

MEMORIAL
FOR
WILLIAM BURNS
(ca. 1867– 1917)



WINONA COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION
DISTRICT COURT
THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT
APRIL 1917

William Burns **(ca. 1867 - 1917)**

May it please your Honor, the committee appointed by the Winona County Bar Association to draft a memorial to the late William Burns, a member of the Winona County Bar Association, has performed this duty and will, with your permission, now present it:

MEMORIAL

William Burns was born in the city of Washington, D. C., about fifty years ago. In early childhood he came with his parents to Fillmore County, Minnesota. His parents took up their abode upon an unimproved farm in a new country. A few years later the mother died and he went to live with his aunt, with whom he made his home until maturity. He received his elementary education in a country school, and made such use of his opportunities that he there fitted himself to pass the examination for a teacher's certificate. He taught several terms of country school and entered the state normal school in this city on the 31st day of August, 1882, with the aim to better prepare himself to take up the profession of law. During this time he was practically self sustaining by means of employment secured out of school hours and in vacation. He graduated in May 1885. He then entered the law office of the late Thomas Wilson of this city where he studied law, and from this office was admitted to the Bar upon an examination before the district court, in accordance with the practice in vogue at that time — 1887. As a result of meeting stern necessities in his youth, he acquired habits of industry, frugality, clean-thinking and right-living. These qualities made Judge Wilson his friend. Seldom did any member of this Bar meet Judge Wilson after he had removed from this city without being called upon to answer the question "How is my friend William Burns?" William Burns carried these same characteristics into the practice of law in which he was engaged in this city after his admission to the Bar, and in which he continued until the time of his death. He practiced law in this city for nearly thirty years, and was universally respected in and out of his profession. He was faithful to every trust, diligent and conscientious in his work, generous to the needy and deserving. He was never married. William Burns died at the Winona General Hospital, at one thirty o'clock in the afternoon, on March 20, 1917.

WHEREAS, Honorable William Burns lately departed this life, and

WHEREAS, By his death the Winona County Bar Association has lost one of its most active members,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the members of the Winona County Bar Association that they deeply regret the death of Mr. Burns and extend to his immediate relatives our heartfelt sympathy.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of these resolutions be presented to the District Court of Winona County, and a copy forwarded to the relatives of the deceased. □

ADDENDUM

The photograph on the first page is from *Men of Minnesota* 230 (1915).

Not mentioned in this tribute was Burns's service as a federal Referee in Bankruptcy from 1902 to his death in 1917. He was succeeded by William T. Valentine (1849-1919). See "Referees and Judges of the Bankruptcy Court for the District of Minnesota, 1898-2013" (MLHP, 2010-). ■



**Posted MLHP: October 16, 2011;
revised February 7, 2013;
photograph added, May 13, 2015.**