

service of twenty-one years on the court, was made Chief Judge; but his health had begun to fail, and he died in 1848. Then, says a contemporary report:³⁶

The office of Chief Justice of the Court of Appeals, was, by universal consent, assigned to Judge Dorsey, to whom, as the oldest judge on the bench, the mantle of his late distinguished and greatly lamented associate descended.

Judge Archer had engaged in public life from his twenty-third year. He had graduated at Princeton College, served two terms in the Legislature and four in Congress, and in 1817 had been a judge of the Mississippi Territory. He was a large, tall man, affable, one who drew to himself more than the usual amount of affection of the people of his world. At the same time he was a firm man, with a good judicial mind. Judge Dorsey was also a strong, able judge, but one of a different temperment, a stern disciplinarian, full of vigor and blunt. "Stern and rigid Judge Dorsey", Judge Mason termed him.³⁷ He, too, had served in the state Legislature in his time, had been United States District Attorney and Attorney General of the state. And he had been a member of the Court of Appeals since 1824. He had a preference for written opinions, and wrote more than any other of his contemporaries on the bench. The report of the case of *Negro George v. Corse*, 2 Harris & Gill, 1, contains a short example of the opinions of each of Judge Archer and Judge Dorsey; and both examples would now be regarded as of high quality. Both of these

36. 11 Law Reporter (1 new series), 239.

37. Mason, *Life of McMahan*, 112.