

MEMORIAL

TO

THOMAS PEEBLES

(March 18, 1857 - March 10, 1938)

**Hennepin County Bar Association
Hennepin County District Court
Court Room 1 – The Court House
Minneapolis, Minnesota
February 11, 1939**

Thomas Peebles

Thomas Peebles, for many years, a member of the Hennepin County Bar, died in Minneapolis after a long illness [on] March 10th, 1938. He was born in Letterkenney, County of Donegal, Ireland, March 18th, 1857, of that Scottish-Irish ancestry which has contributed so much to the development of America.

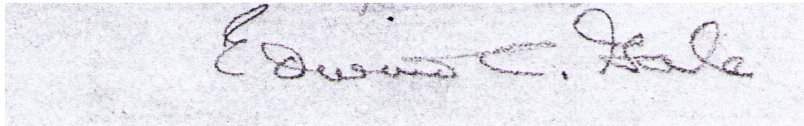
Mr. Peebles was brought to America by his parents at the age of thirteen. The family lived for some little time in Pittsburgh, moving from there to Kansas. In the meantime Thomas Peebles had, largely by his own efforts, prepared himself for admission to Princeton University from which he graduated in 1882. With his intellectual cast of mind he was early drawn to the study of philosophy while at Princeton and so distinguished himself there that the year following his graduation he was offered a position in the Department of Philosophy at the University of Minnesota where he taught for five years. He took an enthusiastic interest in athletics while at the University and helped coach its first football team. A more active career, however, tempted him to leave the teaching profession and following his departure from the University he was admitted to practice law at the Minnesota Bar and continued to live and practice his profession in Minneapolis.* Later he became interested in the investment field and was active several years in that business representing his own and other interests. During the later year of his active life he engaged with his sons in the construction and real estate business.

Mr. Peebles was active all his life in Church and religious work, especially in the Presbyterian Church to which he and

* He was admitted to the bar on April 16, 1886.

his family belonged by Scotch tradition. He was a man of high character, interested in all good movements and above all a Christian gentleman.

Surviving him are his wife, Mrs. Katherine Peebles, and two sons, Thomas C. and Hugh Peebles, together with three sisters, Miss Ann Peebles, Miss Mary Peebles and Mrs. E. E. Smith, and two grand-daughters, all of Minneapolis.

A photograph of a handwritten signature in cursive script, which reads "Edwin C. Hale". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored, slightly textured paper.

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ADDENDUM

The following self-sketch is in the third volume of *History of Minneapolis: Gateway to the Northwest*, edited by Marion Daniel Shutter, published in 1923:

Thomas Peebles was born in Letterkenny, County Donegal, Free State of Ireland, March 18, 1857, and came to America with his parents and family in 1870, settling near Utica, Ohio. The following year he went to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and soon found employment with the Pennsylvania Railroad. In due time he went to Princeton University and graduated with the class of 1882, taking the Mental Science Fellowship, which naturally led to an extra year's residence at the University, in which, owing to the death of Dr. Atwater, he was called on to teach some of his classes. This led to his recommendation to a professorship in kindred subjects, in the University of Minnesota, which became vacant at that time because of the resignation of Dr. Alexander T. Ormond. Mr. Peebles continued with the University for five years and resigned to enter the practice of law. In this field he continued in general practice until he became legal adviser and later managing

director of three important corporations: The Mississippi Valley Telephone Company; the Goose Lake Valley Irrigation Company, an irrigation company operating in southern Oregon; and the Arlington Land Company, which took over the Tierra Auxarilla (sic) Land Grant in the state of New Mexico. The two latter have occupied his attention continuous[ly] since 1906.

In 1886 Mr. Peebles was married to Katherine Norwood Smith, a St. Paul girl, daughter of Augusta Norwood Smith, who was for many years professor of history in the University of Minnesota. Mr. and Mrs. Peebles are the parents of two sons, and reside at No. 68 Ash street. Mr. Peebles launched his sons into the business of building small homes in Minneapolis and in conjunction with them has built hundreds of houses in this city. His older son, T. C. Peebles, now an independent operator, is well known in this line, and his younger son is operating a corporation in which his father is jointly interested at the present time. •

The following obituary appeared in the *Minneapolis Morning Tribune*, Friday, March 11, 1938:

Thomas Peebles, president of the construction firm bearing his name, died Thursday after a long illness at his home, 1025 Cedar Lake road. He would have been 82 years old March 18. Born in Ireland, Mr. Peebles came to the United States at the age of 13 and had been a Minneapolis resident since 1883. He worked his way through Princeton university and was graduated in 1882. Following his graduation he taught philosophy at the University of Minnesota for five years. He helped coach the first football teams at the University of Minnesota. Mr. Peebles was admitted to the bar after his teaching career, and later entered the construction business. Surviving are his wife Kathrine, and two sons, Thomas C. and Hugh Peebles, both of Minneapolis. •

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Posted MLHP: August 5, 2015.