

The First Trial
in
Freeborn County,
Minnesota
(1882)

Freeborn County was formed February 20, 1855, and two years later the first trial was held. The case was tried to the court.

Nothing is known about the dispute, the litigants or William Andrews, the Justice of the Peace. The following sketch of the lawyer involved appeared in Warren Upham & Rose Barteu's semi-official biographies of important Minnesotans published in 1912:

BARTLETT, AMANDER H., b. in Olean, N. Y., Sept. 28, 1829; d. in Glenville, Minn., April 14, 1902. He came to Minnesota in 1856, settling in Freeborn county; was a representative in the territorial legislature in 1857, and also in the first state legislature. He was admitted to the bar in 1860.¹

This account of *Boulton v. Knapp* appeared in an 1882 history of the county.²

¹ Warren Upham & Rose Barteau Dunlap, *Minnesota Biographies, 1655-1912* 36 (14 Collections of the Minnesota Historical Society) (Minn. Hist. Soc., 1912).

² Edward D. Neill, *History of Freeborn County; including Explorers and Pioneers of Minnesota* 275 (1882).

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About the first judicial proceedings in the county were in January, 1857, in which Henry Boulton was plaintiff, and C. T. Knapp, defendant, and the case came before William Andrews, who must have been the first Justice of the Peace. Mr. Bartlett was counsel for both parties, who were beaten by the decision of the court.

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