

The Lawyers of Luverne.

(1899)

On December 20, 1899, the weekly *Rock County News* published a “Souvenir Edition” of the paper. A supplement to the regular paper contained short biographical sketches of merchants, doctors, lawyers, newsmen, tradesmen and other prominent residents of the county interspersed with a few photographs and drawings of churches, homes, banks, schools and other public buildings. Four lawyers were profiled:

Andrew J. Daley
Edwin H. Canfield
Nelson R. Reynolds
William N. Davidson

Each lawyer paid a small price to have his sketch published in the special edition. Without question each wrote his own. Styles varied. Nelson Reynolds, for example, had a peculiar fondness for elongated sentences. One local lawyer, Mark W. Chunn, who had graduated four years earlier from the University’s Law Department, did not participate (though his business card was published as usual on the second page).

It was a small bar because the populations of the city and county were small. In 1900 Luverne’s population was 2,223 and Rock County’s 9,668.

The profiles of the four lawyers in the “Souvenir Edition” follow. The headline is furnished by the MLHP.

The Lawyers of Luverne.

W. N. DAVIDSON.

In writing of Luverne's successful attorneys at law, we should certainly be doing an injustice to the profession were we to omit the name of this gentleman from the list, as he is one of Rock county's pioneer practitioners. Attorney Davidson came to Rock county from Iowa twenty-two years ago, locating in this city at that time, and was probate judge of the county for several terms. He has been following the law profession for forty-three years—nearly half of a century—and is one of the oldest attorneys in south-western Minnesota. He has a fine library and office in the Security Bank of Luverne block and in addition to his law practice he gives special attention to collections and equity business. Mr. Davidson was prosecuting attorney for two terms and is now holding the office of county surveyor, a position which he is thoroughly qualified to hold.

N. R. REYNOLDS.

This well known and able attorney-at-law was born and raised in the extreme east—New York state—but when the war of the North and South broke out he was a resident of the Hawkeye state and enlisted in Co. G, 21st Iowa Volunteers, from Clayton County, serving three years and participated in the siege of Vicksburg. He came to Rock County in 1873, locating in Luverne, and shortly afterward was admitted to the bar and is now the pioneer attorney of the city and practices in all the courts and was Judge of Probate court one term and also filled the office of County Attorney one term. Mr. Reynolds is now holding the office of Justice of the Peace and in connection with his law practice and justice's duties, he also carries on a general real estate business and has a large list of lands for sale or exchange in Rock and adjoining counties at prices ranging from \$18 to \$40 per acre and solicits correspondence and a personal inspection. He also writes insurance in all the old line companies and all losses are promptly and satisfactorily adjusted.

Mr. Reynolds owns and occupies a fine home in Luverne and has a wife and two sons, one of whom is engaged in business in Sioux Falls.

They are worthy members of both the social and business circles of the community and have a wide circle of friends and acquaintances.

A. J. DALEY.

Among the members of the Rock county bar who have earned a justly deserved reputation at the practice of their profession in southwestern Minnesota, none stands higher than the gentleman whose name appears above. Mr. Daley was born and raised a farmer boy in the Badger state. and acquired a fairly good education by attending the district school. However, the life of an agriculturist was not in keeping with his tastes and at an early age he entered the Madison, Wisconsin, commercial college where he received his "sheep skin," and [in] 1890 he became an exponent of the principles of Blackstone before the courts of Rock county and he has been following his profession in this county with very gratifying success ever since. He now has a fine suite of rooms over the post office building and has a large library and is a constant student of his profession.

During his practice here Mr. Daley has been connected with either one side or the other of all the leading cases that have been tried in the Rock county courts and has also been engaged as counsel in many of the important cases that have come up for trial in surrounding counties. Mr. Daley has three nicely furnished office rooms and employs a stenographer and will answer all letters and attend promptly to all collections and probate matter[s] placed in his hands.

He has a nice home and a happy family and takes an active interest in all matters of a public and social nature.

His motto has been that of "Davy Crockett." "Be sure you're right and then go ahead" and it has stood him in good stead in the following of his profession.

E. H. CANFIELD

Among all the names of enterprising citizens who have helped to make Luverne what she is today, who have assisted in bringing to her doors nearly all that grace her threshold, no one stands higher than that of E. H. Canfield, with the vim and push inherited in his make up that is necessary to materially benefit a city, he himself is not the man to make a failure of personal interest.

Mr. Canfield was born in Ohio and his early life was spent on a farm. After gaining a good common school education he took a thorough course in science and language and then studied law at Rochester, Minnesota, and was admitted to the bar in 1881 and has been successfully following that profession ever since.

Mr. Canfield has been a resident of Luverne and Rock county for eighteen years, and during all that time he has been a zealous and earnest worker for the town's best interests. He has a fine suite of rooms over the Arcadia block, one of the solid stone buildings of the city and which will remain as a monument to his enterprise. He makes a specialty of no branch of his profession and a civil case will receive just as careful and considerate attention if placed in his hands as the most intricate and difficult criminal case.

For ten years Mr. Canfield held the office of County Attorney and could have been holding that office at the present time had he so desired, but his practice had developed to such an extent that he would have been compelled to neglect one or the other, and so he dropped out of politics. He has had remarkable success in all the matters he has taken before the supreme court, and no other attorney in south-western Minnesota has a better reputation for honorable methods than he has. He has one of the finest libraries in this part of the state and is a close and careful student of his profession, being a constant reader of all the leading law reports.

Mr. Canfield is also the owner of one farm in Rock county and a large and spacious home in Luverne and a most estimable wife and happy family of children to help make it pleasant. He is a genial, social and pleasant gentleman and has a host of many friends in all parts of the county and extensive acquaintanceship in all adjoining counties.

Related Articles

“Edwin H. Canfield (1855-1936)” (MLHP, 2013).

“Andrew J. Daley (1857-1918)” (MLHP, 2016).

“William N. Davidson (1833-1920)” (MLHP, 2019).