

In Memoriam

Judge Charles Perry Gregory

[February 20, 1848 – March 19, 1893]

Washington County Bar Association
District Court
Third Judicial District
Stillwater, Minnesota

May 2, 1893

C. P. Gregory
1848-1893

§ 1.

Obituary from the *Stillwater Messenger*, Saturday, March 25, 1893:

It becomes our sad duty to chronicle the death of a prominent member of our community which, though expected for some weeks, was none the less a blow that will be deeply regretted by all.

Judge Charles Perry Gregory died Sunday morning [March 19] after a prolonged and painful illness resulting from some liver trouble. For nearly a year past he had been ailing, but carefully concealed the seriousness of his sickness from his friends. About three months ago he suffered a change for the worse and for some weeks past it was evident to all that his death was only a few days, possibly only hours, distant. Still, with his usual courage and tenacity he fought back the impending dissolution, but steadily grew weaker and finally passed away to the unknown. Even at the hour of his death, his active mind was in possession of its faculties and he endeavored to whisper a few parting words, but his will power was unable to overcome the weakness of death, that forever sealed his lips. The funeral was held Monday afternoon from the family residence on south Second street, which was crowded with friends of the deceased. . . .

Charles P. Gregory was born at Kartright, Delaware county, N.Y., February 20, 1848. His parents were farmers and he was brought up on the farm, working hard and attending school at different academies. He taught school several terms, after which he attended the Albany law

college, working his way through, and graduated shortly before coming here. He worked his way west, haying and harvesting, stopping in Indiana for a while where his brother died.

He arrived in Stillwater in the fall of 1874, and made his home with his cousin, E. G. Butts, who admitted him to partnership in his law practice a few weeks after his arrival. The firm enjoyed an excellent practice for several years, when Mr. Gregory was appointed by the city council as justice of the peace, and shortly afterward, in 1876, when the municipal court was formed here he was elected to the bench, being the first municipal judge of Stillwater.

He was elected by the council as city attorney, and served two terms in the state legislature. For some years past he has devoted himself to his law practice, of which he enjoyed a liberal patronage. He always took an active interest in politics and was an unwavering democrat. He was very well posted on all political issues, and possessed the ability of expressing his views in concise and convincing form, as shown by his contributions to the columns of the Messenger.

In character he was fearless and outspoken to a degree, abhorring all manner of hypocrisy, and never backward about saying so, and yet he was so generous and kindly that he made many friends. He was married in 1880 to Mrs. Duane Gaskill, who with her daughter, Miss Inez, survive him.

§ 2.

Obituary from the *St. Paul Daily Globe*, Monday, March 20, 1893:

Stillwater News.

Hon. C. P. Gregory,
Long a Prominent Figure,
Dies.

Hon. C. P. Gregory expired shortly after 4 o'clock yesterday morning. Mr. Gregory was long a prominent figure in Minnesota, being one of the oldest attorneys in the state and a hard political worker. A few years ago he represented Washington county in the legislature, where he also distinguished himself as a worker and made many lasting friendships. Last fall he was taken sick, but his illness was not considered serious at that time. He failed gradually, and in the hope of regaining his health he made a trip to the logging districts. The change did not have the desired effect, and he returned soon afterward feeling worse than when he went away. The day of his return he went home, and since that day he has not been down town. About six weeks ago his illness took a decided turn for the worse, and his friends realized then that the end of his successful career was fast approaching.

He possessed a strong will and was confident of being restored to health, while his ailment was making greater inroads in his system. All that loving friends could do for him was done, but his time had come, and he expired at the time above stated.

He was a member of the Stillwater lodges of the I. O. O. F. and B. P. O. E. and his brothers in these lodges will

take charge of the funeral which occurs at 2:30 p. m. today.

Deceased was born in New York state a little, more than forty-five years ago, and came to Stillwater some twenty years ago. The mourning relatives have the sincere sympathy of a large circle of friends in this city and state.

....

Members of the local lodges of old Fellows and Elks will meet at Odd Fellow's hall at 1:30 p.m. today, for the purpose of attending the funeral of their deceased brother, Hon. C. P. Gregory.

§ 3.

Funeral in the *St. Paul Daily Globe*, Tuesday, March 21, 1893:

The funeral of C. P. Gregory occurred at 2:30 p. m. yesterday, from the family residence on South Second street, and was conducted under the auspices of the Stillwater Lodge of Odd Fellows, of which he was a charter member. The pallbearers were selected from the Odd Fellows' and Elks' lodges and those who officiated were Messrs. F. L. McKusick, Fred Swanson, W. S. Soule, W. R. Lehmicke, James Foley and Granvill Smith. The Elks and Odd Fellows attended the funeral in a body, and all the members of the Washington county bar in the city also attended. The services were conducted by Rev. Harrington, of Minneapolis, and the cortege was one of the largest seen here for years. At the next special term of the district court the bar association will adopt resolutions of condolence.

§ 4.

Memorial services, *Stillwater Messenger*, Saturday, May 6, 1893:

At a term of district court last Tuesday [May 2], the Washington County Bar association held memorial services in honor of the late judge C. P. Gregory. Short addresses were made by judge Williston and attorneys J. N. Castle, Fayette Marsh and E. G. Butts. Judge Nethaway presented the following resolutions which were adopted:

“From out of that great court whose jurisdiction is co-extensive with the universe, from whose decree there is no appeal, and whose mandates all finite things must obey, a summons has been sent to another of our members.

CHARLES PERRY GREGORY,

born in Delaware county, state of New York, on the 20th day of January, 1848, died at Stillwater, Minnesota, on Saturday, the 19th day of March 1893, after a protracted and painful illness.

“Judge Gregory after receiving a liberal education, graduated from the Albany, (New York) law school, and moved to Minnesota in the fall of the year 1874, where he at once engaged in the practice of his profession with E. G. Butts of this city.

“He was soon after elected justice of the peace, which office he held until the organization of the municipal court of the city of Stillwater in 1876, when he was elected first judge of that court and held that office during the term of

two years. After filling the office of municipal judge he was elected city attorney, which office he held several terms. He was twice chosen to represent his district in the house of representatives in this state, and was subsequently elected to be a school director of the city schools, which office he held at the time of his death.

“On the bench he displayed a rare perception of legal principles, and a profound knowledge of law, and with a pre-eminently judicial mind he administered justice honestly and absolutely, without fear or favor. As a legislator he was prominent and one of the leading members of the body to which he belonged, and on all important matters coming before that body his counsel was sought and his opinions valued and respected.

“As a lawyer he possessed a rare faculty of applying legal principles to the case in hand, a great ability in presenting both law and facts to court or jury. He arrived at conclusions only after patient and thorough investigation. In his convictions he was earnest and honest. He was fearless in the expression of his opinions and when in error he was readily convinced and frankly, often voluntarily, acknowledged it. In his practice his word was always respected and when once given was never broken.

“As a citizen he was an honest man and a most excellent neighbor, and in his death the community has lost an able counselor, a brilliant advocate and one who at all times had the best interests of the community in which he lived, at heart, and who was always ready and willing to defend and sustain the rights of all matters pertaining to the welfare of the community in which he lived.

“THEREFORE, be it resolved by the members of the Washington County Bar association, that in the death of our late member, Hon. C. P. Gregory, this association loses a brilliant member, an honest lawyer, and one whose usefulness was only in its prime, and that by his untimely removal there has been caused a vacancy which it will be hard to fill and which each individual member of this association will long and sincerely mourn. That this community has, in the death of our late member, lost a sincere friend, an able counselor and a valued citizen.

“And be it further resolved that to the widow and family of our late friend and co-laborer, this association collectively and individually extend in the hour of their affliction our sincere and heartfelt sympathy, and especially to the widow whose life's journey must hereafter be completed without the aid and comfort of his loving guidance, do we extend our most sincere regret and condolence.

“Resolved further that we respectfully request this district court to spread upon its records these resolutions and direct that a copy thereof be engrossed and forwarded to the widow of our late friend and brother.”

J. C. Nethaway,
F. V. Comfort,
Louis L. Manwaring,
Committee

§ 5.

Resolution passed by Lodge I.O.O.F, *Stillwater Messenger*, Saturday, April 1, 1893:

The following resolutions were adopted by Minnesota Lodge No. 1, I. O. O. F.:

Whereas, the hand of divine providence has removed from our midst our esteemed and beloved brother, Chas. P. Gregory, whose death occurred on the 19th day of March, 1893, and in view of this loss to us and the still heavier loss to our late brother's family

Therefore, be it resolved that we as a band of sorrowing brothers extend our heartfelt sympathy in this, their sad affliction.

Resolved, that while we deeply mourn his loss as a member of this order we find consolation in the thought that we shall meet again in a happy Brotherhood where parting will not be known.

Resolved, that these resolutions be published in the newspapers of this city; that they be spread on the records of this lodge, and that a copy thereof be sent to the family of our dear brother.

≡Θ≡

APPENDIX

Charles P. Gregory was twice elected as a Democrat to represent District 24 in the state House of Representatives. This district covered parts of Washington County. He first ran to serve in the 23rd Legislature. The results of the election on November 7, 1882, were

C. P. Gregory.....579
W. Schmidt.....415 ¹

He did not run in 1884. On November 2, 1886, he was elected over two candidates who split the opposition vote, enabling him to win with only 41.6% of the vote. The results of that election were:

C. P. Gregory.....610
St. John.....368
Richmond.....487 ²

He did not seek re-election. Instead he ran for County Attorney and lost. The results of the election on November 6, 1888, were:

C. P. Gregory.....174
Orris E. Lee.....234 ³

≡Θ≡

¹ *Stillwater Messenger*, November 18, 1882, at 5.

² *Stillwater Messenger*, November 6, 1886, at 4.

³ *Stillwater Messenger*, November 17, 1888, at 4.