

EDWARD JAY FOX, JR.

by

John F. Oldt

The Bench and Bar of Northampton County record their deep sorrow and sense of loss at the death on May 31st, 1962, of Edward Jay Fox, Jr., a member of this Bar.

Mr. Fox, Ned Fox, as he was known to the Bench and Bar, not only in Northampton County but throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, was born on April 13, 1899 and was a lifelong resident of the City of Easton. He was graduated from Lafayette College with a Ph.B. degree in 1920 and from the University of Pennsylvania Law School in 1923 with a degree of LL.B.

In 1918, while still in college, he was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant of Infantry in the U. S. Army from which he was honorably separated after the Armistice.

Ned was admitted to the Northampton County Bar on August 14th, 1923 on motion of his father, Judge Edward Jay Fox. He practiced law with his father and his uncle, James W. Fox, until his uncle died in 1924. He then entered into partnership with his father. Later, Wayne E. Barber was admitted to the firm and the firm name became Fox and Barber. Ned's father died in 1937 and Wayne Barber in 1944. From July 1, 1944, Ned practiced law in partnership with John F. Oldt until January 1, 1962 when John C. Hambrook was admitted to the firm and the firm name became Fox, Oldt & Hambrook.

Ned was the 5th in a line of five generations of lawyers, beginning one year before the Declaration of Independence.

The first of this line was Edward Fox, who practiced law in Philadelphia, was auditor-general of Pennsylvania and was the first Secretary and Treasurer of the University of Pennsylvania, holding that office for thirty-four years. The intervening generations were Judge John Fox of Newtown, Edward Jay Fox of Doylestown and Easton, and Ned's father.

The family tradition of following the law does not end with Ned Fox, but is being carried on by his nephew, Reeder

R. Fox, who is now practicing in Philadelphia.

In his early practice Ned Fox handled some cases in the criminal courts assigned him by his uncle, James W. Fox. He gathered further trial experience as an Assistant District Attorney and also as County Solicitor in which capacity he represented the County in numerous jury trials involving condemnation proceedings.

He soon became a prominent member of this Bar, which prominence increased with his achievement-studded years, and there certainly are no indications that he had reached his zenith when he was taken from us. His practice was of a varied nature, but he will perhaps be best remembered for his skill and success as a trial lawyer and his trenchant arguments before the County and Appellate Courts. He had a style which was all his own and one of his great assets in this respect was what someone has termed the "felicity of pat expression", both in what he said and in what he wrote.

Ned served this Court as a member of the Board of Benchers since 1925 and was Chairman of the Board at the time of his death. He also served as a member of the Law Library Committee for many years.

He has been a member of the Procedural Rules Committee of the Supreme Court since 1937 and the Appellate Rules Committee of that Court since 1954.

He was keenly interested in the activities of the Northampton County, the Pennsylvania and the American Bar Associations. He was elected President of our County Bar Association in 1943 and again in 1944. In 1948 he was appointed Chairman of the Pennsylvania Bar Association Committee to secure the adoption of the "Pennsylvania Plan" for the selection of Judges. This plan became known as the "Fox Plan" and our State Association is still actively striving for its adoption.

In 1951 Ned became President of the Pennsylvania Bar Association. It is noteworthy that Ned and his father were the only father-son combination of Presidents of the Pennsylvania Bar Association in its history. In the American Bar Association Ned was named to the all-important Standing

Committee on the Federal Judiciary and served as its Chairman in 1954. In connection with the work of this committee, Ned frequently testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee as to the qualification of the nominee for judges of Federal Courts appointed by the President of the United State.

Among his other professional interests were his memberships in the American Law Institute, the Judicial Conference of the Third Circuit and the Institute of Judicial Administration. He was also a Pennsylvania Director of the American Judicial Society and was appointed to the Advisory Committee of the Joint State Government in Pennsylvania.

He was a past President of the Easton Community Chest and Chairman of one of its fund-raising campaigns. He was a trustee of the Easton Hospital for many years, and was a member of the First Presbyterian Church of Easton, serving as President of its Board of Trustees and at the time of his death as an Elder of the church.

One of the greatest honors that a man can acquire during his lifetime is recognition by his college of his service in his chosen profession and to community in which he lives. In 1951 Lafayette College so honored Ned Fox. It conferred on him the Honorary degree of Doctor of Laws.

Ned would certainly have been a successful business executive with his qualities of leadership, lively and far reaching imagination, tempered with sound judgment, and his unusual ability to grasp a set of facts, no matter how complicated, and appreciate their significance and the relative importance of each of them. These qualities, of course, served him well in his legal practice and it is inconceivable that he would have done anything else. The law was in his blood. His business executive qualifications, however, did not pass unnoticed as is evidenced by his membership on the Boards of Directors of the Lehigh Valley Transit Company, the Lehigh and New England Railroad Company and the Central Railroad Company of Pennsylvania.

As so well stated in an Editorial in the Easton Express following Ned's death, "Honors such as those accorded to Mr.

Fox are attained only through conscience, ability and dedication, and the highest respect for the ethics and objectives of one's profession."

Honorable Francis E. Walter, Congressman from this District, and a Member of our Bar, made extended remarks upon the death of Ned in the House of Representatives on June 5, 1962, and included the Editorial of the "Easton Express" which appears on Page "A4071" in the Appendix of the Congressional Record.

He is survived by his wife, Lucy Buck Fox, three daughters, Millicent Maillard, Josephine Reed and Dorothy Elicker and seven grandchildren.