

JUDGE PEARCE DIES AT CHESTERTOWN

Death Came When Retired Jurist
Was Thought To Be Recover-
ing From Pneumonia.

SERVED NEARLY 20 YEARS
ON STATE COURT OF APPEALS

While On The Bench He Was The
Recipient Of Many Signal
Honors.

[Special Dispatch to The Evening Sun.]

Chestertown, Md., Dec. 9.—Judge James Alfred Pearce, for nearly 20 years a member of the Maryland Court of Appeals, died at 8.20 o'clock this morning, at his home here. He was 80 years old.

Although Judge Pearce had been ill for about two weeks with pneumonia, he was said to be on the road to recovery, and his death was not expected. Dr. Frank B. Hines, his attending physician, who was at the bedside when the end came, said death was caused by heart failure superinduced by the pneumonia attack.

Judge Pearce had rallied from his illness to such a marked degree that a bulletin issued from his home last night stated he had spent a quiet and restful day and apparently was recovering. Early this morning he had a sinking spell and lapsed into unconsciousness from which he recovered only at intervals before death came.

Received Signal Honors.

In the years he was on the bench Judge Pearce was accorded some signal honors. In 1910 the Legislature passed a resolution permitting him to complete his term, although he was past the age limit prescribed in the Judges' Pension law. That there could be no complications in the matter, the resolution was given three readings, although the rules of the House provided that a resolution of its kind need be read but twice. It was probably the highest tribute ever paid a jurist in this State.

In June, 1915, the honorary degree of doctor of laws was conferred on Judge Pearce by Princeton University. At the same time Gen. George W. Goethals and Thomas A. Edison were given honorary

degrees.

The late Governor Crothers during his term of office offered to Judge Pearce the chairmanship of the Public Service Commission. The jurist was serving on the bench at the time and declined.

When Judge Pearce retired from the Court of Appeals in 1912, a big delegation of lawyers went from Baltimore to pay tribute to him.

Father Also A Jurist.

Judge Pearce was born in Chestertown April 2, 1840, and was the son of James Alfred and Martha J. Laird Pearce. His father also was a jurist. He was graduated from Princeton University in 1860 and was admitted to the bar in 1864. From this time until he was made a member of the Court of Appeals in 1897, Judge Pearce practiced law in Chestertown.

When he returned to his home town in 1912, after being retired from the Court of Appeals, Judge Pearce did not engage in the practice of law, but lived quietly, reading and studying.

Judge Pearce was a great churchman, and for 37 years was chancellor of the Protestant Episcopal Diocese of Easton. He was recognized over the entire country as one of the greatest canon lawyers and bore a conspicuous part in division solutions of questions which came before the General Convention. Because of infirm health Judge Pearce recently resigned as chancellor.

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