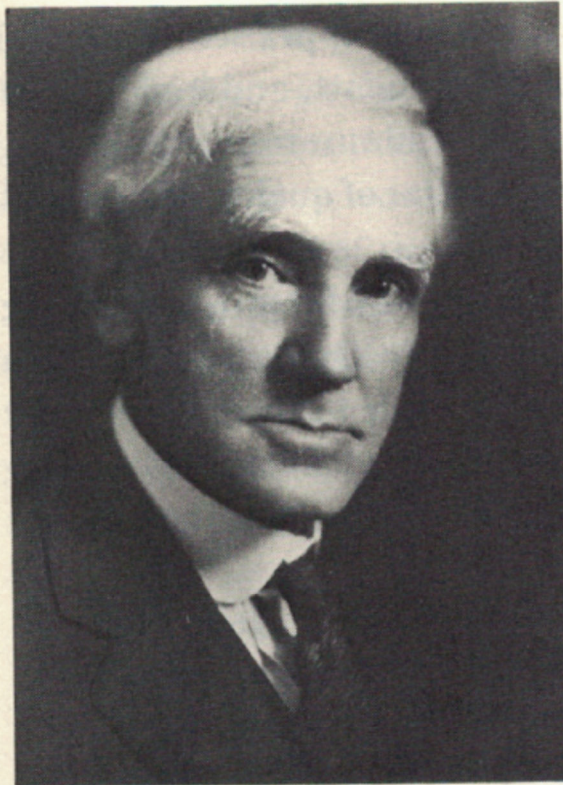


In Memoriam

Henry J. Fletcher

- 1859 – 1938 -



Henry Fletcher 1915
University of Minnesota Archives

Hennepin County Bar Association
District Court
Fourth Judicial District
Minneapolis, Minnesota
February 11, 1939

Professor Henry J. Fletcher

1859 - 1938

Henry J. Fletcher, Professor Emeritus of the Law School of the University of Minnesota, died at his home near Cardinal, Virginia, on November 8, 1938, at age 79.

Professor Fletcher was born in Maquoketa, Iowa, and was educated at the University of Michigan. He came to Minnesota to practice law, and was admitted to the Minnesota bar. After a few years of practice, he joined the faculty of the Law School of the University of Minnesota as a special lecturer in 1895, when the school was seven years old. A year or two later he gave up his practice, and became one of the small group of full-time professors at the school, along with Dean Pattee, Professor Paige, and Judge Hickman, whom older graduates of the school will remember so well. He continued to teach without interruption until his retirement, because of illness, in 1929.

During his thirty-four years of service on the Law School faculty, he taught nearly every course in the curriculum, but specialized in his later years in Sales, Insurance and Bankruptcy. By far the greater number of graduates of the school now living had the good fortune to come under his instruction. He was the first editor-in-chief of the Minnesota Law Review, and from its small beginning in the year 1916, he built it up to national standing, and reputation abroad, as far away as Australia and British India. Whatever value it has had to the Bar of Minnesota is to be attributed in large measure to his unceasing labors during its early years.

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After his retirement, Professor Fletcher lived quietly on his farm in Virginia. He returned twice to Minnesota as a guest of the Law School. In 1934 he attended a dinner given by the school in honor of Professor Paige. The graciousness of his address on that occasion has been remembered ever since as remarkable, even on such an occasion. Old graduates of the school lingered for more than an hour after the dinner to talk to him. Again in 1938, at the dinner given in honor of the fiftieth anniversary of the school, Professor Fletcher was the guest of honor. His reception on that occasion, and prolonged ovation which he received, spoke to some slight extent of the affection and regard in which he was held by his former students.

Professor Fletcher had unusual qualities of mind and heart. He was a gentleman of the old school, in the truest sense of the term. He had a wide range of learning, in literature, history, and many fields of law, and an open, unbiased, tolerant mind which has been compared to that of Justice Holmes. The two men had much in common. He was remarkable for his unflinching courtesy and consideration for others, and for the fact that that in all of his years of teaching he never spoke an unkind word to any student, or failed to do anything in his power to help those who came in contact with him. He liked young men, and was pleased to have them about him, and all of them liked him.

His colleagues on the Law School faculty, his associates on the Minnesota Law Review, and the many hundreds of his former students, mourn him as one of the finest gentleman they have ever known.

Professor Fletcher was survived by wife and four children. Mrs. Fletcher and her son Roderick are now living on his Virginia farm. Another son, David, is now a chemist with the Du Pont Company. One of his daughters is Mrs. Russell H. Bennett of Minneapolis, another Mrs. Sherman Steadman of St. Paul. The Bar of Minnesota will join in extending sympathy to them for their loss.

Few men have had such an influence for good upon the spirit and character of the members of our profession in Minnesota.

Respectfully submitted

William L. Prosser

BAR MEMORIAL SERVICE

Memorial services were held Saturday, Feb. 11, 1939, at the Special Term of the District Court in Court Room No. 1 presided over by the full bench of Judges. The large audience attending was composed of many practicing attorneys of Minneapolis, several federal district judges, supreme court justices and friends of those members of the Hennepin County Bar who passed away during the year and in whose honor these services were held. Following are reproduced the obituaries as read and filed in the office of the Clerk of the District Court. They will appear here, one each day in alphabetical order, until all those filed have been published.

Credit: The photograph on the first page is from the University of Minnesota Archives, and was published in Robert A. Stein, *In Pursuit of Excellence: A History of the University of Minnesota Law School* 53 (Mason Publishing Company, 1980).

The insert on page 3 from the first volume of the *Law Review* is by the MLHP.

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