

WILLIAM HUNTER WASHINGTON,

E x P a r t e :

On this October 21, 1932, Littell J. Rust, submitted to the Court the resolutions adopted by the Members of the Bar on the death of William Hunter Washington and moved that they be spread on the Memorial Volume of the Court. And it was so ordered by the Court:

The Tribute of the Bar of Nashville, Tennessee, to the Memory of  
that eminent citizen, learned lawyer, splendid gentleman  
and Friend, WILLIAM HUNTER WASHINGTON.

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William Hunter Washington was born in Rutherford County, Tennessee, September 9, 1850.

He was endowed with a rich heritage. On his father's side he was a direct descendant from John Washington, an uncle of George Washington.

His mother was a granddaughter of Colonel Anthony Crockett, of Revolutionary fame, and a relative of David Crockett, one of the heroes of the Alamo.

General Washington spent his early life on his father's farm in Rutherford County and had many interesting experiences while his father was gallantly serving under the Stars and Bars in the War between the States.

At the close of this war, General Washington's father returned to Murfreesboro where he opened a mercantile store and as a result of this venture was able to give his son, William, the best educational advantages obtainable at that time.

He was first sent to Washington College (now Washington and Lee University of Virginia) where he sat at the feet of and imbibed inspiration from the greatest of all Southerners and the truest of all gentlemen, Robert E. Lee. He later went to Union University at Jackson, Tennessee, where he graduated with the degree of A. B. and General Lee was present at the graduation exercises.

In preparation for his life calling, the law, he took the junior course at Cumberland University at Lebanon and later went to the University of Michigan where he was graduated with the degree of L. L. B. on March 27, 1873.

Immediately after graduation, he returned to Murfreesboro where he began the practice of law in an office of his own.

Aspiring to public office, he entered the race for Attorney General for the district then composed of Davidson and Rutherford Counties and was nominated by the democratic convention and elected in 1878 after two spirited and hard fought contests.

As Attorney General, he discharged the duties of the office with great fidelity and efficiency, being called upon in his official capacity to prosecute some of his best friends but not allowing in any way this fact to swerve him from the path of duty.

He declined to run for re-election and took up the general practice of law in Nashville where he formed a law partnership with the late Thomas E. Steger and Robert F. Jackson under the firm name of Steger, Washington & Jackson.

He retired from this firm in 1899 and thereafter practiced law in Nashville until the date of his death with continued and profitable success. He made quite a reputation as both a civil and criminal lawyer. He appeared in some of the most noted criminal trials in Nashville, among them being the Clark case, the Feist case and the Cooper case.

General Washington was first married in 1886 to Miss Alberta Lamar, of Macon, Georgia, a member of the distinguished Lamar family of that State, her death occurred about a year after their marriage. She left one son, Henry J. Lamar Washington.

In 1897 General Washington married Miss Rowena Thompson of Nashville, a daughter of Colonel Robert Thompson, a prominent manufacturer and banker of his age. For thirty-five years their married life was a beautiful example of devotion between husband and wife. One of them rarely appeared in public without the other. Their thoughts were

constantly of each other. Those who were privileged to visit in their home and accept their gracious Southern hospitality always went away with a feeling of gratitude for the privilege that was theirs of being numbered among the friends of such a happy and devoted couple.

There were no children born to this union, however, about two years ago General and Mrs. Washington adopted a little girl, little Miss Mary Crockett Washington, who, with Mrs. Washington and his son, Henry J. Lamar Washington, survive him.

General Washington was the recipient of many honors. In addition to his services as District Attorney General, in 1901, he delivered the annual address before the Tennessee Society at St. Louis; in 1908 he served as presidential elector on the democratic ticket in Tennessee. In 1921 he served as a special judge on the Court of Civil Appeals and 1923 was State Senator from Davidson County.

In the latter part of the year 1910, he was appointed as one of the Commissioners on Uniform Laws from Tennessee and for the last sixteen years of his life he never missed a meeting of the Commissioners, paying his own expenses to these meetings and giving his services to the Commission without any compensation whatever.

He was also a member of the American Law Institute which organization is mainly composed of Justices of the various State Supreme Courts and also numbers among its members many judges of the federal courts, including the Supreme Court of the United States, Deans of a number of the large law schools, and distinguished lawyers of the Union.

General Washington was an active member of the American Bar Association, not having missed a meeting of this organization for the past sixteen years. He was also an active member of the state and local bar associations. In attending the meetings of these various legal organizations, he was always accompanied by Mrs. Washington, whose grace and charm on these occasions will long be remembered by those who had the opportunity to meet with them.

As a result of his untiring efforts, more Uniform Laws have been passed by the State of Tennessee than any other State in the Union, except one.

In politics, General Washington was a true democrat of the Old Southern School and always answered the call of his party when service was needed. He was a true democrat in his relations to his fellow man. He gave freely of his time and counsel to the lawyers, young and old, who called upon him and no person was so poor but that he could call on him freely for advice when in trouble.

As a lawyer, he moved on the highest possible plane, he was at all times and under all circumstances ethical, both in thought and act. His word was as good as his bond and none of his brethren at the bar could ever accuse him of taking any undue advantage.

General Washington was a man of the most exemplary habits and because of this maintained a vigor both in mind and body which was a source of wonder and admiration of all who knew him. He never grew old and asked no quarter because of his age. Within ten days of his death, he represented the cause of his client in a case in court with the same fire and vigor that characterized him throughout his legal career. On the day prior to his death, he attended to the duties of his profession in his office in a manner that gave no indication whatever of what was to come.

Truly it might be said of him that "His eye was not dimmed nor his natural forces abated." He approached his grave with an unflinching step.

General Washington was a deeply religious man. He was a regular attendant and one of the officers of the West End Methodist Church in Nashville. His Christian life was an inspiration to all who came in contact with him. His home was truly one where Christ was always an un seen guest.

On July 9, 1932, he suddenly and quietly slipped away and all of us as his friends mourn his loss. WILLIAM HUNTER WASHINGTON, an American, a Southerner, a lawyer and a friend INDEED in whom there was no guile.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BAR OF NASHVILLE, That, in the passing of General Washington our city, state and nation has lost an eminent lawyer, a useful and public-spirited citizen, a true friend; that the lawyers of this Bar will long cherish the memory of this able and courtly gentleman who was a credit to his profession; who was true to every relation in life and who walked erect in the love and esteem of his brethren of the Bar.

That a copy of these resolutions be spread upon the minutes of the courts of this county and the appellate courts and furnished to the members of his family.

Littell Rust,  
J. G. Lackey,  
C. H. Rutherford,  
R. F. Jackson,  
J. B. Daniel,  
J. M. Anderson.

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