

Washington, past and present; a history, editor-in-chief John Clagett Proctor, associate editors Edwin Melvin Williams, Frank P. Black v.4 Page 584

JOHN CLAGETT PROCTOR, historian and writer, son of John Clagett Proctor, newspaper editor, and Mary Ann (Davison) Proctor, was born in Washington, District of Columbia, November 15, 1867, and educated in the public and private schools of his native city, and in the National University Law School, from which he graduated in 1893 with the degree of Bachelor of Laws, and post-graduated in 1894, receiving the higher degree of Master of Laws, and being admitted the same year to practice before the bar of the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia.

For many years the subject of this sketch has been employed in the United States National Museum, under the Smithsonian Institution, being at present detailed there by the Government Printing Office, and it was his close contact with the Institution that early developed in him a love for history and genealogy, in which he has been actively interested

for more than thirty years, serving on all the Historic Sites Committees of the National Capital since the formation of the first one in 1902, and particularly, in this connection, has he rendered conspicuous service to his city in preparing the booklets of historic sites issued by these committees, and in supplying the larger part of the information they contain, for the Thirty-sixth and Forty-ninth National Encampments of the Grand Army of the Republic, held in Washington in 1902 and 1915; for the Twenty-seventh Reunion United Confederate Veterans, and Twenty-second Annual Reunion Sons of Veterans, held June 4 to 8, 1917; for the Citizens' Committee of Arms Conference, November 11, 1921; for the Seventeenth tri-annual Session, General Grand Chapter, Order of Eastern Star; and for the inaugurations of Presidents Theodore Roosevelt (March 4, 1905), William Howard Taft (March 4, 1909), and Woodrow Wilson (March 4, 1913).

For many years Mr. Proctor has been one of Washington's foremost historians, and a few years ago his ability along this line was recognized by the Commissioners of the District of Columbia, when they appointed him the Chairman of the Permanent Committee on Marking Points of Historic Interest, the funds for the work being annually appropriated by Congress. His expert knowledge of historic values has also been sought and used in condemnation proceedings where historic sites were being taken by the National Government for public purposes. In addition he holds office as the Chronicler of the Columbia Historical Society; Vice-President Chronicler and Poet Laureate of the Association of Oldest Inhabitants of the District of Columbia, Chairman of the Committee on Memorials, Relics and Archives of the Masonic Veteran Association, and on the occasion of the Inauguration of President Calvin Coolidge, March 4, 1925, was appointed Chairman of the Committee on Historic Sites of the Inaugural Committee.

Mr. Proctor's written contributions to historic matters have included, besides those mentioned, papers on various historic subjects read before the Columbia Historical Society, and published in their Proceedings; in a genealogy of "Johannes Heintz and His Descendants" and his numerous newspaper articles covering a number of years, his more recent stories dealing with old Washington having been a weekly feature of the Washington "Sun-Star" since January 22, 1928, besides being

an extensive writer of poetry, personally reading his own lines at the Arlington National Cemetery exercises on Memorial Day, May 31, 1926, and again May 30, 1927, and has at various times for years delighted the public, poetically and historically, through the radio broadcasting stations of the capital city.

Though intensely interested in historic matters, yet Mr. Proctor has always found time to take part in civic and fraternal affairs, and in this way became one of the founders of the Society of Natives in 1920, serving as its president in 1924-5. He has also been for years vice-president of the Brightwood Citizens' Association; chairman of the Fort Stevens Association; and vice-chairman in charge of the Memorial Day Exercises at Battle Ground National Cemetery.

Mr. Proctor is entirely of Colonial ancestry, his paternal ancestor to first come to this country being Richard Proctor, of Lancaster, England, who settled in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, prior to 1743, and whose sons saw service in the war of the American Revolution. On his mother's paternal side, his great-great-grandfather, Samuel Davison, was Commodore of the Pennsylvania State Navy at the time of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, and his great-great-grandfather on his mother's maternal side, Johannes Heintz (John Hines), was among those patriots who marched from Frederick, Maryland, to assist Massachusetts after the battle of Bunker Hill, June 17, 1775, and it is through the services of these ancestors that Mr. Proctor was admitted a member of the Sons of the American Revolution. His middle name, Clagett, is derived from his great-grandmother, Sophia Clagett, who married Armour, father of Abner Proctor.

An ardent believer in National Representation for the District of Columbia, the subject of this biography is a member of the Executive Committee which is diligently working to this end. He is also an active member of Columbia Typographical Union, No. 101; of Lafayette Lodge, No. 19, Free and Accepted Masons; a Past Noble Grand of Covenant Lodge, No. 13, Independent Order of Odd Fellows; a member of the Order of the Eastern Star, of which he was Grand Patron in 1929, and a member of the Trestleboard Club.

In religion, Mr. Proctor is an Episcopalian and a member of Old St. Paul's church, Rock Creek Parish, and on October 5, 1887, was married in that faith by the Rev. Samuel Han-

cel Giesy, Rector of Epiphany Church, to Annie Maud Crown, daughter of Charles Edward and Francis Marion (Haislett) Crown, both parents being also strictly of Colonial ancestry. During their forty-two years of married life, Mrs. Proctor has been a valuable helpmate to her husband, an encouraging factor in all his undertakings, and her keen interest in his work has contributed largely towards his every success.

Mr. and Mrs. Proctor have two children: Francis Edward (who married Mary M. Mockbee and who have two children, Frances Elizabeth and Mary Maud), and Maud S.

Mr. Proctor is a pioneer resident of Brightwood, where he resides with his family at No. 1233 Madison Street.