

“ Bench and Bar of Nicollet County ” *

in

HISTORY

OF

**Nicollet and LeSueur Counties
Minnesota**

THEIR PEOPLE, INDUSTRIES AND INSTITUTIONS

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Editor-in-Chief

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Genealogical Records of Many of the Old Families**

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CHAPTER XIV.

BENCH AND BAR OF NICOLLET COUNTY.

The bar in Nicollet county has not had a large number connected with it, and several were here only a short period, hence the personal history of such lawyers is not fully known. The following seems to have been about all the attorneys-at-law that ever made much of an impression in the county, and with rare exceptions have been men of ability and good habits. The same is true of the district judges who have resided within the county:

ATTORNEYS.

From all that can now be learned of attorneys who have practiced at the Nicollet county bar the list is as follow: Judge A. G. Chatfield, who came about 1854; Judge Austin, who succeeded Judge Chatfield; E. St. Julian Cox, who came about 1856; M. G. Hanscome, later a district judge and now long since deceased; S. A. Buell, here as early as 1859; Sumner Ladd, who came to St. Peter in 1866; Alfred Wallin, of Chicago, came here in 1865; E. E. Paulding was here in the sixties, a partner of Judge Horace Austin; C. S. Bryant was here in the sixties and seventies; William Cowan came in the fifties and was associated with Judge Flandrau; Charles E. Flandrau was one of the pioneer attorneys and later a judge; W. E. Cullen, an early lawyer at St. Peter, became a partner with S. A. Buell; A. A. Stone came here in the seventies; Charles R. Davis, present congressman, was admitted to the bar in 1877; Gideon S. Ives, now of St. Paul, was here from 1871 for a number of years; Judge Griffm was a partner of E. St. Julian Cox at one time in St. Peter.

PRESENT BAR.

In February, 1916, the attorneys practicing as resident lawyers in Nicollet county are as follow: Hon. C. R. Davis. Hon. Henry N. Benson, Marshal E. Stone. George T. Olsen, L. J. Gault and R. G. Anderson. [244]

CONDENSED RECORD OF BAR MEMBERS.

Asa A. Stone, a native of Canada, born in 1840, came with his parents in 1854 to St. Peter, Minnesota, and resided on the farm until 1860; he then went to Colorado, but returned the following year and enlisted among the first in the Second Regiment, Minnesota Volunteer Infantry. After serving his term of enlistment, three years, he lived for a time in Tennessee, then returned to St. Peter. In 1865 he was elected sheriff of Nicollet county. In 1866 he commenced the study of law and in 1874 was admitted to the bar. In 1871 he was appointed clerk of the district court, holding the office four years. In 1874 he formed a partnership with Hon. Sumner Ladd in the practice of law. He was mayor of St. Peter in 1879. He died about 1907.

Hon. Charles R. Davis, born in Pittsfield, Illinois, in 1849, came to St. Peter with his parents, who were natives of Canada, in 1854. Here he attended school, also at St. Paul, and after returning from the latter city engaged in mercantile business, which he gave up for the law. For three years he studied with A. Wallin and was admitted to the bar in 1877. The following year he was elected county attorney for Nicollet county; was also attorney for the city of St. Peter and clerk for three terms. He practiced alone until he was elected to a seat in Congress, when he took for his partner in the law business T. T. Olsen, of Springfield, Brown county. He was elected to Congress in 1892 and is still serving, having been elected seven times to this important office.

Gideon S. Ives, a native of New York, was born in Franklin county in 1847. He made his home in Franklin and St. Lawrence counties until 1864, then enlisted in the Fifteenth Regiment, New York Volunteer Infantry, for service in the Civil War, and was honorably discharged in 1865. He remained in his native state until 1869, when he began a course of study at the University of Michigan, graduating in 1871, and moved to St. Peter, Minnesota. He was here admitted to the bar and at once took up the active practice of his profession. For four years he was county attorney for Nicollet county. Subsequently, Mr. Ives removed to St. Paul, where he still resides. He was elected lieutenant-governor and state senator from this district and county. He is still in the law practice at St. Paul.

Alfred Wallin was admitted to the bar here in the fall of 1865. He came from Chicago, practiced a number of years and moved to North Dakota, where he was elected to a seat on the supreme bench of that state. He died a few years ago in California. [245]

Sumner Ladd was a native of Cuyahoga county, Ohio, born in May, 1838, when a year old he accompanied his parents to their former home in Vermont, in which state he remained until 1866. He graduated from Vermont University in 1863; studied law at the Albany law school and with Hon. Daniel Roberts, of Burlington, Vermont, one of the first attorneys of that state. In 1866 he came to St. Peter and practiced his chosen profession with marked ability and was crowned with more than ordinary success. In 1878 he was a member of the Minnesota Legislature being chosen chairman of the committee of ways and means.

M. G. Hanscome who died about 1912, was district judge in this district.

S. A. Buell, who died about 1913, was a very early lawyer at St. Peter, coming in either 1859 or 1860.

The firm of Ladd & Stone practiced here in early years.

W. C. Cullen, another attorney at St. Peter, studied law and was admitted to the bar in St. Peter and became a partner with S. A. Buell; he removed to Helena, Montana, where he was elected mayor of the city; he died a few years ago in California.

William Cowan came here in the fifties and he with Judge Flandrau practiced at Traverse before St. Peter had commenced to make its history as a county seat town.

C. S. Bryant, the brainy attorney and brilliant writer of state and Indian history, was a prominent member of the Nicollet county bar in the sixties and seventies.

JUDGES WHO LIVED HERE.

Hon. A. G. Chatfield, who presided over the courts of this district in pioneer days, was a man of marked character and had to do with the organization of this county and LeSueur and of locating the county seats, as well entering the land on which St. Peter is situated, for the St. Peter Company.

Judge Austin followed Judge Chatfield on the bench.

The next judge was M. G. Hanscome, long since deceased.

Following Judge Hanscome came Judge E. St Julian Cox, also deceased. He was a brilliant man, a good lawyer and an active Democratic politician. He made many friends and likewise not a few bitter enemies, and was finally impeached as district judge for his unbecoming conduct on the bench. He removed to Dakota, remained a few years and returned to [246] this county. He was elected judge in 1877 and died in California about 1902. He was what might be termed a many-sided man. At one time he came with a few votes of gaining a seat in Congress from this district. He was a native of Switzerland, born at Geneva, in 1835. He studied law in Wisconsin and was there admitted to the bar in 1854, moving to St. Paul and from there to St. Peter. He was elected to the Legislature of this state in 1873 and the next term of office was state senator from this district.

Judge Baldwin was appointed to fill the unexpired term of Judge Cox.

Judge B. F. Weber, deceased, followed Judge Baldwin and he was succeeded by Judge I. M. Olsen, present judge, now of New Ulm; a native of Nicollet county.

Judge Griffin was a law partner with Judge E. St. Julian Cox at one time; he moved to Morris, Minnesota, and is now numbered among the dead.



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