

Chief Judge Dennis Honored By Bench And Bar At Memorial Services Held In Court House

High tribute was paid to the memory of Chief Judge Samuel K. Dennis, retired member of the Supreme Bench of Baltimore, at services held in the Court House before a special meeting of the Bench on Friday, March 20th.

Reuben Oppenheimer, President of the Bar Association of Baltimore City, opened the ceremony and introduced the speakers to the Court. The Memorial Minute was presented by former United States Senator George L. Radcliffe, who requested that it be received by the Bench and placed among its permanent archives.

Seconding addresses were delivered by Randolph Barton, Jr., Thomas F. Cadwalader, L. Wethered Barroll, Allan Sauerwein and Gerald W. Hill. Chief Judge W. Conwell Smith presided and responded on behalf of the Supreme Bench.

The exercises were held in the large Superior Court Room on the fourth floor of the Court House and were attended by relatives and friends of the deceased jurist, members of the Bar, Court attaches and many prominent Government, State and Municipal officials.

Following is a complete report of the proceedings:

REMARKS OF MR. OPPENHEIMER

May It Please The Court:

Samuel K. Dennis was of the best that is in Maryland, and in his death Maryland has lost something of itself. His stature as lawyer, judge and citizen was but reflection of the man. His pungent wit, the saltiness that seemed distilled from Maryland's Eastern Shore, the honesty that shriveled sham and ostentatiousness, the deep unswerving loyalty to friend and cause, the quick perception and the courtliness—these qualities gave added meaning to the robes he wore.

Justice, to him, was militant and merciful. Law was a weapon to defend the right, but he knew too much of men and all their obstacles to misjudge weakness or to forget the common frailty. History, to him, was but the web of many lives and he epitomized the strength, dignity and charm of all the days of Mary-

land chronicle. We lose his presence, but by his life the tradition that he carried on is strengthened and enriched.

The Minutes offered here on behalf of our Bar will be presented by Judge Dennis' life-long friend, former Senator George L. Radcliffe, Chairman of this Memorial Committee. Seconding addresses will be made by Messrs. Randolph Barton, Jr., L. Wethered Barroll, Thomas F. Cadwalader, Allan Sauerwein and Gerald W. Hill, associate members of the Committee.

MEMORIAL MINUTE BY SENATOR RADCLIFFE

Your Honors:

It is my privilege—a very distressing one—to offer a memorial resolution in honor of the late Samuel K. Dennis.

Scientists and historians have long debated the question, which has the

bigger influence on a person's life and career, heredity or environment. I hazard no expression of opinion on this controversial point, but I stress the fact that both heredity and environment played important roles in shaping the characteristics and career of Samuel K. Dennis. But the main factors in his outstanding success were his integrity, ability, energy, painstaking industry, practical good judgment and his indomitable will power, together with a shrewd, keen and delightful sense of humor.

Samuel K. Dennis was born September 28th, 1874, at Beverly, Worcester County, the beautiful and historic family home for hundreds of years of the Dennis Family. From early Colonial Days, his ancestors took a leading part in Maryland's religious, agricultural, legal, civic and public activities. His father was a prominent lawyer and statesman and one of his uncles sat as chief judge of the First Judicial Circuit of Maryland, consequently was a member of our Court of Appeals. No man was more devoid of snobbery than was Samuel K. Dennis. Yet no one was more responsive to the impulse to live up fully to the finest traditions of his family.

When he was a boy living at Beverly, he planned to follow out many precedents in his family of being a student at Princeton University. Unexpected circumstances beyond his control prevented him from doing so, but in later years he prized highly his status as an honorary alumnus of Princeton.

While managing the Beverly estate it was natural for him to take a keen interest in politics. This brought him in close contact with John Walter Smith, then beginning his long and successful career as State Senator, Congressman, Governor and United States Senator, and in time the acknowledged leader of the Democratic Party in Maryland. Samuel K. Dennis was his private secretary while he was Congressman and Governor. Also he was his closest adviser and a powerful factor in public affairs in Maryland.

This association presented an opportunity, beset with many difficulties, for Samuel K. Dennis to follow out many family precedents of prac-

ticing law. For two years he managed by some means to leave Annapolis often and long enough to attend law courses at the University of Maryland, graduating in 1903. During his last year as a student, he covered two years' work in one, continuing at the same time to handle efficiently the highly engrossing duties of private secretary and chief political adviser to Governor Smith. His record as a student was brilliant and he finished near the top of his class. In the bar examinations that year, he came out in second or third place.

He was promptly elected to the Maryland Legislature as a delegate from Worcester County and was a leader in that body. About that time he entered into a law partnership with his cousin, the late James U. Dennis. Success came quickly to him, and soon he was recognized as one of the outstanding lawyers in Baltimore. When Woodrow Wilson became President of the United States in 1913, Samuel K. Dennis was the unanimous choice of the bar and Democratic Party for the office of the United States District Attorney in Maryland. For years he filled that position with great success until he resigned to engage again in private practice. As District Attorney, he had won enthusiastic praise from the late Judge John C. Rose.

Samuel K. Dennis then devoted his time to his ever-expanding practice of law. Numerous attempts were made to induce him to become a candidate for public office, but he continued for a long while to resist the instinctive inclination of an Eastern Shore lawyer — or layman — to run for office. Despite some political differences which had developed between the late Governor Ritchie and himself, Governor Ritchie offered him in 1928 the chief judgeship of the Supreme Bench of Baltimore City. He accepted and filled that position with brilliancy and distinction until September 28th, 1944, when the law of Maryland made it mandatory for him to retire at the age of seventy.

His career as chief judge was characterized by constant devotion to duty. He sought unceasingly and successfully to carry out the highest traditions of the bench, which so

many members of his family had exemplified so ably. No judge could have been more unsparing of time and effort to know the truth, and more conscientious in reaching decisions and in giving expression to them. His never-failing sound practical sense of relative values and of true proportions aided him in reaching definite conclusions. These were expressed in robust, pungent, colorful and brilliant diction. His career well illustrates the axiom that a great judge must also be a great man.

After his retirement from the bench, he devoted some of his time to the practice of law, but more to numerous civic and humanitarian activities. Throughout many years of his life, he was a tireless worker for the Sanitarium of Sabillasville. As close adviser, and for many years active head of the American Red Cross in Maryland, his services were invaluable. For a third of a century, he was one of the most vigorous and influential factors in the Maryland Historical Society, as chairman of Publications Committee, vice-president, and one of its three honorary members. In 1944 he delivered the address on the history of that society at the exercises celebrating the centenary of its organization.

For a long time he was an influential trustee of the First Presbyterian Church of Baltimore. It was instinctive for him to take a keen and abiding interest in the Eastern Shore Society from its very beginnings, serving as one of its earliest presidents. He was director of the Fidelity and Deposit Company for years, also director and member of Executive and Trust Committees of The Fidelity Trust Company. He was active as a member of the Board of the Eutaw Savings Bank.

He was a devoted husband and his married life was of the happiest. He was in its trust sense a man of culture. No one could have been stauncher in his friendships. It was my good fortune throughout nearly all of my life to have had intimate associations with him, and I never had a closer or better friend.

Your Honors:

I offer the following resolution and I request its adoption by your Honorable Court:

Whereas—the Bar Association of Baltimore City through the death of Samuel K. Dennis on January 11th has lost one of its most highly respected, illustrious and beloved members, and its sometime president. As practitioner of law, district attorney of Baltimore, Maryland, Chief Judge of the Supreme Bench of Baltimore City for sixteen years, and as public-spirited citizen, Samuel K. Dennis exemplified dignity and high efficiency. He added lustre to the brilliant records of the Bench and Bar of Maryland. In never-failing performance of good deeds, his heart was always eager, his hands ready for the work.

Now therefore be it resolved, that we record with profound sorrow the passing of Samuel K. Dennis and voice our deeply-rooted conviction that the example set by him will be a never-ending source of stimulation, and will always remain a glorious heritage of the people of Maryland.

Now be it further resolved, that a copy of these resolutions be spread upon the records of this Honorable Court and also that a copy be sent as an expression of our profound sympathy to his widow, Mrs. Helen Moore Dennis.

REMARKS OF MR. BARTON

In my long professional life I have taken part in many Memorial Meetings, called by either this Supreme Bench or by the Court of Appeals or by the Federal Court. Usually these were to pay tribute to a deceased Judge or, as in the present meeting, to a deceased former Judge of the Court. Until some twenty-five or thirty years ago it was also the custom to call a special meeting on the death of some especially eminent and distinguished member of the Bar of that Court, even although he had held no official position. At few, if any, of these earlier meetings could I base what I might say of the subject of the meeting and his career upon the same firsthand and direct personal knowledge, the result of the same long and close personal contacts, which I possess in the instant case.

Judge Dennis and Mrs. Dennis were for many years warm personal friends of my wife and me. We many times enjoyed their delightful hospitality, and not infrequently they were our own guests. Their and our social, community and church interests ran along very much the same channels, as though they were Presbyterians and we Episcopalians, their Minister, Dr. Gardner, of the First Presbyterian Church, and his wife were almost as warm friends of my wife and me as of the Dennises. Professionally also I saw much of Judge Dennis. Before he went on the Bench we were not infrequently associated in the conduct of litigation, and when he became United States Attorney I was sometimes on the opposite side, as when the late William L. Marbury and I represented the Brewing interests to sustain before Judge Rose the contention that under the then Federal Statute the sale of 2.75% beer did not violate the law because such beer was not intoxicating. When he was offered the Chief Judgeship he came to me for my advice as to whether he should accept the appointment, which I told him by all means to do. After he became a Judge I, of course, appeared before him on many occasions and on less official occasions I enjoyed his amusing description of the impressions made on him by the Counsel or the witnesses in cases over which he presided, especially personal injury cases. In one of his equity cases, though not employed in the case when heard by him below, I was fortunate in securing a reversal of his decree by the Court of Appeals, and I imagine that he always believed, and perhaps rightly, that it was my own luck combined with strange mental obtuseness on the part of the majority of the Court of Appeals Judges, rather than my professional ability, which effected such a result.

After he reached the retiring age of seventy he often dropped in at our office, partly to talk to me but also because he had become attached to one of my partners, the late William R. Semans, whose sudden death caused Judge Dennis as much sorrow as it did all in my own firm. I also regularly met Judge Dennis at

meetings of the Board of Directors of the Eutaw Savings Bank, of which both of us long were fellow members. And in this connection I will add that, missing him at the last meeting held by the Eutaw Board before his death, I asked the cause and was relieved to find that it was not indisposition but a case before the Court of Appeals that kept him away. After his death I was especially interested to note in THE DAILY RECORD the affirmance in his favor of the appeal that kept him from the Board Meeting.

It can well be understood, therefore, that it is not merely, or even primarily, as one of the Committee of the Bar appointed to represent and speak for the whole Bar at this meeting but also as an individual member of that Bar, a longtime friend and warm admirer of Judge Dennis, that I second the resolution that has been offered and unqualifiedly endorse all that is said both in that resolution and in the Memorial Minute presented by Senator Radcliffe, which the resolution asks shall be received for permanent record.

Everything which that Minute says might be emphasized and elaborated, but so fully have the various articles and editorials in the press and resolutions of various organizations of which Judge Dennis was a conspicuous member already made our whole community realize what they have lost in his death, that little more could be said that would not be mere repetition. I do, however, venture to speak of one incident in particular in the career of Judge Dennis with which I am especially familiar, and in which I was fortunate to have some personal part, and which is typical of the kind of service Judge Dennis was always rendering. Almost at the same time that Judge Dennis entered in 1928 upon his judicial duties I began my term as President of the Baltimore City Bar Association. In discussing with my colleagues in one or other of the offices of the Association the things that the Association might try to accomplish for the benefit of the profession, all of us agreed that the adoption by the Supreme Bench of the practice of wearing when upon

the Bench the gown, which for centuries past has been the historic emblem of the judicial office, — a practice long in vogue in the Federal Courts, and which I believe, though I do not now definitely recall, had for some years been followed in our Court of Appeals,— would be advantageous not only to the Bar but to the community in general, and especially to the litigants and lay witnesses, who when they had occasion to attend the Courts had no means of distinguishing the Judge from any one else in the Court room until he took his seat on the Bench and the gavel in his hand. With the full support of my colleagues, I, therefore, called upon Judge Dennis, asked whether he approved our suggestion, and, if so, whether he would help to secure the adoption of the practice by the Supreme Bench. To my gratification, though hardly to my surprise, the Judge said that not only did he personally fully agree as to the desirability of the adoption of this procedure but that he would take the matter up with the full Bench and urge their adoption of the practice. Soon after he sent for me and told me that he had done so and that with practical unanimity the other Judges had agreed. He didn't say who the dissenter was, but as Judge Stump always, even when the full Bench sat together, continued to appear in his ordinary attire, we at least suspect that it was he who alone could not be persuaded.

We, of course, were greatly pleased, and decided that both as signaling the important change in the procedure of the Supreme Bench and as an appreciation of Judge Dennis' most effective part in bringing it about the Bar Association should present him with one of the newly adopted robes, which we did shortly after, at a little ceremony at which I still remember with pleasure I acted as spokesman for the Association.

I might add that about the same time the younger members of the Bar were much disturbed by the Supreme Bench announcing that beginning at a date shortly following the Courts would sit until four o'clock instead of three. After hearing from numerous lawyers their

objections to this, I called on Judge Dennis and told him that many lawyers who had no associate or assistant, either in the Court Room or in their office, had complained to me that after Court adjourned they not only had office work to do but had to discuss client or witnesses the preparation for the continuance of the case next day, and that closing even at three gave them far from too much time needed for this purpose. Judge Dennis with his characteristic interest particularly in the younger members of the Bar said he had not appreciated this difficulty, and soon after it was announced that three would continue to be the official closing hour and a case not be continued beyond that hour unless all Counsel in it so agreed.

Incidents such as these are only a few illustrations not merely of Judge Dennis' readiness to listen to suggestions, and his interest especially in the younger lawyers, but of the unusual success he had in persuading others to agree to any suggested action which he believed to be for the public good.

But others of my fellow Committeemen also want to record their tributes to Judge Dennis, so with appreciation to the Bench I will yield the floor to others.

REMARKS OF MR. BARROLL

There was no twilight zone in the moral world for Samuel K. Dennis. What he believed was right, he strove for with all his heart and all his strength. In days when many of us, before we take sides on a public question, too often ask:

“Which side is likely to win?”

“What will help my law business for me to say I believe?”

—how heartening it was to hear him sound the bugle, as Severn Teakle Wallis did, seventy years ago, for what was right—because it was right. ‘Old age n'er cooled the Douglas blood.’ Not always did he win, but he never shunned a fight. How could the silly proposal, in 1950, to scrap our Maryland Constitution have been defeated, for example, without his aid? There are

still some of us who can be happy without everything about us being new.

A plain, blunt man, who needed no balloon ascensions, spontaneous petitions or even public awards of merit for springboards to action.

It was his intellect which largely guided the policies of Maryland from 1900 to 1920—a truly golden age—yet, he found time to bring hope to T. B. victims at Sabillasville and light to dark places for multitudes of wretched, unfortunate people.

It was a great loss to this State when he was appointed a Judge. He was a public leader with a high code of conduct, what is more important—brains. We have had too few such since Woodrow Wilson and William L. Marbury.

We like to remember him best as a charming companion, a loyal friend. His salty, vehement conversation was his greatest charm. His mind, stored with legend and history, vividly recalling all the political feuds of the past century, on terms of easy acquaintance with Maryland worthies for 300 years, with a complete understanding and sympathy for the watermen, farmers, merchants, of our State, all formed a palette of rich colors. With these colors, he painted word pictures.

I never went to him for advice over personal anxieties, that drive sleep from the pillow, that I did not come away uplifted. His words of comfort and advice came from a mind that completely understood the good and bad impulses that control the behavior of men. Then, by some heartwarming miracle, he made you feel that, by sharing your worry with him, you had not wearied him but you had conferred on him a benefit and owed him no debt at all.

These rare qualities of sympathy and understanding, — the noblest trait of man, that place man above other creatures, that give us the hope that we may see Salvation—quicken the heart of Sam Dennis.

**REMARKS OF
MR. CADWALADER**

On occasions like this the professional and public side of a life is

reviewed and appraised, but when a man of such marked individuality as Samuel K. Dennis is honored such appraisal would tell less than half the story. I wish to pay my tribute to him as a man. We have been close friends for as long as we have been members of the bar, and longer. We were students together at the University of Maryland Law School, admitted the same year, lived together sharing room and board for a great part of six years, had the same circle of friends, and each a groomsman for the other when within six months we each got married. In the last years since he retired from the bench we shared an office. Few have had a better opportunity than I to learn to admire and love him for what he really was.

In such close companionship there was little indeed that could be concealed, and the fact is that he had nothing he wanted to conceal. There was nothing unclean, nothing sordid or grasping. He had to make his way but he was never on the make. Completely genuine, there was not the thinnest veil of pretense about his character. No dishonorable impulse ever found lodgment in his thoughts. Only his patience may have left something to be desired, for as he used to say, he did not follow St. Paul and suffer fools gladly. Prejudices he had, and what strong character is without them? Though sometimes his judgments were hasty he bore no malice or hatred in his heart.

He was full of the joy and humor of life, and contributed richly to it by a flow of racy tales and wholly spontaneous word pictures convulsing in their totally unexpected aptitude to the person or situation under discussion. But he never posed as an entertainer or as retailer of off-color jokes. While his casual speech was frank and often earthy, it was never lewd.

I believe he got his deepest satisfaction from helping others, whether the young men whom he started in their careers, or the poor consumptives for whose welfare he gave so freely of his time and toil.

No one was closer to the best type of the now vanished Nineteenth Century American. When flood or fire or landslide, or the ruthless

hand of man, lays waste a great forest we see at times a survivor of the mighty race, a rugged lonely shape that towers still, rustling to the winds that sweep the desolate scene. Such a figure was Samuel Dennis. As the favorite poet of our youthful days described the American, he feared not

“* * * to grasp the iron hand of
fate
* * * * *
And turn a keen untroubled
face
Home to the instant need of
things”

Maryland has lost in him a public servant of unusual qualities and distinction, but his friends have lost one whose humor and courage combined to lighten burdens and make living less drab. So vivid a soul cannot be of the dust to which the body has returned. In our memories who knew him on earth he will ever live and walk, and we shall take pride therein.

I beg leave to second the motion before the Court.

**REMARKS OF
MR. SAUERWEIN**

May it please the Court, I rise to speak upon the motion now pending before this Court.

No less an authority than the subject of these memorials has characterized the adjustment of a retired judge to the private practice of the law as a “most baffling and frustrating experience”. He was at that time addressing the Judicial Council—an address enlivened by a pungent wit that was always enjoyed and frequently quoted by those privileged to hear him, but nevertheless sobered by the contemplation of the nearing end of the road.

Promptly thereafter he showed by his own life that such experience need be neither “baffling nor frustrating”. His consuming affection for his chosen profession furnished the challenge to continued purposeful activity, and he responded zestfully to that challenge. He had not retired—he had merely changed the course of his life.

Shortly thereafter he became counsel to the firm of which I am a member. He brought to that under-

taking the resourcefulness of the advocate, ripened by long years of experience at the bar and tempered by other long years of patient deliberation upon the Bench. He reached his opinions only after careful study, but when reached he stated them without reservation or qualification. He seemed never too tired to pursue to the end any task; and at the close of his very last day at the office he left open on the library table those books he was engaged in studying, and on the table with them was his unfinished memorandum of the opinion denied him by death.

It is difficult to comment upon the rich, full life of Samuel King Dennis without resort to superlatives, which he despised. His memory deserves them for that very reason. He clearly demonstrated that no man need regard retirement from any office as the end of the road. For him it was but the turning into other avenues where the experience of the past made progress pleasant, productive and rewarding, not only for himself, but for others along the way.

And so, I too second the pending Resolution.

**REMARKS OF
MR. HILL**

If Your Honors Please:

I would like to think out loud of Judge Dennis as a personality. In the early nineteen hundreds there was a need for an independent tubercular institution, and with the help of the late Senator Smith, then Governor of Maryland, and with the handy man work and the space work being done by the late Judge, there was built at Sabillasville the Maryland Tuberculosis Sanatorium. Budgets were not budgets in those days as they are budgets today, and patients were admitted “for free” or for three dollars a week or for five dollars a week. You can well realize the pennypinching that was necessary in order for Judge Dennis and the late Dr. Victor F. Cullen to make that institution function. But, it did progress until it became one of the outstanding tubercular institutions in the country and representatives of other States and even

foreign countries came to Maryland to study its organization and its operation.

In the early twenties there was the need for a colored tubercular institution, so the late Judge Dennis together with the late Dr. Cullen, and your speaker as the chauffeur and the handy man, went out to Henryton in Carroll County and built the Henryton Sanatorium, and he gave to that institution the same close observation, the same treatment, the same personal attention as he had been giving for twenty years to the Sabillasville Sanatorium.

In the middle twenties there were additional facilities needed for tubercular patients, so again the late Judge Dennis and the late Dr. Cullen, and your speaker still the chauffeur and the handy-man, went out to Pikesville and bought the Mount Wilson Sanatorium, and he gave to that institution the same treatment as he had been giving to the other two for more than twenty years.

Let us skip over the intervening years until the middle forties when he was requested to become Director of the American Red Cross in this area. He accepted the job but it was not an honorary position! It was a work-a-day job with him and he gave to that organization the same treatment, the same personal observation, the same close attention that he had given to the three tubercular institutions.

And now to make my point: Is it possible for us to conceive the countless thousands who have been helped, treated, aided and comforted by the tireless energy of this one individual—I did not want to say it but I am going to say it—without one penny of compensation in return. If he had done nothing else in his lifetime, his life would have been wholly adequate, in my opinion!

Now to some personalities: In 1916 he took me under his wing—that is the only mistake that he made in the selection of personnel. In 1928 he was appointed Chief Judge of your Bench and he embarked upon rather a novel program—novel at that time but not today. He wanted to help young

men to study law, who might otherwise have been precluded, by appointing them as his bailiffs. And here they sit behind me! Right here, Bill O'Donnell, Henry Decker, Carl Sharretts, Senator Turnbull, Tom Gray and Douglas Sharretts! There they are, responsible lawyers, reputable citizens, due in a measure to the help of Judge Dennis, but in a larger measure to his advice, his counsel, and his sound judgment. He did not have children of his own but when you look back there you can see how he acquired himself a family, these boys were as devoted to him as if he had been their father!

He loved the Church of his faith. He was a member of its Board of Trustees at the time of his death, I am told that he even selected the hymn which you gentlemen sang so lustily at the church:

“Faith of our fathers, holy faith,
We will be true to Thee till death.”

And now, gentlemen, I am grateful to the Judge—and when I say “I”, I am speaking for these boys sitting behind me here. We are grateful to the Judge for the many, many, many nice things he did for us. Personally I am grateful to him for three things: First, for the privilege of knowing through him the late Dr. Victor F. Cullen, knighted by the Pope for his services in the tubercular field and to the people of Maryland; second, for the privilege of knowing Judge Parke, ex-Judge of the Court of Appeals of Maryland; and third, for the privilege of having worked for, served, and having been associated with the late Judge, three giants in stature, devoted and dedicated to the service of the people in Maryland.

You have often heard it said that no one is indispensable. Sometimes I wonder if that is entirely correct!

I am through, gentlemen, but if you will bear with me for just a moment: “O God, from whom all holy desires”—now listen to these words—“all good counsel, and all just works do proceed” — do not those words fit our profession like a kid glove—“Give unto Thy humble servant that peace which we in this world cannot give, that his heart

is and may be set to obey Thy commandments, and living as we do, in the fear of enemies, may he pass his time in rest and quiet."

I thank you gentlemen, for the privilege of seconding the motion.

RESPONSE OF CHIEF JUDGE SMITH

Judge Samuel K. Dennis, the sixth Chief Judge of the Supreme Bench of Baltimore City since its creation by the Constitution of 1867, was appointed to that post in 1928 by Governor Albert C. Ritchie. He succeeded Judge James P. Gorter, on his retirement. The distinctions which he achieved in civic, charitable and professional fields were so many that I could not hope to recount them. I must deal only with his judicial service, in which his contributions to the improvement of the administration of Justice in Baltimore are so noteworthy, as to make me fear that I may fail to recount them all.

He made the first (and only) published report of the work of the Supreme Bench, and the courts under its supervision. It was under him that jurors were first pooled and sent to a common assembly room, to make them available for service in other courts; that prepayment of costs was first required; that the adult probation department was founded under a legislative Act (Chapter 132 of the Acts of 1931), drafted by a Committee of Judges. His criticism of the Juvenile Court system resulted in legislation which made the Juvenile Court a part of the Court System under the Supreme Bench in 1943.

He challenged the imposition of an income tax upon his salary, and won a reversal of the State Tax Commission from Judge Robert F. Stanton, which was appealed by the State. In the case of Gordy vs. Dennis (176 Md. 106) the appeal which was first affirmed by an evenly divided Court, upon reargument, was affirmed by the full bench. The adoption of a constitutional amendment has made the decision one of historical interest only.

He was Chairman of the first Committee on Rules of Practice and

Procedure appointed by the Court of Appeals (under Chap. 719 of the Acts of 1939.) This committee drafted new trial rules, and rules on depositions and discovery, which drastically altered the method of preparation and trial of civil cases throughout the State. Whatever changes have since been made, or may hereafter be made, it must be conceded that the rules prepared by Judge Dennis' Committee represent the greatest forward step in Maryland Court Procedure, in our time.

In spite of his administrative duties, Judge Dennis performed a full share, and more, of judicial work in his own court, which was always a busy one. It was my good fortune, when I first came on the Bench, to follow him in the Court rotation, so that I succeeded him each year in the court to which he had been assigned. And I could always be confident that all the cases on his docket had been heard and disposed of, or had been given opportunity to be heard. He set an example difficult to match.

Having inherited from his predecessor two bailiffs of the old school, Judge Dennis, at the first opportunity adopted a practice since followed by a number of other judges, of employing as bailiffs one or more young law students. This served the double purpose of giving him the benefit of youthful energies to aid him, and giving these prospective lawyers the advantage of daily court experience. Without exception, these young men, now successful lawyers, have great admiration and affection for him, and are present today to give evidence of it.

But I would not seek to make it appear that Judge Dennis was a great reformer. Far from it. No one could be more tenacious in clinging to tried and true methods, which he believed sound, nor more stubborn in opposing departure. He was discriminating in his choice of causes. Yet he was incurably optimistic. He constantly believed and asserted that the younger generation of lawyers at the bar will be found superior to the old. He applauded methods adopted by the Government to combat the economic depression, and believed that economic controls

will produce a sounder business structure.

Judge Dennis was a big man in every sense of the word—of commanding presence, with strongly chiseled features, he had a fine intellect and a sparkling wit. No lawyer or judge has left behind so many legends of quick repartee and scintillating humor.

Yet it was his warmth of personal interest which most endeared him to his many friends. When I was elected to the Bench in 1938, together with Judge Niles and Judge McLanahan, Judge Dennis gave a memorable dinner at the Maryland

Club to celebrate the event. Ever during my service on the Bench, he gave me words of heart warming encouragement, which did not end with his retirement but continued until his death. My admiration, affection and respect for Judge Dennis as Judge, lawyer and friend are unbounded.

The addresses of the President and the Committee of the Bar are gratefully acknowledged, and will be preserved among our permanent records.

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