

MEMORIAL

TO

FLORENCE M. RIDGWAY

* * *

READ AT THE MEMORIAL SERVICES OF
THE HENNEPIN COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION
APRIL 18, 1953.

* * *

Florence M. Ridgway was born in Elba Township, Dodge County, Wisconsin, June 16, 1883. Her father, Dr. Joseph Ridgway, was of English descent; and her mother, Fannie Bridges Ridgway, was of Scotch-Irish parentage.

The Ridgways were medical men. Besides her father, there were his brothers: Dr. Alexander Ridgway, who practiced in Belgrade and South Haven, Minnesota; Dr. Alfred M. Ridgway of Annandale, Minnesota—all physicians; and Dr. Gainsford Ridgway of Minneapolis, who was a dentist. They are all deceased.

Wishing to carry on the medical tradition of her family, and since she was the only child of Dr. Joseph Ridgway and Fannie Bridges Ridgway, who were somewhat disappointed in not having a son, Florence decided to study medicine. She was graduated from Hamline University Medical School in 1906, with a degree of Doctor of Medicine and Master of Surgery.

She practised medicine with her father for a few years, but was not happy in this profession, and decided to study law. She was graduated from the University of Minnesota Law School, and was admitted to practise, in 1913. She maintained her law office in conjunction with her father's office the Masonic Temple until his death in 1941. Then she moved to the Plymouth building, where she continued to carry on a very active general practice. She was member of the Minnesota and Hennepin County Bar Associations.

Not satisfied with her three degrees in the venerable professions of medicine and law, this amazingly versatile young woman added to her achievements a degree in music. Her friends remember her as an accomplished pianist, who gave much pleasure to her friends and family by the exercise of her musical and artistic talents.

Florence was also a member of the Western Star, and she and her mother, who died in 1945, traveled together extensively throughout the United States. They especially enjoyed attending the Shriners' conventions.

Her associates and those who knew her best were stimulated by her brilliant mind and vivacious personality. She was honest and frank in her dealings with her clients and fellow attorneys, always courteous, pleasant and friendly, and ever ready to lend a helping hand when opportunity was given. At the same time, she was a woman of strong convictions, with a profound sense of justice; and when she was convinced that her client was right, she would exhaust every known remedy in law and in equity, and if necessary, would go to the court of last resort even though the monetary amount involved might be very small, as she believed that truth and right must prevail at all cost.

Those who knew her and worked with her will also remember certain outstanding physical and mental characteristics: she was small of stature, sprightly in movement, and her unbelievably rapid-fire speech sparkled with wit and humor. Furthermore, she had a penetrating, analytical gaze which seemed capable of making a comprehensive diagnosis, from the medical standpoint, and a complete psychological of the mind and innermost thoughts, from a legal viewpoint.

After an illness of several months, Florence M. Ridgway passed away on October 16, 1932, in Minneapolis. She will be missed many, and especially at the weekly luncheon meetings of the Hennepin County Bar Association, which she attended faithfully, we shall envision a vacant chair.

PREPARED BY:
RUTH B. RHEBERG.

Ridgway was admitted to the bar on June 13, 1913. (Her middle name is listed as Margaret). *Roll of Attorneys, Supreme Court, State of Minnesota, 1858-1970* 123 (Minnesota Digital Library).

The following entry appeared in *the University of Minnesota Law School Alumni Directory* 299 (1915):

Florence M. R. Ridgway,

LL. B., 13; M. D., 06, C. M.; Lawyer; Phys. and
Surg. 315 Masonic Temple and 2123 Bryant
Ave. S., Mpls., Minn.

=*=

Posted February 27, 2016.