

Robert I. Miller

(– 3 Jul 1963)

Miller, Robert I. On Wednesday, July 3, 1963, at his residence, 1314 8th st. n.w., Robert I. Miller, beloved husband of Marguerite M. Miller. Funeral from the Collins Funeral Home, 3821 14th st. n.w., on Monday, July 8, at 8:30 a.m. Requiem Mass at the Immaculate Conception Church, 8th and N sts. n.w., at 9 a.m. Interment Congressional Cemetery.

The Evening Star, July 7, 1963, p. B6

Robert I. Miller Dies; Noted Criminal Lawyer

Robert I. Miller, 86, one of Washington's most famous "Fifth Street Lawyers" -- himself once charged with first degree murder -- died Wednesday at his home after a heart attack.

The stable boy who became a criminal lawyer, defending everyone from a dwarf to a naval officer, was charged in 1944 with the murder of psychiatrist Dr. John D. Lind, who Mr. Miller said was having an affair with his wife.

The jury acquitted Mr. Miller after a two-week trial and one hour's deliberation. The shooting took place on the afternoon of February 21, 1944 before hundreds of passersby at Eleventh and G streets N.W.

Mr. Miller, a picturesque man with a shock of white hair and flowing mustache, handled many criminal cases for which the Fifth Street crowd was noted.

Flamboyance was his manner. He was given to long, impassioned pleas even in minor cases. A well-worn \$1,000 bill was carried in his breast pocket. At crucial moments, he would draw forth the bill to wipe his glasses with.

He carried "lucky money" he said was given to him by a Gypsy client. Also part of his apparel was a two-way watch fob with a Masonic emblem on one side and a green shamrock on the other. After a few sizing-up glances, he would turn the appropriate symbol in full view of his client.

After losing a case during World War I, Mr. Miller was once quoted as saying he would never again defend a Naval officer because they were too truthful.

He managed to get many of his clients acquitted -- including a four-foot defendant accused of a traffic charge. Mr. Miller refused to take any money from the dwarf after he was acquitted. Upon his insistence Mr. Miller finally consented to take for his fee an 1820 10-cent piece.

Mr. Miller lived such a high-style that he and his friend the late Vice President Curtis, rode to the Maryland race tracks behind a police escort. Mr. Miller, fond of horses from his stable boy days, was able through his thriving practice to own several horses, including a favorite which was appropriately named "Not Guilty."

Mr. Miller, born in the District, graduated from the old Central High School on O street. He served in the Army during the Spanish-American war, in 1914, he entered National University law school and soon became one of the busiest lawyers in police court, averaging a case a day throughout his years of practice.

He leaves his wife, Marguerite of the home address at 1314 Eighth street N.W.