

William Kay

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[photo of W.E. Kay was in column 3-ALH]

COL. WILLIAM E. KAY PASSES IN FLORIDA-Former Prominent Local Resident Died Yesterday, Be Buried Here.

Col. William Edward Kay, eminent southern attorney, outstanding Jacksonville citizen and dominant figure in the economic, political and social life of Florida, and for years a leading Brunswick resident, died yesterday afternoon in St. Vincent's hospital in Jacksonville.

Death was attributed to a heart attack. While on a visit to Cuba several weeks ago he suffered a heart attack. He suffered a second attack at his home in Jacksonville February 15, and his condition had since been critical.

Col. Kay was 79 years old last November 15.

He was general solicitor for the Atlantic Coast Line railroad, head of the law firm of Kay, Ragland and Kurz, a director of the Florida Publishing Company and attorney for the Clyde-Mallory lines in Florida.

For more than 25 years Col. Kay was a leading Brunswick resident, removing from this city when he was appointed assistant general counsel of the Atlantic Coast Line railroad.

Col. Kay was reared in Atlanta, where he was born November 15, 1859. He was of English and Irish ancestry.

Col. Kay attended the public schools of his native city, going through the high school department, and in 1875 and 1876 attended Pio Nono College, a Catholic institution, near Macon.

On leaving college he began the study of law in Atlanta in the office of former Chief Justice Lochrane, of the supreme court of Georgia, and on April 25, 1878, was admitted to the bar in that city. While a law student he learned stenography, and during the time he was prosecuting his studies he was doing special work as a stenographer and earning his own support.

On being admitted to the bar he removed to Brunswick, where he was soon appointed solicitor of Glynn county court, and he served also as official stenographer of the superior courts of the Brunswick judicial circuit.

Having secured a fair start in life and established himself in his profession, he resigned both these positions in 1881, in order that he might devote himself wholly to the general practice of law.

After two years of individual effort he became a member of the firm of Goodyear & Kay, which did a large practice, not confined to Brunswick but extending all over southeast Georgia.

In 1896 the firm was dissolved and Colonel Kay practiced alone for six years. He was general attorney for the Brunswick and Western Railroad Company, division counsel for the Savannah, Florida and Western Railway Company, and assistant division counsel for the Southern Railway Company, besides representing many other important interests in the section around Brunswick.

On the acquisition of the Plant System of Railways by the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad Company in 1902, Col. Kay's firm (Kay, Bennet & Conyers, formed July 1, 1902) became the representatives of the Atlantic Coast Line as division counsel,

having a very large portion of its territory in Georgia. They also continued to represent the Southern Railway as assistant division counsel, and extended and enlarged the field of practice generally.

Col. Kay was appointed assistant general counsel of the Atlantic Coast Line railroad on January 1, 1906, and was given charge of its legal affairs in the states of Georgia, Florida and Alabama.

He then removed to Jacksonville, where in the fall of 1906 he purchased the beautiful residence on Riverside avenue.

Col. Kay was married February 2, 1882, to Miss Emma Lucas, a daughter of the Rev. H.E. Lucas, for many years rector of St. Mark's Episcopal church, and of Mary A. (Magwood) Lucas, a native of Charleston, S.C.

Col. Kay was a Democrat, and while he was never a candidate for, nor sought an elective office, he rejected offers of judicial preferment, and consistently manifested active interest in the political affairs of the United States.

He was a man of wide general reading, accustomed to turn from strenuous professional work to nights in his library, where his remarkably quick and retentive mind enabled him to keep up with the best literature of the day, as well as with the progress being made in legal, economic and other lines.

Col. Kay is survived by his widow, Mrs. Emma Lucas Kay; a son, William Archibald Kay, of New Jersey, and two daughters, Mrs. Edgar Englis, of Miami, and Mrs. J. Wiley Pope, of Jacksonville; two sisters, Mrs. George Kay Sullivan of Atlanta, and Mrs. Mary Kay Ward of Atlanta. Several nieces also survive.

Funeral services will be held from the Church of the Immaculate Conception in Jacksonville at 9:30 o'clock tomorrow morning. The funeral cortege will leave Jacksonville after the services and burial will be in Oak Grove cemetery here tomorrow afternoon at 1 o'clock.

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