

Sir Douglas Straight
1844-1914 (Plot 31)



Sir Douglas Straight was a prominent lawyer, judge, Member of Parliament and journalist. He was born in London 1844 and was the son of Robert Marshall Straight (1816-1860) and Janet Douglas (1816-1890). His father was a barrister and the Straight family had originally come from Chelmsford Essex but had moved to Surbiton Hill.

Douglas was educated at Temple Grove and Harrow schools and in he initially started to work in journalism until 1865 when he was called to the bar and succeeded in forming a large practice in criminal and various other cases. He still continued to write and in 1867 he anonymously published "Harrow Recollections" under the pseudonym of Sidney Daryl as well as many other plays and stories throughout his life.

In 1867 he married Alice Jane Bridgman (1847-1894) the daughter of William David Jones Bridgman (1811-1898) a Doctor of Law. By 1871 the couple were living at St Margaret's Westminster and had a son Douglas Marshall (1869-1949).

Douglas was elected in 1870 the Conservative Member of Parliament for Shrewsbury as the result of a bye - election and held the seat until 1874.

During his early legal career, he was a junior counsel at the Central Criminal Court for the Treasury and Banker's Association. After being defeated as a Member of Parliament he was appointed commissioner to investigate into corrupt practices at Boston, Lincs.

In 1876 he was given the Freedom of the Worshipful Company of Bowyers of the City of London and held the office of Master in 1900-1902 and again in 1910-1912.

Then a big change for the family, as in 1879 Douglas was appointed a *puisne Judge to the High Court of Judicature at Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh, India. To mark his appointment, there was caricature by Leslie Ward in the *Vanity Fair* magazine, titled *The Hon. Mr Straight, the New Judge*. This portrait is now in the National Portrait Gallery.

While in India he became involved in the establishment of the University of Allahabad and became a Member of the Senate. In 1890 he was made the President of the Faculty of Law and the first LLD.

In 1892 Douglas Straight retired and returned home and was knighted.

In June 1894, Alice his wife died in London and was buried on the 18th June at Brookwood Cemetery. The Funeral cost £81 and she is buried next to the Drake Mausoleum, one of the most decorative at Brookwood

Douglas returned to journalism and became the joint editor of *the Pall Mall Gazette* from 1896 to his retirement in 1909.

He enjoyed his retirement with many friends and had always enjoyed the sports of cricket and tennis. He owned his own motor launch and made many canal and river trips. He died on in London on June 4th 1914 aged 69 years and is buried with his wife in Plot 31 at Brookwood Cemetery.

His only child Douglas Marshall Straight CIE became an Inspector General of United Provinces in India, and was awarded the Companion of the India Empire. He married Edith Douglas Lane in 1902 and they were divorced in 1903.

*Puisine means a Judge of the Superior Court but inferior in rank to Chief Justice.

Sources

Ancestry

Wikipedia

The Worshipful Company of Bowyers

University of Allahabad website.