

**In
Memoriam**

Henry McClellan Lamberton, Jr.

(January 12, 1893 • October 17, 1962)



**District Court
Third Judicial District
Winona, Minnesota
Winona County Bar Association
January 14, 1963**

**STATE OF MINNESOTA
COUNTY OF WINONA**

**DISTRICT COURT
THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT**

**In the Matter of the
Memorial Services for
Henry McClellan Lamberton, Jr.**

*** * * ***

The January, 1963 Term of the District Court of Winona County was opened on January 14th at 11:00 o'clock A.M., the Honorable Leo P. Murphy presiding, and almost every member of the Winona County Bar Association was in attendance.

THE COURT: Mr. Lindquist, you, as President of the Winona County Bar Association have, I believe, a special matter to be brought before the Court?

Mr. LINDQUIST Yes, Your Honor, on behalf of the Winona County Bar Association we would like to have a Memorial Service for both Mr. Lamberton and Mr. Bierce who passed away just this fall and winter, and we have a committee for Mr. Lamberton's Memorial which is composed of Mr. Moonan, Mr. Bruski, Mr. Peterson and Mr. Murphy, Jr.; and at this time I would like to call upon Mr. Bruski to read the Memorial for Mr. Lamberton.¹

THE COURT: Mr. Bruski.

Mr. BRUSKI: May it please the Court:

¹ The memorial session in District Court on January 14, 1963, was for both Henry Lamberton and Herbert Bierce. It was transcribed by a court reporter. The transcript has been divided so that the tributes to each lawyer form separate articles on the MLHP. An Appendix to each memorial has been added by the MLHP. The photograph on the first page has been supplied by archivists at the Winona County Historical Society. The date is not known.

After a long illness, death claimed Henry McClellan Lamberton, Jr., on Wednesday morning, October 17, 1962. Mr. Lamberton was 69 years of age at his death. Services were held at the Breitlow Funeral Home with Rt. Rev. Harold J. Dittman conducting the non-denominational services on Friday, October 19, 1962.

Henry McClellan Lamberton, Jr., best known to the members of the legal profession as "Jack", was born in Winona, Minnesota, on January 12, 1893. His parents were Henry McClellan Lamberton, Sr., and Jeanette McKain. The family name is of pure Scottish origin and appears in early records as far back as the Eleventh Century. Mr. Lamberton was the third generation of his family to serve Winona and its surrounding area in the legal profession. His grandfather, Henry Wilson Lamberton, came to Winona more than a century ago and practiced law here. His father, Henry McClellan Lamberton, Sr., established the Lamberton Law Offices in Winona shortly after his admission to the bar in 1887, and Henry McClellan Lamberton, Jr., joined the firm in 1921.

Mr. Lamberton's early years were spent in the family home at Fourth and Huff Streets in Winona, now a well-known Winona landmark. In 1961, after his mother's death, this property was the subject of a gift by Mr. Lamberton and his sister, Mrs. Charles Sweatt, to Catholic Charities of Winona, and is now used as a Children's Home.

Mr. Lamberton's early formal education was in the Winona Public Schools. He later attended Shattuck School at Faribault, and Princeton Prep School. He was graduated from Princeton University in 1916 with a Bachelor of Arts Degree and pursued the study of law at Columbia University where he received his Bachelor of Laws Degree in 1921.²

² He was admitted to the Minnesota bar on September 1, 1921. Roll of Attorneys, Supreme Court, State of Minnesota, 1858-1970, at 204 (Minnesota Digital Library).

After joining the Lamberton Law Office in 1921, Mr. Lamberton served the City of Winona as its legal counsel for a period of twelve years, from 1923 to 1935. Mr. Lamberton soon established himself as one of the leading lawyers in the area and conducted the trial of numerous cases in State and Federal Court over a span of forty-years. He was active in both civil and criminal cases.

Mr. Lamberton was always greatly interested in sports and outdoor activities. While at Princeton, he was a member of the varsity baseball and football teams, and received All-American honors as an end on the Princeton football team. He also coached football at Lehigh University prior to completing his law studies at Columbia. He enjoyed both fishing and duck hunting and continued these pastimes until shortly before his death.

During World War I, Mr. Lamberton served with the United States Navy with a destroyer flotilla operating in the North Sea and the North Atlantic. He was discharged from the Navy in 1918.

Mr. Lamberton was a member the Winona Athletic Club, Eagles Club, Red Men, Neville-Lien Post #1287 of Veterans of Foreign Wars, and Leon J. Wetzel Post #9 of the American Legion of which he was a Past Commander.

In politics, Mr. Lamberton faithfully served the Democratic Party in the 1920's and 1930's and, later, the Democratic Farmer Labor Party. He served as County Chairman for both the Democratic Party and the Democratic Farmer Labor Party during this period.

While Mr. Lamberton was engaged in the general practice of law, he was particularly noted, and will be particularly remembered, for his great skill in the trial of personal injury cases and as an attorney for defendants in criminal cases. The court calendars for terms of District Court in Winona County during the 1920's

and 1930's show that Mr. Lamberton appeared in as many as fifty cases in one year and he was always at home when he was presenting his case to a jury. In one well publicized case in which Mr. Lamberton was defending a client charged with armed robbery, the jury considered the case for twenty-nine hours and the trial ended in the jury's disagreement.

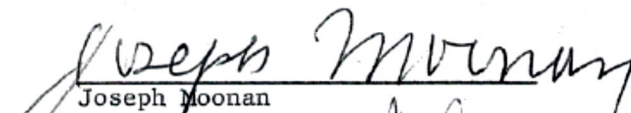
The constitutional right of the defendant to competent counsel in a criminal case was always a cardinal principle with Mr. Lamberton, and, to his great credit, in a field so often shunned by many lawyers, no defendant was too indigent, and no cause too unpopular, for him to refuse his services, and in this he set an example for the entire local bar.

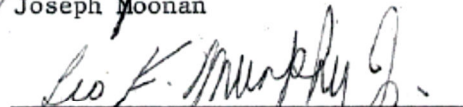
The legal tradition in the Lamberton family is carried into the fourth generation by his son, James W. Lamberton of Staten Island, New York. Mr. Lamberton was also survived, by a son, Henry McClellan Lamberton, III, of Peru, Indiana, and one daughter, Mrs. William F. (Dare) White, of Winona, Minnesota, and his sister, Mrs. Charles B. Margaret Sweatt of Wayzata, Minnesota.

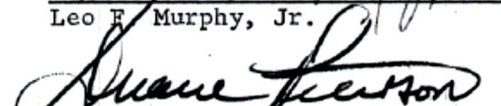
At this time, the Bar Association moves that this Testimonial to his services to the bar and community, and our great regard for him as a lawyer, be spread upon the records of the Court where he so frequently appeared as a lawyer and counselor.

Respectfully submitted,


S. D. J. Bruski


Joseph Moonan


Leo F. Murphy, Jr.


Duane Peterson

THE. COURT: It is so ordred. Thank you, Mr. Bruski.

Mr. LINDQUIST: Joseph Moonan, of Waseca, would like to add to that Memorial.

THE COURT: Mr. Moonan.

Mr. MOONAN: May it please the Court, members of the Bar: The time of the Court is rarely employed to a better purpose than when it gives ear to testimonials from the Bar in recognition of the character and attainments of those who have shared in the determination of its judgment and have closed the period of their lives.

It has been my privilege to associate with Jack Lamberton in trials and settlements of litigations - sometimes as an adversary and sometimes associated on the same side with him.

In these associations Mr. Lamberton always worked earnestly in the interest of his client. When he was handling a case it made no difference to him whether the case was large or small. In essence Mr. Lamberton was a great lawyer, as he understood that the basis of law is common sense and justice. Jack had a deep sense of justice and he fortified that virtue with a profound knowledge of the law. He never lacked the courage to claim for justice its due and he always moved in the light of the law.

Such a lawyer is God's greatest gift to every society of men, and such a lawyer finds his greatest glory in the peace, happiness and security of his fellow man. This was the pattern of Jack's life as a lawyer; and this is the coveted goal of each and all us, who hope to live in the memory of the succeeding generations and hold the high distinction in the minds of men of having been lawyers worthy of the name.

I am very grateful to have had this opportunity to be here and participate in these proceedings because for so many years I

regarded Jack Lamberton as one of my closest friends among the lawyers of this State.

I feel that the legal profession of this District and of the State has been enriched by Jack Lamberton's life among us and that this District and State and the history of the Courts of this State and this District have suffered a loss in his passing.

THE COURT: Thank you, Mr. Moonan.

. . . .

Mr. LINDQUIST: Unless there is anyone else who wishes to speak, Your Honor, this concludes the Memorial.

THE COURT: Gentlemen of the Bar: Nothing much can be added to what has been so well presented here this morning.

However Judge Hatfield who has been invited by the presiding resident Judge to speak for the Court has suggested that another should speak in that capacity.

Conscience would haunt should there be a failure on my part to speak in whatsoever capacity on this occasion — Memorial Services for the departed, Herbert M. Bierce and Henry M. Lamberton, Jr., each a constant friend for more than forty years.

The remarks which are about to be made are in no way intended as my measure of the value of those friendships.

. . . .

To all who knew him well the image of Jack Lamberton is that of a trial lawyer.

In the trial of any action he was an aggressive antagonist, skillful in the examination of witnesses, forceful in argument. Every client's cause he made his own, and its presentation in court was made with utmost ardor but always fairly.

He had an uncanny ability to discover and ferret out deceit, fraud and sharp practice in a witness or fellow lawyer, which in time he forgave but never forgot.

In my time no lawyer in the Third Judicial District had greater success in impressing upon the minds of jurors the sacredness of a great principle of our law.

Every person accused of a crime is presumed innocent until the contrary is proven.

He believed in the rights of every man and no case was so publicly unpopular or a man so poor as to prevent Jack's protecting those rights.

Jack was a sensitive man sociable and kind, gracious in victory, gracious in defeat.

The memory of Henry M. Lamberton, Jr. as a brilliant, effective trial lawyer of strong convictions, and the courage to support them will and should, I believe, remain for generations.

I shall always cherish the memory of each of these two loyal friends.

The Court directs that the Memorials be filed with the Clerk of this Court and that the entire proceedings be spread upon and made a part of the minutes of this Court, and the Clerk is directed to send a certified copy of said minutes to the family of Mr. Bierce and to the family of Mr. Lamberton.

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APPENDIX

**The following obituary appeared in the *Winona Daily News*,
October 17, 1962:**

H. M. Lamberton Jr., 69, Dies After Long Illness

**Henry McClelland Lamberton Jr., 69, 251 Walnut St.,
an attorney, died early today at Community Memorial
Hospital after a long illness.**

**He was born here Jan. 12, 1893, son of Henry
McClelland Lamberton Sr., and Jeanette McKain.**

**HE ATTENDED Winona schools, Shattuck School,
Faribault, Minn., and Princeton Prep School. He
received a bachelor of arts degree from Princeton
University in 1916 and a bachelor of laws degree from
Columbia University in 1921. He was a member of
Princeton's varsity baseball and football teams and
was an All-American end. In 1919 he was assistant
football coach and in 1920 coached football at Lehigh
University.**

**He married Gretchen Leicht Jan. 1, 1920. He is sur-
vived by his sister, Mrs. Charles B. (Margaret) Sweatt,
Wayzata, and his children: Henry McClelland Lam-
berton III, Peru, Ind., James W. Lamberton, Staten
Island, N.Y., and Mrs. William F, (Dare) White,
Winona.**

**In 1921 he joined his father's law firm here, Lam-
berton Law Offices. From 1923-35 he was Winona city
attorney.**

During World War I he served with the Navy from May 5, 1917, to Feb. 28, 1918, A lieutenant junior grade, he served overseas 8 1/2 months with a destroyer flotilla operating in the North Sea, North Atlantic and from Queenstown (now Cobb), Ireland.

He was a past commander of the Leon J. Wetzel Post 9 of the American Legion and was also a member of Neville-Lien Post 1287 of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. He was a member of the Winona Athletic Club, Eagles, Elks and Red Men. He has been chairman of the Winona County DFL party. His hobbies were hunting and fishing. His office was at 3rd and Center streets.

MR. LAMBERTON was a third generation of a pioneer Winona family, his father and grandfather having preceded him in the legal profession in Winona.³

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Related Memorial

“Henry Wilson Lamberton (1831-1905)” (MLHP, 2011-2015).

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**Posted MLHP: October 5, 2016;
Photograph added October 25, 2016.**

³ *Winona Daily News*, October 17, 1962, at 3 (photograph and funeral arrangements omitted).