

## Bernard Reid Tolson

( - 6 Feb 1959)

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**Tolson, Bernard, Sr.** Suddenly, on Friday, February 6, 1959, at his residence, 6911 6th st. nw., Bernard R. Tolson Sr., beloved husband of Katherine L. Tolson; father of Miss Margaret C. Tolson and Bernard Tolson Jr., and grandfather of Misses Clayton and Nancy Tolson. Services at the S.H. Hines Funeral Home, 2901 14th st. nw., on Monday, February 9, at 2 p.m. (parking facilities). Interment Congressional Cemetery.



**BERNARD R. TOLSON**

**Tolson, Bernard R.** Evangelist Chapter, Knights Rose Croix, A.A.S.R., in the Valley of Washington, will conduct the Rose Croix service for our late brother, Bernard R. Tolson, on Sunday, February 8, 1959, at 8 p.m. at the S.H. Hines Funeral Home, 2901 14th st. nw.

E. Ray Ballinger, K.C.C.H., Wise Master

*The Evening Star, February 7, 1959, p. A10*

### **Bernard R. Tolson Dies; 'Mayor' of Union Station**

Bernard Reid Tolson, who as "mayor" of Union Station presided over railroad traffic in and out of Washington for 23 years, died yesterday of a heart attack at his home, 6911 Sixth street N.W.

Mr. Tolson spent 48 of his 75 years in the railroad business. From 1926 until his retirement 10 years ago, he was manager of the Washington Terminal Co.

His job made him responsible for the utilities, fire, police and health protection at Union Station and a sort of general manager for all railroads using it.

The way he performed it brought him the National Security and War Finance awards from the Government during World War II. It also brought him a reputation as a genial, tactful man whose office door was never closed to a traveler who needed help.

### *Accidental Affection*

A lifelong resident of Washington, Mr. Tolson acquired his affection for railroading accidentally. In 1901 he needed money to pay his way through school and he took a job as a clerk in the train master's office of the Pennsylvania Railroad.

He continued his education and when he finished it he had attended the Corcoran Scientific School, Columbia University and obtained a law degree from the old National University. He also was licensed to practice before the Supreme Court and the District Court of Appeals.

But as Mr. Tolson once put it, "There is something so fascinating about railroading that once it gets hold of you, it's pretty hard to pass it by."

While studying he kept his post with the Pennsylvania Railroad and in 1907 he became chief clerk for the Washington Terminal Co.

During his career, Mr. Tolson became known both nationally and in Washington business circles through his leadership in civic and defense organizations.

He was wartime chairman of the War Savings Bond Committee, the Railroad Evacuation Program in Washington, the area unit of the National War Fund Campaign and the Railroad Committee of Operations of the U.S.O.

### *On Board of Trustees*

Mr. Tolson had served on the board of trustees of Southeastern University and last year received an award from the Washington YMCA for 50 years of service on its railroad branch.

He was a member of the Board of Trade, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the board of directors of the Washington Travelers Aid Society and the Army Transportation Association. He also was a 32d degree Mason and a Shriner.

Mr. Tolson leaves his wife, the former Katherine Louise Guest, and a daughter, Miss Margaret Tolson, of the home address; and a son, Bernard Reid, jr., 4610-B Thirty-sixth street South, Arlington.

Funeral arrangements are being handled by the S.H. Hines funeral home.

He was wartime chairman of the War Savings Bond Committee, the Railroad Evacuation Program in Washington, the area unit of the National War Fund Campaign and the Railroad

*The Washington Post, February 7, 1959, p. D2*

### **Bernard Tolson Dies Here at 75**

*By Victoria Stone, Staff Reporter*

Bernard Reid Tolson, the man who supervised the comings and goings of trains and travelers in Union Station for 23 years, died yesterday of acute thrombosis at his home, 6911 6th st. nw. He had lived in Washington all of his 75 years.

Until his retirement ten years ago, Mr. Tolson was the manager of the Washington Terminal Co., a job he had held since 1926. His railroading experience, however, dates back to 1901 when he began clerking for the Pennsylvania Railroad in the old station at 6th and B sts. nw.

He was putting himself through the National Law School then, after completing courses at the Corcoran Scientific School and Columbia University. Although he was equipped with a law degree and the right to practice before the Supreme Court and the District Court of Appeals, Mr. Tolson decided to plunge deeper into railroading and, in 1907, became chief clerk of the Washington Terminal Co.

### *'Mayor' of Station*

As terminal manager in years later, he was the "mayor" of the station, responsible for its utilities, its fire, police and health protection. His job also made him the representative for all railroads serving the station.

During World War II, when his domain was at its busiest, he directed a number of civilian groups, including the civilian defense unit, the railroad evacuation program and the national war fund campaign.

Long active in local affairs, Mr. Tolson's affiliations include the Board of Trade, Washington Travelers Aid Society, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the American Association of Railroad Superintendents and the Army Transportation Association. He was also a 32d degree Mason and a Shriner.

### *Retired for Fishing*

Since his retirement, Mr. Tolson had devoted himself to another great love -- fishing -- and he spent the last several summers at it in Avalon, N.J.

He had served on the board of trustees of Southeastern University, and last year, he received an award from the Washington YMCA divisions for his 50 year's service on their railroad branch.

He is survived by his wife, Katherine G. Tolson, and a daughter, Margaret C. Tolson, of the home address, and a son, Bernard R. Tolson, Jr. of Arlington.

Funeral services will be held on Monday at the S.H. Hines funeral home, 2901 14th st. nw. Burial will be in Congressional Cemetery.