

**Memorial to and Biographical Sketch of**

**John Nathaniel Ohman**

July 30, 1884 – June 8, 1937



**Hennepin County Bar Association  
District Court  
Fourth Judicial District  
Minneapolis, Minnesota  
February 5, 1938**

## John Nathaniel Ohman

- 1884 - 1937 -

It is an honor to have been chosen to file with this Court a brief memorial to and biographical sketch of John N. Ohman. He spent several of his student years in my office and I knew him well. It was a privilege to have been his friend. John was a good lawyer and a good citizen. He was a hard-working, careful, conscientious practitioner. He was not brilliant or imaginative, and he sought no northwest passage to success. He counseled with his clients, prepared his cases, and won such success as he achieved by hard, dogged, persistent work.

We do not erect memorials to mere wealth or smartness or success. In this country we delight to honor those who serve. An honest, capable, modest, hard-working lawyer is one of the greatest assets of any community. He serves, as does every other citizen, by merely making a living and supporting his immediate family. However, in addition to the service for which he is paid, he applies his trained mind voluntarily and without charge to his church, his political party, his clubs and social organizations. The service so rendered is of unmeasured benefit to the community.

Mr. Ohman was an outdoor man, and while his health permitted him to do so, he enjoyed sports, particularly hunting and fishing. If I were to characterize him, I would use the word sturdy.

Most men who have achieved any degree of success in life lay a wreath to the memory of some woman, wife or mother, whose advice and counsel they have followed. Ruth Edwards Ohman was such a wife and helpmate to John. A Parisian fable says:

One day  
A wonderer found a piece of clay  
So redolent of sweet perfume  
Its odor scented all the room.

“What art thou?” was the quick demand,  
“Art thou some gem from Samarkand?  
Or spikenard rare in rich disguise?  
Or other costly merchandise?”  
“Nay, I am but a piece of clay!”  
“Then whence this wondrous sweetness, pray?”  
“Friend, if the secret I disclose,  
I have been dwelling with a rose!”

Mr. Ohman’s father, John August Ohman, and mother, Mathilda Sofia Ohman, were born and raised in Småland, Sweden. After their marriage they moved to the province of Ostergötland, Sweden, where John Nathaniel Ohman was born on July 30, 1884. When John was a very young child, the Ohman family came to America and for many years lived in Glenwood City, Wisconsin, where John received his early education and graduated from high school in Glenwood City.

He came to Minneapolis to attend the night law school at the University of Minnesota, and during his student days was employed for three years in the law office of Henderson, Wunderlich, Stockton & Henderson. He graduated from the Law School and was admitted to practice in 1909. A few months after his admission to the bar he formed a partnership with Louis H. Joss under the name of Joss & Ohman, later Joss, Ohman, Fryberger & Parker. Afterwards he was senior member of the firm of Ohman, Fryberger and Wangaard, later Ohman & Fryberger. For the last two years of his life he was ill and unable to continue in active practice.

He passed away at Glen Lake, Minnesota on June 8, 1937. He leaves to mourn him his widow, Ruth Edwards Ohman, and two children, Janet Elizabeth Ohman and John Edwards Ohman.

William B. Henderson  
February 5, 1938

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## Appendix

Advertisement in *Hubbell's Legal Directory*, Appendix, at 237 (1922)

**JOSS, OHMAN, FRYBERGER & PARKER,**  
Attorneys and Counselors at Law,  
404-406 NORTHWESTERN BANK BUILDING,  
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA.  
GENERAL CIVIL PRACTICE IN ALL COURTS.

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LOUIS H. JOSS.  
JOHN N. OHMAN.  
R. H. FRYBERGER.  
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Traub & Mants Mortgage Corporation.

**REPRESENTS:** Minnesota Loan and Trust Company.  
First and Security National Bank.  
Any other bank in Minneapolis.  
The Judges of State and Supreme Courts.

## Credit

The photograph on the first page is from *Men of Minnesota* (1915).

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