

ALEXANDER W. CALDWELL

MEMORIAL

Presented To

RAMSEY COUNTY DISTRICT COURT

At Special Term

March 30th, 1929

BY RAMSEY COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

ALEXANDER W. CALDWELL (1872-1928)

Alexander W. Caldwell died August 27, 1928. He was born in Wheeling, West Virginia, April 12, 1872; came with his parents Mr. and Mrs. Harry Caldwell to St. Paul when ten years old; was educated in the public schools of St. Paul and graduated from Central High School, St. Paul, in 1892. Here he had his first journalistic experience as editor of the High School World. He entered the University of Minnesota and there completed a part of his study of law, then gave over study for his chosen profession to enter newspaper work on the St. Paul Dispatch in 1895. From that date until 1927 he remained with the Dispatch, and in the last ten years wrote editorials for the Pioneer Press and Dispatch.

While his experience had made him a capable newspaper man and an able writer, his was essentially a legal mind and he turned toward the choice of his youth in professions. Besides his work as a newspaper writer, he took up again the study of law in 1924, in his extra hours, and by attending night classes completed the law courses in 1926 and was given his diploma by St. Thomas College in June, 1926, and admitted to the bar in November of that year. It is undoubtedly true that the strain involved in study at his work by day and at his law books by night had a share in the final sudden collapse that ended his life, which followed a stroke of paralysis.

To his intimates he was genial, generous and kind, but for those outside that circle the reserve of his race, the Ulster Sect, presented a barrier only let down after proof of worthiness. He

was intrinsically American. For him the best system of government was that of the United States, which he often pointed out had brought this nation to its present heights. Hence any changes from the original plan met his disapproval, and he regarded them as weakening the fabric of the nation. The Constitution of the United States was more to him than a mere human document to be lightly changed to suit a passing exigency.

He was a vigorous defender of the legal profession and of the courts of this country, using his pen always to come to vigorous defense of that profession. When Dr. Charles F. Aked, a prominent nationally known clergymen, in a speech made in 1925, said in effect that the American criminal courts were the most lax and inefficient in the world, and regulated the most lawless people on earth, he made quotation from that speech in an editorial in the St. Paul Dispatch, and then proceeded to say: "That is a sweeping statement, it implies most, if not all of the blame for failure of justice to discourage commission of crime, is on the courts. Criminal procedure is undoubtedly bad, and as has been admitted by the American Bar Association and many similar bodies, the remedy, however, is not entirely or probably to any considerable degree in the power of the judges. Courts act according to law as made by the legislature." This was a characteristic editorial.

He had a profound love for Masonry, and was a Past Master of Macalester Lodge of Ancient Free & Accepted Mason, of the City of St. Paul. In Masonry and its principles he found ideals that met his needs. He was a regular church attendant. His recreation was golf, and the day on the links often made for

him a welcome pause between long stretches of confining work.

He married Minnie G. Haggerty of St. Paul in 1900, and she survives him, as do his parents, a brother and three sisters.

This Memorial is respectfully submitted by your Committee.

Edward A. Knapp,
Chairman.



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