellow Judges and the members of the Bar, but to the people of the County generally. After election for a full term in 1939 he became President Judge of our Courts in 1948, a position he held until his retirement in June of 1969.

Judge Barthold's distinguished judicial career spanned a period of over thirty years and during all of this period he reflected the finest traditions of our Bench.

We who have been privileged to work with Judge Barthold will greatly miss him—his friendliness and keen sense of humor became hallmarks of the excellent relationship which exists between our Bench and Bar. Our loss is however small in comparison to the loss suffered by his devoted wife and family and in their bereavement we extend to them our heartfelt sympathy.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be entered on the minutes of this Court; that the Prothonotary send to Judge Barthold's family a copy of this morning's proceedings, that when this Court adjourns, it does so out of respect to the memory of Honorable William Gregory Barthold.”

FOR THE COURT:

Honorable Carleton T. Woodring, Retired
Judge.

President Judge Palmer, Judges Williams and Grifo, Mrs. Barthold, members of the family and friends of William G. Barthold, my colleagues at the Bar, ladies and gentlemen:

Time has not yet softened the shock nor lessened the sorrow which resulted from the announcement of Judge Barthold's death. I cannot, therefore, properly eulogize this great man with whom I was so closely and intimately associated as Attorney and Judge for almost four decades. I will endeavor, however, to make some brief remarks about Bill Barthold, my colleague:

Today we can speak of him as a living man. All of us in this room, or almost all, are men and women who knew him. Many are persons who lived and worked and played with him; here in the courthouse, in the Bethlehem community, on the golf links, or on a crystal clear lake in Canada's fishing waters.

I said that I would speak briefly but it is difficult to think or speak briefly of a man of the stature of Judge Barthold. It is as though I were standing at the foot of Mt. McKinley or Mt. Ranier or one of the other great cascade peaks and were given an assignment to sculpt a figure out of that infinite mass of earth and stone. It's an impossible task. Greatness in a man, as in a mountain, requires distance to be seen. The things a man has lived by take their place beside his actions in the true perspective of time. When thus viewed the inner pattern of his life becomes apparent.

Judge Barthold's span of life or space of years coincides with the period of maximum and unprecedented progress in science, travel, communications and other related fields of industrial and commercial development. The expansion of jurisprudence and the great body of substantive law was not lagging during these years. But greatness does not lie in the dominating association with great events. Events have an impersonal inertia of their own. Greatness lies in the man and not the times. The times is merely a reflector or a sounding board of the people who live in and thus make the times.

It requires no supporting argument for the proposition that William G. Barthold achieved greatness. He was a great man and a great judge. He was a good lawyer. Those of you who recall the countless tributes and testimonials at the time of his death made by innumerable citizens from many walks

of life can have no doubt that Judge Barthold was regarded as a great man. Why is this so? What is it that makes one person stand out and tower over his fellowman? Because he was possessed of certain sterling qualities, a few of which I will discuss briefly:

HONESTY. Bill Barthold was an honest man. With his family, his colleagues and associates and even with himself he was completely honest. Of all the people in the world it is easiest to deceive oneself. Judge Barthold avoided this common pitfall throughout his life. He was possessed of a sincere and deep rooted humility which was his shield and buckler against any temptation of dishonesty.

HUMILITY. That Judge Barthold was a humble man, none can gainsay. His dress, associates, manner of living, and family life all bespeak a genuine humility. If I am permitted to conjecture as to the source of his humbleness, it is perhaps two fold. (1) The Bible: A dustless and wellworn volume was constantly on his bedside table and he was thoroughly familiar with the promise that the humble (the meek) shall inherit the Kingdom of God, (2) the second source of his humility was his boundless,

CHARITY. In our hasty and competitive living we are apt to lose sight of the real meaning of charity. It is the act of loving all men as brothers because they are sons of God. Judge Barthold was possessed of this quality to an enviable degree. By his conduct it is readily apparent that he loved all mankind. Each person within his realm of knowledge and activity was a son of God—a brother—whose welfare was the concern of Bill Barthold. It is not surprising, therefore, that Bill had a real sense of compassion and that the justice which he meted from the Bench was always proscribed with mercy.

COURAGE. Judge Barthold was courageous in all of his dealings. The general unpopularity of a cause did not weaken his advocacy for it or serve as a reason for him to change his position. He was thoughtful, not hasty. But once he had made up his mind, he was steadfast.

Judge Barthold was a public speaker of excellence and possessed of a delightful sense of humor. As such he was popular on the banquet circuit. In his many public appearances he seldom lost the opportunity to emphasize his belief in the importance for the promotion of spiritual values rather than the more popular obeisance to things of physical value only.

Bill was a man of faith. Faith in his God and faith in his fellow man. He was considerate and thoughtful of the welfare of his friends and associates. In my many years of association with him, he never failed to display his concern for my happiness and success. He was a warm friend, a good companion, a helpful and inspiring colleague. His memory will abide with and inspire us for many years to come.