

Heart Attack Fatal to Charles Houston

Brilliant Legal Career Ended

Far-Reaching Rulings
Credited to Him

WAS JUST 54

Death Sudden,
Was Alone at Time

WASHINGTON — (NNPA) — A brilliant career had an untimely ending last Saturday afternoon when Charles Hamilton Houston, nationally prominent lawyer, died.

His death occurred at 2:15 p.m., in Freedmen's Hospital. It was due to a sudden heart attack. Although Mr. Houston had been ill since October 13, and hospitalized for most of the time, his death was unexpected. He was 54 years of age.

Funeral services for Dr. Houston will be held at Rankin Chapel, University, at 1 p.m. Wednesday. The body will rest at McGuire's Funeral Home, 1820 Ninth St., N.W.

Born on Sept. 3, 1885, the son of William LePre and Mrs. Mary H. Houston, he is survived by his father, his wife, Mrs. Henrietta Williams Houston; a son, Charles J., 6; an uncle, Dr. Ulysses Houston, and an aunt, Mill Clotill Houston, retired teacher.

His first wife was the former Miss Margaret Gladys Moran, from whom he was divorced in the thirties.

Got Better, Suffered Relapse

At the time Mr. Houston first became ill, physicians said he would have to give up work for at least six months. During the early period of his hospitalization, only immediate members of his family were permitted to see him. He was not even permitted to listen to the radio.

Alone at Time of Death

He apparently was on the road to recovery and had begun visiting his office for an hour or two a day when he suffered a relapse and was again hospitalized.

No members of his family were

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CHARLES HOUSTON

Brilliant Legal Career Ended

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with at the time of his death. His father, William L. Houston, was just leaving their law office to visit him.

His wife, the former Henrietta Williams, and a 6-year old son, Charles H. Houston Jr., were visiting her sister at Southern University in Baton Rouge, La.

A native of Washington, he was a graduate of Dunbar High School here, Amherst College and Harvard Law School. He was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa at Amherst.

While at Harvard, he became the first colored law student to be one of the editors of the Harvard Law Review, and the first colored student to be awarded the degree of doctor of juridical science by the school.

Later Joined by Hastie

He won the Sheldon Traveling Fellowship at Harvard, for a year's study abroad. During that time he took postgraduate work at the University of Madrid in Spain.

Admitted to the bar of the District of Columbia in 1924, he entered law practice with his father under the firm name of Houston and Houston.

Later, Judge William H. Hastie, formerly governor of the Virgin Islands and now a judge of the United States Third Circuit Court of Appeals at Philadelphia, became a member of the firm and the partnership name was changed to Houston, Houston & Hastie.

Really Worked on Cases

Mr. Houston was an indefatigable worker, prepared his cases thoroughly, laying the grounds in the trial court for appeals. He took in his own testimony, wrote his briefs and argued his cases from the lowest to the highest court of the nation.

In comparatively recent years, after he had become engaged in a mass of litigation involving employment of colored workers on railroads, he was assisted by Joseph C. Waddy, first an associate and now a member of the firm.

Won 1st Major School Victory

In 1938 Mr. Houston succeeded in getting the United States Supreme Court to hand down the ruling which is now controlling in cases involving the exclusion of colored students from courses offered at the white State-supported institution but not offered at the corresponding colored institutions.

Representing Lloyd Gaines, Mr. Houston won the decision that the State of Missouri had to admit his client to the University of Missouri Law School or provide equal facilities for his education within the State.

While the case was pending in the Supreme Court, Gaines disappeared and Mr. Houston never learned what had become of his client for whom he had obtained a reversal of the judgment of Missouri courts denying him admission to the University of Missouri Law School.

OF FAR-REACHING EFFECT:

Houston's Victories Helped Race, Nation

The victories won by Dr. Charles H. Houston in courts throughout the nation had and will have a far-reaching effect on the history not only of the race but of the country.

Recognized as one of the nation's top Constitutional lawyers, Dr. Houston not only prosecuted many of the cases which led to fuller rights for minority groups but also served as adviser in practically all of those handled by the NAACP.

Enumeration of all the cases in which he figured would require a book, but here are six which might be considered among the most important.

OPENED U. OF MD. LAW SCHOOL

MURRAY CASE—Ruling handed down by city court in Baltimore in 1935, and upheld by the opening of the University of Maryland Court of Appeals, forced Maryland Law School to Donald Murray.

GAINES CASE — Ruling, first of kind handed down by the U.S. Supreme Court, in 1938, declared that a State must provide equal training for its colored residents within the State's boundaries. The Court sent the case back to Missouri to be tried on its merits in lower court, but Lloyd Gaines, petitioner, had disappeared and was never thereafter located.

PRATT LIBRARY CASE—Ruling by U. S. Court of Appeals at Richmond, 1945, ordered the Pratt Library (Baltimore) to open its training course to Miss Louise Kerr, on the grounds that a public supported institution cannot operate as a private agency.

HELPED R.R. MEN

TUNSTALL CASE — Ruling handed down by district court at Norfolk, Va., and upheld by the Circuit Court of Appeals in Oct., 1947, ordered the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Engineers to represent Tom Turstall and other colored railroad firemen on the grounds that if a union is the sole bargaining agent for a craft of workers it must represent all of the workers.

Review requested by Brotherhoods denied by U.S. Supreme Court.

RESTRICTIVE COVENANT CASES—In a unanimous opinion handed down in 1948, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that Federal and State Courts may not enforce

President Truman had refused to allow the committee to issue its decision against the Capital Transit Company, which operates Washington street cars and buses.

That decision would have ordered CTC to cease and desist from practices and policies denying employment to colored persons as conductors, motormen,

restrictive covenants which bar persons from owning or occupying property because of race or color.

Based in Federal Rights Aid

Because the District of Columbia is not a State, and the Federal courts which have jurisdiction there are not State courts, the decision in the two District cases handed by Mr. Houston was based on the Federal Civil Rights act which gives the same property rights to all citizens, regardless of color.

The other two cases originated in St. Louis and Detroit.

M'CREADY CASE—In the first test of racial discrimination in Maryland since the Murray Case, ruled April 14, 1950, that the United States Court of Appeals must admit Miss Esther McCreedy and that the State cannot require a colored student to accept a scholarship at an out-of-State institution for courses offered to white students within the State.

That ruling virtually nullifies the Southern Regional Education Compact fostered by Southern Governors.

Bomb Victim Not Moving

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in the Saturday bombing. In the house at the time were Mrs. Doris Kindred and her three-months old baby and Roy Perry. Perry was on the first floor while Mrs. Kindred and baby were upstairs.

Windows Shattered

All of the windows in the residence were blown out and the front porch and front part of the house ripped to threads. Plaster had been jarred from the walls by the force of the blast and the rooms were left in shambles.

Belatedly police have been assigned on 24-hour duty. This action, observers state, was forced because of the tense situation.

Hundreds of angry veterans stormed by the house and many openly vowed revenge on the dynamiters. Curiously enough the police department has made no real effort to apprehend the terrorists.

Conner A Dixiecrat

Safety Commissioner Eugene (Bull) Conner, who heads the police department is currently running for governor on the

3,500 Listeners Jam Church

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co workers in the Eastern part of the State."

Symbol of Land

The famed singer then lauded Mrs. Smith as a person who had done a great deal for the colored worker and as a symbol of the best in the land.

He told his audience that they must dedicate themselves to the struggle just as she did—"to see that this will be a bounteous, peaceful world where all people can walk in full human dignity."

Mr. Robeson reiterated that he would continue his concert singing for the masses; that he no longer expects to sing in concert series because those groups do not represent the masses of the people.

His musical contribution at the funeral was, "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot."

Three days later Robeson addressed approximately 200 colored and white guests attending a party given in his honor by Mr. and Mrs. William J. Hays in Washington.

Robeson expressed his delight at being honored by a group of people who represent the type of democracy that enables "all of us to walk in common equality and human dignity."

Kind of America He Loves

The singer compared this demonstration of democracy with the kind exemplified at Peekskill during the riot when thousands of Jewish and other people stood side by side with colored people, willing to die if necessary, for the rights of American citizens and the freedom of speech and assembly.

"This," he emphasized, "is the kind of democracy I love. The unity demonstrated at Peekskill represents the kind of America I love."

In spite of all the fear and hysteria in this country today, Robeson continued, the American people still want to hear—they are anxious to have strong leadership. He pointed out that an enormous crowd had always turned out to hear him, including his recent appearance at Carnegie Hall, and apparently weren't afraid.

Praises Owner of 'Eagle'

Robeson was also high in his praise for Mrs. Charlotte Bass who has used her newspaper, the California Eagle, as a spokesman for the progressive movement of America.

She has, through the pages of her newspaper, stood firmly on her beliefs and the ideals of democracy in spite of the fact that she has suffered severe consequences.

She has kept her great paper alive at a great sacrifice caused by the withdrawal of advertisers who were not in agreement with her ideals and expressions.

For this reason he appealed to

Mrs. J. Ida J. Jiggetts, author of the Women of America, was concluding as