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Remarks, Dedication of Portrait of the Honorable William F. Christiana

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REMARKS

DEDICATION OF PORTRAIT OF HON. WILLIAM F. CHRISTIANA
Columbia County Courthouse
Hudson, New York
November 13, 1986

As long as lawyers practice their profession in Columbia County, Bill Christiana will be remembered. Although he was one of us, he was a special one. He brought great dignity to the Bench, and he always was concerned that litigants who appeared before him understood that justice was his goal. Bill was our link to the past, our historian. He never let us forget that we are the inheritors of a proud tradition as well as practitioners of an honorable profession. Those of us who conducted trials or argued in his Court were most fortunate, because we got the best -- the very best the judiciary had to offer. He was everything a judge should be, and he set a standard of excellence for all to follow. In judging judges, I always find myself making comparisons to Bill Christiana. Is the judge fair, compassionate, scholarly and kind, as Bill was? Is the judge patient, open-minded but firm, as Bill was? Does the judge have a high sense of personal and professional ethics and a dedication

to serving the community, as Bill did? And last, but most important, does the judge care about people, the way Bill did?

For Bill Christiana was not only the finest lawyer and the finest judge, but the finest person. He was gracious and correct, even courtly, and his manner was that of a gentleman of another era. He never spoke ill of anyone, and treated all with consideration and respect. In his years of practice, he was a formidable adversary, but he always regarded his colleagues with fondness and affection. He sincerely believed in the collegiality of the Bar. We who knew him well, loved him well. He reflected great credit upon the Bench and Bar of this county. Wherever I travel, lawyers and judges still speak to me about Bill Christiana of Columbia County.

The epitaph of Sir Christopher Wren in St. Paul's in London, the cathedral he designed, reads in translation from the Latin: "If you would see his monument, look around." If you would see the real monument to William F. Christiana, look around this Courthouse. It is, and always will be, in the hearts of those who strive for justice here.