

MEMORIAL FOR  
HUGH P. McFADDEN

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Remarks by Milton B. Riskin

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WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE COURT, Honorable Judges, members of the Bar of Northampton County, family and friends of Hugh Paul McFadden.

When our Bar Association President, Tom Maloney invited me to offer the Memorial for Mr. McFadden, I felt honored that I was singled out, for the presentation.

The first thought that came to mind was how do you describe such a man, who was not only a great lawyer, but engaged in many other varied activities.

I was reminded of a Broadway play some years ago, entitled "A Man For All Seasons," the cycle of Autumn, Winter, Spring and Summer. And so the four rounds in his life. First and foremost — the legal profession, then the church, business and the community.

Baptized as Hugh Paul McFadden, the son of Hugh P. and Mary Gallagher McFadden, many referred to him as H.P. and his friends and associates called him Jim. Although I was associated with him for 25 years, I never knew why "Jim."

Jim was born in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, December 9, 1905 and lived his entire life in Northampton County. His early schooling was in the Bethlehem Parochial Schools, and then on to Bethlehem Preparatory School for his high school diploma. He attended and graduated from Lehigh University and then on to Pennsylvania Law School from which he graduated in 1928. Jim was admitted to the Bar of Northampton County in 1928 and practiced as a sole practitioner for many years. In 1948 entered into a partnership with Milton Riskin, and along the way was joined by Alfred T. Williams, Jr., our current President Judge, by Robert Holland and others who no longer practice in our County.

In his early years, he engaged in a general practice. Those were the years when specialization was not prevalent, and his was a practice both criminal and civil law, trial and office work.

Nobody walked out of his office because of lack of money or too small a case. If the matter had merit, Jim represented the person. This philosophy continued throughout his professional life.

Although in later years of practice Jim was known primarily as a corporate attorney, Jim engaged in criminal practice in his early career and became very efficient in the trial of cases which stood him in great stead in later years as a trial lawyer. One of his outstanding criminal trials was his representation of a former Mayor's daughter in a murder case in which he won an acquittal.

As time went on, and his ability as a trial lawyer became known, he was frequently called in as co-counsel by other practitioners.

In the infancy of Labor Law in the thirty's, he was retained as Labor Counsel for Ingersoll-Rand and served in that capacity for about 20 years until his business activities required his resignation from that post.

For many years, he was local counsel for Bethlehem Steel Corporation, representing them in trial work, and in the acquisition of real estate both for the Research Center and the new furnaces built in old Northampton Heights.

During the Bank Holiday, in the depression days of the 30's, Jim was appointed as solicitor for the liquidation of Bethlehem National Bank and served in that capacity for many years, the experience being of utmost help when he entered the banking field. Jim served as solicitor for Bethlehem Redevelopment Authority for 15 years during which period, Bethlehem built its now beautiful municipal area, overlooking the Lehigh River and the South Mountain, which includes City Hall, Library and its gardens as well as other improvements.

In 1974, Jim suffered a stroke and after several months of hospitalization and recuperation, he returned to the office at 18 E. Market Street. Unfortunately his health did not permit him to return to a full practice and it became evident that a continuation of the old practice became too burdensome and he decided to leave his office at 18 E. Market Street and resort to a more leisurely practice. He became counsel for the firm of Kolb, Holland, Antonelli and Heffner, and subsequently with the firm of Leeson and Leeson.

In this age of specialization, Jim nevertheless continued to be a general practitioner. At the height of his legal career, he was invited to join, as a partner, perhaps the most prestigious firm in Philadelphia, but Jim preferred the tranquility of a practice in the Lehigh Valley. Jim was a member of the Superior and Supreme Courts of Pennsylvania and the Supreme Court of the United States. He was a Past President of the Northampton Bar Association and a member of the Board of Benchers of our county.

In 1983, Jim was also honored with an Honorary Degree of Doctor of Laws from Allentown College of St. Frances De Sales.

Moving to his religious interests and affiliations which to most practitioners is usually confined to a Sunday and holiday church or synagogue attendance, we find Jim a devout and dedicated Catholic, not only involved with his local church, St. Theresa Roman Catholic Church in Hellertown where he attended mass on a daily basis, but he was involved on a regional scale. When the Philadelphia Catholic Diocese decided to divide and create the Allentown Catholic Diocese in the early '60s, Jim was called upon to represent the new Diocese, with the many problems with which it was faced, particularly in the real estate field. He served them faithfully until his illness in 1974. Thereafter he still served them as a consultant. The most important case in which the Diocese was involved concerned the merger of Allentown Hospital and Sacred Heart Hospital. This matter was successfully litigated thru the local and Supreme Courts of Pennsylvania.

Jim was a lay affiliate of the Vincentian Order and he was made Knight of St. Gregory the Great by Pope John XXIII in 1963. He was a past president of the Regional Holy Name Society and co-founder of the Nocturnal Adoration Society of Bethlehem.

Passing on to his business interest — we find him reaching the top in many endeavors. He was President of Peoples Bank and when it merged with the larger Union Bank and Trust Company, he advanced to the position of Chairman of the Board. That bank is now known as Lehigh Valley Bank, a multi-billion dollar operation. He was involved with Bethlehem Fabricators, Inc., which in its heyday was one of the country's largest steel fabricators, and rose to the position of Vice President and Director. He was also a director of Whitehead and Kales, a Michigan Corporation, that built the chassis of carriers of new automobiles.

Turning to the Community Activities we find Jim not only involved in local charitable projects but educational as well. As a parent of 5 children and many grandchildren, we would expect him to be greatly interested in education. He was Chairman of the Villanova Law School Board of Consultants. He served on the Board of Trustees of Lehigh University, of Trinity College, Washington, D.C., from which school one of his daughters graduated. He served on the Board of Trustees at St. John's University, the Diocese of Allentown Seminary in Northampton and was a member of Pennsylvania State University's advisory board.

Turning to local community activities, we wonder where he received the stamina and time — he never accepted a position on any board merely for name only, but only as a participant in its progress and advancement of its purposes. Naming several, knowing I am guilty of omissions, we find him, over his span of communal life, to have been involved:

- (1) as President of the Board of Directors of St. Luke's Hospital for 21 years and only his protest of the hospital's position on abortion did he retire therefrom.
- (2) He served as President of the Greater Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Planning Council.
- (3) A member of the Board of Blue Cross of the Lehigh Valley.
- (4) On the Northampton County Board of Selective Service for 27 years. A few other minor but important offices were as Director of Historic Bethlehem, Inc., Annie S. Kemmerer Museum, Bethlehem Community Chest, now the United Way.

Jim was a devoted family man. Married to Dorothea Kinney, they raised five children, 4 daughters and finally a son, Dennis. They are blessed with 12 grandchildren and although the family seems scattered through all the corners of the United States, he kept in constant contact with them and many family reunions were held.

Jim couldn't resist his Irish ancestry and purchased a cottage in Ireland where he spent time and enjoyed the pleasure of his Irish home and shared his cottage's use for the pleasure of his family and friends.

Jim loved the fine arts, the theatre, the opera and I recall him making many trips to New York to attend. He was a collector of antiques and in his travels through Europe always returned laden with objects of art. When we were associated in the law practice, he filled our office with beautiful antique chairs, desks, clocks and tables.

Jim was dedicated to his profession and to the other affiliations for which he labored. He was, of a serious nature, persistent that every detail be performed to perfection, regardless of the time required or the pecuniary returns to the office. Still he knew how to relax when away from the burdens of his professions, be it law or business.

I appreciate the opportunity to address this Honorable Court, to the members of the Bar and to the family and friends of Jim McFadden and pay tribute to the memory of an outstanding lawyer who gave much to his community and as an associate and personal friend, I bid him a fond adieu.

I respectfully offer the following resolution in memory of Hugh Paul McFadden and move its adoption.

Resolved that this resolution be entered on the minutes of this Court that a copy be sent to Mrs. Dorothea McFadden and that when this Court adjourns this day, it does so out of respect for the memory of Hugh Paul McFadden. (September 4, 1987)