

Judge Myles F. Parrish Dead at 64

By Dave (Nellie) Clark

Adams Circuit Court Judge Myles F. Parrish, a distinguished and widely respected jurist who served on the bench here for more than 30 years and parts of five decades, is dead.

Judge Parrish, in his sixth term as judge of the circuit and juvenile court in Adams County, died at 9:40 p.m. Monday at his home after suffering a heart attack. EMS personnel rushed to his home at 607 West Jefferson St., but efforts to revive Judge Parrish proved unsuccessful.

One of the deans among judges in the Hoosier State, Judge Parrish would have celebrated his 65th birthday on Oct. 4.

He had served on the bench all day Monday, and when he returned home at the end of the working day, he said that he was feeling tired and retired to bed early last evening, according to reports.

Judge Parrish had suffered a heart attack several years ago, but returned to the bench and again took an active role.

He was highly respected in judicial circles throughout the state of Indiana, and was sought out on numerous occasions by other judges for his opinions concerning a variety of court-related subjects.

Born in Decatur on Oct. 4, 1916, he was the son of Frank and Addie Yocum-Parrish, and was untied in marriage to Beulah Augsburger on July 21, 1949; she survives.

Also surviving are one son, M. Franklin Parrish, Fort Wayne; and one brother, Dr. Richard K. Parrish of Decatur.

A member of the First United Methodist Church of Decatur, the judge was also a member of the Indiana Judges Association, the Indiana Bar Association, Adams County Bar Association, Decatur Lodge 571 F&AM, Scottish Rite, Knights of Pythias, Sons of the American Revolution, and the American Legion. He was a member of the Democratic party.

Funeral services will be held Friday at 2 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church, with Rev. A. C. Underwood, Rev. Philip Hillsamer, and Rev. Harold Leininger officiating. Burial will be in the Decatur Cemetery. Friends may call at the Winteregg-Linn & Haggard Funeral Home after 7 p.m. Wednesday and all day Thursday. The body will lie in state at the church from 1 p.m. Friday until time of the services.

Masonic services will be held at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, with K of P services at 8 p.m. the same evening. Military graveside rites will be performed by the American Legion.

Adams County Bar Association services will be held Friday at 11 a.m. in the Adams Circuit Court courtroom.

Judge Myles F. Parrish was a graduate of Decatur High School and Indiana University, where he received a degree in government and history and his law degree from the I. U. School of Law.

The veteran jurist was also a graduate of the FBI Academy and served as a special agent with that service. He also served his country in the U. S. Navy during World War II.

Returning from the military service, he filed for prosecuting attorney in 1946, defeating the late John L. DeVoss and the late G. Remy Bierly in the Democratic primary election. The winner received 1,874 votes, Mr. DeVoss, 1,427 and Mr. Bierly, 853.

In the 1948 primary election, he won yet another three-way race for the Democratic nomination for Judge of the 26th Judicial Circuit, receiving 1,974 votes to 951 for Hubert R. McClenahan, 794 for the late D. Burdette Custer. He then started his distinguished career on the bench after defeating Republican Ferd Litterer, 5,175 to 4,159 in the fall election.

Six years later - in 1954 - Judge Parrish again defeated G. Remy Bierly; 3,128 to 1,770. In the general election, Judge Parrish received 5,817 votes to 736 for the late Earl Dawald, who ran as an Independent Republican.

(another three paragraphs about elections)

Judge Parrish was extremely proud of the Adams County Courthouse, and earlier this month met with the county commissioners to discuss roof repairs.

He was also interested in possible maintenance which may have to be implemented in the courthouse tower, and said he would like to see a waterfall placed at the peace monument. Also interested in history, Judge Parrish remarked to the commissioners that a waterfall was located at the peace monument approximately 40 years ago.

Judge Parrish was always the driving force in restoring the courthouse. He strongly encouraged the county commissioners to remodel twice instead of building a new county building.

The veteran jurist also was quite proud of the fact that very few of his decisions have been reversed by the appellate or supreme courts of Indiana. He spent many long hours poring over the latest law statutes and was also a stickler for making sure a defendant understood his or her rights.

Judge Parrish, active in the affairs of the Democratic party for many years, was also known for his walks around Decatur with his wife.

Judge Parrish was also honored in 1979 by the bar association for 30 years of outstanding service. A reception was held in his honor at that time.

(A portion of the background concerning Judge Parrish was obtained through the 1979 Adams County history book.)