

# NAPOLEON ALEXANDER L'HERAULT

( 1882 – 1936 )



(ca. 1913)

# NAPOLEON ALEXANDER L'HERAULT

( May 29, 1882 – March 18, 1936 )

For many years, Edward J. L'Herault was a superintendent in a substation in Minneapolis of the U. S. Postal Service. His son, Napoleon Alexander, followed his father's footsteps and for seven years after his graduation from high school worked for the postal service. But he had ambitions this job could not satisfy. While working at the postal service, he took classes at night in the University of Minnesota Law Department; he graduated in 1907, and was admitted to the bar on June 14th of that year.<sup>1</sup> He married the next year, and two years later

opened his own shop. In 1910 he ran as a Democrat in the Thirty-eighth Senate District.

At this time, newspapers published a separate sample ballot for women. This is an excerpt from the "Sample Ballot for Women" that appeared in the *Minneapolis Tribune* on October 24, 1910. It lists L'Herault and two other candidates.



<sup>1</sup> 1 Roll of Attorneys: Supreme Court, State of Minnesota, 1858-1970, at 91 (State Law Library, 2011).

He won. The results of the election on November 8, 1910, were:

J. W. Shadewald (Republican).....710  
N. A. L'Herault (Democrat) .....1,616  
Chas. E. Williams (Public Ownership) .....416<sup>2</sup>

His biographical portrait in the 1913 *Legislative Manual* provided:

### THIRTY-EIGHTH DISTRICT

N. A. L'Herault (Democrat) was born in Fall River, Mass., May 29th, 1882. The same year his parents settled in Minnesota. He is a product of the public schools of Minneapolis. Was employed as a clerk in the post office for seven years. While in this employment he attended the night class of the law school of the University of Minnesota, and graduated in 1907, was married in August, 1908. Two years later he resigned his government position to engage in the practice of law. In his 28th year he was elected to the state senate in his maiden attempt in politics.<sup>3</sup>

Four years later, after redistricting, he ran in the newly-constituted Twenty-eighth Senate District. He lost. The results of the nonpartisan election on November 3, 1914, were:

J. G. Callahan.....2,086  
N. A. L'Herault.....1,731<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> 1911 Blue Book, at 495

<sup>3</sup> 1913 Blue Book, at 628. His photograph on the first page of this article is taken from this book.

<sup>4</sup> 1915 Blue Book, at 547.

He returned to practicing law in north east Minneapolis.<sup>5</sup> He died on March 18, 1936, at age fifty-three. Later that year, Manley L. Fosseen, who had served in the senate with him, delivered the following memorial on behalf of the Hennepin County Bar Association:

Napoleon Alexander L'Herault, usually known as N. A. L'Herault, was born at Fall River, Massachusetts, on the 29th day of May, 1882. What kind of a fighter his parents expected him to be when they gave him the names of two such famous warriors, the writer of this short biography is unable to state. His parents were Edward J. and Marie L'Herault. His mother's maiden name was Brothers. The parents were both of French-Canadian stock.

In the Fall of 1882, when Napoleon was only five months old, he came with his parents to Minneapolis, where the father entered the mail service and was for many years superintendent of one of the substations of the Minneapolis Post Office. From the time of his arrival in Minneapolis to the time of his death, Mr. N. A. L'Herault lived in North East Minneapolis. He attended Catholic parochial school, the East Side High School and the Law Department of the University of Minnesota, from which he graduated in 1906 (sic). In the same year he was admitted to the bar and entered the general practice of law in Minneapolis, in which he

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<sup>5</sup> The 1916 alumni directory has the following entry on him:

Napoleon A. L'Herault, L.L. B., 07; Lawyer; State Senator, Minn. 435 Palace Bldg., and 419 B'way, Mpls., Minn.

Alumni of the College of Law, 1889-1915, at 284 (1916).

continued to be engaged until illness forced him to give up work a few months before his death.

In August, 1907, he was married to Della G. Gorham, who, together with six children, two boys and four girls, survives him.

In 1910, at the age of only 28 years, he was elected State Senator as a Democrat from the District made up mostly of the First Ward of the City of Minneapolis, and he served a Senator during the regular legislative sessions of 1911 and 1913 and the special session of 1912. This was the only public office that he ever held. As a Senator he was diligent in the performance of his duties, but as a member of the Democratic minority he perhaps did not have the opportunity to assert himself as much as he would have had if he had been affiliated with the Republican majority in the Senate. The Senate in which he served was the last one elected in this State under party designation.

In the practice of law he was never employed by or in partnership with any other lawyer. During the first five years of his practice he had his office in the Palace Building and after that, for more than twenty-four years, in the Andrus Building. In the latter building the writer of this biography had office next door to him for over eleven years. He was always a pleasant, congenial and accommodating neighbor.

He was a member of the Notre Dame Catholic Church of Minneapolis, The Society of St. John the Baptist, the Holy Name Society, The Royal Arch-

anum, The Royal League, The Maccabees and The Eagles.

After several months of illness he died from cancer on the 18th day of March, 1936, at the age of 53 years, 9 months and 18 days.

Manley L. Fosseen <sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Manley L. Fosseen (1869-1947), a Minneapolis lawyer, served two terms in the Minnesota House of Representatives, 1903-1907, and two terms in the Senate, 1907-1915, the last coinciding with L'Herault's single term. ■

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