

Benjamin Irving Stanton

(June 9, 1853 – September 13, 1898)



Benjamin I. Stanton, a native New Yorker, taught high school in St. Paul from 1875 to 1877. He then returned home to attend Albany and Harvard Law Schools; after graduating, he practiced for a while in Albany. In 1889 he moved permanently to St. Paul where he became an associate of Henry L. Williams and Henry P. Goodenow in the firm Williams, Goodenow & Stanton.¹ After Williams retired, he and Goodenow practiced together but eventually separated. He was a sole practitioner when he died on September 13, 1898, at age forty-five. The *St. Paul Daily Globe* reported the news:

BENJAMIN I. STANTON DEAD.

Prominent Attorney Passed Away at
His Home Last Night.

Benjamin Irving Stanton, a prominent member of the local bar, died yesterday evening at his home, 503 Ashland avenue.

Mr. Stanton was formerly a member of the firm of Williams, Goodenow & Stanton, but for several years had been practicing alone.

He was forty-five years of age.

The funeral arrangements have not been completed.²

Two days later the *Globe* carried a lengthy account of Stanton's life and funeral:

HE RESTS AT LAST.



Funeral of Benjamin I. Stanton,
After a Busy Life.

The funeral of the late Benjamin I. Stanton, who died Tuesday evening at his home, 803 Ashland avenue, was held yesterday from the Church of St. John the Evangelist, Rev. Dr. Dudley W. Rhodes officiating. The

¹ For a sketch of Williams, see "The Bar and Bench of Ramsey County" 38 (MLHP, 2015) (published first, 1892). For a sketch of Goodenow, see "Henry Parker Goodenow (1857-1898)" (MLHP, 2015).

² *St. Paul Daily Globe*, September 14, 1898, at 2

funeral was very largely attended. The body was borne to the grave by George L. Beardslee, Granville Worrell, Fred P. Wright, Walter P. Myers, Kenneth Clark and C. C. De Coster. The interment was at Oakland.

Benjamin I. Stanton, son of the late Prof. Benjamin and Mrs. Catharine P. Stanton, of Union college, Schenectady, N. Y., received his preparatory training partly from his father, partly from his uncle, Prof. Levi Stanton, principal of Byefield academy, Massachusetts. At Union college he was distinguished in the oratorical contests, and from it he graduated with high honor. For a year he was engaged in business, becoming a skillful, reliable accountant. Then he acted for a year as principal of the Union Classical institute, Schenectady, which his father had been developing in connection with Union college. Next he accepted the position of teacher of Greek and Latin in the high school, St. Paul.

But choosing law as a profession, he graduated from the Albany law school; afterwards studied two years at the law school of Harvard university. He practiced for a time in Albany, N. Y., and then settled in St. Paul, being for a while in the law firm of Williams, Goodenow & Stanton, but of late years alone. A man conscientious, of robust, sterling integrity, of fine legal mind, clear perceptions, cautious, sound judgment, great fidelity to details and very practical; guarded in his utterances, and wont to weigh his words; fond of books and quite an omnivorous reader. His noble character, fine presence, great bonhomie, secured for him many friends wherever he went. He was not known to have an enemy. Very loyal in his attachments, he abounded in those little acts which multiply friendships and make them last for life.

Until recently, when delicate health forbade, he was busily engaged in the pursuits of his profession. During his last illness, though the pain was intense and long-continued, he seemed to endure it without a murmur. His fortitude, patience, self-control were most extraordinary. He was a member and vestry man of the Church of St. John the Evangelist, at Portland avenue and Kent street.

Besides his wife, he leaves a brother Horace C. Stanton, D. D., of Kansas City Mo., and two sisters, one Mrs. Frederick A. Farrar, of Boston, the other the wife of the author, Dr. William Elliot Griffis. He

will be sincerely mourned in the community in which he was so respected and beloved.³

On December 14, 1900, the Council of the Society of Colonial Wars in the State of Minnesota met in St. Paul, and adopted the following memorial:⁴

Mr. Benjamin Irving Stanton was born June 9th 1853, in Wolfborough, N. H., and was a son of the late Prof. Benjamin Stanton of Union College, Schenectady, N. Y., and Catherine P. Coffin. He was directly descended from Benjamin Stanton, who was born about 1695, who served in the expedition against Port Royal, and at the siege of Louisburg, and who has also Ensign in the Dover Train Band as late as 1746. James Stanton, the grandfather of Benjamin Irving married Sabra Wentworth, and her lineage is a long and honorable one. She traces her descent from William Wentworth, who located in New Hampshire at a very early day, and whose family rendered efficient and valuable services in the cause of the Colonies, Other families represented in Mr. Stanton's lineage are the Youngs, Evans, Aliens, etc., all of whom were prominent in the early history of the country.

He received his early education partly from his father, and partly from his uncle Prof. Levi Stanton, who was then the principal of an academy in Massachusetts. A little later he entered Union College and as a student he was distinguished in the oratorical contests, and he graduated from that College with high honors.

For a short time after his graduation, he was engaged in business, and also as Principal of the Union Classical institute in Schenectady, which his father had been developing in connection with his work in Union College. In the year 1875, and while still a young man, he came to St. Paul and accepted a position as teacher of Greek and Latin in our High school, but remained here for only two years. In the year 1877 he returned to the East, entered Harvard Law School in 1878, and graduated in 1880.

³ *St. Paul Daily Globe*, September 16, 1898, at 8.

⁴ Minutes of the Society of Colonial Wars in the State of Minnesota (Vol. 2, 1900, Dec.). On file at the Minnesota Historical Society. A memorial by the county bar association has not been located.

For a time he practiced his profession in Albany, N. Y., but in 1889 he came to St. Paul a second time and made this city his home until his death.

He was for a considerable time a member of the law firm of Williams, Goodenow & Stanton, but during the latter part of his life he practiced alone.

He married Minnie P. Pulling, of New York City, Nov. 12th 1890.

Mr. Stanton was a man of sterling integrity and of a good legal mind, and had he been spared, would doubtless have reached a prominent position in his chosen profession. He was literary in his tastes and was always fond of books and was a gentleman of refined and cultivated habits in every respect. His last illness was most painful and long continued, but he endured it without murmuring, and his fortitude, patience and self-control were such as to stamp him a worthy descendant of his Colonial ancestors. He was a member and vestryman of the church of St. John the Evangelist in St. Paul. He left no children, but besides his wife who survives him, he left a brother, Horace C. Stanton, D. D., of Kansas City, Mo., and two sisters, Mrs. Frederick A. Farrar of Boston, and Mrs. William Elliot Griffis, the wife of the well-known author of that name.

After a long and lingering illness, Mr. Stanton died in St. Paul, on the 13th day of September 1898, and we place this memorial upon our records as an evidence of our respect and regard for him and for his memory.

All of the foregoing memorials were accepted and ordered to be spread upon the records of the Society.
No other business was transacted, and at 4:30 P. M. the meeting adjourned.

William Gardner White
Secretary.



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