

**A MEMORIAL AND
A TRIBUTE FROM HIS
FRIENDS; PP. 12-62**

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A Memorial and a Tribute from His Friends; pp. 12-62 by Robert Darrah Jenks

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ROBERT DARRAH JENKS

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ROBERT DARRAH JENKS
1875-1917

*A memorial and a tribute
from his friends*



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Robert D. Jencks

treasured friendships—Robert Barrett, Roland Dixon, Charlie Drew, Harry Foote, Sinclair Kennedy, Duncan Phillips, James Porter and others, without which life would never have been the same to him.

After a summer spent in travel in Europe, Rob decided to enter railroad life, and began his work in the Freight Department of the Philadelphia & Reading Railway, becoming a "billing clerk" at the Front and Noble Streets Station. Here he worked for about a year; then deciding to study law, he entered the Law School of the University of Pennsylvania in the fall of 1898, graduating in 1901. While in this school he was a member of the Sharswood Law Club. He passed his course with first, second and third year honors, and graduated *cum laude*. Later he became an editor of the American Law Register.

About the time of entering the Law School he was much distressed at the corrupt political conditions of the ward in which he lived in Philadelphia, and from then until the close of his life, he was a close student of city politics. Early in his career he encountered the opposition of the "gang" politicians in his efforts to improve the registration of voters in his district, and he had many times to show the true courage he possessed when attempting, while a "watcher" on Election Day, to prevent the voting of repeaters and those illegally registered. Once when endeavoring to ascertain if a certain named person lived at a given address on one of the worst streets of the City, he was threatened with

personal violence; and while protesting a voter in his own polling place he was once struck on the head and thrown from the booth. This time he was able to have his assailant arrested. Many times on Election Day his quiet but firm and courageous behavior kept order in a polling booth filled with excited negroes and workers of the lowest class.

His neighbors, Hazard Dickson, Esq., and Mr. Richard Gilpin, (both now deceased) were also pillars of strength. Gradually the election officers (usually colored) came to realize that Rob was always fair, and later they trusted him and gladly accepted the help he often gave on Election nights when he would almost always stay until late and help them count the votes and make up the rather complicated tabulations of the returns.

With his intimate knowledge of conditions as they were in the lower wards of the City, he willingly became a member of the Committee of Seventy and was still one of that active body at the time of his death.

After graduation from the Law School he began the practice of law in the office of John Douglass Brown, Esq., in the Drexel Building, Philadelphia; later forming a partnership with Mr. Brown and his friend, Henry Wolf Biklé, Esq., under the name of Brown, Biklé and Jenks.

When Mr. Biklé was called to the Pennsylvania Railroad, Robert decided to move nearer the Law Library and Courts, and accordingly took his office in the West End Trust Building, becoming associated, although never in partner-

ship, with Thomas Raeburn White, Esq. His attention soon was attracted by railroad rate cases, and he made a constantly increasing study of cases involving interstate commerce and railroad law.

On June 20, 1914, he married Maud M. Lowrey, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Dwight M. Lowrey, of Philadelphia. Shortly after the wedding they left for Europe, and spent a very happy and interesting two months travelling through England, Germany, Switzerland and France. He and his wife rented an attractive little house at 1704 Rittenhouse Street, Philadelphia, where he lived until his death.

Since the winter of 1901 and 1902 when, after a warning breakdown, he was sent to spend the winter reluctantly in Egypt, he had endeavored to prevent a like enforced vacation; and by spending a month or six weeks in the mountains or camping in the West in summer and, when overtired, a day or two at the seashore in the winter, he had remained in very good health.

However, since the first of January he had had much responsibility in an important rate case, involving the interests of the City of Philadelphia, hearings of which were in New York City. Being unable to secure accommodations in that city, he had for several days been travelling to New York each morning and returning to his home late at night. At the close of the hearing on Tuesday, January 16th, he complained of feeling tired, and cancelled a dinner invitation with one of his Harvard friends in New York. Upon arriving home he suffered a

severe chill with much prostration and fever. Pneumonia developed. He grew rapidly worse. By Sunday he was delirious and he gradually sank into unconsciousness from which he never rallied. He died peacefully and without suffering Monday, January 22, 1917, at 11:00 P. M.

His time was always generously given to those in need. For several years he was actively interested in the Penn Normal and Agricultural School in South Carolina; he was also Counsel for the Visiting Nurse Society of Philadelphia; a member of the Committee of Seventy; chairman of the Council of the National Civil Service Reform League; one of the Executive Committee of the Civil Service Reform Association of Pennsylvania (formerly secretary and later counsel) and a Director of the American Dredging Company.

He was a member of the University Club; of the Merion Cricket Club; of the Cosmos Club of Washington, D. C., and of the Harvard Clubs of New York and Philadelphia.

THE MEETING AT THE CITY CLUB

At the City Club of Philadelphia, on January 27, 1917, at 3 P. M. opportunity was given for expressions concerning Mr. Jenks and his work for the Club.

Mr. Thomas Raeburn White in taking the Chair said:

"The City Club and the City of Philadelphia suffered a severe loss in the death on January 22nd of Robert D. Jenks. Mr. Jenks was not only a charter member of the City Club, he was one of the first five who originally conceived the idea of a City Club for Philadelphia. My acquaintance with him has extended over a period of twenty years and I know his unselfish interest in civic work. He gave freely of his time and strength, almost too freely I fear, even after in later years his practice had so increased that he had but little time for outside interests. He was especially interested in civil service reform, and gave much attention to that subject both in the state and in the nation at large, where his counsel and advice were highly valued.

"He was one of the original members of the Committee of Seventy and frequently served on its important committees. He was not only willing to do conspicuous service but also modest and even distasteful work which needs to be done but which frequently goes undone because no one is found willing to attend to it. His