

= George Bethune Adams =

George Bethune Adams ( April 3 , 1845 ? October 9 , 1911 ) was a United States lawyer and United States District Judge specializing in admiralty law . He served in private practice , litigated before the Supreme Court of the United States , and served as a judge on the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York .

= = Early life and career = =

Adams was born in Philadelphia , Pennsylvania . Though under the minimum age , he enlisted in a Pennsylvania regiment in the United States Army in 1861 , and served for three months before returning to school . He reenlisted in 1863 when Robert E. Lee 's forces invaded Pennsylvania , and afterwards entered the Quartermaster 's Department of the Army , where he served until 1871 . He then worked as a merchant for several years . He read law and became a lawyer in Philadelphia in 1878 . He was thereafter in private practice in New York City from 1883 to 1901 , specializing in admiralty law at the firm of Beebe & Wilcox ; after the death of Judge Beebe in 1884 , he became a name partner and the firm was renamed Wilcox , Adams & Green . There , he litigated before the Supreme Court of the United States in admiralty cases such as *The Kate* . Adams was Secretary of the Union League Club of New York in 1894 and 1895 .

= = Appointment and judgeship = =

When Judge Addison Brown resigned his seat on the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York , the members of the Admiralty Bar adopted a resolution in July 1901 asking the president to appoint Adams . He received a recess appointment to that seat from President William McKinley on August 30 , 1901 , and , following McKinley 's assassination on September 14 , was formally nominated to the seat by President Theodore Roosevelt on December 5 . The Senate confirmed Adams on December 17 , 1901 , and he received his commission the same day .

When appointed , Adams was the only judge in the district . The workload resulting from new federal bankruptcy laws caused his health to break down two years later ; though three other judges were appointed to the district , Adams 's health never fully recovered , but he served until his death , focusing on the maritime cases that were his specialty .

= = Family and death = =

In 1904 , Adams married the former Helen Jean Balfour . Adams died in Hague , New York on October 9 , 1911 , after two years ' illness . His will was fifteen words long : " I give and bequeath all my estate to my wife and appoint her my executrix . " There were no children .

Mrs. Adams served the cause of the New York Women 's League for Animals for decades after her husband 's death ? despite being bitten by animals 71 times over the course of her service . She died in 1950 at the age of 101 .