

## James Hyman Causten (Sr.)

(26 Sep 1788 – 28 Oct 1874)

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**Causten.** On Wednesday evening, the 28th inst., James H. Causten formerly of Baltimore, Md., but for the past 42 years a resident of this city in the 87th year of his age. The friends of the family are invited to attend the funeral from his late residence, No. 1428 F street n.w. on tomorrow (Friday) afternoon at 12 o'clock.



James Hyman Causten (1788-1874)

*The Evening Star, October 29, 1874*

### **Death of James H. Causten**

A venerable and much respected citizen, Mr. James H. Causten, died last night, in the 87th year of his age. Mr. Causten was born in Baltimore, September 26, 1788, and has been a resident of the District for the forty-two years past. He was consul for the republics of Chili and Equador for a considerable period, and has been widely known for many years as the agent for the French Spoliation Claims," the payment of which he urged with eloquence and indefatigable energy, but which, just as they undoubtedly are, the country never found it convenient to pay, and he died without seeing the fruition of his long labor. Mr. Causten served as a soldier in the war of 1812, and he was one of the staunchest Union men in feeling during the late rebellion. His memory will be held in respect by all who knew him.

James Hyman Causten died October 28, 1874, at his town house, 1428 F Street northwest. He was 86 years and one month old and had lived in the District

*The Evening Star, April 29, 1885*

### **The Late Mr. Causten's Papers**

#### **His Heirs to Receive a Portion of The Fees from**

#### **the French Spoliation Cases**

Yesterday afternoon Judge Hagner had before him the matter of the estate of the late James H. Cuasten, in which T.E. Waggaman qualified as the administator on a bond of \$200,000 a few days ago. The decedent, who was for many years engaged in collecting data and prosecuting the Fench spoliation claims, left at his death a large collection of valuabl papers, which were placed in charge of the late Colonel John T. Pickett, and were afterwards entrusted to W.E. Earle. Yesterday, the purpose of the court was to make some arrangement as to the proportion of fees to be paid the Causten estate. There were present, representing varous parties, Messrs. C.D. Barrett, H.E. Davis, W.J. Miller, P.F. Larner and

Mr. Earle. Some thought that Mr. Earle should pay the estate not less than twenty per cent, and others claimed that 33 per cent was the right proportion. It was finally agreed that for the use of the papers in prosecution of the claims Mr. Earles should pay the estate 25 per cent of what he received as fees, and give security that he will pay over the amount as the cases are decided. There is no definite idea of the number of claims to be presented, but Mr. Earle stated he knew of over 1,700, but he did not know how long it would take to dispose of them.

*The Washington Post, March 29, 1878, p. 2*

**The U.S. Government as a Swindler**

Washington, March 28, 1878

To the Editor of The Post

I thank you for your editorial reminder of the gross injustice of the United States Government towards the French spoliation claimants in today's issue of your paper. In a memorial to Congress last Winter, as attorney for the claimants and heirs of the late James H. Causten, we urged their payment out of the balance of the Geneva award, inasmuch as the French spoliations were due to England and the Jay treaty by which England secured for herself all the privileges the United States had already granted to France by the treaty of 1789, and our Government treated France with treachery and ingratitude. Mr. Causten devoted sixty years of his life to efforts to obtain justice, and in spite of forty-one favorable reports by committees of Congress and the passage of two bills for the payment of the claims, died at ninety-four years of age a disappointed man. President Polk vetoed one bill because it was inexpedient to take so much money out of the Treasury when the Mexican war was going on, and President Pierce vetoed the other for reasons which showed he knew nothing about the subject, as he afterwards admitted to Mr. Causten, expressing his regret for the veto. Mr. Buchanan promised to sign the bill if it passed, but no spasm of honesty afflicted the Congress of that day, and the Government still keeps the money. Yours,

J.J. Stewart

*The Evening Star, Feb. 27, 1927*

**The Rambler**

Here follows a testimonial that flatters me so much I cannot keep it to myself. It is from my old friend and your old friend, John Hadley Doyle (Johnny Doyle for short), No. 3016 O street northwest (Georgetown):

"My Dear Shannon:

You know how much I am interested in your 'Rambles ' and I follow your digging up of the hallowed past, being of the old cycle class, with a high degree of enthusiasm; and The Star is to be congratulated on your work, as it is superb, (Quit yer kiddin', John!)

In yesterday's Ramble you mentioned the tomb of Mr. James H. Causten and the wonderful array of names and legends that adorned the sepulcher; and you, will pardon me if I inform you something of that splendid character. He was one of the leading characters of this city; a lawyer of national reputation, closing out his career as the international head of the Mexican Claims Commission, which he carried through to a success, pleasing to both countries, as there were many intricate claims of the war between the United States and Mexico in 1848.

His town residence was on F street, where the Washington Hotel now stands, a large and imposing residence, the scene of many brilliant social gatherings and attended by the elite before the stormy days of 1861. His country residence, Weston, was a large manor out on the Rockville pike and embraced all

the land that is now being beautified by the erection of the magnificent Episcopal Cathedral. There he erected a large and spacious colonial type home that was the pride of ante-bellum Washington, but which in the march of progress being directly on Massachusetts avenue was demolished in 1906.

Mr. Causten and my father were great friends and I recall when a kiddie the pleasure I had in visiting the old ancestral place, especially from a boy's viewpoint, as it was full of the finest cherries, peach, pear and plum trees.

Mr. Causten and his people, especially the Young's, were of the best that old Washington produced, and it was sure some good memories your article created.

Yours sincerely,  
John Hadley Doyle"