

Character Sketch of Henry Davis

Age in April, 1923: 45 Age at Death: ??

Age when picture was taken: 40 (est)

A black and white portrait of Henry Davis, a man with a mustache, wearing a dark suit and a bow tie.

Assistant Attorney General
Henry Davis

Character Sketch

Henry Davis was the Assistant Attorney General of Missouri in 1923. He was appointed by State Attorney General Barret to team up with Prosecutor Ruby Hulen for the trial of George Barkwell.

Davis assisted Hulen in conducting a post-lynching investigation which also included a look into the circumstances surrounding the indictment of James Scott and the gathering of evidence against him. It was Davis who conducted the interview with Chief Ernest Rowland following the lynching. Davis Examined Rowlands procedures for rounding up suspects and presenting them and any other Relevant materials to Regina Almstedt for identification.

It was also likely Davis who, either on his own or with Ruby Hulen, discovered the key issues that inhibited the proper identification by Regina – namely a proper initial lineup and the circumstances Under which she identified Scott’s voice and the smell of his clothes. Both Davis and Hulen likely sought out Professor Ellwood’s opinion on the Clever Hans theory and how it likely had a profound Impact of Regina’s identification of James Scott.

Davis, in his legal-but-political position provided details to the press that probably put his fellow lawyer, Ruby Hulen, on the spot. Davis is the likely culprit for leaking to the press the issues that surrounded Regina’s botched identification and he certainly – and publicly – doubled down when he told reporters that Hulen was going to indict another man for Regina’s rape, but was waiting for the Barkwell and co-conspirators trial to be cleared off his schedule.

All this was probably Henry Davis being the take charge person that he was. As Ruby Hulen’s superior officer during WW I, Davis knew how to take charge of a situation and he expected Hulen to follow his orders.



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SIDES

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Davis' ornate office. Davis and Hulen sit across from each other, the weight of their investigation settling between them.

HULEN

I just can't understand it, Henry. How could basically good people resort to such lawlessness.

DAVIS

Rubey, the newspaper all but dared these people to take the law into their own hands. "Summary Justice!" That's how they put it. This morning I got a call from Scott's lawyer—Anderson. He said Scott was an innocent man. Said he met with you and Scott had no scratches on his face or neck from when the girl fought off her attacker.

HULEN

That's right. But she identified his voice, the smell of his clothes. Maybe there were no scratches from the umbrella?

DAVIS

The papers say Scott claimed his cellmate was the one who raped the Almstedt girl. Wasn't he arrested for raping another girl?

HULEN

Ollie Watson. But he doesn't have the mustache the Almstedt girl described.

DAVIS

What if he shaved after the attack? Did Watson's face show signs of a struggle?
106 65.

HULEN

His victim never mentioned scratching him. He beat her very badly before raping her. She never had a chance to struggle.

DAVIS

Just like the Almstedt girl Rubey. What if Barkwell and the mob just lynched an innocent man?

A handful of people climb the courthouse steps. Davis huddles with reporters.

DAVIS

Yes, we expect to show by evidence that Barkwell was the man who placed the rope around James Scott's neck and pushed him from the railing of Stewart Bridge.

REPORTER

Is it true that the Almstedt girl has changed her mind, that she has identified another negro as the man who attacked her?

DAVIS

I understand that Prosecutor Hulen now intends to file charges against another man with the crime for which the mob lynched Mr. Scott. He doesn't want to do so until the cases against Barkwell and the others involved in the lynching are disposed of.