

Adams County Historical Museum - 1939 Scrapbook

Sat. May 20, 1939

Former Judge David E. Smith Taken by Death

Former Judge of Adams Circuit Court Dies This Morning

David E. Smith, 71, a former resident of Decatur and judge of the Adams circuit court from 1913 to 1919, prominent in legal and Masonic lodge circles for many years died at 2:00 this morning at his home, 709 Kinnaird Avenue, Fort Wayne, following a heart ailment. The direct cause of death was attributed to thrombosis of the heart. Word of his death was received here by Mrs. John S. Peterson, a sister-in-law, and by intimate friends of the jurist.

Besides serving as judge of the Adams circuit court, Judge Smith was also elected to two terms as prosecuting attorney of the 26th judicial circuit. He had been a member of the Indiana bar since 1892, beginning the practice of law in this city. Following his study of law at Indiana University, he furthered his studies as a student in the offices of Van Vorhees and Judge William Spencer of Indianapolis.

His reputation as a jurist and attorney spread over Northern Indiana and near the close of his terms judge he was urged to become the Democratic candidate for congress in the old eighth district. He announced his candidacy and later withdrew his name.

Judge Smith was born in Mercer County, Ohio, December 20, 1867, a son of James H. Smith, who moved to Decatur from Montezuma in 1868, and was employed at the old Shackley wheel works. On March 27, 1897, Mr. Smith was married to Miss Ethel Hale, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John D. Hale. The death of Mrs. Smith occurred in 1936.

Judge Smith is survived by six children, namely Byard H., an attorney of Chicago; Mrs. Ramona Smith Tripplet, Dorothy M., Gretchen, a teacher in the Ft. Wayne schools, Richard and Robert Smith of Ft. Wayne.

Funeral services will be held at 1:00, Monday afternoon from the Klaehn Funeral home, Fort Wayne. Burial will be in the Decatur cemetery.

Transcribed by Danielle Warmuth

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(Handwritten date: Monday, May 22, 1939)

JUDGE SMITH RITES TODAY

Former Adams Circuit Court Judge Dies at Fort Wayne

David E. Smith, 71, a former resident of Decatur and judge of the Adams circuit court from 1913 to 1919, prominent in legal and Masonic Lodge circles for many years, died at 2 o'clock Saturday morning at his home, 709 Kinnaird avenue, Fort Wayne, following a heart ailment.

The direct cause of death was attributed to thrombosis of the heart. His condition was considered critical for a week and little hope was extended for his recovery.

Besides serving as judge of the Adams circuit court, Judge Smith was also elected to two terms as prosecuting attorney of the 26th judicial court. He had been a member of the Indiana bar since 1892, beginning the practice of law in Decatur. Following his study of law at Indiana university, he furthered his studies as a student in the offices of Van Vorhees and Judge Wm. Spencer of Indianapolis.

Judge Smith was born in Mercer county, O., Dec. 20, 1867, a son of James H. Smith, who moved to Decatur from Montezuma in 1868, and was employed in the old Shackley wheel works.

On March 27, 1897, Mr. Smith was married to Miss Ethel Hale, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John D. Hale. The death of Mrs. Smith occurred in 1936.

He was graduated from the Decatur high school and following his professional studies, became a member of the law firm of Schurger, Reed and Smith of Decatur. Judge Smith was the last surviving partner of the partnership.

Judge Smith is survived by six children, namely Byard H., an attorney of Chicago; Mrs. Ramona Smith Tripplet, Dorothy M., Gretchen, a teacher in the Fort Wayne schools, Richard and Robert Smith of Fort Wayne.

Funeral services were held at 1 o'clock this afternoon from the Klaehn Funeral Home, Fort Wayne. Burial was in the Decatur cemetery.

Transcribed by Karin Kin