



Joseph L. McGlynn, Jr.

Born: February 13, 1925, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Died: February 23, 1999, in Cancun, Mexico

Federal Judicial Service:

Judge, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania

Nominated by Richard M. Nixon on January 31, 1974, to a seat vacated by Thomas A. Masterson.

Confirmed by the Senate on March 1, 1974, and received commission on March 8, 1974.

Assumed senior status on February 14, 1990.

Service terminated on February 23, 1999, due to death.

Education:

Mount St. Mary's College, B.S., 1948

University of Pennsylvania (now Carey Law School), LL.B., 1951

Professional Career:

U.S. Navy: 1943-1946

Assistant U.S. Attorney, Eastern District of Pennsylvania: 1953-1960

Private Practice, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: 1960-1965

Judge, Philadelphia County Court: 1965-1968

Judge, Court of Common Pleas of Philadelphia County: 1968-1974

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Judicial Biography

*In 1974, President Richard M. Nixon appointed Joseph L. McGlynn, Jr. to the Court.

Judge McGlynn had served in the Navy in World War II and later as an Assistant United States Attorney. He was sitting on the Court of Common Pleas of Philadelphia County at the time when he was nominated to the federal bench. McGlynn, like Judge Edward Becker, lived in Northeast Philadelphia and was close to Bill Meehan and the Philadelphia Republican organization. He often quipped that a judge was simply a lawyer who knew a politician.

In 1953 Judge McGlynn joined the U.S. Attorney's Office in Philadelphia, becoming chief of the civil and criminal divisions and then first assistant U.S. Attorney. He was named the United States Attorney in 1959. After leaving the prosecutor's office, he joined the Center City law firm then known as Blank, Rudenko, Klaus & Rome, becoming a partner in 1964.

Later in 1964, Judge McGlynn was appointed to what was then known as Philadelphia County Court and became a Common Pleas judge in 1968 after a statewide judicial reorganization. He was appointed to the lifetime seat on the U.S. District Court in February 1974 by President Nixon.

In a quarter-century on the federal court, Judge McGlynn handled a range of criminal and civil cases. One of his most noteworthy – and controversial – rulings was in 1983, when he cut nearly \$16 million from \$20.2 million in legal fees requested by more than 40 law firms involved in a \$50 million settlement of a paper industry antitrust lawsuit. Although the decision was reversed by the U.S. Court of Appeals, the opinion was hailed by many in the legal community as a “cry for reform” of lawyers' billing practices.

Judge McGlynn presided over an MDL consisting of thirty-seven class actions charging a conspiracy to fix the prices of fine paper. His opinion awarding counsel fees and costs consumed 171 printed pages in the Federal Rules Decisions, coming close but not exceeding Judge Edward Becker's record of 217 pages in the Japanese Electronics case. Judge McGlynn is supposed to have wrapped a copy of his opinion with a ribbon and bow and presented it to his friend Judge Becker with a note, “We're like Avis, we try harder.”

Judge McGlynn assumed senior status on February 14, 1990, and he continued to serve the Court in that capacity until he died on February 23, 1999 at the age of 74, while vacationing in Cancun, Mexico.

* The following material is excerpted from JUDGE HARVEY BARTLE, III, MORTALS WITH TREMENDOUS RESPONSIBILITIES, A HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA, 3-12 (Saint Joseph's University Press, 2011). Reproduced with the permission of the author, Judge Harvey Bartle, III, and the publisher, Saint Joseph's University Press.