



1954

Memorials

North Dakota State Bar Association

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Recommended Citation

North Dakota State Bar Association (1954) "Memorials," *North Dakota Law Review*. Vol. 30 : No. 1 , Article 12.

Available at: <https://commons.und.edu/ndlr/vol30/iss1/12>

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BENCH AND BAR

Memorials

The following tributes to the memory of those members of the Bar of North Dakota who have passed away have been prepared by the Committee on Memorials of the North Dakota State Bar Association. The committee is under the chairmanship of the Hon. J. H. Newton, Esq., Clerk of the Supreme Court of North Dakota, and consists of Messrs. A. W. Aylmer, A. W. Cupler, T. I. Dahl, J. A. Hyland, Thomas G. Johnson, Joseph G. Forbes, and L. R. Nostdal.

EDWARD CONRAD BOOSTROM

Edward Conrad Boostrom died in the city of Lakota on the 21st day of August, 1953.

Mr. Boostrom was born in Hamlin Township, Nelson County, N. D., on January 28, 1889. He attended school in Hamlin Township and at Lakota. In 1909 he graduated from the Normal School at Mayville, North Dakota. Then he taught school at Montpelier and in Hamlin Township, and later attended the State University for two regular terms. After leaving school in 1912 he stayed home on his father's farm until 1916, afterwards operating a farm in Hamlin Township until 1925.

He married Clara Dahl in 1915. While operating his farm, he attended the 1923 Summer Session and the 1923-1924 term at the University, receiving his law degree. He was admitted to the Bar of North Dakota on July 18, 1924.

In 1925 he moved his family to McVille, N. D., where he practiced law until 1928. In that year he was elected States Attorney of Nelson County and moved to Lakota, where he practiced until his last illness. He held the office of States Attorney of Nelson County for the terms 1929-1930 and 1931-1932 and again in 1939-1940.

Besides his widow, he leaves two sons, Lysle and Gordon, and a daughter, Vivian. His son Lysle was elected and served as States Attorney of Nelson County for the years 1947-1950.

Mr. Boostrom was a quiet, unassuming man, devoted to his family and respected and admired by his friends and members of Bar with whom he came in contact.

CHARLES COVENTRY

Charles Coventry, long-time Emmons County Attorney, died at his home in Linton on November 3, 1953 after suffering a heart attack.

Mr. Coventry was born December 23, 1874 in Sewardstone, Essex, a suburb of London, the son of Charles and Mary Ann (Long) Coventry.

On October 14, 1893 he sailed from England and landed at New York. From there he came by train to Eureka, South Dakota and from Eureka, by wagon, to a community in Emmons County known as Dale. For a time he worked as a ranch hand and in 1896 commenced teaching in the rural schools of Emmons County. In 1898 he enrolled at Valparaiso University. While there he joined an army of volunteers during the Spanish American War, but was never called into active service. After his return from Valparaiso he again resumed teaching and was elected County Superintendent of Schools of Emmons County, serving from 1903 to 1906. He became interested in the study of law and studied law in the office of George W. Lynn, Linton. He continued his legal education at the University of North Dakota and was admitted to the Bar of North Dakota on June 8, 1907 and maintained his residence at Linton where he served several terms as State's Attorney of Emmons County. Charles Coventry engaged in the general practice of law and was regarded as a sound and able lawyer, always honorable, with his word being as good as his written stipulation.

He was married to Miss Agnes Stewart of Dale before coming to Linton. Besides his wife he leaves three children: Mrs. Clinton Richards (Marion), Sioux Falls, South Dakota, who is the wife of the U. S. District Attorney for South Dakota, Mrs. Lloyd Unzelman (Phyllis), who has acted as his secretary in recent years, and Stewart Coventry of Van Nuys, California.

Masonic funeral services were conducted at Linton with burial at a cemetery in the Dale vicinity.

WESLEY HENRY ESTERLY

Wesley Henry Esterly, Beulah, a member of the Bar of North Dakota for twenty-three years, died unexpectedly at S. Paul, Minnesota, on October 1, 1953. Mr. Esterly had gone to St. Paul on business, was taken ill on the train and removed to a hospital where he passed away.

Mr. Esterly was born July 17, 1904, at Hanover, Minnesota, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Esterly. He attended the Grade

Schools of Hanover and was graduated from North High School, Minneapolis, Minnesota. His pre-legal education was received at North Central College at Naperville, Illinois. He received his law degree from the University of Minnesota, graduating from that institution in June, 1929, and successfully passed the Minnesota Bar examination. He took the North Dakota bar examination and was admitted to the North Dakota Bar on January 17, 1930. He immediately became associated with the late Governor John Moses at Hazen, North Dakota. In 1932 he established his own practice at Beulah and continued in practice there until his death.

Mr. Esterly was active in civic affairs at Beulah. He was a member of the Beulah Lions Club, the School Board of Beulah, Beulah Commercial Club and served as City Attorney for Beulah. He attended the Congregational Church.

In 1931 Mr. Esterly was united in marriage to Grace Paetznick of Paynesville, Minnesota. She, together with two daughters, Mary and Margaret, and two sons, James and Charles, survive.

Funeral services and burial were at Beulah on October 5, 1953.

FREDERICK J. GRAHAM

Born at Stockbridge, Michigan, March 31, 1881, Frederick J. Graham came to Merricourt, North Dakota, with his family in 1894. He graduated from Ellendale High School in 1899, from Ellendale Normal and Industrial School in 1902, and from the Law School of the University of North Dakota in 1906 and was admitted to the Bar of our state June 9, 1906. Since then he had actively engaged in the practice of law at Ellendale, Dickey County, until his death from bronchial pneumonia on September 21, 1953, at the age of 72 years.

"Fred" Graham had an active political as well as professional life. He early identified himself with the Non-Partisan League Faction of the Republican party, and served as State's Attorney of Dickey County in 1915-16, as District Judge of the Third Judicial District in 1919-1920, as Chairman of the North Dakota Republican State Central Committee in 1926-27, as Republican National Committeeman from 1928-1932, and as a member of the House of Representatives of North Dakota from 1943-1949.

He was elected and served as president of the North Dakota State Bar Association 1949-1950. He was a member of the Masonic Lodge and of the Shrine and Elk's Lodge.

On June 24, 1912, he was married to Ina E. Randall, who survives him. Also surviving are three sons, Gordon, residing at Manhasset,

New York, Randall, residing at Minneapolis, Minnesota, and J. Benjamin (Ben), who has been associated with his father in the practice of law since 1951, and a daughter, Mrs. John (Helen) Rezzatto, residing at Charleston, Illinois. A sister, Miss Ethel M. Graham, resides in Washington, D. C.

A sound lawyer, well grounded in the general principles of law, Frederick J. Graham, in his 47 years of practice at our Bar has left his impression in the development of our jurisprudence and his passing will be felt by both Bench and Bar.

PATRICK D. NORTON

On October 14, 1953, at Minot, North Dakota, death ended the career of Patrick D. Norton, long a public figure in the political life of North Dakota, the greater portion of his life having been devoted to public service, ranging from the county level to membership in the United States House of Representatives.

Patrick D. Norton was born at Ishpeming, Michigan on May 17, 1876, the son of Patrick Norton and Bridget Dolan Norton, both of whom were born in Ireland. He came with his parents to Dakota Territory in 1883 and attended the grade schools at Bartlett, North Dakota and later entered the preparatory department of the University of North Dakota where he completed his high school and college courses, graduating from the University with an A.B. Degree in 1897. He later attended the North Dakota College of Law and was admitted to the North Dakota Bar on March 25, 1903. He served as County Superintendent of Schools for Ramsey County from 1905 to 1907. He was chief clerk of the North Dakota House of Representatives for the 1907 session. On the formation of Adams County he was appointed by Governor John Burke as the first State's Attorney and served in that capacity until 1911, at which time he assumed the office of Secretary of State, having been elected to that office in November, 1910. He served one term as Secretary of State and became a candidate for Congress in the Third Congressional District at the 1912 election. He was elected and served four terms in Congress. Upon his retirement from Congress he entered into a law partnership with Mr. C. F. Kelsch, Mandan. Later he moved to Minot and maintained his law practice at that point until the time of his death.

Pat Norton while in Congress took a keen interest in legislation having to do with agriculture and the improvement of the lot of the farmer. He sponsored irrigation projects, the establishment of experiment stations with lignite coal. He was also active in the

sponsorship of legislation by which the Government set aside Sully Hill Memorial Park as a refuge for big game. Another of his legislative achievements was the promotion of legislation for the welfare of Indians. After his retirement from Congress and while residing at Mandan Mr. Norton had an important part in speeding the appropriation for the construction of a vehicular bridge across the Missouri River between Bismarck and Mandan. Mr. Norton was at various times a cattle and horse rancher in the western part of North Dakota and a farm owner and operator. At the time of his death he farmed extensively in Ward, Ramsey and Wells Counties.

Although a life long Republican Pat Norton was a friend of Presidents Woodrow Wilson and Franklin D. Roosevelt. While in Congress he was chairman of a committee investigating conditions surrounding the army of occupation in Germany. He stayed in Europe until the Peace Conference and returned to America with the Wilson party on the George Washington.

Mr. Norton was a member of the Catholic Church, Knights of Columbus and was a charter member of the Dickinson Elks Lodge.

On August 22, 1925, at Fargo, Mr. Norton was married to Mary Louise Fitzgerald. To this union there were born two children: Dr. John T. Norton, now interning at St. Joseph's Hospital, Denver, Colorado, and James C. Norton, now at home in Minot, North Dakota. Both sons are graduates of the University of North Dakota. Besides the members of his immediate family there survives one brother, James T. Norton, Butte, Montana, and three sisters: Mrs. Dan V. Brennan and Miss Mary E. Norton, both of Minneapolis, and Mrs. J. F. Dillon, Houghton, Michigan. Funeral services were at St. Leo's Catholic Church at Minot with burial at that city.

SCOTT REX

Scott Rex, a pioneer North Dakota attorney, died at Stockton, California on April 2, 1953. Mr. Rex was born on his father's farm near Richmond, Ohio, September 10, 1865. He attended country school in that state as well as Richmond Academy and Wooster University. He qualified himself as a court reporter and served as official court reporter for Wayne County, Ohio, while still attending the university.

In 1887 Mr. Rex went to Minneapolis, Minnesota and entered a law office as stenographer, clerk and law student. On October 15, 1888, he was admitted to the Minnesota Bar and in 1890 opened his own law office at Duluth, Minnesota. In 1897 he moved to Grand Forks, North Dakota and was admitted to the North Dakota

Supreme Court on September 7 of that year. He became associated at Grand Forks with Charles F. Templeton, a former Attorney General of the Territory, Judge of the Territorial Supreme Court, and later Judge of the First Judicial District. He continued in that partnership until 1905. He was later associated in practice at Grand Forks with W. A. McIntyre, a past president of the North Dakota Bar Association, and O. B. Burtness, one of the present judges of the First Judicial District. He served as City Attorney for Grand Forks and also as Assistant State's Attorney. While in Grand Forks, Mr. Rex, an enthusiastic sportsman, was active in curling and golf, winning many prizes as a golfer. He was also an avid bird hunter. His name appears in the North Dakota Supreme Courts reports in many important cases.

In 1915 Mr. Rex moved to Stockton, California, where he resided until the date of his death. In California he specialized in commercial, banking, corporation and probate law. At the time of his death he was associated with Messrs. Neumiller, Ditz, Beardslee & Sheppard, of Stockton.

In 1887, at Wooster, Ohio, Mr. Rex was married to Agnes M. Crismore. There are four surviving children of this marriage: Mrs. Helen R. Smith, Beford, Ohio; Mrs. Ruth G. Selle, Seattle, Washington; Mrs. Dorothy Sullivan, Chicago, Ill.; and Scott T. Rex, Fargo, North Dakota, a member of the North Dakota Bar. After a divorce Mr. Rex married Violet Cassedy, who also survives him.

T. A. THOMPSON

T. A. Thompson, for many years an attorney in North Dakota and Montana, died at Pomona, California on July 16, 1953.

Judge Thompson was born at Long Lake, Minnesota on March 25, 1879. In 1881 he came with his parents to Cooperstown, North Dakota, where his father was a leading merchant and farmed extensively. He attended grade and high school at Cooperstown, preparatory school at the University of North Dakota and law school at both the Universities of North Dakota and Michigan. He was admitted to the Bar of North Dakota on June 8, 1907. He practiced law in North Dakota from 1907 to 1909, at which time he moved to Kalispell, Montana. He served as County Attorney of Flathead County, Montana from 1914 to 1915, resigning from that position to become Judge of the Eleventh Judicial District by appointment to fill the unexpired term of Judge John Erickson who had been elected Governor of Montana. Judge Thompson served as District Judge until 1920, resigning because of ill health. He then returned

to North Dakota and was in the grocery business and farmed at Cooperstown. At that time he became interested in oil development in North Dakota and was responsible for the drilling of a well at Glenfield, in Foster County, and later the drilling of another exploratory well at Burnstad in Logan County. While oil in commercial quantities was not found in either of these wells, Judge Thompson lived to see his faith of oil production in North Dakota realized. In Montana Judge Thompson was interested in the original development of the Kalispell-Kevin and Sunburst Oil Fields at Cutbank and Shelby.

From 1931 to 1933 Judge Thompson was associated in the practice of law with Charles Coventry, Linton, North Dakota, and from 1933 to 1935 he practiced at Napoleon. He was Assistant Attorney General under Attorney Generals Sathre and Strutz from 1935 to 1938 and legal counsel to John Gray, State Tax Commissioner from 1938 to 1941. During his period of service in the Attorney General's office Judge Thompson was assigned to the prosecution of criminal cases and handled many important criminal cases of that era, he being particularly well known as a trial lawyer.

Besides his sister, Mrs. Grace Seekins, Los Angeles—she being the first white child born in Cooperstown—Judge Thompson is survived by Mrs. Thompson, two daughters, Mrs. Ila M. Cameron, Los Angeles, and Mrs. Thora Donaldson, Santa Barabara, and one son, James L. Thompson, with the school system at Stirum, North Dakota. There are seven grandchildren.

Judge Thompson's ashes were returned to Cooperstown where he rests with his parents and two brothers, one of whom, Oscar J. Thompson, Cooperstown, was also a member of the North Dakota Bar, preceding him in death by less than three months.

