

**IN MEMORIAM**

**GIDEON S. IVES**

**(1846 – 1927)**

**RAMSEY COUNTY DISTRICT COURT**

**RAMSEY COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION**

**APRIL 7, 1928**

# **GIDEON S. IVES**

**( January 19, 1846 – December 20, 1927 )**

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**Gideon S. Ives was born in Dickinson, New York, January 19th, 1846. His father was Warren Ives of Claremont, New Hampshire, and his mother was Elizabeth Ladd, a native of Vermont. Both parents were of pioneer American families. A direct ancestor, William Ives, came over on the True Love in 1636 and settled in Boston. Before the Revolution, Joseph Ives migrated to Claremont, New Hampshire, and served with the Minute Men as a Lieutenant**

**Gideon S. Ives was the youngest of six brothers. He was educated at St. Lawrence Academy, New York, and served during the last year of the Civil War with the 16th New York Engineers, most of his service being in and around Richmond, Virginia. He was in the Grand Review in Washington following Lee's surrender. Shortly after the war he entered the Law School at the University of Michigan, from which he graduated in 1871. After graduation he started westward and arrived in St. Peter in the early summer of 1871. His decision to settle in St. Peter was quite by accident. He was on his way to Mankato and was delayed at St. Peter for some reason, and as a result he decided to stay there. He soon became a prominent figure in the pioneer community and was elected City Attorney, Mayor, and County Attorney of Nicollet County.**

**He served as State Senator at the sessions of 1887 and 1889 and was a leader in that body, participating in some of the most important legislation. He led the land grant fight against the Duluth and Iron Range Railroad, and also was generally credited with saving the University of Minnesota from division. As to the latter, it appears that a bill was pending for the separation of the Farm School from the University proper. This, of course, would have weakened both institutions and he fought it successfully.**

**Cyrus Northrop always gave him credit for its defeat. He also led the fight for the so-called, High License Bill, which was the first serious attempt in the State to curb saloons.**

**In 1890 he was elected Lieutenant-Governor on the ticket with [William R.] Merriam. He served during the 1891 session. This was a historic session, as the Legislature was controlled by the Democrats and Populists, and they took away from the Lieutenant-Governor all appointive powers. At this session he won much favorable press comment by his clash with the leaders of the opposition, with some of whom he was on terms of personal friendship.**

**In 1892 he was a candidate for the Republican nomination for Governor but was defeated by the Hon. Knute Nelson. At that time he was in doubt whether he should run for Congress in his district or for Governor. When he announced his candidacy for Governor it is said he had enough delegates pledged to assure him of the nomination for Congress. His decision at this point of his career undoubtedly extended his life, because his health was such at that time that arduous work in the Washington climate would have borne heavily upon him.**

**In 1901 he was appointed by Governor [Samuel R.] Van Sant as Chairman of the first State Tax Commission, to draw up a new code for the State. The Commission prepared the code that was adopted in 1902.**

**In 1903 he moved to St. Paul and practiced law here until his death on December 20th, 1927. He was appointed Referee in Bankruptcy in 1909.**

**Governor Ives always took an active interest in Fraternal Lodge affairs. He was for many years both a Mason and an Odd Fellow.**

**In 1881 he was elected Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Odd Fellows of Minnesota, and a little later suggested the establishment of an Odd Fellows Home, which in time became a reality, and the present Odd Fellows Home at Northfield is one of his monuments.**

**He was a prominent Mason and in 1901 was Grand Master of the Minnesota Grand Lodge of Masons. In 1905 he was instrumental in starting the campaign to establish the Minnesota Masonic Home near Savage and took a live[ly] interest in that benefaction. That institution is another monument to his memory.**

**He was active in the Minnesota State Historical Society and was its President from March 1918 to January 1921. He probably did more than any other man toward procuring the legislation for the present Historical Society building.**

**He was also an active member, and was at one time President of the Minnesota Society, Sons of the American Revolution.**

**He was always interested in the work of the Grand Army of the Republic and was elected State Commander of the G. A. R. in 1900.**

**Governor Ives was an ardent out-door sportsman and gained relaxation in hunting and fishing, of both of which recreations he was very fond.**

**He was a diligent and discriminating reader and spent many happy hours in his library among the books that he loved.**

**He was fond of music and usually was charged with the preparation of the musical program for the Masonic Lodges to which he belonged.**

**In 1878 he was married to Mary E. Swift, daughter of Henry A. Swift, third Governor of Minnesota [serving from July 10, 1863 to January 11, 1864]. Theirs was a Christian family and during their residence in St. Paul they maintained membership in the House of Hope Presbyterian Church. His wife died in March 1926. He left surviving two sons, Henry A. Swift Ives and Warren G. Ives, both well known men.**

**Governor Ives was a popular and lovable character. He was fond of his wide circle of friends and they were fond of him. He enjoyed their society and was never so happy as when he was**

**doing something for others. His life was a life of service. We are glad to pay our tribute to his memory.**

**Harris Richardson,  
John W. White,  
John P. Galbraith,  
Charles W. Sterling,  
John M. Bradford,  
George W. Markham,  
Thomas. J. McDermott,  
Frank C. Hodgson,  
Joseph F. Cowern,  
James H. Mullaly,  
Charles S. Kidder,  
Oscar Hallam, Chairmen.**

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**Six months after his death, the following notice appeared in 2 *Journal of the Association of Referees in Bankruptcy* 134 (June 1928):**

**GIDEON S. IVES**

**Announcement of the death of Referee Gideon S. Ives, of St. Paul, Minnesota, which occurred in that city December 20th, 1927, was made in our last issue.**

**Mr. Ives was born in Dickinson, N. Y., and obtained his primary education in the schools of his home town, and later attended St. Lawrence academy, Potsdam, N. Y. Further studies were taken at Lawrenceville academy, Lawrenceville, N. Y., and in 1871 he received his law degree from the University of Michigan.**

**That same year Mr. Ives came to St. Peter, Minn., and launched a career which led him through many years of political and fraternal organization work.**

**Prior to coming to Minnesota, Mr. Ives served in the United States**

**forces during the Civil war, being at one time attached to company H, 15th New York volunteer engineers. He also acted as major of the Second regiment, Minnesota National guard, for eight years.**



**His first public office was as county attorney of Nicollet County, Minnesota, in 1874, three years following his arrival there. He served in this capacity until 1878 after which he became city attorney of St. Peter, Minn.**

**Mr. Ives' entry into Minnesota state politics came in 1887 when he was elected to the state senate, serving in the upper branch of the legislative body until 1890. In 1891 he was elected lieutenant governor of Minnesota which office he held for one term.**

**A staunch Republican in his political beliefs, Mr. Ives was rewarded for his zeal and efforts by appointment to the state tax commission in 1901. He served as a commissioner until 1902, a year later taking up his residence in St. Paul where he entered the private practice of law.**

**His leadership in fraternal circles was likewise recognized. He was grand master of Masons of Minnesota in 1901-02 and in 1881 he was grand master of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows. He also was department commander, Minnesota G. A. R. in 1900-01.**

**He was appointed Referee in Bankruptcy on July 28, 1910, and thus served for over seventeen years. ■**

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**Posted MLHP: June 8, 2012;  
Expanded February 2, 2014.**