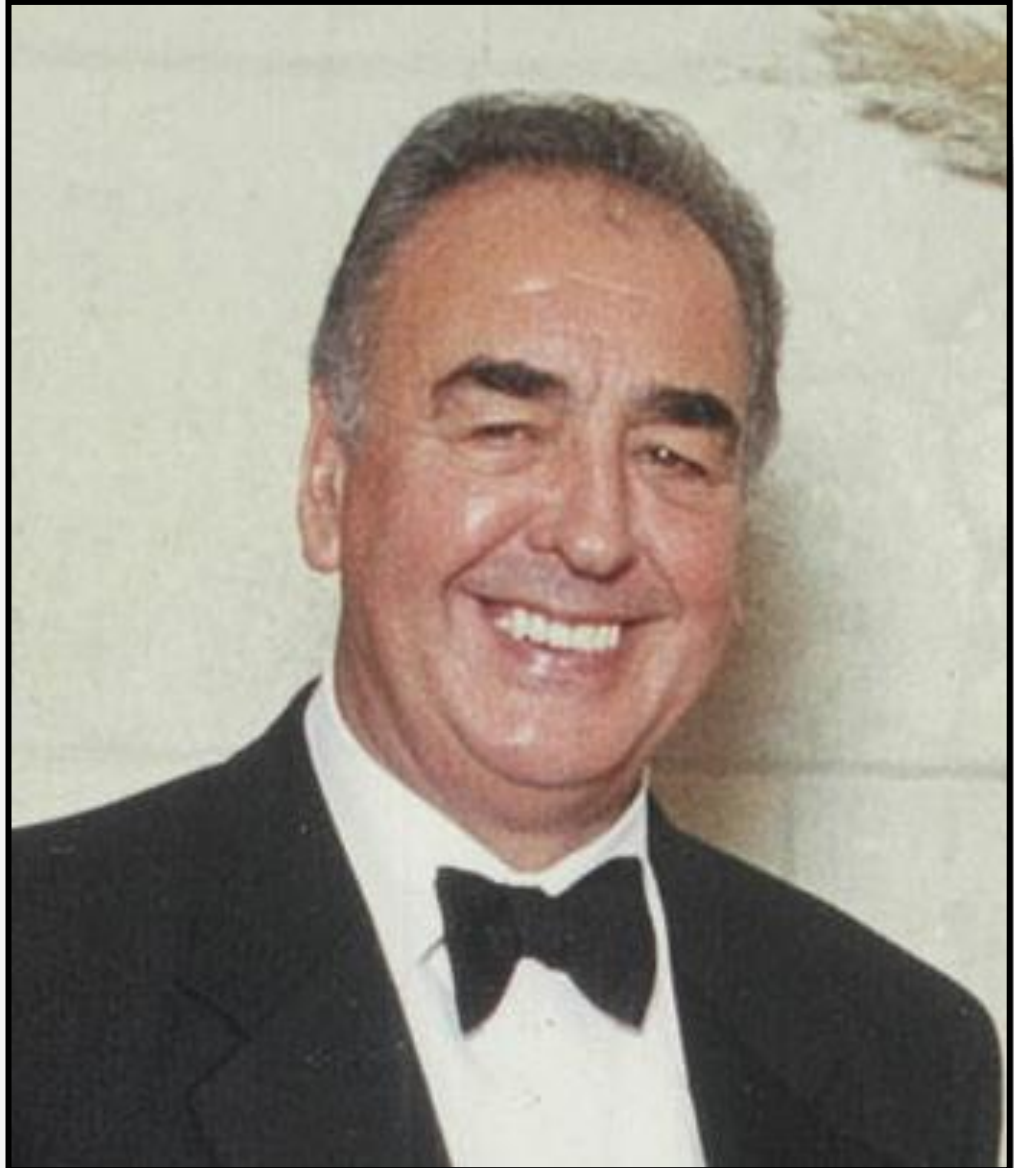

OBITUARY

David Wilson

Senior Clerk

50 High Pavement Chambers, Nottingham

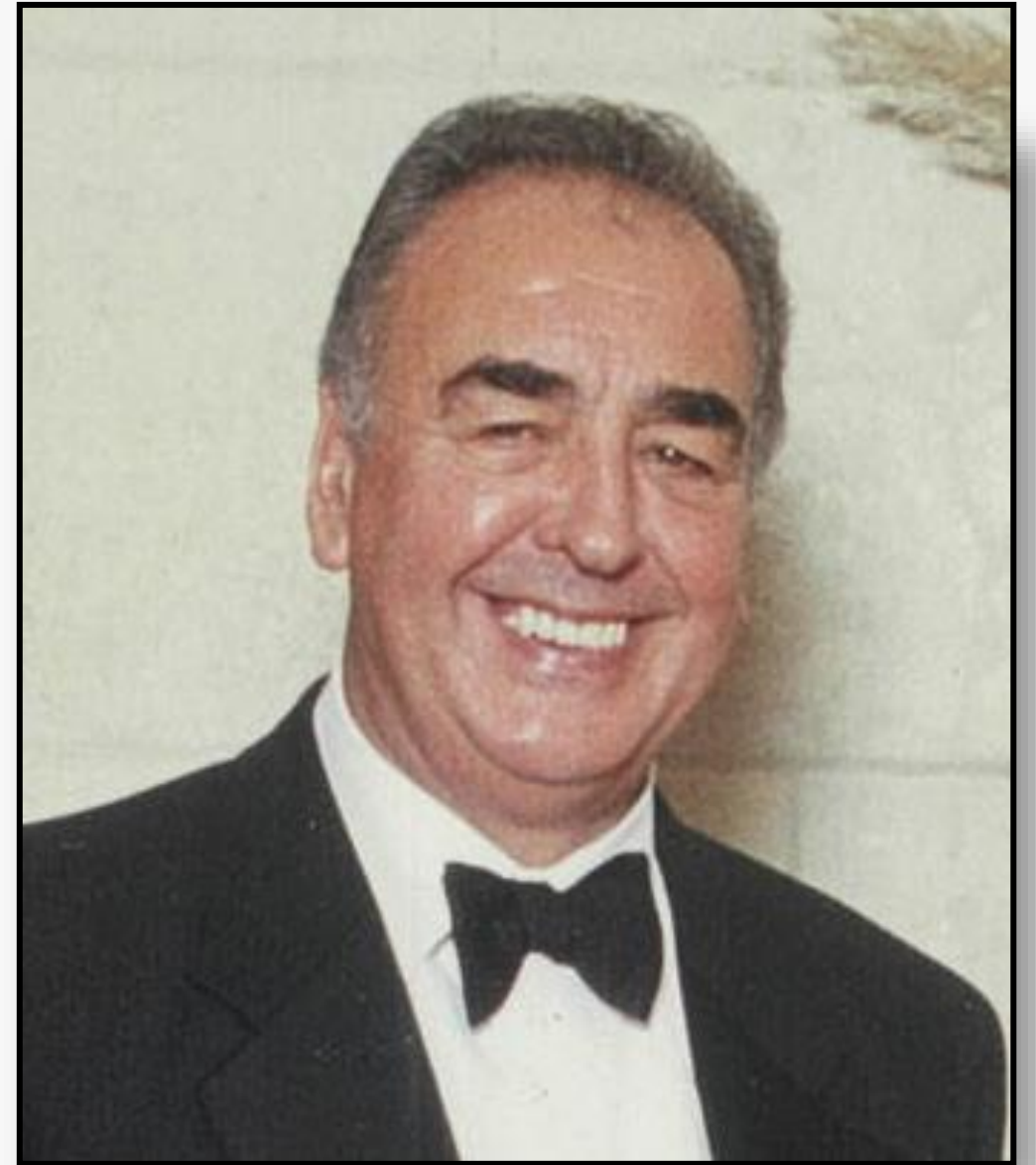



David Wilson

Senior Clerk, 50 High Pavement Chambers, Nottingham

For the best part of a quarter of a century David Wilson was the Senior Clerk of the Barristers Chambers at 50 High Pavement, Nottingham, until his retirement in 2000.

He was born on 22 December 1936 in East London. He had a good intellect and might well have gone to college and obtained qualifications. However, he was encouraged by his family to enter the world of work at the earliest opportunity. He chose the legal profession in a variety of roles. For a period, he was a Judge's Clerk at the Royal Courts of Justice. He clerked Sir John Donaldson (later Master of the Rolls, succeeding Lord Denning) during the turbulent period of the National Industrial Relations Court. David's real talent, though, was as a barristers' clerk. He joined the very fashionable divorce Chambers of Joseph Jackson QC, at Mitre Court in the Temple. His problem-solving skills linked with his personable demeanour meant that he was a popular and successful Junior Clerk. As David himself would remark latterly, he was in great Chambers at an interesting time, claiming, at least in small part, some credit for the advancement of juniors such as Margaret Booth, Elizabeth Butler-Sloss and Mathew Thorpe.





Nottingham was sufficiently distant from London to be able to sustain a local Bar. Historically, the pre-eminent set was at the Ropewalk. Eldon Chambers, later 12 High Pavement and, even later, 50 High Pavement was modest in comparison, with just a handful of barristers. The 1970s saw a rapid expansion of the Bar and No.50 recruited several promising juniors. At the same time the Clerk, Ernest, retired and David was persuaded to leave the Temple to become the Senior Clerk. It was something of a risk for him, professionally and financially, but he took on the challenge enthusiastically. It was exactly the right move for him personally, embracing relocation to rural Lincolnshire.

David had some Nottingham contacts but had to work hard to build up the solicitor base necessary for a successful set of Chambers. He worked tirelessly and soon established his reputation. Unlike some Clerks who rule by fear, David's approach was more subtle. He had a quiet authority and an eye for strategy. In largely pre-technological days, David's main tools were a large paper diary and the telephone. He raised the profile of Chambers in the competitive areas of crime and civil. However, with his background in the Temple of divorce and family work, he focussed on making No.50 the leader in those fields. He understood the pressures and often acute urgency of such work and guaranteed the solicitor clients a committed team of family barristers. The explosion of children-based work in the 1980s, mainly Wardship, meant that there were many briefs and Courts to cover which David always ensured was achieved. Although No.50 remained a mixed set during David's time, it is no co-incidence that it has now become a specialist family set. His groundwork was invaluable.

Tributes to David are unanimous in pointing out his reassuring calm, no matter what the crisis, his helpfulness and, above all, his charm. He had a certain matinee idol good looks, with his thick dark hair, expressive eyebrows and constant smile. In the small clerksroom at No.50, whatever the configuration of desks, David always faced the glass panel into the entrance and waiting room. He never missed a coming or going. A client or solicitor was never kept waiting. The benign personal touch was what mattered. His junior colleagues looked up to him. He passed on his expertise effortlessly. He took his membership of and committee responsibilities for the Institute of Barristers' Clerks very seriously.

Following retirement, David kept in touch with Chambers and showed a great interest in the career development of those whom he had nurtured. However, retirement was principally a time to expand his other interests with his family. David was a talented artist and gardener and loved cooking, music and all things Spanish. His retirement with Marie was long and happy, only sadly blighted by failing health during his final 5 years. David died on 20 July 2023. He leaves his wife, Marie, son, Matthew, stepdaughters, Lucy and Lisa and an extensive and loving wider family.

His Honour Mark Rogers

Associate Member, St Mary's, Nottingham

St.Mary's

FAMILY LAW SPECIALISTS

