

Honored Posthumous Recognition: Adlai E. Stevenson I

Adlai E. Stevenson was born into the very prominent family of Bloomington, Normal, IL. He was the son of Lewis Stevenson, Secretary of State of Illinois and Helen Davis Stevenson. His grandfather was Adlai Stevenson I, vice-president of Grover Cleveland, and his maternal great-grandfather was Jesse Fell, founder of Illinois State University and who is also credited with founding much of Normal, which was then considered North Bloomington.

After leaving University High School, he attended the preparatory school at the Choate School. He then went on to receive his degree from Princeton University. His father convinced Adlai to attend Law School at Harvard. He lasted only two years at Harvard Law School, and then returned to Bloomington, where he wrote for the family newspaper, The Daily Pantagraph. He was experienced in journalism having been the business manager of The Choate's School newspaper and editor-in-chief. He also was the managing editor of The Daily Princetonian at Princeton University.

After being back in Bloomington for a year or so, he had the opportunity to spend an afternoon talking to Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, while attending a wedding of a friend in Washington D.C. This was when he decided to take up law again and attended Northwestern University and received his law degree in 1926. Adlai then accepted a position with Cutting, Moore & Sidley Law Firm in Chicago.

Adlai Stevenson I in 1945 went to the State Department where he helped organize the United Nations and served as an advisor to its first American Delegation. He then resigned from the delegation staff to return to Illinois where he ran and won the seat of Illinois Governor in 1948.

In 1952, Adlai Stevenson I became the Democratic choice to run for President of the United States against Republican Dwight Eisenhower. Stevenson earned the reputation as an "intellectual" and endeared him to many Americans, but at the same time alienated him from many. Subsequently he lost to the ever popular, World War II hero, General Dwight D. Eisenhower.

Stevenson became the only clear choice by Democratic Leaders to again run for the presidency in 1956. He campaigned vigorously, calling for a change in America and basing his agenda on the anticipation of the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. The American people however, saw no need for change and re-elected Eisenhower.

Despite his two losses at the bid of presidency, Stevenson was still very popular among the American people; however, he declined to run for the Democratic nomination for President of the United States. He instead accepted the appointment of United States Ambassador to the United Nations from John F. Kennedy. Stevenson held this position until his sudden death in London on July 14, 1965. Memorial services were held for the

popular statesman in Washington D.C., Springfield, IL, and Bloomington, IL. Adlai E. Stevenson I is interred in the family plot at Evergreen Cemetery in Bloomington, IL.