

A Tribute to a Worthy Man

Billy Davis, colored, who was a faithful and steadfast servant of Capt. R. Y. Overbey for many years, died in Richmond January 10th. Billy Davis was a man of whom everyone, both white and black, spoke well and was very highly respected by all the white people, and especially by those of high standing. There was not a colored man in the state who was more highly respected on account of his honorable bearing and universal politeness. He never faltered in the least in his devotion to his old master and family during all the trials of the late war; and since its closing notwithstanding there were several threats made against him and he was denounced as a rebel by those of his own color, and his insight and judgement (*sic*) convinced him that white people South were the best friends of the colored race. Billy's death is much regretted and lamented and his place can never be filled in the estimation of his master and family. We have witnessed the evidence of Capt. Overbey's regard for Billy. Since his death, the Capt. cannot refrain from weeping whenever his name is called. Surely he was a good man to be highly respected and deeply lamented.
Peace to his honored dust.

Notes to this Memoriam:

- *It was a newspaper article found pasted to canvas on the back of the Robert Yancey Overbey portrait in my possession.*
- *It was not dated nor was the newspaper identified.*
- *Based on the context, it probably was published between the end of the War in 1865 and Overbey's death in 1872.*
- *Based on the reference to Overbey's rank as a Captain, would he have served in the War of 1812, the Mexican War, the War Between the States, or only the local militia?*

Jere Dennison
Richmond, Virginia