

Putnam Webster Locke

(1831 - 1891)



Putnam W. Locke arrived in St. Paul in the late 1880s. He had served on the bench in another state and was known as “Judge” Locke. He was an active Mason.¹ He and his family resided at 423 Selby Avenue in St. Paul.² His death on November 22, 1891, at age sixty, was reported in the *St. Paul Daily Globe*:

Death of Judge Locke.

Putnam W. Locke, Esq., died yesterday at his home on Selby avenue after an illness of several weeks' duration. Judge Locke was comparatively a newcomer in St. Paul and a new practitioner at the legal bar, but he had brought with him a fine legal reputation, which he speedily accentuated, while his genial personality soon brought him a host of friends. Politically he was a sound Democrat, and though he took comparatively little part in politics, his words and influence were of great service, especially in the discussion and consideration of the constitutional amendments passed upon a year ago.³

Two days later, the Ramsey County Bar Association met and passed resolutions in tribute to the judge. Although little was known about him, the leaders of the county bar turned out, and

¹ *St. Paul Daily Globe*, April 5, 1890, at 2.

² *St. Paul Daily Globe*, November 29, 1891, at 15 (listing his age as sixty).

³ *St. Paul Daily Globe*, November 23, 1891, at 2. His passing was also noted in the *Pioneer Press*:

Putnam Webster Locke, the well-known attorney, died yesterday at his residence, 423 Selby avenue. Mr. Locke had a host of friends among his brother lawyers, won by his universal courteous manner as well as by his knowledge of the law. He was a close and logical reasoner and an able advocate and jurist. The termination of his recent illness will be deeply regretted by a wide circle of acquaintances and his death will be a loss to the community at large. Funeral services will be held at Dayton avenue church tomorrow afternoon at 4 o'clock. The interment will be at Kingston, N. H.

St. Paul Pioneer Press, November 23, 1891, at 8.

the courts adjourned early to enable the bar and bench to attend his funeral. The proceedings were quoted in the *Globe*:

A TOUCHING TRIBUTE.

Members of the Bar Express High Esteem of the Late Judge Locke.

A Man Who Made Friends by Conscientious Work and Actions.

The funeral services of the late Putnam Webster Locke were held yesterday afternoon. A large concourse of friends, including a large representation of the Ramsey county bar, assembled to pay their last respects at Dayton Avenue church, whence the remains were conveyed from the family residence on Selby avenue. The interment will be had at South Kingston, Vt. A delegation of Palladian Commandery, Knights Templar, accompanied the funeral cortege, which left for that place last evening.

A meeting of the Ramsey County Bar association was held in Court Room No. 3 at 3 o'clock yesterday afternoon, which was largely attended. W. H. Sanborn presided. Cyrus J. Thompson read the following memorial:

The members of the bar of Ramsey county have assembled to pay their last tribute of respect to the memory of their deceased brother, Putnam Webster Locke, and to record their sorrow at his death.

Though associated with us and known by us but a few years, Mr. Locke had already gained a high place in the affectionate regard of the members of this bar. The death of few among us, save, perhaps, those who have been for many years connected with this bar, could make so large a gap in

our ranks. And it was because there was in him something which, by itself, placed him above the average of his fellow men.

He came to us from another state, where he had already developed those strong characteristics with which nature had endowed him, and where he had made for himself a name in the profession. He came to us to make a new name at a bar already numbering in its well-nigh overcrowded ranks many lawyers of ability and distinction, and to whom he was a stranger. But he could be a stranger to no community long.

We found in him all those characteristics which enable men who possess them to leave the imprint of their names upon the people with whom they dwell. He was genial to all who came. None so sought him who were not cheered by his hearty greeting and drawn to him by the cordial grasp of his hand. But, while his heart was essentially warm to all mankind, it was never allowed to warp or control his judgment of right or wrong, nor to withhold his condemnation of injustice.

Herein, perhaps, was the strong point in his character, that wrong found in him a merciless prosecutor — not one who would prosecute from anger, but only that good might result. If there was one thing that was not to be found in him it was sham.

His judgment was clear, and when his course was decided, neither fear nor favor could swerve him from it. So we learned to respect him for his honesty and his fearlessness, as we loved him for the sunshine that was in his heart. This, too, was the estimate in which he was held in the community at large, and, in all the paths of life in which he walked, he honored his profession as it has sought to honor him.

His mind was keen, logical and comprehensive. His grasp of legal principles was quick and accurate. In his practice, his battles were fought only along the lines of right and justice, while his methods were those of fairness and uprightness itself.

He leaves a name untarnished by any act of meanness, unkindness or dishonor. His life is an example which we shall ever cherish and strive to follow. We sorrow at his untimely taking-off, but we rejoice that we have the lessons, which his presence and his work among us have afforded us to treasure and to profit by.

T. T. Fauntleroy's motion that the memorial be adopted was agreed to and Mr. Fauntleroy, H. V. Rutherford and Cyrus J. Thompson were named as a committee to ask the judges of the district court to spread the memorial on the records of the court. C. D. O'Brien, H. J. Horn and Harris Richardson were named as a committee to ask the supreme court to spread the memorial on its records. Harry J. Horn had a motion adopted that a copy of the memorial be presented to the family of the deceased. H. J. Horn, S. J. R. McMillan and Emerson J. Hadley were named as a committee to arrange for the association and the judges of the court to attend the funeral ceremonies in a body.

At 3:30 p. m. the courts adjourned, and a large concourse of judges and members of the bar proceeded in a body to the Dayton Avenue Presbyterian church, where the services were conducted. 4 ■



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⁴ *St. Paul Daily Globe*, November 25, 1891, at 2.