

Henry Edgar Davis

(15 Mar 1855 – 26 Mar 1927)

Davis. On Saturday, March 26, 1927 at his residence, 1931 19th street northwest, Henry E., husband of Harriet Riddle Davis and son of the late Henry S. and Mary E. Davis. Funeral services at St. John's Church, 16th and H streets northwest on Tuesday, March 29 at 11 a.m. Interment (private) at Congressional Cemetery.

Davis. The members of the Bar Association of the District of Columbia will attend the funeral of Henry E. Davis at St. John's Episcopal Church at 11 o'clock Tuesday, March 29, 1927. The committee consists of the entire membership.

Paul E. Lesh

Acting President, D.C. Bar Assn.

Davis. The Society of Natives, District of Columbia, announces the death of our late associate member, Henry E. Davis. Funeral services at St. John's Church, 16th and H streets northwest, Tuesday, March 29, 11 o'clock a.m.

Dr. Samuel S. Adams, Pres.

Miss Emma A. Bright, Sec.

The Evening Star, March 27, 1927, p. 2

Noted Lawyer Dead

Henry E. Davis Expires at Home

Influenza Attack Is Fatal. Noted Lawyer Had Distinguished Career

Henry Edgar Davis, a prominent member of the District bar for nearly half a century, died at his home, 1931 Nineteenth street, at 8:55 o'clock last night. He had just passed his 72nd birthday.

Mr. Davis' death followed the recurrence of an attack of influenza, a relapse taking place three weeks ago, and confining him to his home, after he had insisted on making a trip to Prince Frederick, Md., to conduct a case while he was recuperating from an earlier illness.

Funeral arrangements will be made today.

Old Maryland Family

"Harry" Davis, as he was best known, was the son of Henry S. Davis and Mary Eliza Galt, both members of pioneer Maryland families. His father was a well known business man. At the paternal residence on Ninth street between E and F streets, Mr. Davis was born March 15, 1855.

He was educated in the local schools and academies, including Young's School, preparatory to entering Princeton University, from which he received his A.B. degree together with highest class honors in 1876. The following year he entered Harvard Law School, but was compelled to return home during the school year because of illness, and resumed the study of law at the old Columbian Law School, where he received the LL. M. degree in 1879. The same year Princeton University conferred on him the master of arts degree.

While pursuing his studies at Columbian Law School Mr. Davis also was reading law in the offices of Walter D. Davidge, an acknowledged leader of the local bar, and he was admitted to the District of Columbia and Maryland bars in the Fall of 1879, after which time he engaged in the active practice with

the late Albert Gallatin Riddle, a member from Ohio of the war Congress, and considered one of the greatest orators before the courts in that period.

Wed Partner's Daughter

January 17, 1882, Mr. Davis married Harriet Williams Riddle, daughter of his partner, who, with a sister, Miss Josephine Davis, survives him.

Mr. Davis from the very outset enjoyed a large and varied practice. He served as Assistant Corporation Counsel for the District of Columbia from 1885 to 1889, and as United States District Attorney for the District of Columbia from 1897 to 1899, at which time he resigned to re-enter private practice. During the period from 1888 to 1906, in addition to practicing his profession, Mr. Davis devoted himself to teaching, being professor of common law practice and lecturer on history of the law, at Columbian University, and professor of evidence, pleading, mercantile law and history of the law at National University, which latter university in 1898 bestowed on him the honorary degree of LL. D.

From the time of his resignation as District attorney until his death, Mr. Davis devoted himself exclusively to the practice of his profession and public affairs. In the criminal branches of the courts during the last half century he has been considered the dean, having tried upward of 40 first degree murder cases in addition to innumerable other important criminal trials. Associates recall that he was never so much interested as when engaged in an exceedingly difficult and technical case and his attention was being employed almost continuously by what are known as test cases, in both the criminal and civil branches of the law.

Was Leading Authority

He was recognized as a leading authority on the history of the law in the District of Columbia and the history of local courts, and had accumulated one of the largest and most complete collections of books and pamphlets on this subject in the city, which he recently donated to the Public Library. At the same time he donated to Howard University library about 3,000 volumes on the history of the English law and all the English law and equity reports.

Mr. Davis was a former president of the District Bar Association, was one of the oldest members of the American Bar Association, and a member of the bars of Maryland, Virginia, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Kentucky, as well as the United States Supreme Court, before which he frequently appeared. He was a member of the Cosmos, Metropolitan and Chevy Chase Clubs of this city, and the Princeton Clubs of New York and New Jersey, the Columbia Historical Society, the Association of Oldest Inhabitants of the District of Columbia and Society of Natives and many other local organizations.

Mr. Davis was president of the class of '76, Princeton University, and was one of its most loyal and devoted alumni. He never missed a re-union or a football game between Princeton and Yale. One of his outstanding characteristics was his love for Washington.

When urged by a fabulous offer to remove to New York City, Mr. Davis said, "I was born here when it was a village, I am a villager, and I want to live and die in my village."

The Evening Star, March 28, 1927, p. 5

Funeral Tomorrow For Henry E. Davis Courts and Bar Association Members to Attend Services for Widely Known Lawyer

Funeral services for Henry Edgar Davis, widely known lawyer, who died Saturday night at his home, 1931 Nineteenth street, will be held at St. John's Episcopal Church tomorrow morning at 11 o'clock. Rev. Robert Johnston, rector, will officiate. Burial will be private in Congressional Cemetery.

Honorary pallbearers will be Clerk William Stansbury, representing the United States Supreme Court; Justice Charles Robb, representing the District Court of Appeals; Chief Justice Walter I. McCoy and Associate Justices Wendell P. Stafford, Frederick L. Siddons, William Hitz, Adolph A. Hoehling and Jennings Bailey of the District Supreme Court; Justice James F. Smith, Court of Customs Appeals; Albion K. Parris and Charles L. Sturtevant.

The active pallbearers will be younger members of the bar: Joseph Y. Reeves, Frederick Stohlman, president of the Barristers' Club; George D. Horning, jr., representing the District attorney's office; Bolitha J. Laws, Bertrand Emerson, jr. , and DeWitt Patterson.

The entire membership of the bar association will attend the funeral, according to an announcement by Acting President Paul E. Lesh and George E. Gertman, secretary of the bar association. This will be in lieu of the appointment of a representative committee due to the prominence of Mr. Davis at the District bar for the past 50 years.

The Columbia Historical Society, Association of Oldest Inhabitants of the District of Columbia, K.F.R. Society, Princeton University class of '76, the Princeton faculty, the Washington Literary Society, the Society of Natives and other organizations will be represented by delegations.

The death of Mr. Davis was called to the attention of Chief Justice McCoy of the District Supreme Court this morning by John E. Laskey, former United States attorney, in behalf of the bar association. The chief justice directed that formal notice of the death of the distinguished lawyer be entered on the minutes of the court and said that when court adjourned this afternoon it would not resume until after the funeral of Mr. Davis tomorrow morning. Mr. Laskey said:

"If your honor please, since the court last adjourned it has suffered a distinct loss. Henry E. Davis, the nestor and best beloved member of its bar, died Saturday night, some 10 days after his 72nd birthday. He was native here his long, active, useful and kindly life was spent in our midst and we learned to love him much. These corridors and these courtrooms, in which he lived his professional life, are filled with memories of his brilliant career and appropriate proceedings will late be had in this building to pay fitting tribute to his memory as a lawyer and as a man.

"Some one once aptly said of him he was every inch a lawyer. He was all of that and more to the many of us who could call him friend, he was every inch a man. His profession was his obsession; to it his life was devoted, and no man did more to exemplify and uphold its best traditions. He honored the courts and by the courts was held in high esteem."

Chief Justice McCoy, in granting the request of Mr. Laskey for appropriate entry of the passing of Mr. Davis, said that "besides being a great lawyer, Mr. Davis had another side, which was his great capacity for human companionship, which will remain in memory long after his capacity as a lawyer shall have been forgotten."

All branches of Municipal Court also will be adjourned tomorrow out of respect to Mr. Davis.

The Evening Star, March 30, 1927, p. 9

Funeral Services Held for H.E. Davis

Courts, Bar and Civic Leaders Attend Rites for Prominent District Lawyer

Funeral services for Henry Edgar Davis, 72 years old, prominent lawyer of the District of Columbia for nearly half a century, who died in his home, 1931 Nineteenth street, Saturday night, were conducted in St. John's Episcopal Church, Sixteenth and H streets, yesterday. Rev. Robert Johnston, rector, officiated. Interment was in Congressional Cemetery.

Honorary pallbearers were: Clark William Stansbury, representing the United States Supreme Court; Justice Charles Robb, representing the District Court of Appeals; Chief Justice Walter I. McCoy and Associate Justices Wendell P. Stafford, Frederick L. Siddons, William Hitz, Adolph A. Hoehling and

Jennings Bailey of the District Supreme Court; Justice James F. Smith, Court of Customs Appeals; Albion K. Parris and Charles L. Sturtevant.

The active pallbearers were younger members of the bar: Joseph Y. Reeves, Frederick Stohlman, president of the Barristers' Club; George D. Horning, jr., representing the District attorney's office; Bolitha J. Laws, Bertrand Emerson jr., and DeWitt Patterson.

Gathered in the church were representatives from various organizations of which he was a member and many other persons of prominence in both military and civilian life, while many were unable to find standing room in the church and waited outside during the services.

The Bar Association, Columbia Historical Society, Association of Oldest Inhabitants of the District of Columbia, K.F.R. Society, members of the Princeton University class of 1876, Washington Literary Society, Society of Natives of the District of Columbia and other organizations were represented by large delegations.

There was an abundance of large floral offerings from his many friends in this city and elsewhere, including one from Princeton University and another from Howard University.

Commending on the death of Mr. Davis at the Howard University Law School yesterday, James C Waters, jr., secretary, praised Mr. Davis for the aid he had rendered the university, adding: "In the death of Mr. Davis an arm upon which we were bidden to lean heavily in more ways than one has been withdrawn from our support." Mr. Davis also had been highly praised by John E. Laskey, former United States district attorney, and Chief Justice McCoy of the District Supreme Court, their words having been printed in yesterday's Star, while many others also joined in words of tribute. The courts were closed until after the services.

The Washington Post, March 29, 1927, p. 11

Henry Edgar Davis Honored in Courts

District Supreme Tribunal Not to Convene Today Until After Funeral

Tribute to Henry Edgar Davis, widely known lawyer, who died Saturday night at the home, 1931 Nineteenth street northwest, was paid yesterday in the courts of Washington.

The death of M. Davis was called to the attention of Chief Justice McCoy of the District Supreme Court yesterday morning by John E Laskey, former United States Attoney, in behalf of the District Bar association. The chief justice directed that an entry of the death of Mr. Davis be entered in the minutes of the court and announced that the court would not convene today until after the funeral services, which will be held at 11 a.m. at St. John's Episcopal church.

"Some one once aptly said of him that he was every inch a lawyer. He was all of that and more to the many of us who could call him friend -- he was every inch a man. Mr. Laskey said. "His profession was his obsession; to it his life was devoted and no man did more to exemplify and uphold its best traditions. He honored the courts and by the courts was held in high esteem."

Replying, Justice McCoy said that "besides being a great lawyer, Mr. Davis had another side, which was his great capacity as a lawyer shall have been forgotten."

All branches of the municipal court will be adjourned today out of respect to Mr. Davis. Many of the local members of the legal profession and the courts will attend the funeral services. The Rev. Robert Johnston, rector of St. John's, will conduct the services. Burial, which will be private, will be in Congressional cemetery.

The Washington Post, March 28, 1927, p. 16

Local Bar and Bench To Honor H.E. Davis

Many Delegations to Attend Rites Tomorrow at St. John's Church

Funeral services for Henry Edgar Davis, lawyer, who died Saturday, will be held at 11 o'clock tomorrow morning at St. John's Episcopal church. The services will be conducted by the Rev. Robert Johnston. Burial will be in Congressional cemetery.

Honorary pallbearers will be Clerk William Stansbury, representing the United States Supreme Court; Justice Charles Robb, representing the District Court of Appeals; Chief Justice Walter I. McCoy and Associate Justices Wendell P. Stafford, Frederick L. Siddons, William Hitz, Adolph A. Hoehling and Jennings Bailey of the District Supreme Court; Justice James F. Smith, Court of Customs Appeals; Albion K. Parris and Charles L. Sturtevant.

The active pallbearers will be younger members of the bar; Joseph Y. Reeves, Frederick Stohlman, president of the Barristers club; George D. Horning, jr., representing the district attorney's office; Bolitha J. Laws, Bertrand Emerson, jr, and De Witt Patterson.

Acting President Paul E. Lesh and Secretary George E. Gertman, of the Bar association, formally announced that the usual representative committee would not be appointed but that the entire membership of the association will attend in a body because of the prominence of Mr. Davis at the District bar for nearly 50 years.

The Columbia Historical society, Association of Oldest Inhabitants of the District, K.F.R. society, Princeton university class of '76, the Princeton faculty and many other organizations will be represented by delegations.