

Langley, Katherine Emeline Gudger ^[1]

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by Joe O'Neal Long, 1991

14 Feb. 1888–15 Aug. 1948



Katherine Emeline Gudger Langley, January 8, 1927. Image from the Library of Congress.

^[2]Katherine Emeline Gudger Langley, member of Congress, was born near Marshall in Madison County ^[3], the daughter of James Madison, Jr. ^[4], and Katie Hawkins Gudger ^[5]. Her father was a congressman and a successful attorney. Katherine Gudger was educated in local schools and was graduated from the Woman's College in Richmond, Va. After attending the College of Oratory in Boston, she taught expression at the Virginia Institute in Bristol, Tenn.

In November 1904, in Washington, D.C., she married John Wesley Langley ^[6], whom she had first met in that city while her father was in Congress. She went with her husband to Pikeville, Ky., where she helped him campaign for a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives in 1906. He entered the House in 1907 as a congressman from Kentucky, and for the next twenty years Katherine Langley worked with her husband on campaigns, making speeches and serving as his secretary.

During World War I ^[7] she was Chairman of the Pike County Red Cross and from 1920 to 1922 she was vice-chairman of the Republican State Central Committee. In 1920 she also was chairman of the Kentucky Woman's Republican State Committee. She was an alternate delegate to the 1920 Republican National Convention and a delegate to the convention in 1924. From 1919 through 1925, she was clerk of the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds.

After her husband retired from Congress in 1926 to return to his law practice, Katherine Langley ran for his vacated seat and was elected in the fall of 1926. She served in the Seventieth and the Seventy-first Congress from 1927 through 1931. Only the seventh woman to be elected to Congress, she was the first from Kentucky. She was unsuccessful in her bid for

a third term and returned to Pikeville. Following her husband's death in 1932, Mrs. Langley remained active in civic and political affairs. She served as railroad commissioner for the Third Kentucky District from 1939 to 1942. She was a member of the [Baptist church](#) [8] and of the [Daughters of the American Revolution](#) [9]. Survived by three children, Katherine Bentley, John, and Susanna, she was buried in Johnson Memorial Cemetery, Pikeville.

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