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## JOSEPH R. CROWLEY: A REMINISCENCE

Irving R. Kaufman \*

CONSIDER it a privilege to have been asked to pay tribute to my dear friend Joseph Crowley. Our friendship began with my own tenure on the federal bench, and I can assure you that the task of capturing this great man's career in this short space is manifestly impossible.

Learned Hand wrote, "A man's life is like a tapestry. It is made up of many strands which interwoven make a pattern; to separate a single one and look at it alone not only destroys the whole, but gives the strand itself a false value."<sup>1</sup> So it must be with what I write about Joseph Crowley, for he was a man who combined the highest dedication to scholarship with a personal charm and pixie humor that warmed the hearts of all who knew him.

Yet one area of Joe's life is the hallmark of all the others: Fordham Law School. At Fordham, Joe matured into a seasoned scholar who devoted his life to the study and love of the law. He was also an accomplished teacher who earned the respect and devotion of his students. Like Chaucer's Cleric in *The Canterbury Tales*, Joe would "gladly . . . learn and gladly teach."<sup>2</sup> And, at last, Joe served with distinction as associate dean. Only someone as extraordinary as Joe could have juggled the conflicting needs of the administration, faculty, student body and alumni, winning the esteem of all.

Let me share a personal reminiscence. I first met Joe in November 1949, when I was sworn in as a United States District Judge. My law partner, Gregory Noonan, also joined the federal bench at that time, and chose Joe as his first clerk. Judge Noonan leaned heavily on Joe's industry and scholastic ability. All of us in the courthouse delighted in his infectious good humor and enthusiasm.

After Joe's clerkship ended, I continued to enjoy his friendship. Many years later, I was at the Law School for a ceremony. Then Dean William Mulligan, knowing of my affection for Professor Crowley, invited me to visit one of Joe's classes. We slipped into the back of the classroom, and found the good professor lecturing on *Boys Markets, Inc. v. Retail Clerks Union*,<sup>3</sup> a difficult case dealing with the interstices of labor law and federal jurisprudence. For a moment, I was taken aback. Who was this poised scholar, lecturing with the slight swagger of an actor and experienced law professor? Yet, in seeing the enthusiasm with which Joe illuminated the wrinkles of the case—as well as the obvious devotion of his

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\* Judge, United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit; B.A. 1928, Fordham University; J.D. 1931, Fordham University School of Law.

1. L. Hand, *The Spirit of Liberty: Papers and Addresses of Learned Hand* 167 (1960).

2. G. Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales* 6 (R. Lumiansky trans. 1948).

3. 398 U.S. 235 (1970).

students—I knew that my old friend had not really changed. Fordham, for Joe, was a home where all his talents, personal and professional, could come into play.

The Fordham legal community has lost one of its strongest pillars. Perhaps some solace may be found in these few short lines of poetry taken from one of the Greek Epigrams:

They told me, Heraclitus, they told me you were dead.  
They brought me bitter news to hear and bitter tears to shed,  
I wept as I remembered how often you and I  
Had tired the sun with talking and sent him down the sky.  
And now that thou hast left us, my dear old Carian Guest,  
The past is dust and ashes, and thou at last at rest,  
Still are thy pleasant voices, thy memories awake,  
For death, he taketh all away, but them he cannot take.

Joe has left us far too soon. We miss him and grieve for ourselves. Remembering him as a teacher who enlightened many, we must now wish for him rest and light. *Et lux perpetua luceat ei.*