

RACINE COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION--COMMITTEE ON MEMORIAL

- to -

WILLIAM C. SMIEDING

It is impossible for me to be present for the memorial to William Smieding because of a jury case previously scheduled. However, I should like to take this means of paying tribute to his memory.

While Bill's life with us was much too short, the impact of his kindly personality and sterling character will remain in the hearts of all who knew him. His struggle to overcome physical disability and achieve success will stand as an inspiration to all of us.

We are proud that he was a member of our profession.



JUDGE OF THE MUNICIPAL COURT

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*Edu. F. Daley*

Memorial to the Memory of William Conroe  
Smieding, Presented to the Circuit Court  
for Racine County, Tuesday, April 10, 1951

William Conroe Smieding was born at Racine, Wisconsin, on June 18, 1908, the son of Herman and Jessie Conroe Smieding. He died at Racine, Wisconsin, on November 20, 1950; at the age of forty-two. He was survived by his mother, Mrs. Jessie Conroe Smieding, of Racine, and his sister, Mrs. James P. Fenn, of Marblehead, Massachusetts.

He was known to his friends and acquaintances and to all of us in the profession as "Bill". Bill was graduated from Williams College in 1931 and from Harvard Law School in 1935. His firm will and splendid perseverance overcame physical disability, which had resulted from a childhood illness, and he made a fine scholastic record both as an undergraduate and in the law school.

He was admitted to the bar in 1936, and commenced active practice of the law with his office at the Badger Building, 610 Main Street, Racine.

He became a member of the Racine County and Wisconsin Bar Associations in 1937, and served as Secretary and Treasurer of the Racine County Association for the year 1945. He was an active, working member of the Association. His keen mind, combined with his fine education, well equipped him for work in the field of law. His legal learning, his quick perception, and his unquestioned integrity were respected by his colleagues in the profession.

He was appointed Public Administrator for Racine County by order of the Hon. J. Allan Simpson, County Judge, dated March 21, 1947. All of the members of the bar who worked with him on inheritance tax matters will testify to his courtesy, to his readiness to meet with them at any time and arranging his schedule to suit their

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convenience, and to his quick grasp of the problems involved. He undertook this job, as he did everything else, with a thorough recognition of the responsibility it entailed, and he made sure in each estate that the inheritance tax was accurately assessed in full accord with the law. He continued to hold the office of Public Administrator until the time of his death.

In the comparatively short span of years allotted to him, he became known not only as an able, diligent and conscientious lawyer, but also as a man who devoted his time and abilities unsparingly to community service.

Doubtless his most outstanding contribution to the welfare of Racine was his service with the Board of Trustees of St. Luke's Hospital. He was elected to that body in 1940, and shortly thereafter became Secretary of the Board, an office he continued to hold until the time of his death. Many and varied were the problems which were put before him in that capacity, and also as legal counsel for the Board. He had charge of all the negotiations for the purchase of the many parcels of real estate necessary for the large addition to St. Luke's Hospital which is now under construction. He served as lecturer to the student nurses on the subject of hospital law during the years 1945-1948, inclusive.

Another interest important in Bill's life was St. Luke's Church. He served as a vestryman for a three-year term, from 1939 to 1941, inclusive, and also in 1943. He was elected a delegate to the Diocesan Council at Milwaukee in 1940. He served as Parish Treasurer, an office requiring a great amount of detailed and tiring work, for four years, from 1943-1946, inclusive. Bill applied his best efforts to his work with the church and with the hospital; he was hardly ever known to miss a meeting; his advice and counsel were valued by the men who worked with him. His deep interest in

these two organizations is further evidenced by the fact that he left each a generous bequest in his will.

He became a member of Racine Lodge #32, Knights of Pythias, on December 9, 1941, and continued as a member thereafter.

We remember Bill as a true gentleman, of cheerful, engaging personality - a young man with an indomitable spirit which conquered bodily troubles that would have engulfed many another. He had a ready sense of humor; he was an interesting talker; in a word, he was good company. The record he made as a lawyer and as a man is a credit to the profession.

His family, the Racine County bar, and the people of Racine have suffered a deep loss in his passing.

This memorial is respectfully submitted by the Committee with the request that it be spread upon the records of the Court.

Wm. H. Whaley  
Eugene T. Harvey  
John B. Hand

Committee

STATE OF WISCONSIN : CIRCUIT COURT : RACINE COUNTY :

RESPONSE OF THE COURT TO THE  
MEMORIAL PRESENTED BY THE RACINE  
COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION ON BEHALF  
OF WILLIAM CONROE SMIEDING, Deceased.

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*Edu. F. Doherty*

William Conroe Smieding was of the age of but forty years at the time of his departure from this life. The judgment of a Divine Providence, from which there lies no appeal, is not subject to question. However, it is only natural to regret the necessity of the entry of such judgment in the case of one of that age. From childhood he labored under physical handicaps which if not entirely responsible therefor at least contributed to his untimely death.

Nature compensates as best it may for the handicaps with which the members of the human race are afflicted. In his case there was developed will power and perserverance in a marked degree,- qualities which manifested themselves in school, college and law school, in the practice of his profession, in his church, hospital and fraternal work, and in his daily life.

He did not aspire to become a trial lawyer, not because of any lack of ability but as a matter of choice. He became an able and respected lawyer in those branches of the law in which he elected to confine his practice. In civic and charitable endeavors he merited and enjoyed the confidence and respect of those with whom he was associated in such work.

Honesty and integrity may be mentioned as outstanding traits of his character. By his personal and professional life he reflected credit not only to himself but to the honorable profession of which he was a member.

When it was known that Mr. Rowlands, after thirty years as Public Administrator, was resigning, I called in William Smieding and asked him to take over the work. I had had much respect for his legal ability, his cheerful disposition and his judgment. I know that every member of the Racine County Bar was pleased at the excellent way he performed the duties of the Office.

He displayed in his work the same attributes he had displayed during all his life. He showed the same courage in upholding his view of any legal question that, since he was a boy, he demonstrated in overcoming his serious physical difficulties, asking no odds and doing almost everything that he would have done had he not had his crippling attack.

His happy laughter was a regular sound on the County Court floor of the Courthouse and members of the Bar enjoyed their association with him regardless of the fact that he was exacting in his official duty.

When he found last summer that he would require a serious operation, he conferred on the appointment of a deputy and the selection of his successor was actually largely his.

The Bar has lost a respected member, the Community has lost a faithful and capable official and the Smieding family have lost a brave, lovable and worthy son and brother.

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*Edw. F. Daley*

We are assembled here today to evidence our highest respect for him and to pay simple and fitting tribute to his memory.

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Dated at Racine, Wisconsin, April 10, 1951.