



Judge William P. Donelan, PSD 2nd District Master 1954-1958 (1907-1983)

Judge William P. Donelan was a dynamic, devout Knight. Born in Charleston on June 27, 1907, he was one of eight children to William and Harriett Donelan. At age nine his father died, and his mother moved the family to Columbia where William graduated from Columbia High School in 1927. He attended the University of South Carolina where he was the quarterback for the football team. He also played on the baseball team and was member of several honor societies. He graduated in 1931 with a B.A. degree and immediately entered Law School. Graduating with a L. L. B. degree in 1933. William set up his law practice in Columbia, SC. He was elected to the South Carolina State Legislature from Richland County and served in the General Assembly in 1935 and 1936. During his tenure, he was member of the Ways and Means Committee and Commerce and Manufacturing Committees.

When World War II erupted, William served as Wing Intelligence Officer for the Civil Air Patrol based out of Charleston. He subsequently enlisted in the U. S. Marine Corp. He served with distinction in the Pacific theatre and was honorable discharged at the end of the war as a Captain.

Upon returning from the war, he returned to his law practice. He served as Standing Master in Equity for Richland County for twenty-nine years from 1949 to 1979. In 1977, he was appointed Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of South Carolina to serve as a Special Circuit Judge for the Fifth Judicial Circuit. Judge Donelan's legal career extended over fifty years. In recognition of his integrity, honesty and distinguished career, he was recognized by Governor James Borrow Edwards with the *Order of the Palmetto* in 1978.

William Donelan joined the Knights of Columbus Bishop England Council #724 in February 1930. He held multiple positions in the Council including Grand Knight. He was elected State Deputy of the South Carolina State Council three time; in 1939, 1941, and 1942. He also served as Faithful Navigator of the Bishop England Assembly #1072. In 1954, he was appointed the second South Carolina District Master of the Fourth Degree and reappointed in 1956.

His family was one of the original families at the establishment of St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church in Columbia. When this parish merged with St. Joseph Catholic Church, continued his devout service and was an active communicant.

He married Ester Martin of Atlanta and had four children and lived to see ten grandchildren.

Judge SK William P. Donelan died February 25, 1983.

