

IN MEMORIAM

JUDGE EUGENE ST. JULIEN COX

February 21, 1834 • November 3, 1898

**Los Angeles County Bar Association
Superior Court
Los Angeles, California**

November 9, 1898

EUGENE ST. JULIEN COX

A Well-Known Lawyer of the City Dead

The death of Eugene St. Julien Cox occurred yesterday morning at 2 o'clock at the home of his sister, Mrs. G. W. Burton, 133 Smith Hunker Mill avenue, with whom he has made his home for the past ten years, Mr. Cox was a prominent member of the Los Angeles county bar and of the Bartlett - Logan post, G. A. R., having served in the union army from the outbreak of the civil war until its close. Immediately after peace was declared the Sioux Indian war broke out in Minnesota, and Lieut. Cox organised a company of volunteers and served as captain through the campaign.

Eugene St. Julien Cox was born in Easton, Pa., February 21, 1834, and removed to Wisconsin with his father's family in 1852 where he studied law and was admitted to the bar. He was married in St. Paul, Minn., in 1858, and soon after settled at St. Peter, where a widow, two sons and four daughters survive him. Mr. Cox has been prominently identified with politics, having been elected by the Democratic party one or more terms to the Minnesota legislature, and was twice the nominee for congress in the St. Peter district and elected judge of the superior court in St. Paul. He came to this city ten years ago in failing health, and finding relief here has since resided with his sister.

The funeral will take place tomorrow, the hour not having been yet named.

Winona Daily Republican

November 4, 1898

Page 1

E . ST. JULIEN COX DEAD

Passing of a Once Prominent Figure in Minnesota Affairs.

St. Paul. Nov. 4.—News has been received of the death in California of E. St. Julien Cox, at one time one of the brightest lights of the Minnesota bar, but in his declining years the victim of adverse circumstances.

In the early 70's E. St. Julien Cox represented the Thirty-fourth district in the state senate. He was a leader and an able attorney and in the fall of 1876 was elected judge of the Ninth judicial district.

While on the bench complaint was made that he had become a servile victim of the liquor habit, and in 1882 the senate was called in special session to act as a court of impeachment. The trial was a cause celebre and is familiar to attorneys throughout the country as one of the hardest legal battles of its kind. Cox had only a few months to serve when the impeachment was finally concluded in March, 1882. He returned to practice at his home and lived down the scandal of the past but insidious disease then added to his troubles and he died in poverty. ¹

¹ This article was also published in the *Austin Daily Herald*, November 4, 1898, at 1.

E. ST. JULIEN COX DEAD

**The Once Brilliant Minnesota Attorney
Dies in Poverty —Was a Victim of
The Liquor Habit and Was Removed
From the Bench on That Account.**

A report from Los Angeles, Cal., says that E. St. Julien Cox, at one time one of the brightest lights of the Minnesota bar, but in his declining years a victim of adverse circumstances, is dead at that place.

E. St. Julien Cox was one of the rising men of St. Peter, Nicolet county, in the early '70's, and in the legislative session of 1874 and 1875 represented the Thirty-fourth district, consisting of Nicolet and Renville counties, in the state senate. He was a leader and an able attorney, and the fall of 1874 he was nominated for the district bench for the Ninth judicial District.

While on the bench complaint was made that he had become a servile victim of the liquor habit, and in 1882 the senate was called in special session to sit as a court of impeachment. The trial was a cause celebre, and was familiar to attorneys throughout the country as one of the hardest legal battles of its kind. Cox had only a few minutes to serve when the impeachment was finally concluded in March, 1882, and his friends exerted every effort to save his name, but in vain, and his service ended March 22, 1882.

He returned to practice at his home and lived down the scandal of the past, but insidious disease then added to his troubles and he died in poverty. He tried to regain his health recently by a trip to California, but in vain. For a time he was a resident of Minneapolis.



New Ulm Review

November 9, 1898

Page 5

Death Of St. Julien Cox.

**Passing Away of a Once Brilliant Lawyer and
Public Man.**

**Death Caused by a Cancerous Growth from
Which He Had Suffered for Years.**

E. St. Julien Cox, one of the brightest and most eloquent men who ever practiced before the Minnesota bar, died at his home in San Diego last Thursday.

For several years past Judge Cox suffered from a cancerous growth on the tongue which no medical or surgical skill could destroy.

Some months ago he expressed a desire to return to his old home and pass the remainder of his days, which he knew must soon end, amid the scenes of his early successes and his former friends, but for some reason or other, whether from lack of funds or inability to stand the trip we do not know, his cherished hope was never realized. His remains will probably be brought to Minnesota for burial.

Judge Cox came to Nicollet county in the early '60's. He was a gifted talker, a skilled lawyer, and it wasn't long before he became a prominent figure in Nicollet county politics. In 1872 he was elected to the legislature and served throughout his first term with distinction, so much so that in 1876 he was nominated and elected to the district bench.

While on the bench complaint was made that he had become a servile victim of the liquor habit, and in 1882, just towards the close of his term, the state senate was called in special session for the purpose of acting upon proceedings brought to impeach the judge.

The trial consumed many exciting days and the case was one of the most hotly contested in the history of legal battles.

Cox was represented by able lawyers, and his own plea for the honor of his family will go down as a masterpiece of forensic eloquence, but the evidence was against him and he was impeached.

His career as judge thus came to a sudden close on the 22nd of March, 1882, and he was barred from practicing in his old district for a term of five years. This period he spent in St. Paul, his family remaining at the old home in St. Peter.

At the conclusion of the period of disbarment he returned to St. Peter and for a time made a noble and strenuous effort to live down the scandal that had gathered about his name.

But the odds were against him and in a couple of years he succumbed again to drink. This was while he was running for a legislative position in 1889.

He was defeated of course and the humiliation which came with defeat induced him to leave the state and take up a residence in California. His career since then, clouded as it was by poverty and disease has been a sad one.

Judge Cox was one of the prominent participants in the Sioux Outbreak and also gained distinction a good many years after as a candidate for congress against Horace B. Strait.



St. Peter Herald

Friday, November 11, 1898

Page 1

Death of E. St. Julien Cox.

A telegram was received here last Friday announcing the death of E. St. Julien Cox, which occurred at Los Angeles, Cal. The news was not unexpected for word came here from time to time announcing his serious illness and that he was suffering from cancer of the tongue. His letters to old friends here were even pathetic for he recognized that the end was not far away and he told of the pain and

suffering which he endured. And yet when the news came it was a shock to his old-time friends who learned of his demise with sadness, for his death recalled the fact that another of the old pioneers had gone, and this time it was a pioneer who for years was one of the leading citizens of this section.

Judge Cox was so well known that even a brief biography is scarcely necessary. He was born in Philadelphia. The year of his birth was 1835, thus being 63 years of age at the time of his death. He was educated in the schools of Pennsylvania and was admitted to the bar before he had attained his majority. In 1851 he had moved Wisconsin and in 1857 came to St. Paul and from there to St. Peter the same year.

He had made this his home from that time up to a few years ago when he went to California, hoping to improve his shattered physical condition. He was a man of brilliant mental attainments and soon after his arrival at St. Peter he took a prominent place in the public affairs of Nicolet County and Minnesota.

When the war of rebellion was declared he was among the first to tender his services and he served with distinction. In the outbreak of the Sioux Indians he was one of the leaders of the defence and it was his arrival at the head of his troops that made the people of New Ulm feel that they were safe from attack from the Indians. He was a natural leader of men and those who followed him did it because he was loyal to those under him and treated them with that consideration which always wins hearts of men.

For years he was prominent in politics and was one of the democrats of the valley who succeeded. In 1873 he was elected to the house of representatives and two years later to the state senate and in both bodies served with

distinction. He was once candidate for Congress against H. B. Strait and even his opponents admitted his election. He was counted out, contested his seat at Washington but not permitted to occupy it.

In 1877 he was elected judge of the Ninth Judicial District by an unparalleled majority, his opponent being Alfred Wallin, now one of the justices of the Supreme Court of North Dakota. He served as judge for one term. After his term of Judge, he removed to Grand Forks where he practiced law for a few years and then located at St. Peter. After a few years here, his health began to break down and he left here for California where he resided up to the time of his death.

He was married in 1856 to Miss M. Mahew, of Oconomowoc, Wis. Mrs. Cox and six children survive him.

During his residency of upwards of forty years in St. Peter he was not only a familiar figure in public affairs but was a friend and champion of the interests of St. Peter. He was a friend of the poor and oppressed and was a man who was known for his honesty and his integrity. Many here will feel that in his death they lost a personal friend.



LOS ANGELES HERALD

November 10, 1898

Page 12

ACTION BY THE BAR

Resolutions Relative to the Death of E. St. Julien Cox

The following address was yesterday presented to the superior court of this county:

"We, the undersigned committee of the Los Angeles bar, respectively submit the following resolution of respect in relation to the death of the late E. St. Julien Cox, formerly of the bar of St. Paul and St. Peters, Minnesota, where for many years his personality was strongly impressed upon the legislature and judicial departments of his adopted state. Failing health influenced him a few years ago to settle in Los Angeles in the hope that the salubrious climate of this section would give rest and peace, if not restoration to health. The hope, while at first encouraging, did not justify the anticipated restoration of health. A shattered constitution could not be restored by climate, and death ensued on the 3d inst., by which the state of Minnesota has lost a distinguished citizen, jurist and legislator, and California has lost an adopted citizen who, had he been blessed with health and strength, would have been an honor to the state and an instructive example to the younger members of his profession.

"Resolved, That we hereby tender to the state of Minnesota and to the family and friends of our deceased brother in the two states the sympathy and condolence of our professional brotherhood, and request that these resolutions be spread upon the minutes of the court and that a copy thereof be forwarded to the family of our deceased brother.

(Signed) "A. J. King, Richard Dunnigan and J. A. Donnell. Committee."

In accordance with such request, Judge Van Dyke, to whom it was presented, ordered that the address and accompanying resolution be spread upon the minutes of the court in his department.

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APPENDIX

Not mentioned in any of these obituaries is a Joint Resolution passed by the Twenty-seventh Minnesota Legislature on April 1, 1891, that "vacated, cancelled and expunged" all record of Judge Cox's impeachment from the Journals of the House and Senate. It follows.

Judge Cox's home in St. Peter is on the National Register of Historic Places. It is now a museum maintained by the Nicollet County Historical Society. The following photographs were taken on August 5, 2009 by Bobak Ha'Eri.

The Twenty-seventh Legislature passed the following Joint Resolution on April 1, 1891. It can be found at Laws 1891 (Regular Session), Resolution No. 11, at 399-400.

RESOLUTION

NO. 11

A Joint Resolution

WHEREAS, The House of Representatives of the state of Minnesota, at the extra session of 1881, did adopt and present to the Senate of the state of Minnesota, then and there in session, articles of impeachment of E. St. Julien Cox, then judge of the Ninth Judicial District of, in and for said state, and

WHEREAS, The said Senate sitting as a high court of impeachment did on the 22d day of March, 1882, convict the said E. St. Julien Cox, and

WHEREAS, The said articles upon which the said Judge E. St. Julien Cox was convicted by said Senate in no wise or manner reflected upon his integrity as a man, nor touched his incorruptibility as an honest, upright and fearless judge and jurist, and

WHEREAS, The great cloud of said conviction hangs like a dark pall over the life and reputation of said E. St. Julien Cox, darkening the future of his posterity and at the same time greatly interfering with his efforts to attain that honorable position among his fellow citizens, to which a long life of usefulness to this state, his talents and ability justly entitle him, and

WHEREAS, This great and generous state designs not to tarnish its escutcheon with oppression, but aims rather to ennoble and elevate its citizens by every means in its power:

Therefore,

Be it resolved, By the Senate, the House of Representatives concurring,

That all proceedings on the part of the House of Representatives of the extra session of 1881, relating to the impeachment of E. St. Julien Cox, judge of the Ninth Judicial District, state of Minnesota, and in like manner all proceedings on the part of the Senate of said state, sitting as a high court of impeachment in the trial of said E. St. Julien Cox, upon the articles of impeachment and charges preferred by said House of Representatives against said E. St. Julien Cox, be and the same are hereby vacated, cancelled and expunged from the Journals of the House and the records of the Senate, sitting as a high court of impeachment for the trial of said E. St. Julien Cox.

Resolved, That the foregoing concurrent resolutions be inserted, printed and published in the bound copies of the General Laws of the state of Minnesota, for the year one thousand eight hundred and ninety-one, the same as other resolutions and memorials.

Approved April 1, 1891.



**Home of Judge Cox.
St. Peter, Nicollet County, Minnesota.
It is on the National Register of Historic Places.
Now a museum maintained by County Historical Society.
Photograph taken: August 5, 2009.
Photographer: Bobak Ha'Eri
Source: Wikimedia/Creative Commons.**



**Former Home of Judge Eugene St. Julien Cox
St. Peter, Nicollet County, Minnesota
Photograph taken: August 5, 2009.
Photographer: Bobak Ha'Eri
Source: Wikimedia/Creative Commons.**



**Former Home of Judge Eugene St. Julien Cox
St. Peter, Nicollet County, Minnesota
Photograph taken: August 5, 2009.
Photographer: Bobak Ha'Eri
Source: Wikimedia/Creative Commons.**



Related Articles

Three volumes of the “Journal of the Senate of Minnesota Sitting as a High Court of Impeachment for the Trial of Hon. E. St. Julien Cox, Judge of the Ninth Judicial District” published in 1882 are posted separately on the MLHP website.



Donations to maintain Judge Cox’s home should be directed to:

**Nicollet County Historical Society
1851 North Minnesota Avenue
St. Peter, Minnesota 56082**



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