

REPORT

of the

MID-WINTER MEETING

and

SIXTY-FIFTH ANNUAL MEETING

of the

MARYLAND STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

held at

SHERATON-BELVEDERE HOTEL
BALTIMORE, MD.
JANUARY 23, 1960



HOTEL TRAYMORE
ATLANTIC CITY, NEW JERSEY
JUNE 23, 24, 25, 1960



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NINETEEN HUNDRED AND SIXTY

He was a member of the Delta Theta Pi Legal Fraternity, the Sharon Lodge of the Masons, the Boumi Temple of the Shrine and the Baltimore, Maryland and American Bar Associations. He was also president of the Traders Savings and Loan Association of Baltimore City and the Building Association Lawyers of Maryland.

Mr. Ditto is survived by his wife, Kathryn Thompson Ditto, whom he married on June 7, 1927, and their three sons, John H. Ditto, Jr., a member of the Baltimore Bar, who is associated with his father's firm, Donald H. Ditto and Barry E. Ditto, and a sister, Mrs. Thelma D. Holbert.

Mr. Ditto died on August 24th, 1959.

Eugene O'Dunne

With the death of Judge Eugene O'Dunne in his 85th year on October 30, 1959, a Maryland institution ended, but a Maryland legend will long continue.

Eugene O'Dunne was born on June 22, 1875, in Tucson, Arizona, the son of Chief Justice Edmund F. Dunne (who had thus shortened the family name) of the Territory of Arizona. Mrs. Dunne, nee Kirby, came of the family of that name in Fairfax County, Virginia.

Eugene O'Dunne came to Baltimore to conclude his formal education in the Law School of the University of Maryland, from which he received his law degree in 1900. Following an interlude of exploration in South America, in which he experienced shipwreck, he returned to Baltimore in 1903, and immediately made his presence felt at the Bar, in politics, and in public affairs. He became an Assistant State's Attorney, organized the Young Men's Democratic League, and commenced a long and largely successful campaign to improve statutes, judicial organization, and the administration of justice generally. Among the reforms attributed to him in these days are a law abolishing minimum penalties in criminal cases, which was enacted in 1905, a reform of the ancient Justice of the Peace system and its replacement by the People's Court for the trial of small civil cases, a reorganization of the Attorney General's office, and the abolition of the practice of hiring private counsel by State Boards and Departments.

Less successful at the outset were his efforts for a reform of the penal system, and he kept the House of Correction under heavy fire for many years. Finally he was named Chairman of a special commission to study the Maryland Penal System, and many of the reforms advocated by this commission were eventually adopted.

The second stage of Eugene O'Dunne's career opened when Governor Albert C. Ritchie in 1926 appointed him a Judge of the

Supreme Bench of Baltimore City to take the place of Judge W. Stuart Symington. Within a year Judge O'Dunne had successfully run for re-election for a full 15-year term, in some measure compensating for his three unsuccessful candidacies for State's Attorney in 1911, 1915, and 1919.

If the powers of those days thought that the judicial robes would serve to put Eugene O'Dunne under wraps, they had not taken the measure of the man, and soon found this out. His wit, which will be long remembered for some notable achievements of a skilled phrase-maker, and his enthusiasm for everything he did, and his passion for what he felt to be right kept him constantly in the public eye, and frequently at odds with other judges of the Supreme Bench and even with the Court of Appeals of Maryland. What he said and did was in its nature newsworthy, and since it was known that good copy could always be found in his courtroom even on a dull day elsewhere, his legend grew by what it fed on. By no means unaware of the ways of publicity, he made deliberate use of his own legend to implement and strengthen the causes which he espoused, and he also felt that the public was entitled to know what went on in the courts which it supported.

A full account of all the decisions, opinions, pungent *obiter dicta*, and public pronouncements that built Eugene O'Dunne into an institution and formed the foundation of his legend is beyond the scope of a brief necrological summary. Fortunately, the bulging morgues in the reference rooms of the local press remain available. Perhaps his most famous opinion, involving a successful suit for annulment of a marriage on a disputed state of facts, carried his fame across the ocean; and his salty opinion was correctly appraised for the ages in *Punch* by A. P. Herbert as a wise and profoundly understanding document.

Judge O'Dunne was re-elected to a new 15-year term in November, 1951, but underwent compulsory retirement at age 70 in 1945. Unabashed by this, he immediately re-entered practice, and was active until a few years before his death.

An overlapping stage of his career was in teaching. While still on the Bench, he gave courses in Criminal Law and Medical Jurisprudence at the Law School of the University of Maryland, the Johns Hopkins Medical School, and the Law School of the University of Baltimore; and he was elected a member of the International Academy of Legal and Social Medicine in recognition of his lectures on Forensic Medicine at the Hopkins.

Eugene O'Dunne's family life, like his public life, was rich and satisfying. On February 22, 1904, he married Elise M. Reardon in Baltimore, and four of their six children survived him: Mrs. John P.

Winand of Timonium, Eugene O'Dunne, Jr., of Washington, and Hamilton and David O'Dunne, both of Baltimore, and there are between 15 and 20 other descendants of this marriage. His first wife died on August 30, 1935; and in 1950, at the age of 74, Judge O'Dunne married Mrs. Helen Keep of South Orange, New Jersey, and Ogunquit, Maine, in the latter of which homes he spent his last days.

A community that can produce a Mencken and nourish an O'Dunne will never be really dull.

Edwin Webster Wells

Edwin Webster Wells was born in Baltimore City on November 19, 1884. He received his education at the University of Delaware and the University of Maryland, from which latter institution he graduated in 1905 with a Degree of Bachelor of Laws. After being admitted to the Maryland Bar in 1905, he became associated with the Fidelity and Deposit Company.

In 1908, he formed a partnership with Lawrence J. McCormick under the firm name of Wells & McCormick. The firm had offices in Baltimore and Washington and it specialized in personal injury, liability and surety law.

In 1915, after the death of Lawrence J. McCormick, Mr. Wells continued to practice law still under the firm name until his retirement in 1949. He made his home in Baltimore up until the time of his death. He died at the Abington Memorial Hospital at Abington, Pennsylvania, on December 1, 1959.

Mr. Wells married Viola E. Eagleston in 1915, and she survives him. He is also survived by his brother, Dr. G. Harlan Wells, who resides at Rittenhouse Square in Philadelphia and also at historical Fields Point on the Elk River.

Mr. Wells is remembered with affection by his many friends and associates.

Thomas Gorsuch Young, Jr.

Thomas Gorsuch Young, Jr., was born in Baltimore on July 23, 1911. He attended Gilman School and graduated from Princeton University in 1932. Upon his return to Baltimore he entered the University of Maryland School of Law from which he graduated in 1936. In the same year he was admitted to the Bar and began his practice with the firm of France, McLanahan and Rouzer.

While at Princeton he was a member of the R.O.T.C. and upon his graduation was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in Field