

MEMORIAL

JAMES ALLEN MARTIN
(1866 – 1932)

RAMSEY COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

April 15, 1933

STATE OF MINNESOTA
COUNTY OF RAMSEY

DISTRICT COURT
SECOND JUDICIAL DISTRICT

IN RE MEMORIAL

FOR

JAMES A. MARTIN
A MEMBER OF THE RAMSEY COUNTY BAR

We, the undersigned, members of the committee of the bar, appointed for the purpose, hereby submit the following Memorial:

James Allen Martin was born on a farm near Princeton, Minnesota, on May 24th, 1866. His parents were Alexander and Sarah (Brandon) Martin. The father was born at Paisley, Scotland, of Scottish parents and came over to Nova Scotia with his brother Daniel when both were young men.

Shortly after they removed to the United States and both served in the Civil War on the Northern side.

His mother was of Scotch-Irish-English descent and was born in Indiana. When a small child she came to Minnesota with her parents in a covered wagon.

When James was a mere child his parents removed from their farm to Cambridge, Minnesota, where his father was actively engaged as a Methodist Minister for thirty years. At the same time he served as Sheriff of Isanti County.

There were five children in the family, Christina, James, Maude, Mae, and John. The father died about twenty-five years ago and the mother six years ago. The only surviving child is now John.

After attending the common school James Martin was graduated from State Normal School at St. Cloud in 1885, at the age of nineteen. Upon his graduation he was chosen as a member of the faculty and for a year was a teacher for that Institution. The following year he entered the law department of the University of Michigan where he graduated in 1889 with the degree of LL.B.

After graduation he went to St. Cloud, Minnesota, and in 1892 became City Clerk, filling that office for eight years.

He was then appointed Executive Clerk in the Governor's office by Honorable Samuel R. Van Sant; that position he resigned to assume the chairmanship of the Republican State Central Committee.

Afterwards he was appointed and served as chairman of the State Board of Control.

In order to undertake the management of the campaign of Honorable Loren W. Collins, one of the Justices of the Supreme Court, for the Republican nomination for Governor, Mr. Martin resigned that position.

In 1905 he became Postmaster of St. Cloud, by appointment and subsequently resigned for the purpose of managing the Congressional campaign of Charles H. Lindbergh, who at the election succeeded Congressman Buckman of Little Falls.

Judge Collins was not nominated for Governor and Mr. Martin became associated with him the practice of law at St. Cloud.

In 1910 Mr. Martin came to St. Paul where he continued to live until the close of his life devoting himself exclusively to the practice of his profession.

In 1930 he was appointed United States Court Commissioner and held that office until shortly before his death [on October 8, 1932].

In 1891 he married Wilhelmina Lausted of St. Cloud, and she survives him. There were two daughters born to them, Ethel M Martin and Esther L. Martin, the latter died in infancy and the elder daughter is now the Reporter of the Minnesota Supreme Court.

Mr. Martin was an interesting character. His tales of youthful days in the beautiful wilderness surrounding his father's farm where he travelled the trails across the meadows, through the woodlands, skirting the swamps, up and down the hills, crossing bridgeless waters, boating in beautiful lakes, hunting and fishing in woodland and prairie where deer, elk and moose abounded and buffalo were frequently in view. He delighted in the night camps of the hunters where the fires threw their spires high into the dark air, the wolves howling and the wildcats yelling in the vicinity, while the owls hooted to each other nearby.

From such experiences he learned the ways of the wood animals and their secrets. Again and again he followed the honey-bee to its sweet hoard in

the hollow bee tree. Indians were numerous and were his friends. In the summertime he saw the Cambridge Tavern Keeper manufacturing Indian whiskey in the rear of the log stopping place where cheap tobacco was mixed with rainwater in barrel set under the elves for the purpose, and in which alcohol and essences purchased from St. Paul church goers were poured in and stirred with a broom-stick. In the wintertime he witnessed the efforts of the same tavern keeper in slicing, with a hand-saw, huge fish, frozen solid and laid upon a saw-buck preparatory to entering the kitchen for food for trappers and woodsmen.

The value of Mr. Martin's service to the State, to the Republican party, to the Courts, and to his friends cannot be overstated. His great mental powers were rarely revealed except to his closest associates. He was possessed of superior mental endowments. His exactness in collecting and arranging facts; his ability to ponder over and speculate upon a chain of events; his powers of psychological analysis, led him to conclusions and were little short of marvelous.

These, with his remarkable memory, made him a successful political leader, a safe legal advisor, and a valuable public officer. He was a convincing speaker in committee meetings, at public gatherings and in Court. He was a great student, devoting much time to the historical sources of the law and he had the ability to explain and illustrate them in understandable language. He displayed his knowledge not only lucidly but persuasively. Judges, juries and audiences were enchanted by the attractive words in which he expressed his solid common sense. By intuition, inference and discernment he penetrated the minds of his hearers and conducted them along the path to right and justice.

His public career was characterized by outstanding loyalty to his friends and by his willingness to fight their causes to the end. His work in political organization, and as well in the law, was marked by thoroughness of his knowledge of the facts and the details. He was always completely prepared for a political campaign and likewise for his court work. His strong personality impressed itself upon all who knew him. He was courageous, straightforward in his methods and highly regarded by his acquaintances and the Judges before whom he practiced.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Harris Richardson
/s/ James T. Denery
/s/ Thos. M. Ryan

/s/ H. W. Phillips
/s/ George Cahill

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