

MEMORIAL PROCEEDINGS

FOR

WILLIAM OREN HILLMAN

(December 6, 1859 - January 7, 1932)

RAMSEY COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION
Second Judicial District
District Court
Ramsey County, Minnesota

MARCH 26, 1932

WILLIAM OREN HILLMAN

William Oren Hillman, for many years Court Reporter of the District Court of Ramsey County, died at St. Paul on January 7, 1933. He was the son of George Washington Hillman and Chloe Ann Dayton and was born at Greenwich in Washington County, New York, on December 8, 1889.

He was educated at Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut, and while attending that institute became a member of Chi Psi Fraternity. While acting as Court Reporter in the District Court of Ramsey County he attended the evening courses of the University Law School and was graduated therefrom in 1893. In 1883 he married Miss Mattie K. Hooker of Springfield, Vermont. He is survived by two sons, C. Kirk Hillman, William Raymond Hillman, a daughter, Mrs. Alice Crawford, and by his brother, Mr. George N. Hillman.

Early in life he became interested in stenography and assiduously studied and practiced the art of shorthand reporting and soon became an expert therein. In 1881 he came to Minnesota and was by Judge John L. McDonald appointed Court Reporter for the Eighth Judicial District of Minnesota, in which office he remained until Judge McDonald was elected to Congress from the Third Congressional District in 1886. In the year 1886 he came to St. Paul and joined the reportorial staff of his brother, George N. Hillman, official Court Reporter of the District Court of Ramsey County, and remained in that capacity until his death.

For more than 45 years Mr. Hillman has been a familiar figure in the District Court of Ramsey

County, quite intimately associated with and known by all the lawyers who practiced in the Court and all the judges who presided over its proceedings.

There is no more important office connected with judicial proceedings than that of the Court Reporter. On his integrity and accuracy depend many important rights, and a reporter whose honesty is unquestioned and whose accuracy is perfect is of the highest value to the bench and bar, and to those of the community at large who become involved in judicial proceedings.

Mr. Hillman was a reporter of this type. His integrity was beyond question. His accuracy was complete. He never lost or misplaced an exhibit. He never made an inaccurate note of testimony or proceedings. His transcripts were never questioned or criticized by either bench or bar, and the well deserved confidence of both bench and bar in the correctness of his notes and transcripts saved both the judges and lawyers many hours of laborious drudgery, for no one ever felt it necessary to check over his transcripts to ascertain if they correctly reported the testimony given.

His demeanor in court was fair and disinterested and he at all times refrained from indicating in any way his own opinion as to the merits or demerits of any case under consideration. In addition to this he was most accommodating and ready at any stage of a case to promptly furnish transcripts of desired testimony.

Mr. Hillman was a sincere and devout christian, a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church and charter member of Trinity Methodist Church of St. Paul. He was a well educated and well read man and an interesting and delightful companion to those who enjoyed his intimate social acquaintance. His

splendid service, his fine and admirable character his clean and useful life are well worthy of commemoration by the bench end bar of Ramsey County.

Respectfully submitted,

- Frederick W. Dickson
August M. Meier
Arthur A. Stewart
Harry Stearns

COMMITTEE.

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Hillman's death on January 7, 1932, was reported in the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*:

W. O. HILLMAN, 72
COURT REPORTER
FOR 46 YEARS DIES

Ramsey District Bench Employe
Here Stricken With Heart Disease.

William O. Hillman, a reporter in Ramsey County for 45 years, died at 1:30 P.M. Thursday of a heart attack. He was stricken at Sixth and Robert streets by what physicians believed was a recurrence of an attack suffered about a year ago.

He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Mattie M. Hillman, 396 Dewey avenue, two sons, C. Kirk Hillman of Seattle and William R. Hillman of Kansas City, and a daughter, Mrs. Alice Crawford of White Bear Lake. Mr. Hillman was a brother of George N. Hillman of St. Paul, veteran reporter who retired three years ago after completing more than 54 years of service in the Ramsey county district court.

Mr. Hillman was 72 years old. He was born in Greenwich, N. Y., where he attended the Union school of that city and later Wesleyan Theological seminary. He came to St. Paul in 1882 and was appointed reporter in the Eighth judicial district by Judge John L. MacDonald in whose court he served at Shakopee until Judge MacDonald was elected to Congress in 1886. Mr. Hillman then joined the staff of Ramsey county district court reporters where he was serving at the time of his death.

In addition to his work as a reporter, Mr. Hillman studied law and in 1882 (sic) was graduated from the law school of the University of Minnesota.

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When the Trinity Methodist Episcopal church, Dewey and Marshall avenues, was founded in 1885 Mr. Hillman was named a trustee and elected treasurer of the church. He was chairman of the committee in charge of the building of the church and has been a trustee continuously and has held the offices of secretary or treasurer numerous times. He was particularly active in the work of the Sunday

school and for many years taught a class of boys.¹

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This is entry on Hillman as a member of the Class of 1893 in the Alumni Directory of the University of Minnesota Law School:

William Oren Hillman,
LL. B., 93; attended Wesleyan Univ. 84 (Middletown, Conn.) Alpha Alpha Chi Psi (Wesleyan); Court Reporter at St. Paul, Ramsay Co., Minn; trustee Trinity M. E. Ch. (St. Paul) and sec. Official Bd.; memo Chess and Whist Club; Modern Woodmen and Fraternal Mystic Circle (insurance). Room 70 Court House and 396 Dewey Ave., St. Paul, Minn.²

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Related Articles

George N. Hillman: "Some Judges and Lawyers I Have Known." (MLHP, 2016) (Published first,1927).

George N. Hillman: "Reminiscences" (MLHP, 2016) (Published first,1926).

Jackie Young, "A History of Court Reporting in Minnesota." (MLHP,2014).

¹ *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, January 8, 1932, at 10 (funeral arrangements and photo omitted). The *St. Paul Daily News* reported Hillman's death on its front page. January 7, 1932 ("W. O. Hillman, Court Reporter, Dies Suddenly").

² *Alumni of the College of Law, 1889-1915* 247 (1916).