

MEMORIAL

TO

EDWARD WELLES HAWLEY

(1867- 1952)

DISTRICT COURT
HENNEPIN COUNTY
FOURTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

HENNEPIN COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

(ca. 1953)

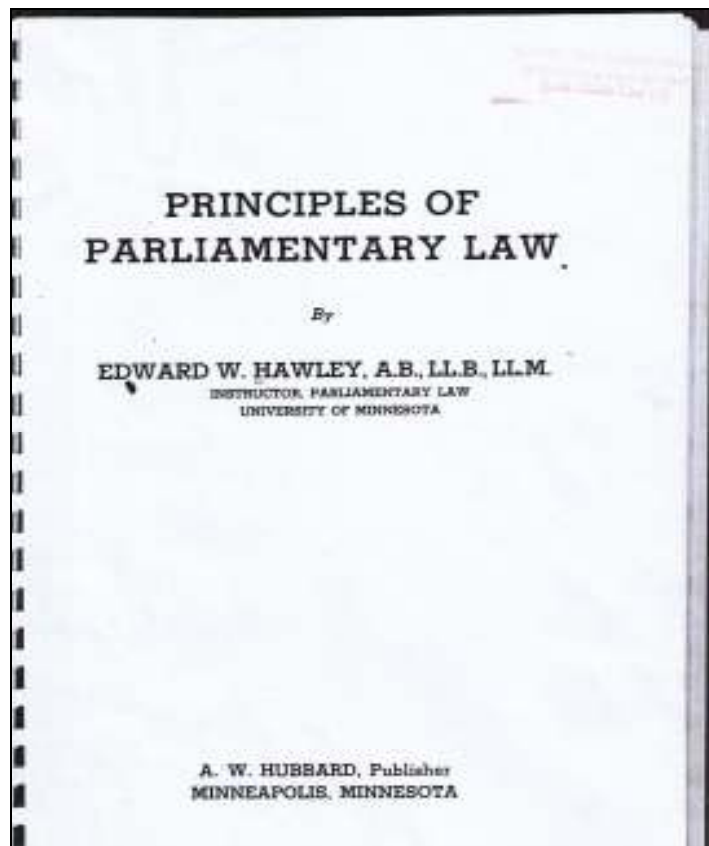
Edward Welles Hawley

(1867-1952)

Edward Hawley spoke German, Latin, Greek and Sanskrit; he wrote poems in Greek that were published in literary magazines; late in life he studied Celtic and Scandinavian literature, astronomy, geology, and history, among other subjects. He also delivered lectures to select audiences, and reportedly “was prepared on ten minutes notice to deliver an hour’s lecture on any one of seventeen subjects, without notes.”

He was, in short, a polymath, who practiced law in Minneapolis for almost fifty years.

He served sixteen years on the Minneapolis City Council, and took copious notes of its meetings—occasionally in Greek. This experience led him to research, write and self-publish *Principles of Parliamentary Law* in 1938.



An inkling of why he “spent many years in the closest study” of parliamentary procedure while practicing law and pursuing numerous other intellectual interests—and rowing on the Mississippi River besides, for he was a superb athlete—is found in the Preface to his treatise:

PREFACE

If this book were written to furnish a means of getting the answer, directly or in principle, to any question which might arise in Parliamentary Law, so-called, there would be little, if any, reason for its existence; for there are a number of fine books now in print which serve that purpose, some of them to perfection.

But when anyone asks: “What is the name of a book from which I can learn the subject of Parliamentary Law, and remember it, so, that I shall know how to take my part in any kind of a meeting, either as a member of it or as its chairman, and do so effectively, or efficiently, as the case may be?” who can name such a book?

There can be no doubt that the subject of Parliamentary Law, if approached in the wrong way, and there are several wrong ways, is as difficult a subject to learn as could well be imagined; but if studied by the proper method, and studied on the theory that it is a most carefully worked system of principles, the development of which has taken hundreds of years, as it has, to perfect it, it becomes one of the easiest to learn and most fascinating of subjects.

If the work of learning it is pursued in this manner, with any considerable degree of diligence, it can be asserted with perfect assurance that any person who has a reasonable amount of intelligence, and a reasonable amount of education, can acquire a good working equipment in Parliamentary

Law in a short period of time, without having had any previous knowledge of the subject; nor is any knowledge of law whatsoever needed in order to study this subject effectively. And yet, very many of those who have become good parliamentarians have, as they will admit, spent many years of hard work in order to obtain the same, and perhaps poorer, results.

To write any such book for the learning of this important subject it is of the greatest advantage to its writer not only to have spent many years in the closest study of the subject in books, but to have had many years of experience in the application of the principles, as a member of some important legislative body, and also many years of practice in the teaching of other difficult subjects.

It is the firm conviction that the possession of these three kinds of experience, a not very common combination, enables one to teach this subject effectively, together with the knowledge of the results which actually have been obtained in sixteen years of teaching the subject. The publication of this book sets forth the method by which those results have been obtained; and it is earnestly hoped and confidently believed that what can be accomplished by the use of the book will prove that it was well worth while to put such method into printed form, so that it might be easily available to large numbers of people at a very reasonable cost.¹

His expertise led him to teach parliamentary law at his alma mater, the University of Minnesota, and act as parliamentarian for conferences of several professional associations. He also instructed state legislators on parliamentary procedure at each new legislative session for many years.

¹ The book, spiral bound, 101 pages in length and copyrighted, can be found at the Historical Society and the Riesenfeld Rare Book Research Center at the University of Minnesota Law School. Hawley's "Outlines of lectures on the law of insurance" is also at the Riesenfeld Center.

He was revising his *magnum opus* when he became ill and died on November 16, 1952, at age eighty-five. It is apparent from the colorful details in his obituary in the *Minneapolis Star* the next day that the reporter had known and admired him:

Death Ends Hawley's Scholarly Research

The tall, gaunt figure of Minnesota's most scholarly parliamentarian, sagging under two briefcases stuffed with the notes of research, will be missing from the state capitol from now on.

The long-awaited revised edition of Edward W. Hawley's book, "Principles of Parliamentary Law," will have to be compiled by somebody else, from his notes.

The author, Edward W. Hawley, undoubtedly the only Minneapolis alderman who took notes on council meetings in Greek, died Sunday at University hospital. He was 85.

About three weeks ago, the hardy scholar, onetime athlete, a memory specialist was taken sick for the first time. But he refused to stay in the hospital for more than X-rays, went back to the capitol for a few more days of the 11 years of research he's been doing in the state law library.

He put his knowledge to every day use, however. His conversation was enriched with quotations from the poets, and in any discussion of public affairs he could and did supply the appropriate quote from the United States a constitution which he knew by heart from age 15.

With his barber Dietrich Lenzen, across the street from Minneapolis city hall, Mr. Hawley spoke German. He was an alderman from 1908 to 1916, and 1921 to 1929. Lenzen shaved him daily.

With others he spoke Latin or Greek if that suited them better. He even knew Sanskrit, but couldn't develop any conversational skill in that dead language, "because nobody would talk it with me."

Each new crop of Minnesota legislators has been learning parliamentary law from lawyer Hawley for so many sessions now that there's hardly a trick known to one lawmaker that can't be countered by another straight out of Mr. Hawley's lectures. Son of Augustine Bayer Hawley, who came to Red Wing at age 23, a year before Minnesota became a state, Mr. Hawley kept trim up to his 80's by running at least a block each day, and rowing a boat. He was a star pitcher on the Harvard and University of Minnesota law school baseball teams, and a tennis ace.

Surviving are his sister, Anne Hawley, who kept house for him at 97 Arthur avenue SE, after his wife's death several year's ago; another sister, Mrs. Frederick B. Chute, Minneapolis; three nephews, J. B. Hawley, Jr., Wayzata, chairman of the board of Northern Ordinance, Inc., Dr. George M. B. Hawley, Red Wing, and Frederick H. Chute, Wayzata; and two nieces, Mrs. Jacques Fermaud, Minneapolis, and Mrs. Henry Winans, Dallas, Texas.²

The following year, a memorial to him was presented in district court by Neal M. Cronin on behalf of the Hennepin County Bar Association:³

Memorial to Edward Welles Hawley
Delivered before the Judges of the
District Court in Hennepin County,
Minnesota, and members of the
Hennepin County Bar.

² *Minneapolis Star*, Monday, November 17, 1952, at 18 (funeral arrangements and photo omitted).

³ This bar memorial and several hundred others are on deposit at the Historical Society.

Edward Welles Hawley (1867-1952) was born in August, 1867, in Red Wing, Minnesota. He was the son of Dr. Augustine Boyer Hawley and Harriet Bowman Blackstock of Washington, Pennsylvania. On June 9th, 1909, he married Leulah Jedson of Dobbs Ferry, New York. She was later an instructor in history at the University of Minnesota. She died on April 28, 1934. After graduating from Red Wing High School, he took a classical course at Hobart College in Geneva, New York, graduating in 1888, and in 1889, a post-graduate course at Harvard University. These courses included the study of Latin, Greek, German and Hebrew. After leaving Harvard he taught mathematics at Englewood, Illinois, high school for two years before coming to Minneapolis. In later years, in fact during most of his life, he studied astronomy, mathematics, geology, history and poetry. He was a member of the Geological Club of Minnesota. He memorized many poems, and wrote some of his own poems in Greek or Latin. These were published in a magazine devoted to the classics. In recent years he made a study of Celtic and Scandinavian literature.

A mere enumeration of the subjects on which he delivered lectures indicates the wide range of his study and research. He was prepared on ten minutes notice to deliver an hour's lecture on any one of seventeen subjects, without notes.

He graduated from the Law School of the University of Minnesota in 1894, where he received the degrees of Bachelor of Laws and Master of Laws, and became a member of Phi Delta Phi legal fraternity.⁴ He began the practice of law in

⁴ He was a member of the class of 1893, and received his Masters degree the following year. His entry in the alumni directory provides:

Edward Welles Hawley,
LL. B., 93; LL. M., 94; Phi Delta Phi; Lawyer.

Minneapolis in 1894, in the office of John W. Vanderlip, and then from 1896 until 1904 was in partnership with his brother George B. Hawley, but for most of his practice of over fifty years he was alone. He was a member of the Hennepin County Bar Association. For several years prior to his death he spent many hours a day in the Bar library at the Capitol in St. Paul, engaged in legal research.

He was a profound student of parliamentary law, rated as next to the author of Roberts' Rules of Order in his knowledge of that subject, which he taught for years at the University of Minnesota, later conducted classes of his own, and established classes for members of the legislature. For many years he was parliamentarian for groups such as National Druggists Association, the Minnesota Educational Association, and Nurses Association. His book "The Principles of Parliamentary Law", published in 1938, is invaluable for the student. At the time of his death he was engaged in a revision and enlargement of his work.

In addition to the practice of law and the activities mentioned, Mr. Hawley rendered his full share of public service.

From 1908 to 1916 and from 1921 to 1929, he was alderman of the Second Ward. Before his election he attended nearly every meeting of the City Council for four years, taking notes on the delibera-

605 Metropolitan Life Bldg. and 323,
11th Ave. S. E. Mpls., Minn.

Alumni of the College of Law, 1889-1915, at 247 (online).

He was admitted to the Minnesota bar on June 2, 1893. See 1 *Roll of Attorneys: Supreme Court, State of Minnesota, 1858-1970* 30 (State Law Library, 2011).

tions. As an Alderman, although like others he was identified with one of the Council groups, there were times when his convictions impelled him to break ranks. He was not afraid to stand alone.

In Council debates he was always fortified with the facts involved. He was brief and vigorous in argument. He was above innuendo, insinuation, or indulgence in personalities. He was also possessed of a fine sense of humor.

During his entire life he was an athlete. In early years, baseball claimed his attention, but his favorite exercise was rowing on the Mississippi, preferably against the current, and on Lake Minnetonka, where he continued to row until a few months before his death.

He was a member of the Episcopal Church.

Surviving him are two sisters, Mrs. Frederick B. Chute and Miss Anne M. Hawley, of Minneapolis; a brother, Henry Wilder Hawley, of Newark, New Jersey; and two brothers, John S. Hawley, Jr. and Frederick H. Chute, of Wayzata, Minnesota. ■

<<< H >>>

Posted MLHP: March 10, 2013;
Expanded March 18, 2013..