

Detail provided by Andrew Mussell, Archivist, Hon Society of Gray's Inn:

“Richard Marven Hale Everett was one of our Benchers, and was Treasurer of Gray’s Inn in 1977. I attach copies of his obituaries from “Graya” No 82 (1978), the Inn’s magazine, which will give you more information on his career and character.”

The information given at the time of his admission is brief but relevant to your enquiry:

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13 May 1930: [admitted] Richard Marven Hale Everett, of Spring Hall, Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire, aged 20 years 8 months, eldest son of Bernard Richard Everett of Spring Hall, Sawbridgeworth, solicitor.” At the time of his admission he was a pupil of Messrs Stoneham & Sons, 108a Cannon Street, London EC4.

He was called to the Bar on 26 Jan 1933, but the Law Lists give no chambers for him until 1935, when he appears at 12 King’s Bench Walk, Temple, EC4, and on the South Eastern Circuit: possibly he didn’t have much of a practice for the first couple of years after call, thus leaving him the time to run the fire service.

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Obituaries taken from “Graya” No 82 (1978), the Grays Inn’s Magazine

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Master Richard Marven Hale Everett, Q.C.

Two friends, one a judge and a brother Bencher, the other a member of the Bar from another Inn, pay tribute to the late Treasurer.

First, MASTER THE HON. MR. JUSTICE CROOM-JOHNSON:

Everybody knew him as Marven. From the end of the War until he became a County Court Judge in 1971 his tall burly figure with his serious manner was a daily sight in the Law Courts that is to say when his frequent appearances in the House of Lords or on Circuit did not take him away. For twenty-five years his practice was very large.

He was born in 1909. Law was in his blood, for his father was a solicitor, and on his mother's side he was descended from the great 17th century Chief Justice, Sir Mathew Hale, one of the landmarks of the Common Law. To that ancestral precedent he looked back with pride.

He was called to the Bar by Gray's Inn in 1933, and entered Common Law chambers mainly concerned with insurance law a subject in which he became a master. After war service in the Army, he found himself in the forefront of the great post-war expansion in the law of negligence, and he became an expert in particular in the law of employers' liability and industrial injuries. He edited four editions of *Willis' Workmen's Compensation*. He took silk in 1952. From early in his professional career he had the additional burden and worry of the progressive serious deterioration of his wife's health, about which he seldom spoke and of which few people apart from his intimate associates knew. It was a great extra strain on his own strength.

In 1959 he was elected a Master of the Bench of Gray's Inn. He was successively Recorder of Deal and of Maidstone, and from 1968 to 1971 he was Leader of the South-Eastern Circuit.

In 1971 he became a County Court Judge, and in that capacity and later as a Circuit Judge he displayed the same qualities of solid reliability which had been the foundation of his career at the Bar. Advocates liked to appear before him, a careful agreeable judge, unfailingly anxious to decide rightly and to do justice in even the least important cases.

In 1977 he served as Treasurer of Gray's Inn, discharging the duties of his office with characteristic thoroughness and conscientiousness, always sound and practical in his addresses to the newly-called on Call Nights. It was Jubilee Year, and it fell to him to carry to the Palace the Loyal Address presented by the Honourable Society to Her Majesty the Queen.

After a year of service of distinction, the last weeks of his Treasurership were marred by a severe accident to his wife. Nevertheless he finished his year as he had begun it. He had scarcely laid down the office when illness overwhelmed him. He lingered for several months and finally died in August 1978, a few weeks after his wife had passed away.

Marven was a highly competent and successful advocate. He wasted no time. He always had a clear idea of the point he wanted to make, and how to make it. Although he appeared before juries rarely, when he did so he was an excellent jury advocate giving to them, all the time, the impression that the case he was putting

forward for his client was just plain commonsense. One other pleasant feature of his court work was that he delighted to give public credit to the work of younger men whether they were his own juniors or on the other side. His practice was extensive but in a narrow field: when he stepped outside that field he showed that he was equally capable in less familiar surroundings.

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Next the recollections of a Temple friend:

For a Hall member of another Inn to write a tribute to a late Master and Treasurer of Gray's must seem a little unusual. The Editor has however asked me to contribute an appreciation of Marven Everett, not so much as the distinguished lawyer, but as a man, a friend, and for many years an immediate neighbour in the same block of flats. Those whose contacts with Marven Everett were confined to the strictly professional will long remember him as a highly successful leader - a handsome and commanding presence, a beautiful speaking voice urbane and courteous, and always strictly correct in all he did. These qualities he had in full measure. But there was in his character also a strongly unconventional side which manifested itself in his home surroundings. This is not the appropriate place for anecdotes but many were the occasions when he adopted a "How can it possibly matter what people may think?" attitude.

It would have been an imperceptive friend who could not detect that his large practice, his Recordship and the work he did for Gray's at times put a considerable strain on Marven. He found relief by spending summer weekends at an old converted cottage with a beautifully tended lawn and garden, which he had acquired in Essex seated on the lawn on a fine afternoon Marven could describe to his guests what the farmers were doing in the adjoining fields how the crops were coming along and speak of many other matters of rural interest. He was also a strong swimmer, a passion he indulged mostly at resorts in the South of France, sometimes terrifying his wife, Kay, by swimming so far out that there would have been little hope of rescue if he had been seized with a sudden cramp.

Marven was an excellent "mixer". When he came to the parties which at one time my wife and I gave as a matter of official duty for visiting foreign or Commonwealth lawyers, he showed a remarkable ability to find something in common with people whose background was completely different from his own. Marven was, of course, always delighted when I was able to introduce to him a Gray's man, who had achieved success in his own country.

Such was Marven Everett as I knew him in the 1960's, certainly the most successful and probably the busiest decade in his life I wish I could stop at this point, but this pen-picture would be incomplete without some reference to the sadder years that were to follow.

Kay had never been a robust person, and her health began to deteriorate. She suffered from an ailment for which there is it seems no known cure, and the doctors could only ring the changes on the pain killing drugs. She bore the years of suffering with great courage. The property in Essex had to be sold since Kay could no longer face the journeys to and fro. The twice per annum holidays abroad also had to cease, Marven himself seemed quite suddenly to lose much of his former vigour and in complete contrast to earlier times became a rather withdrawn person. Friends might wonder privately whether he was wise to accept the Treasurership with all its additional administrative and social duties, but I doubt whether Marven ever seriously considered the possibility of declining the opportunity of rendering further service to his Inn to which he was devoted.

I was abroad when Marven had his first stroke, and it was some time before I could go and see him in hospital. It was clear even on my first visit to him that the prognosis was not good.

Kay died quite suddenly and peacefully in her own home. There was no announcement to the newspapers of her death and only a handful of relatives and close friends attended the funeral. The problem was how best to prepare Marven for the news. Over a period of some three weeks he was told a series of white lies to the effect that the doctors were increasingly worried about Kay's health. The moment inevitably came when he had to be told the truth. His third and fatal stroke speedily followed. Despite the care he was receiving it could hardly have been otherwise. Marven and Kay, were a devoted couple, and neither would have wished to survive the other for long.