

Mr. President, Honorable Judges of the Judicial Conference of this Circuit, and Members of the Bar Association of the Seventh Federal Circuit:

I have the honor to present on behalf of the Committee appointed by our President a Memorial to the memory of the Honorable J. Leroy Adair, who passed away at Quincy, Illinois on January 19, 1956.

J. Leroy Adair was born in Coatsburg, Illinois, on February 23, 1887. He attended Illinois College at Jacksonville, Illinois and the University of Michigan Law School, from which he was graduated as Valedictorian in 1911. While attending the University of Michigan he was awarded the Algiers Medal, highest honor in debating. He first practiced his profession for two years in Muskogee, Oklahoma, after which he returned to Quincy in 1913 to establish his law practice. He served as City Attorney, for two terms as State's Attorney of Adams County, Illinois and was elected State Senator in 1928 and served in that capacity until 1932 when he was elected to the United States Congress from the old Fifteenth Congressional District and served two terms after which he did not choose to run for reelection.

In 1937 he was appointed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to the position of United States District Judge for the Southern District of Illinois, in which capacity Judge Adair

served admirably until the time of his death.

Judge Adair possessed a keen mind and a broad understanding of the law with great ability to apply the law to the facts at hand. His first undertaking in any matter presented to him, both as a practicing lawyer and as a Judge, was to determine the basic facts of the particular case. He was able to make the most out of what to others seemed small and unimportant facts. He was endowed with a great quantity of common sense. His ability as a trial lawyer was widely recognized and as State's Attorney he will long be remembered not only by reason of his ability and integrity and the independence with which he discharged the duties of that office, but also for the fairness towards those whom it became his duty to prosecute and toward opposing counsel in the trial of cases. As State Senator and as Congressman he was an able, conscientious representative of his constituents, keeping their interests always paramount in his mind.

Judge Adair possessed a great understanding of human nature and especially the lawyers' problems which made him an outstanding Judge in the District Courts of the United States. Despite the dignity of his profession he preferred to remain in the eyes of his friends and acquaintances, both in and out of the legal profession, the same as before his elevation to the bench and especially preferred to be

addressed as "Roy Adair". This faculty, however, did not keep him from maintaining the respect of all those, both lawyers and laymen, who appeared before him. Although he sometimes maintained a jocular attitude in the trial of cases, especially those without a jury, the attorneys practicing before him always recognized the dignity in which he held his position as Judge and them, as officers of his court, and they uniformly conducted themselves accordingly.

He was widely recognized for his ability and versatility as a political speaker, endowed with the faculty of being able to speak in the parlance of his listeners. During the presidential campaign of 1936 he was a member of the staff of speakers for the Democratic National Committee, and was called to many of the larger cities in the Middle West to speak. Although he retired from active politics upon being appointed to the Bench of the District Court, he retained a deep interest in the Democratic Party.

Mr. Adair enjoyed life and he especially enjoyed the companionship and fellowship with his associates. Until his eyesight began to cause him difficulty, he was intensely interested in outdoor sports, especially golf. He enjoyed the conversations that go with and follow the participation in such activities. Although his residence continued at Quincy after his appointment to the Bench, much of his time was spent in

Peoria and the greater part of his court days were there. He, therefore, maintained many close friends in his outside of court activities, both in Quincy and Peoria.

Judge Adair was a member of the First Congregational Church at Quincy, was an active Mason and a member of many other fraternal and private organizations and clubs. He was stricken in his own home and died without suffering within a few minutes thereafter. He is survived by his widow, Maude E. Adair, of Quincy. Judge Adair will long be remembered by the members of the Bar and his many friends outside the Bar, not only as one of the ablest of lawyers and Judges, but for the genial and captivating personality which made him loved by countless friends.

Be It Resolved, therefore, by the Members of this Bar Association of the Seventh Federal Circuit at its Annual Meeting this 21st day of May, 1956, and by the Honorable Judges of the Judicial Conference of this Circuit here assembled, that this Memorial be spread on the records of this Association and of this Judicial Conference, and a copy thereof be transmitted by the Secretary of this Association to the family of Judge J. Leroy Adair.

**BAR ASSOCIATION FOR THE  
SEVENTH FEDERAL CIRCUIT**

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