

Federal Judge W. R. Smith El Paso Pioneer, Statesman Is Victim Of Sudden Death

MYRON A. SMITH, of Fort Worth, arrived Monday to attend the funeral services of his father, United States district judge W. R. Smith, who died Saturday night at his home, 1427 Hawthorne Place. Robert Smith, Jr., another son, will arrive this afternoon from Austin.

Funeral services will be held in the First Baptist church Tuesday at 10 a. m. by the Peak-Hagedorn company. Rev. T. V. Neal, pastor of First Baptist church, officiating.

Messages Of Sympathy.

Hundreds of messages of condolence and sympathy were pouring into the Smith home Monday, not only from El Paso but from friends over the United States.

Judge Smith had been ill since August 6 but was reported in an improved condition. He was believed to have been much better the day of his death. Saturday night at 11 o'clock he asked for a drink of water. While the nurse was out of the room he died. Strain of overwork during the past few months was largely responsible for his death, according to his son, Breedlove Smith. Judge Smith went to New York in June to assist in clearing the docket, there and on returning here took up active work again.

Used Great Fairness.

Admired and respected, especially

by those who were most intimately associated with him, Judge Smith gained a name of great fairness and sympathy for human kind in his decisions. Many men have been cured of the drug habit through his efforts. One of his recent rulings which attracted national attention was his ruling that a saloon keeper in Juarez was not entitled to United States citizenship. He held that a man, to become a true citizen, must believe in, and help uphold, the constitution.

Opens New Thoroughfare.

Another local ruling which made possible the opening of a new thoroughfare was his decision in the Cotton avenue paving case. The Southern Pacific had obtained a temporary injunction to stop paving across its tracks, claiming that Cotton avenue was not a dedicated street. After hearing evidence to show that it was a dedicated street, judge Smith refused to grant a permanent injunction.

The Rio Grande project owes much to judge Smith, who spent years of work to get through the necessary legislation for building the Elephant Butte dam.

Fought For Dam.

"In congress it was his big ambition," said Breedlove Smith. "There was opposition to letting Texas in on it because all of the public lands had been kept by the state instead of turning them over to the union. Due to the fact that there was much irrigable land in New Mexico and old Mexico,

Judge W. R. Smith, Claimed By Death



—Photo by Feldman's Studio.
—Cut by International Engraving Co.

the project was finally agreed upon and Texas allowed a part in it.

"My father was a member of the irrigation committee in the house while he was there, and from 1910 to 1917 served as chairman of it. He took a great interest in the development of all the western territory.

Provides Postoffice.

"We lived at Colorado, Tex., until 1916, when we came to El Paso. During his 14 years in congress the 16th district, which he represented and which included El Paso, doubled in population. He obtained the appropriation for the postoffice here and for seven others in the district.

"My father was admitted to the bar in 1885 and came to Colorado, Tex., in 1888 as a young lawyer, where he was in 1897 appointed judge of the 32d judicial district upon the death of the incumbent judge. He was reelected to the office in 1898 and 1900 and elected to congress in 1903, where he served 14 years."

Friend Of Bryan.

Judge Smith was a devoted Democrat and a personal friend of William Jennings Bryan, who often stopped at the Smith home in El Paso. In 1917 he was appointed United States district judge by the late president Woodrow Wilson.

Of fraternal organizations judge Smith had been a member of the Woodmen of the World, Knights of Pythias, Odd Fellows, and Elks.

Judge Smith was born in Smith county, Texas, August 18, 1863, the son of Samuel Augustus and Melissa Caroline Smith. He graduated from San Houston Normal institute in Huntsville in 1883 and married Nov. 6, 1890 to Miss Frances Lipscomb Breedlove of Brenham.

Was District Judge.

In 1885 judge Smith was admitted to the bar and in 1888 removed to Colorado, Tex., when he was appointed judge of the 32nd district.

At Colorado prior to his appointment to the judgeship judge Smith was a law partner of W. S. Smallwood, who later came to El Paso and died here in 1916.

His survivors are his widow; three sons, Breedlove, El Paso attorney; Myron A., of Fort Worth, and Robert, jr., attending the University of Texas; two daughters, Mrs. Laurence Stevens and Miss Dorothy Smith, El Paso; a sister, Mrs. Jessie S. Kerr, El Paso, and a niece, Margaret Kerr.

Resolutions Of Sorrow.

At a meeting of the Bar association Monday, judge M. Nagle was instructed to draw up resolutions praising the work of judge Smith and extending sympathy to members of the bereaved family.

Active pallbearers are Norman J. Morrisson, A. H. Woelher, J. N. Phillips, Jay D. Reeder, A. H. Rabentish, J. C. White and John Wren.

The honorary pallbearers are Tom Lea, R. E. Thomason, Charles B. Stevens, H. R. Gamble, Dr. Will P. Rogers, S. J. Isaacks, Dr. J. B. Gray, William

H. Burges, A. H. Culwell, J. G. McGrady, Richard F. Burges, Prince A. Hazzard, A. J. W. Schmid, E. B. Elfers, J. Frank Coles, judge M. Nagle, L. M. Lawson, W. W. Carpenter, Roy Lasseter, Victor C. Moore, W. H. Fryer, N. F. Work and James J. Hill.

Knights of Pythias will be in charge of services in Evergreen cemetery.