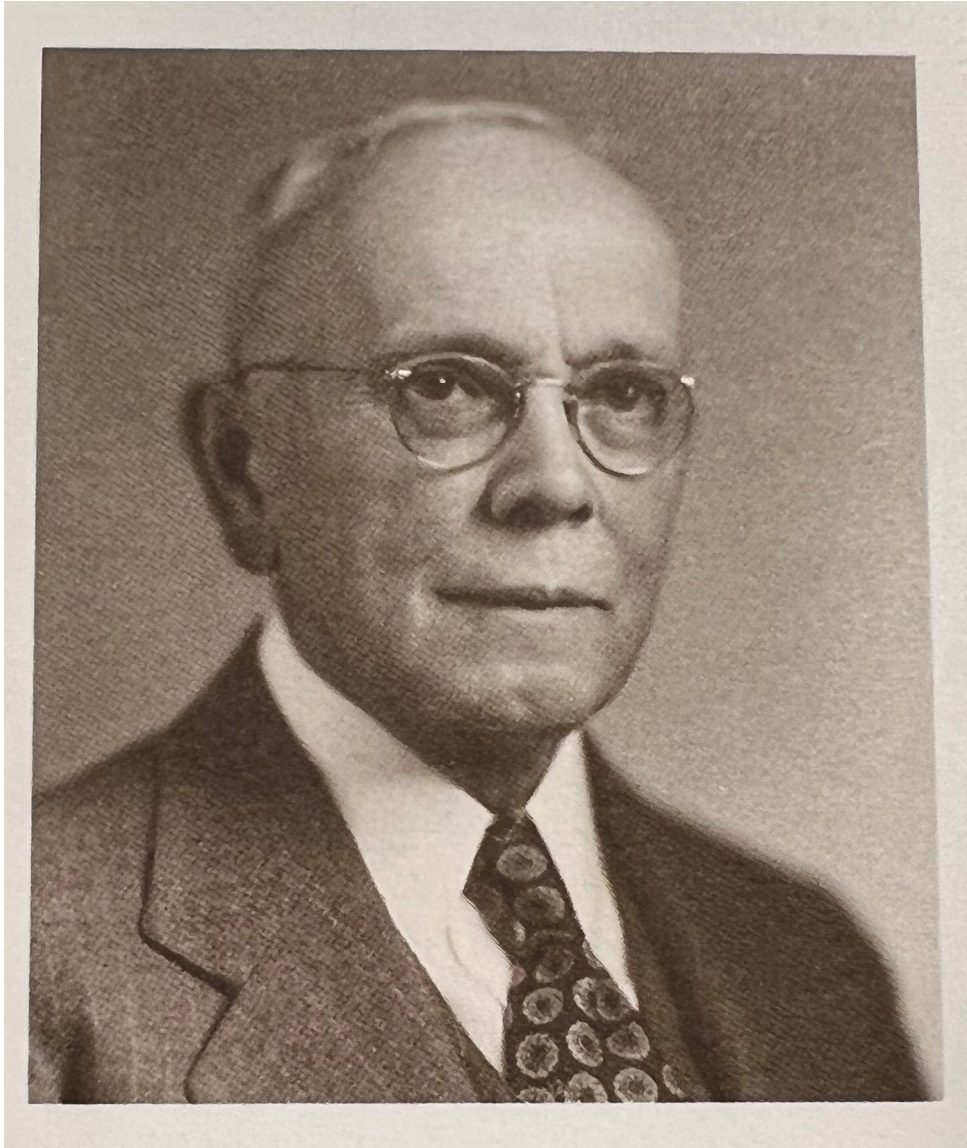


IN MEMORIAM
FRANK D. MERCHANT

(May 9, 1866 • February 11, 1943)



Hennepin County Bar Association
Hennepin County District Court
Minneapolis, Minnesota
February 27, 1943

FRANK D. MERCHANT MEMORIAL

Frank Davidson Merchant was born at Terre Haute, Indiana the ninth day of May, 1866, and died at Minneapolis, February 11, of the present year, the result of a heart attack, and the 77th year of his age.

He had moved to Minneapolis with his parents when he was one year old, and thereafter continuously lived at Minneapolis, where his education was obtained. He attended the old Adam's Grade School, and South Side High School.

My acquaintance with Mr. Merchant began in the Fall of 1891, when he was employed as a draftsman in the office of attorney James F. Williamson. He was then making ready to enter the Engineering Department of the State University, besides keeping at his work with Mr. Williamson. Shortage of finances made such an arrangement necessary. He graduated as an engineer with University class of 1893, and as a lawyer with the class of 1896. He was always a pains-staking and hard-working student and because of his unfailing good nature was popular with his school mates. He at all times planned to be a patent lawyer. Much of his time he lived at Sigma Chi Fraternity House, but he frequently complained of the waste of time resulting.

By the time of his graduation as an attorney, two events had occurred which greatly influenced his life. He had met a young lady whom he later married; and he was taken into a legal co-partnership with Mr. Williamson, known as Williamson & Merchant. Later a co-partnership was connected with Mr. H. C. Kilgore and this firm was enlarged by taking in the two sons of Mr. Merchant, Harvey M. and Ralph F. Mr. Kilgore withdrew from the firm five years ago.

The young lady in question was Stella Michaud to whom Mr. Merchant was married on June 26, 1895, and with whom a family of four children was reared.

Mr. Merchant's principal hobby was violin playing. He was a gifted violinist. He never owned less than two violins, and most of the time the number was four or more. As Mrs. Merchant was, and is, likewise gifted

as a piano player, it may be assumed that their home was full of music and charm. Before his marriage, while living at the fraternity house, he frequently entertained other fraternity members with violin music, some times continuing late into the night, and he always had a ready audience.

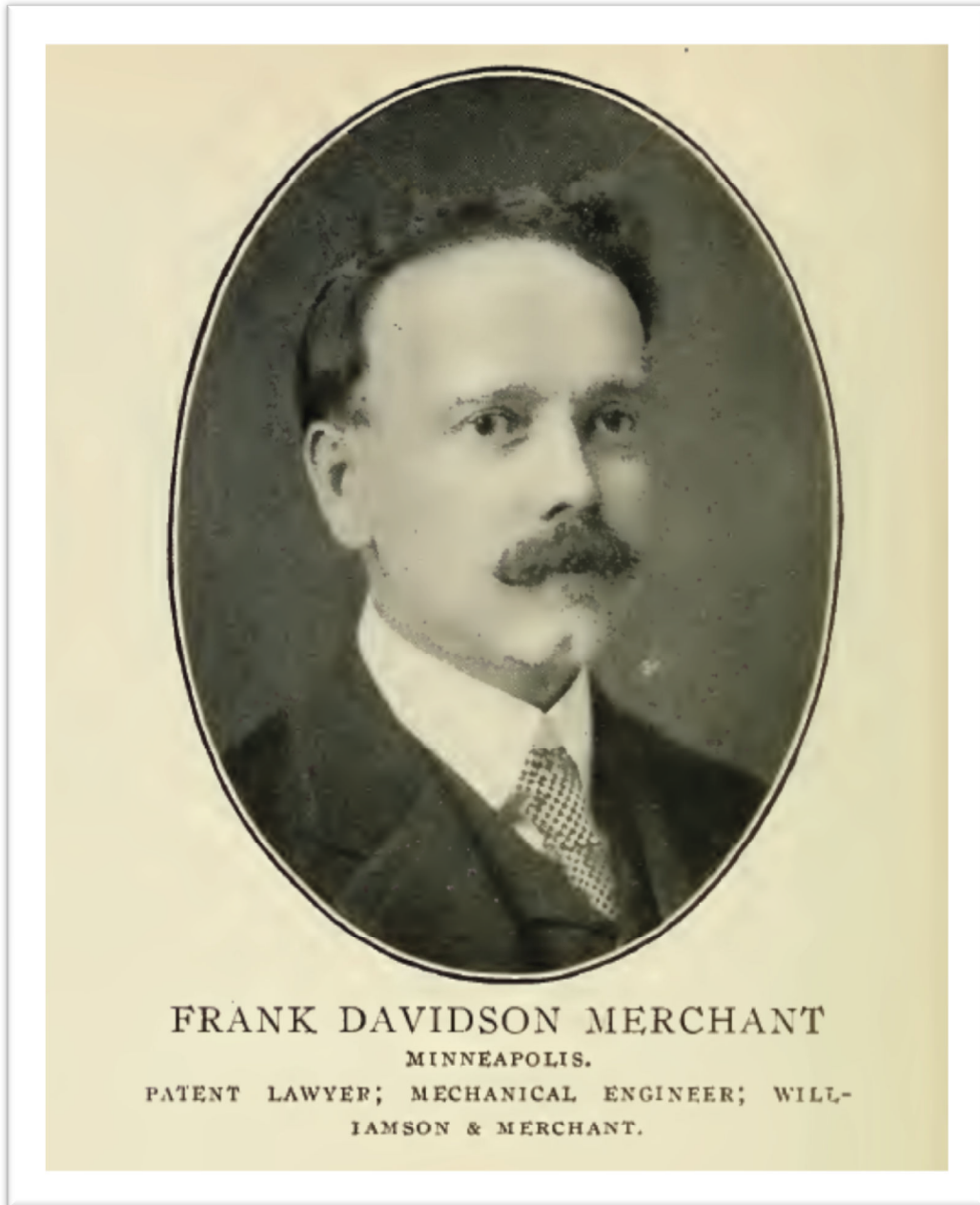
In his many years in the patent business Mr. Merchant had handled many very important matters for inventors, some of whom later became famous. The farm machinery business was largely developed in the Northwest, and Mr. Merchant handled numerous important patent matters in this great field, and he was always proud of the fact that he had prepared and filled in his very early days in the business, the original patent on the zipper fastener, and often in later years he would tell how those patents had expired and the inventor had died before public recognition was attained.

Mr. Merchant's death was a great surprise to his family and friends. He drove with his wife downtown from his home, and on the way fainted in the car. He shortly, apparently, recovered from the fainting spell, but the next morning was found dead in his room; no sound having reached other members of his family of any suffering or staff.

Mr. Merchant was a Mason, and a member of Kiwanis Club.

Respectfully submitted,
Jesse Van Valkenburg

Appendix



(1902)

14 *The Lawyer and Banker and Southern Bench and Bar Review* 111
(March-April (1921)).

PATENT LAWYERS
IN WASHINGTON, D. C. AND PRINCIPAL CITIES

MINNESOTA.

MINNEAPOLIS..... Merchant, Kilgore & Kilgore, 727 Metropolitan Bank Bldg.
Patent Attorney, Mechanical Engineers. Frank D.
Merchant, expert in Patent Causes.

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25 *The Garage Dealer* 31 (February 1921) (enlarged).



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From the firm's website (2021).

Merchant
&Gould
A Technology & Innovation Law Firm

Albert N. Marquis, ed., *The Book of Minnesotans: A Biographical Dictionary of Leading Men of the State of Minnesota* 349 (1907).

MERCHANT, Frank D., lawyer, mechanical engineer; born at Terre Haute, Ind., 1866; son of Harvey N. and Ella Jane (De La Mater) Merchant; came to Minneapolis with parents, 1867; educated in public schools of Minneapolis; special course mechanical engineering, University of Minnesota, 1888-1901; College of Law, University of Minnesota, 1894-96, graduating degree of LL. B., 1896. Began active career by learning trade of machinist, 1884-85; prior to entering University of Minnesota, was connected with Minneapolis Harvesting Co., as draughtsman and later in charge of draughting room; was assistant to James F. Williamson, patent attorney, and after graduating in law, became junior partner in firm of Williamson & Merchant, patent, trade mark and copyright law, in which position he continues. Also director Wolf Valve Gear Co. Married at Minneapolis, 1895, to Miss Stella Marie Michaud. Member Sigma Chi fraternity, Royal Arcanum. Recreations: Music and all outside athletic sports. Office: Guaranty Bldg. Residence: 3117 Irving Av., S., Minneapolis.

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Related Memorial

“John Douglas Gould (1927-2015)”
(Hennepin County Bar Memorials, 2016)

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Credits

The photograph on the first page is from the archives of Merchant & Gould, that on page four is from *Men of Minnesota* (1902).

Posted MLHP: November 30, 2021.