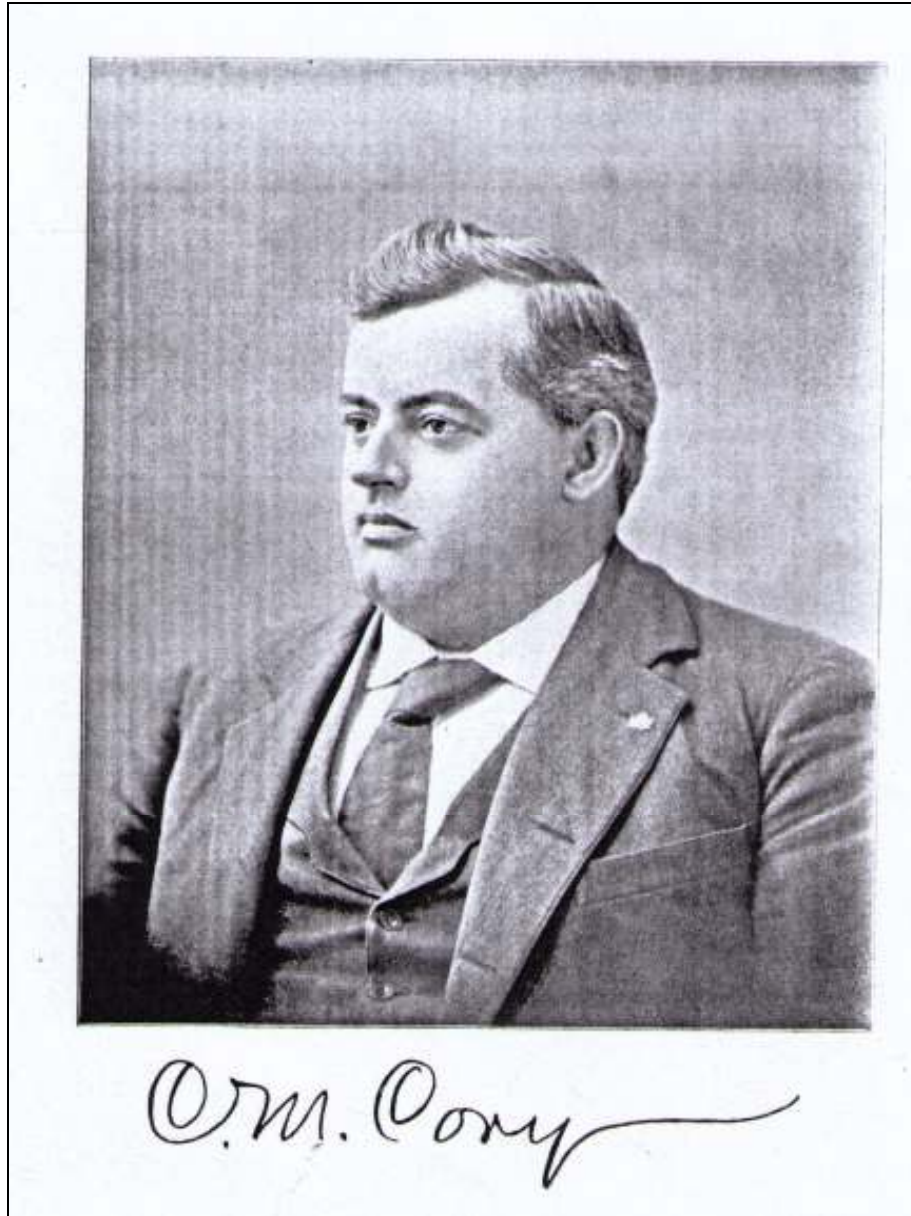


Charles M. Cory

(January 2, 1866 – September 27, 1919)



Judge Charles M. Cory
(ca.1897)

CHARLES MORTON CORY served on the Nobles County bench over half his life. Admitted to the bar in 1891, he was elected Probate Judge the next year. He was twenty-six years old.

Five years later, this profile of him was published in a compendium of profiles of prominent residents of southwestern Minnesota:

CHARLES M. CORY, probate judge of Nobles county, is one of the ablest lawyers of southwestern Minnesota, having that mental grasp that enables him to discover the points in a case. A man of sound judgment, he manages his cases with masterly skill and tact, and has gained a most enviable reputation. He is a native of Indiana, born near Crawfordsville, in Boone county, January 12, 1866, and is the son of Jeremiah and Mary A. (Bennett) Cory. The father, whose birth occurred near Zanesville, Ohio, followed the vocation of farmer, and after his marriage removed to Boone county, Indiana, locating upon a farm, where his death occurred in 1874, at the age of seventy-six years. He was of Scotch and English extraction, while his wife, who was a native of Pennsylvania, was of German lineage.

The Judge is the youngest in the family of six children,—four sons and two daughters, but one of the sons is now deceased. The others are widely scattered, one brother being a resident of Indiana, another of Wisconsin, a sister in Arkansas and the other in Ohio. Charles M. spent his youth in his native county, obtaining his elementary education in the district school, and later entered Wabash College at Crawfordsville, where he took a preparatory course. He then became a student at Carleton College, at Northfield, Minnesota, where he pursued his studies for two years, and then engaged in teaching. For one year he read law under the supervision of Hon. J. H.

T. James, of Excelsior, Minnesota, after which he entered the law department of the State University of Minnesota, where he graduated in 1890.

After his graduation Mr. Cory accepted the position of clerk in the money order and registered-letter department of the post office at Mankato, this state, acting in that capacity for one year. He then went to Adrian, Nobles county, where he began the practice of his chosen profession, but in March, 1895, located at Worthington, where he certainly ranks among the foremost lawyers. In 1892, he was elected judge of the probate court on the Republican ticket, and in 1894 re-elected. He is a man who thoroughly loves his profession and is eminently gifted with the capabilities of mind which are indispensable at the bar. He holds a membership in Minnetonka Lodge, No. 102, I. O. O. P., later changed his membership to Worthington Lodge, No. 219; and he also belongs to the Modern Woodmen of America.¹

In the election in 1900, Cory received the endorsement of the *Worthington Advance* :²

For Probate Judge. Charles M. Cory has filled the office for some years and this is an office that should not be handed about. Voters should remember that some day their property may pass through the hands of the Probate Judge and if not properly handled would create no end of trouble for their posterity. Who would want to place the handling of their business where not certain of its being done properly. In Mr. Cory not an appeal has been taken from his decision. Of course he being an attorney

¹ *Memorial Record of Southwestern Minnesota* 226-27 (1897) (the photo on the first page of this article is taken from this book).

² *Worthington Advance*, October 5, 1900, at 4.

places him in a position to properly attend the duties of the office, that's what's wanted by everyone.

In its endorsement of the Republican ticket on November 2, 1906, the *Advance* reiterated its support for him:

Vote this Straight

The Republicans of Nobles county owe it to themselves and to their party to turn out next Tuesday and vote their full ticket. Vote it straight and you will have no regrets in the future. It is a ticket, from top to bottom, that you can be proud of, and it is entitled to your loyal support. Here it is:

State Ticket

Supreme Court Justice Charles M. Starr	X
U. S. District A. L. Cole	X
U. S. Marshal A. O. Eberhart	X
State Treasurer C. C. Dinchert	X
Attorney General E. T. Young	X
Secretary of State Julius H. Schmall	X
State Auditor S. G. Iverson	X
Clerk Supreme Court C. A. Pidgeon	X
Railroad Commissioner C. F. Staples	X

County Ticket

Member of Congress J. T. McGleary	X
1st Dist. S. B. Bedford	X
2nd Dist. S. O. Morse	X
3rd Dist. E. C. Pannell	X
4th Dist. E. H. Smith	X
Register of Deeds Harry R. Tripp	X
Deputy Newton Faushee	X
Attorney E. J. Jones	X
Probate C. M. Cory	X
District Clerk F. L. Hamilton	X
Deputy of School L. W. Abbott	X
Dr. A. B. Williams	X

C. M. Cory. The nominee for judge of probate hails from Adrian, but he has been a resident of the county seat so long that he is regarded as a fixture, especially as no one seems inclined to contest his office. Judge Cory is one of the oldest attorneys in the county, and he has discharged his official duties in a manner to gain the approbation of all familiar with the business of the office. His genial disposition and courteous treatment of all callers is one of the secrets of his hold on the public.

The Judge died on September 27, 1919, in the middle of his fourteenth term. He was fifty-three years old. The *Worthington Globe* carried his obituary on its front page:

CORY IS CALLED TO HIS REWARD

**Judge of Probate of Nobles County
for past Twenty-Seven Years,
Dies at His Home Here**

Charles Morton Cory, judge of probate of Nobles county, died at his home in this city at 1:45 p. m. Saturday, September 27th, after an illness extending over two months. He had been in failing health for the past year but had been able to attend to his official duties at the court house.

During the week of the Nobles county fair Judge Cory was received into the Catholic church. Fr. Schneider of St. Kilian performed the sacred rites. Funeral services were held from St. Mary's Catholic church of this city at 10 a. m. Wednesday, October 1. Burial was in Worthington cemetery by the side of the two children that had passed on before.

Charles Morton Cory was born Jan. 2, 1866, in Boone county, Indiana, and his boyhood days were spent on a farm. In 1885 he removed to Minnesota, settling at Excelsior, on Lake Minnetonka. He began the study of law and for some two years also reported the lake news for the Twin City dailies. He was admitted to the bar in 1891. His education consisted of a two-years course in Wabash College at Crawfordsville, Indiana, from 1881 to 1884; at Carleton College, Northfield, Minn., from 1887 to 1889, one year law in the University of Minnesota Law School. He read in the office of Hon. J. T. James of Excelsior and during

some two years incumbency in the position of superintendent of the money order department in the post office at Mankato, devoted his spare hours to the study of law. He was admitted to the bar in May, 1891, and a month later went to Adrian, Nobles County Minn., where he began the practice of his chosen profession. He was elected village attorney of Adrian in March, 1892, and held that office for three succeeding years. He was elected judge of probate of Nobles county in 1892 and served continuously until his death—a period of 27 years. He removed from Adrian to Worthington in 1895 and this city has been his home ever since. Judge Cory also served as deputy clerk of court, deputy register of deeds and deputy county treasurer.

Judge Cory came from an old English family that dates back to the times when knighthood was in flower. In fact, two of his English ancestors were knighted, namely Robert Cory in 1612, John Cory in 1639. The American branch of the family was founded by John Cory, who was born in England in 1600 and came hither in 1659, settling in New York. John Cory, Jr., the first son, of John Cory, was a resident of New Jersey and a farmer and merchant Elanthon Cory was the second son of John Cory, Jr.; and died on Jan. 4, 1785, in New Jersey. One of his sons was Jeremiah Cory, a native of New Jersey. Noah Cory, the second son of Jeremiah, was born in New Jersey, March 20, 1770, and later became a resident of Ohio. August 3, 1807, in Ohio, was born Jeremiah Cory, son of Noah Cory. Jeremiah Cory was the father of the late Judge C. M. Cory.

Judge Cory was married Feb. 2, 1898, to Miss Rausen at Luverne. Seven children were born to them, two of whom, a son and a daughter, died some years ago. Five remain; the oldest, Ruth, the others

are boys. Two, brothers and a sister survive him. One of the brothers visited him here a few weeks ago, but was unable to attend the funeral. Mrs. Cory's brother, John Rauned, of St. Paul, was here at the funeral.

Judge Cory was a man of fine mental abilities, a classical scholar, well read in the law and considered the most informed and most capable judge of probate in Minnesota. A number of his decisions were carried to the supreme court, but each one was sustained. Every time he stood for an election he had little or no trouble in being returned. For several terms during the later part of his life Judge Cory had no opposition, as it was generally conceded that he was to pre-eminently the man for the place and that it would be useless to stand against him. His death causes genuine and deep regret among the legal fraternity, who all held him in the highest esteem. Every attorney who had cases before him—and their name is legion—testified to his ability, his fairness and his expeditious handling of the work.

The esteem in which Judge Cory was held among the members of his profession was not limited to them. He was universally respected and esteemed. He was a man of fine character, a congenial companion, a man whose friendship was worth having. He was absolutely honest and, sincere.

In fact, he was one of Nature's noblemen, and his going leaves a vacant and a lonely spot in many hearts. This is the universal verdict. May his soul rest in peace.³ ■

³ *Worthington Globe*, October 2, 1919, at 4 (several errors in text corrected).

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