

A MEMORIAL:

JOSEPH G. HILDENBERGER, deceased
By: ROBERT UNGERLEIDER, Esquire

When asked to summarize for the Reporter a memorial on behalf of Joseph G. Hildenberger, I thought in terms of what was so well said extemporaneously by Irving Coleman, Esquire, and written in the form of a letter by Judge J. Cullen Ganey, and by your scrivener in presenting the Resolution at the Memorial Service held in Court Room No. 1 on February 26, 1968.

In the words of Mr. Coleman: "Joe was an interesting lawyer in the sense that he loved the profession, and he loved all the things that the profession allowed him to do. He enjoyed political life. He worked for the Democratic Party in this County, not only on the County and State level, but on a National level and as time went on, his efforts were well recognized."

Again, in the words of Judge Ganey: "'Joe,' as he was familiarly known to his host of friends and admirers, loved his native city of Bethlehem and, more particularly, the South Side thereof, and took pains on every occasion that presented itself to boost it and, in so doing became one of its most prominent citizens."

Continuing, Judge Ganey wrote: ". . . I, likewise, had many occasions to observe his conduct before the Bench, and I have no hesitancy in saying that he always acquitted himself ably as a prosecutor in the trial of criminal cases as well as in the trial of civil cases, and, among his colleagues in the United States Attorney's Office, he was noted for being a forceful trial lawyer."

Joseph G. Hildenberger was a member of the Bar of this County from 1936 until his death on January 3, 1968. He was the son of Catherine and Martin Hildenberger, his father having been an Official Court Stenographer in Court Room No. 1, Northampton County Court House for many years.

Joe was graduated from Bethlehem Catholic High School, Dickinson College and Dickinson School of Law and was admitted to the Bar in 1936. His admissions included not only the Courts of Northampton County, but the Pennsylvania Su-

perior and Supreme Courts, the United States District Court of Eastern Pennsylvania, and the United States Circuit Court of Appeals, Third Circuit.

Among his many credits was his employment in the Unemployment Compensation Department as a Referee and previous to this position he served as Project Attorney for the United States Resettlement Administration and was also an attorney in the United States Department of Agriculture. From 1940 to 1942 he was an Assistant District Attorney of Northampton County, resigning to become an Assistant United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania from 1944 to 1948 when he became Solicitor of Northampton County. After four years in that office, he was again appointed Assistant United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania. In March, 1953 he was appointed United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

He was married to the former Catherine C. Bender, who survives him. There are two children, Lt. Martin J. Hildenberger and Catherine R. Hildenberger, a nurse.

It was a tragic circumstance of his life when he was stricken in body by a crippling ailment which curtailed his physical activities and for less sturdy sole might have ended his professional career, nevertheless, and though handicapped, he continued in the finest tradition of his profession.

His departure left a great legacy of courage, tremendous optimism, cheerfulness and warm disposition though sorely afflicted of body for many years prior to his death. His excellent career at the Bar will always serve as a shining example for those who come after him. His record stands unblemished and will forever bring honor to him, his family, to the members of this Bar, his clients, and to the Court that he served with such fidelity and devotion.