



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Immediate Release

JUDGE WILLIAMS DEAD; WAS NOTED CONSERVATIONIST

Robert White Williams, 62, Chief Counsel of the Fish and Wildlife Service, United States Department of the Interior, and former Solicitor of the Department of Agriculture, died suddenly at 6:53 p.m. on Thursday, September 19, in Emergency Hospital, Washington, D. C., after being stricken with a heart attack while working in his office. His wife, Norma Cleaney Williams, was at his bedside when he died.

The Judge, an honorary title conferred upon him by his associates, is survived by his wife, and two children, Elizabeth McCleaneay and Robert Willoughby, a junior at Virginia Military Institute. Funeral services were held at the Episcopal Church in Falls Church, Virginia, at 2:30 p.m., Saturday, September 21.

"Judge Williams' life was patterned on the highest ideals of public service," said Dr. Ira N. Gabrielson, director of the Fish and Wildlife Service. "His associates knew him as a kindly, courteous gentleman whose knowledge of wildlife-conservation laws and codes was more extensive, perhaps, than that of any other person. He will be mourned by many throughout the United States and Canada and particularly by his associates of the Fish and Wildlife Service."

He was born in East Carrol Parish, Louisiana, on December 5, 1877, the son of Robert Willoughby Williams and Virginia Sutton. The family soon moved to Leon

County, Florida, where Judge Williams spent his boyhood days. He attended the Leon County (Florida) Academy and West Florida Seminary before going to Northern Indiana Law School, in Valparaiso, where he obtained an LL.B. degree in 1898.

After practising law with his father in Tallahassee, Florida, for 4 years, he entered the Government Service in 1902 as a Game Law Assistant in the former Bureau of Biological Survey (which has since been consolidated with the Bureau of Fisheries as the Fish and Wildlife Service of the Department of the Interior).

In 1907, Judge Williams joined the staff of the Solicitor of the Department of Agriculture, where he soon became known as an outstanding authority on conservation law. In 1915, he was promoted to the position of Assistant Solicitor, and in 1920 he was named Solicitor of the Department, a post he held for 9 years.

In 1929, Judge Williams returned to the Biological Survey as supervisor of national wildlife refuges in the southeastern States, with headquarters at Tallahassee. In 1931, he was transferred to the Washington offices as an assistant U.S. game conservation officer. Four years later he was named Senior Biologist in charge of the Section of Importations and Permits, which position he held until July 1 of this year.

Because of his wide legal background and his ability as an ornithologist, Judge Williams last July was named Chief Counsel of the Fish and Wildlife Service to advise Service officials on legal matters affecting the conservation work of that agency.

Among his writings are a bulletin entitled "Game Commissioners and Wardens-- Their Appointments, Powers, and Duties," "Game Protection in Florida," and "The Game Warden of Today," an article that appeared in the 1907 Yearbook of Agriculture. Judge Williams was co-author of all the annual game-law bulletins of the

Department of Agriculture published from 1903 to 1906. As a writer of birds and animals, he contributed to many ornithological and wildlife conservation periodicals.

Judge Williams was a member of the American Ornithologists' Union, the Washington Biological Field Club, the Baird Ornithological Club, the Cooper Ornithological Club, and the Wilson Ornithological Club.

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