

JUDGE GERALD W. STILLMAN

The Iowa judiciary recently parted with one of its giants with the passing of Judge Gerald W. Stillman. The facts of his long and distinguished life can be briefly stated.

Judge Stillman was born on May 8, 1904, at Dolliver, Iowa. He died on April 14, 1997, in Algona, Iowa, at the age of 92 years. He is survived by his wife Betty; two daughters, Elizabeth Ann Stillman and Marcia Jones; five grandchildren; and three great grandchildren.

After graduating from the University of Iowa Law School in 1926, he started his private practice in Algona. He served eleven years on the Algona Public School Board, and was an active member of the Congregational Church, Prudence Lodge #205, and the Kossuth Shrine Club. He was an avid sportsman and conservationist.

Judge Stillman began serving as a district judge in the fourteenth judicial district on January 1, 1939, at the age of 34. He retired on September 1, 1974, at the age of 70 years, after serving as a district judge for more than 35 years.

Judge Stillman, a modest and quiet man, would have considered this brief sketch more than adequate, and would have scorned any embellishment. But, to the succeeding generation of Iowa lawyers and judges for whom he served as a role model, a brief list of his career dates is wholly inadequate.

Judge Stillman was described as a man with penetrating intelligence and good judgment. Even this description is inadequate. He was truly blessed with a wonderful judicial temperament. This gift, supported by robust common sense, genuine humility, and - not least - a keen sense of humor, won not only respect but affection throughout his judicial district.

He outlived most of his contemporaries - but not his commanding reputation. He was precisely what a judge should be. Though he was full of years and honors, we mark his passing with profound regret.