

IN MEMORIAM

HENRY CLAY JAMES

(1849 – 1930)

RAMSEY COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

April 4, 1931

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HENRY C. JAMES

Henry Clay James was born February 24, 1849, at Deerfield, New Hampshire. His father was Ruben and his mother, Cornelia Lamprey. Mr. James fitted for college at Philips Academy, Andover, and graduated from Harvard College in 1871.

He came to St. Paul the same year and entered the law office of Morris Lamprey, his mother's brother, as a law student and was admitted to practice on June 7, 1874. Mr. Lamprey was one of the prominent and successful lawyers of Ramsey County. On October 3, 1874, Mr. James married Frances L. Haynes. He died August 6, 1930, at Hudson, Wisconsin, and is survived by his daughters Margaret James Hurt, Cornelia James Cannon, Helen James Sommers, Frances J. Hoy, Linda James Binett and by his son, Henry Clay James, Jr.

Upon the death of Morris Lamprey, Mr. James was associated with his uncle, Uri I. Lamprey, under the firm name of James & Lamprey, and continued in practice with his uncle until the death of Mr. Lamprey.

At the time when Mr. James entered upon the practice of law, the Bar of Ramsey County could boast of many distinguished jurists and lawyers. Among these were Hascal R. Brill, Westcott Wilkin, Cushman K. Davis, Charles C. Otis, Walter H. Sanborn, E. C. Palmer, first Judge of the District Court of Second Judicial District, William Sprigg Hall, first Judge of the Court of Common Pleas, Orlando Simmons, Judge of the same court; and on the Supreme Bench were Lafayette Emmett (Chief Justice), Charles B. Flandrau, James Gilfillan (Chief Justice), John M. Berry, Greenleaf Clark and many others.

It is difficult for us to realize that at that time there were no stenographers, typewriters or telephones. Pleadings, motion papers, briefs and records were written in long hand and laboriously copied by the same process. There were no

law schools in the State. The law student absorbed a knowledge of law and practice while serving as a law clerk and by the perusal of Blackstone and Kent's Commentaries, and possibly a few textbooks. Judge Brill and Mr. James were law clerks in the office of Morris Lamprey and Walter H. Sanborn was, at that time, a clerk in the office of General John B. Sanborn.

Our memorial, exercises today close the last chapter of the Ramsey County Bar of the year 1874. So far as is known, no lawyer practicing in that year now survives.

Henry C. James was a man of large ability, the highest integrity and of irreproachable private life. He adored, and was adored by his family even to the third generation. His personal contacts with the youngest members of the Bar were always kindly and helpful. In many years of comparative intimacy the chairman of your committee never heard a harsh or condemnatory word from Mr. James except in protest against positive wrong doing or unethical professional conduct. His life was much broader than that of the average lawyer of his generation. He was a lover of the outside, physical world, of forests, lakes and streams. To the end of his active and useful life, his interest in flowers, shrubs, trees, animals, birds and every living thing, remained keen and undiminished. Although in the course of time his name will inevitably be forgotten, those who knew him well, have strong faith in the conviction that his influence, for all that is best in legal tradition and for all that is highest and finest in the private life of the Citizen will endure.

F. G. Ingersoll)
A. E. Horn)
R. A. Walsh) Committee
Morton Barrows)
 Chairman.

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