

IN MEMORIAM

WILLIAM FRANKLIN HUNT

(March 6, 1865 – April 5, 1933)

**DISTRICT COURT
RAMSEY COUNTY
SPECIAL TERM**

APRIL 15, 1933.

**SUBMITTED ON BEHALF OF THE
RAMSEY COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION**

IN MEMORIAM

William Franklin Hunt was born on March 6, 1865, at Seven Mile, Ohio. He was the son of Henry C. Hunt and Catherine Fickinger Hunt. His father was a carriage manufacturer specializing in wheels many of which were furnished to the old Haynes Buggy Company, which years afterwards was the producer of the Haynes automobiles, one of the early types.

William's early education was received in the public schools of Miamisburg, Ohio. In the year 1883 he entered Ohio State University as a freshman. In his college work, he majored in mathematics, a science in which with his keen mind he acquired proficiency. He was graduated from the University in June, 1887, with the degree of Mechanical Engineer.

During his attendance at college he was initiated into the Phi Delta Theta fraternity. Later on during his life in St. Paul he maintained an active interest in his fraternity and became a member of its alumni organizations in Minnesota.

In the summer following his graduation, Mr. Hunt came to St. Paul, having been engaged as principal of the old Barnard School for Boys, which has become since and is now the St. Paul Academy. He entered his work as a teacher in September 1887. He continued in that work until the year 1894. So excellent had been his record with the School that it was with reluctance that the trustees accepted his resignation.

In the meantime he had formed an ambition to study law. In this he was aided and abetted by his friend, William P. Westfall, who was then chief clerk in the law office of Messrs. C. D. and T. D. O'Brien. Mr. Westfall assisted him to obtain a clerkship in the O'Brien office. At about the same time Mr. Hunt entered the evening classes in the law department of the University of Minnesota. He received the degree of bachelor of Laws in 1895 and was then admitted to the bar of Minnesota. Continuing his studies he received the degree of

master of Laws in 1896. While taking his work at the University here he was admitted to the law fraternity of Phi Delta Phi.

After finishing his law studies at the University he left the O'Brien office and entered upon independent practice. Judge Thomas D. O'Brien, the surviving member that firm, fondly recalls their early association with Mr. Hunt as a student and law clerk. He says of him that he was an exceptionally valuable clerk and the firm soon recognized that high ability which with his strict integrity and his untiring industry laid the foundation of the successful career which followed.

In the year 1899 Mr. Hunt was married to Miss Emma B. Fairchild of St. Paul who survives him. Mrs. Hunt is a daughter of the late Josiah Fairchild whose memory lingers in the minds of older members as one of St. Paul's pioneer real estate dealers.

Early in his practice Mr. Hunt became the senior partner in the firm of Hunt, Prendergast and Griggs. Like most law partnerships between young men, however, this one proved evanescent. Later he became associated with the late James Schoomaker in the firm of Schoomaker and Hunt. Since the death of Judge Schoomaker in the year 1927, Mr. Hunt practiced alone except that he came into close association with Mr. Thomas G. Fitzpatrick of our bar, particularly in tax and special assessment litigation. They successfully handled many important cases in this field. In 1930 he associated with himself as a partner, his son, Calvin Hunt, a promising and capable young lawyer who bids fair to do credit to his father in successful practice.

Mr. Hunt was called from this life in this present month of April, 1933, just as he was entering his 69th year.* His practice of nearly forty years took a wide range. Questions involving most, if not all, important branches of civil law and practice came before him and

* Hunt died on April 5, 1933 according to his death certificate at the Minnesota Historical Society. On that certificate, his middle name is spelled Franklyn.

were successfully dealt with. His keen mathematical mind enabled him to get an especial grasp on the facts of any given matter. Every experienced lawyer recognize the value of such a capacity whether in the drawing of contracts, wills and other legal documents, or in the preparation of causes for trial. He never allowed his imagination to mingle with his understanding and his judgment in practical affairs. Having acquired his facts he was of untiring industry in exploring the legal principles applicable and in applying them to the facts.

In the year 1900 Mr. Hunt was appointed by the District Court receiver of the insolvent Allemania Bank. He performed a long and arduous task with great skill. Nearly ten years were occupied in whole or in part in the administration of that trust. Many complications arose and much litigation resulted. James R. Trask of our bar was appointed to act as his attorney in that matter and between them they secured a number of decisions of our Supreme Court which form an important contribution to the banking law of Minnesota. *

Mr. Hunt during the years of his long practice successfully served many wealthy clients. For more than twenty years last past he was the sole representative in St. Paul of the extensive Oppenheim real estate interests. Among his many important tax and assessment cases he was one of the leading counsel in the litigation which resulted in declaring invalid the recent Third Street widening assessment proceedings.

* As receiver of the bank, Hunt was a party in ten appeals to the Minnesota Supreme Court: Hunt v. Roosen, 87 Minn. 68 (1902)(Brown, J.); Hunt v. Grant, 87 Minn. 189 (1902)(Lovely, J.); Hunt v. Burns, 90 Minn. 172 (1903)(Brown, J.); Hunt v. Hauser Malting Co., 90 Minn. 282 (1903)(Lovely, J.); Hunt v. Dean, 91 Minn. 96 (1903)(Collins, J.); Hunt v. Seeger, 91 Minn. 264 (1904)(Lovely, J.); Hunt v. Doran, 92 Minn. 423 (1904)(Start, C. J.); Hunt v. Reardon, 93 Minn. 375 (1904)(Lewis, J.); Hunt v. Ahneman, 94 Minn. 67 (1904)(Douglas, J.); and Hunt v. Hauser Malting Co., 95 Minn. 206 (1905)(Lovely). The bank was a party in another appeal that predates his appointment: Abel v. Allemania Bank, 79 Minn. 419 (1900)(Lovely, J.).

Yet notwithstanding the exigencies of a busy and lucrative practice he found time and the disposition cheerfully to give attention and assistance to many who were unable to adequately to compensate him in a financial way.

He was a man of high character and integrity, respected alike by the courts, his clients and his brother practitioners. He was most happy in his home relations. Essentially a domestic man, he was fond of his family and friends. At all times a loving husband and father he was also endeared to many outside the family circle. His witty and entertaining conversation was of interest to all who came into intimate contact with him.

Walking to his office every week-day morning, he kept himself in fine physical trim. His hobby, if he had one, was his flower garden. Annual and perennials flourished in profusion. Between six and seven o'clock of summer mornings found him at work in his garden. This custom he followed up to this last summer of his life. He was not only personally fond of flowers but many of his friends and neighbors were rendered occasion to thank him appreciatively for flowers and plants.

His passing was not sudden except in the sense that the end seems always sudden. For several months he had a lingering illness which baffled his medical advisors, when a sudden attack of pneumonia carried him off. He leaves to mourn his loss in addition to a host of personal friends and clients, his widow, his two daughters, Mrs. Katherine Bixby, wife of Paul H. Bixby, and Mrs. Betty Patterson, wife of Wilder Patterson, his son Calvin Hunt, all of St. Paul, and his sister W. D. Hoover of Denver.

This sketchy outline is all too inadequate to express what was to those who knew him well the vivid, virile personality of the man.

Fitting indeed are Shakespeare's immortal words:

**“ His life was gentle and he elements
So mixed in him that Nature might stand up
And say to all the world ‘This was a man’ ”.**

**Respectfully submitted to the District Court on behalf of the Ramsey
County Bar Association by its Committee.**

**Thomas D. O’Brien
Harold C. Kerr
Thomas C. Fitzpatrick
John A. Burns
John C. McConneloug
/s/ Leonard A. -----
Chairman.**



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