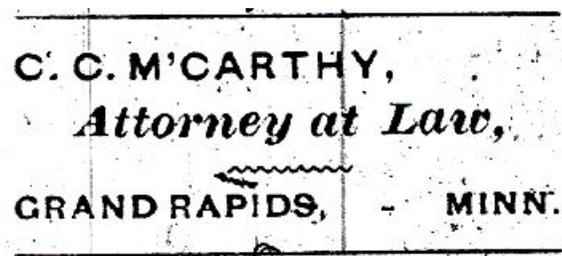


Chauncey C. McCarthy

(February 8, 1856 – December 20, 1932)

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Chauncey Chatterton McCarthy practiced law in Saginaw, Michigan from 1882 to 1892, when he and his wife relocated to Grand Rapids, Minnesota. He was admitted to the bar and began practicing law. He placed his business card in the local newspaper:¹



Like many lawyers in towns in rural Minnesota in the nineteenth century, he became active in politics and community affairs. He served as attorney for the village of Grand Rapids and was elected Itasca County attorney. In 1898, running as a Republican, he was elected to the state senate from the 52nd District, which covered Carlton, Aitkin, Itasca and Cass Counties. He carried every county. The election results were:

C. C. McCarthy (R).....2,706
W. H. Skemp.....1,288 ²

¹ *The Iron and Lumber Review* (Grand Rapids), May 20, 1893, at 1. Later that year he associated with J. J. McCarthy, and the business card for "C. C. & J. J. McCarthy" was published on the front page of the *Iron and Lumber Review* (i.e. October 28, 1893). It is not known how long the firm lasted.

² 1899 Blue Book, at 516. The 1901 Minnesota Legislative Manual carried his profile:

FIFTY-SECOND DISTRICT.

Chauncey C. McCarthy (Republican) was born in Gratiot county, Mich., in 1857. He was educated in the common schools of his native state and Valparaiso Normal School of Indiana; worked in the lumber camps and on the log drives in Michigan almost continuously from fifteen to twenty four years of age; came to Minnesota June 15, 1892, locating at Grand Rapids, Itasca

His entry in *The Book of Minnesotans*, published in 1907, had a bit more information:

McCARTHY, Chauncey Chatterton, lawyer: born in Gratiot Co., Mich., Feb. 8. 1856; son of Daniel and Melissa Safety (Dexter) McCarthy; educated in common schools of Michigan until 15 years of age and at Valparaiso Normal School, Valparaiso, Ind. Worked in lumber camps and on log drives of Michigan from 15 until 26 years of age; came to Minnesota, June 13, 1892; studied law, admitted to bar and has practiced law at Grand Rapids, Minn., since July 14, 1892. County attorney of Itasca Co., Jan. 1, 1897, to Jan. 1, 1899; State senator 52nd senatorial district, Jan. 1, 1899, to Jan. 1, 1903. Director First National Bank of Coleraine. Republican. Unitarian. Married at St. Louis, Mich., Nov. 15, 1886, to Miss Elizabeth Belle Cornell. Recreations: Hunting and camping. Address: Grand Rapids, Minn.³

county, where he still resides. He has been village attorney of Grand Rapids and county attorney of Itasca county. Married.

1901 Blue Book, at 677.

³ Albert N. Marquis, ed., *The Book of Minnesotans: A Biographical Dictionary of Leading Men of the State of Minnesota* 321 (1907). Four years earlier, a large oversized book of biographies interspaced with historical sketches contained this:

CHAUNCEY C. M'CARNEY, of Grand Rapids, Minnesota, was born in Gratiot county, Michigan, in 1857. He was educated in the common schools of his native State and Valparaiso Normal School of Indiana. He worked in the lumber camps and on the log drives in Michigan almost continuously from fifteen to twenty-four years of age. He came to Minnesota June 15, 1892, locating at Grand Rapids, Itasca county, where he was not long in gaining merited prominence both as a citizen and as a lawyer of ability. He has been village attorney of Grand Rapids and county attorney of Itasca county. He was State senator from the Fifty-second district, and was one of the most potential factors in the Minnesota legislature.

The Book of Minnesota 49 (1903). It is subtitled "Development, Resources, Enterprise and Beauty of the North Star State."

He died on December 20, 1932, at age seventy-six. The *Grand Rapids Herald-Review* carried the story on its front page:

Leader of Itasca County Bar Died Last Evening in Duluth

**C. C. McCarthy Failed to Rally from Illness
— Resident of County and Practicing Attorney for Forty Years — Served as County Attorney, in State Senate, and in Other Positions of Honor and Trust — Had Wide Knowledge of Law — Funeral Services Expected to be Held Friday.**

Northern Minnesota lost a most distinguished citizen in the death of C. C. McCarthy. Mr. McCarthy died at 8:30 last evening at St. Mary's hospital in Duluth.

For several weeks Mr. McCarthy had been ill at his home here, suffering in part from the recurrence of a heart ailment with which he had been afflicted for many years. Last week he was improved but it was considered advisable to go to Duluth for medical attention. Within the last two days he failed rapidly, but death at this time was unexpected by his friends.

Mr. McCarthy was a native of the state of Michigan. He was born in Oakland county, Michigan on February 8, 1856. His early life was spent on a farm in Gratiot county, Michigan. He was ambitious to study law. This he did in Michigan and Indiana. He was admitted to the Michigan bar in 1882, practicing at Saginaw. He was admitted to the bar of Minnesota in 1892 and he began the practice of law in Grand Rapids on July 3rd of that year. Since that time he has been prominently identified with the development of the community of Grand Rapids and Itasca county.

Since politics attracted young men in the early days, Mr. McCarthy became a candidate for county

attorney and was elected. Later he was elected to the Minnesota legislature and he served as state senator from this district. In this capacity as a law-maker he sponsored important legislation which marked him as a man of vision, sympathy and independence.

For the last quarter century Mr. McCarthy had devoted his time to the practice of law in Grand Rapids. He was the dean of the Itasca county bar and was prominently connected with important litigation. He found time to give to public causes. He took a deep interest in politics and his eloquence brought him in demand as a political speaker in all sections of the Middle West. His attitude upon all questions was marked by deep loyalty to his friends and the community.

He was active in fraternal life, serving as master of the local Masonic order.

On November 18, 1886 Mr. McCarthy was married to Elizabeth Cornell at St. Louis, Michigan. Mrs. McCarthy survives him.

Two sisters and a brother survive. The sisters are Mrs. Lena McCanne of El Paso, Texas and Mrs. E. L. Anderson of St. Louis, Michigan. The brother is the Reverend Willard McCarthy of Ord, Nebraska.⁴

His funeral on December 28, 1932 brought lawyers and judges from the area, as noted in the *Herald-Review*:

LARGE ATTENDANCE AT FUNERAL HERE

**People From Many Places Paid
Last Tribute to Late C. C. McCarthy.**

⁴ *Grand Rapids Herald-Review*, December 21, 1932, at 1 (funeral arrangements omitted).

Several counties of northern Minnesota were represented in the large attendance at the last rites for the late Chauncey C. McCarthy, conducted from the family home in Grand Rapids last Saturday afternoon. Attorneys who had known Mr. McCarthy during his long practice of law in Minnesota, former members of the state legislature who had worked with him for the advancement of the interests of this section, men who had been helped by his counsel and advice as an attorney, all gathered to bid him farewell.

Judge B. F. Wright came from Park Rapids. Judge Graham M. Torrance and others came from Bemidji. County Attorney Ed L. Rogers and Daniel DeLury came from Walker. John M. Gannon, and others came from Hibbing. There were men and women present from almost every section of Itasca county.

Rev. Sherman W. Arends of the Community church officiated at the funeral. Judge Alfred L. Thwing read a tribute to Mr. McCarthy which was worthy of its subject. The Grand Rapids male quartet sang during the services. In the funeral procession to the Itasca cemetery, automobiles filled with members of Itasca Lodge, A. F. & A. M., served as a guard of honor and escorted the hearse. This procession was nearly a mile in length.⁵

An editorial in the same issue expressed the community's loss:

C. C. McCARTHY

There are many things that we would like to say about C. C. McCarthy.

We might describe him as we shall all remember him. As a public speaker the senator presented a striking appearance with his white hair, his sincerity, his action. It would be a pleasure to tell of his service as senator and his efforts to get a square

⁵ *Grand Rapids Herald-Review*, December 28, 1932, at 1 (list of pall bearers omitted).

deal for the lumberjack by prohibiting the discounting of time checks. That action was splendid in its purpose but it can be said, now that the senator has passed on, that it made him enemies who had power to block Mr. McCarthy's appointment to the bench. It would be a pleasure to describe Mr. McCarthy as a student of human affairs.

But instead of these things we wish to pay tribute to him as a man of uncompromising integrity. Most lawyers will give to their clients the money collected for them. Not all of them will turn away the seeker after litigation if the cause is not just. C. C. McCarthy would not allow a client to deceive him or the court. He was earnest for justice, an enemy of deception and dishonesty. In his political views he held the same idealism. Only the ideals of parties and of men had any hold upon this distinguished citizen.

C. C. McCarthy has gone. But he left a splendid mark upon the community and the county.⁶

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Posted MLHP: November 9, 2016.

⁶ *Grand Rapids Herald-Review*, December 28, 1932, at 4.