

William B. Davies

(July 25, 1848 – October 11, 1918)

MANKATO DAILY FREE PRESS

October 11, 1918

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WILLIAM B. DAVIES CALLED BY DEATH

**VETERAN COURT REPORTER
DIED THIS MORNING**

**Prominent Resident of Mankato
Succumbed Today After
Long Illness**

W. B. Davies of 112 South Fifth street, an esteemed resident of Mankato who has been prominent in the life of the city and who served as district court reporter for the past thirty-two years, died at his home this morning at 4:27 o'clock, after a lingering illness. He was born in Auburn, New York, on July 25, 1848, and was married to Miss Laura Belle Presson in St. John's Episcopal church of this city on September 14, 1869, and they and their estimable family have been honored residents of his city for many years.

With the passing of Mr. Davies the life story of one of nature's truest gentlemen is closed. Unfailingly courteous to all his associates, upright and honorable in all business dealings, he was a man universally liked by those with whom he came in contact either in a business way or socially and fraternally. One of the first positions of public trust which Mr. Davies held in Mankato was that of city recorder, when the late Judge A. R. Pfau was mayor of the city. He was appointed district court reporter by Judge J. M. Severance, serving throughout Judge Severance's long

term from 1885 to 1900,¹ and then serving under Judge Loren Cray for eight years, after which he served under the late Judge A. R. Pfau and Judge W. L. Comstock, a total length of service in this capacity extending over thirty-two eventful years.

“Mr. Davies was a very able court reporter, one of the best in the state,” said Judge Cray today, in commenting on the busy life of the deceased. “He was expert in taking scientific evidence of any kind, and was very accurate. He was also always very accomodating to the lawyers.”

Member of Board of Education

Mr. Davies served as a member of the Mankato Board of education for twelve years preceding the election of the late George P. Scherer, who succeeded him two years ago last month, Mr. Davies having refused to be a candidate for another term on the board. He was president of the board when he resigned.

Well known fraternally and a popular member of a number of important lodges, Mr. Davies will be greatly missed by his associate members. He was a prominent member of the Mankato Elks' lodge and served as Exhalted Ruler from 1891 to 1892. He was also a prominent member of the A. O. U. W. and the Modern Woodmen of the World, and was a veteran member of the Knights of Pythias, being a member before coming to Mankato, and having his membership transferred to the Mankato lodge. All the honors of the local lodge had been conferred upon him, and he served in all officers of the lodge, also serving as

¹ According to Thomas Hughes, a Mankato lawyer and county historian, Davies was appointed on February 6, 1889. Thomas Hughes, *History of Blue Earth County and Biographies of Its Leading Citizens* 206 (Middle West Pub. Co, 1909) (“On February 6th, 1889, W. B. Davies was appointed the first District Court reporter in the county, which position he has held ever since.”). He may have been appointed by Judge Severance in 1885 to serve on a part-time basis.

representative to grand lodge meetings. He was one of the first to respond to the relief call for war work which came to the Pythian lodges. Mr. Davies was a member of the First Church of Christ Scientist, of this city.

Was in Florida Recently.

Several months ago Mr. Davies returned from a sojourn at West Palm Beach, Fla., where he has relatives and many friends. Failing health caused him to give up his usual occupations, but he was most patient and resigned under his affliction. During past years he was a familiar summer resident at Lake Francis where the family have a summer home, and was well known and popular in that vicinity. The news of his death will cast a shadow of sorrow over his many friends as well as his own family circle.

Surviving relatives are the widow and eight children, Mrs. W. A. Riddle, Miami, Fla., W. D. Davies, San Pedro, Cal., Mrs. J. H. Koch and J. C. Davies, Mankato; Mrs. E. C. Minea, and E. F. Davies, Seattle, Washington; Mrs. H. E. Marquette, Aurora, Ill., Miss Mae Davies, at the home; three sisters, Misses Mary and Kate Davies, Santa Cruze, Cal., and Mrs. Stella Woodward, Berkeley, Cal.; two brothers, John and Arthur Davies, Lodi, California.² ◇

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<sup>2</sup> *Mankato Free Press*, Friday, October 11, 1918, at 8 (photo omitted, and two misspellings in last paragraph corrected).

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**“The Blue Earth County Court House” (MLHP, 2010).**

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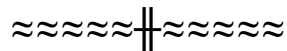
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**Posted MLHP: June 27, 2014.**