

MEMORIAL

Upon the Life and Career
of

PETER J. MYERS

Peter J. Myers, for forty-four years an active member of the Bar of Racine County, died at the City of Racine on December 15th, 1943, after an illness of several months.

Peter J. Myers was born and reared upon the farm, and was a product of the grass roots of the State of Wisconsin. He was reared upon the farm where he was born, and upon a second farm which his parents later occupied at the corner of what is known as Somers Center, in the County of Kenosha. In 1891 he came to the City of Racine, where he attended the Garfield School and graduated from the Racine High School in the class of 1896.

For a time after his graduation he studied law in the offices of the firm of which he afterwards became a member. This firm was then known as Kearney, Phipps and Thompson. After studying there in 1896 and 1897, he attended the Law School of the University of Wisconsin, and was admitted to the Bar in August 1899. He then became associated in the practice of law with Thomas M. Kearney and William D. Thompson under the firm name of Kearney, Thompson and Myers, which firm remained such until 1927, when it became Thompson, Myers and Helm.

Shortly after engaging in the practice of law, Peter J. Myers was married, on December 25th, 1900, to Eda Mathilda Hansche. Of this marriage six children were born, Captain Gordon R. Myers, an officer in the United States Army, now a prisoner of war of the Japanese in the Philippine Islands; Alfred R. Myers, now of Racine, Wisconsin; Ellen M. Myers, a librarian at Fort Benjamin Harrison; George W. Myers, now of Muskegon, Michigan; Samuel P. Myers, of Racine, Wisconsin, who is a member of his father's law firm; and Leone Myers Vinke, deceased.

Peter J. Myers was a member of the various Masonic Orders in the City of Racine, - Racine Lodge #18, Orient Chapter, and the Commandery. For many years he was a member of the Board of Trustees of the Masonic Temple Association, of which he was President for the last several years of his life. He was a member of the First Methodist Church, in which he was active as a member of the Board of Trustees. He was a member of the Racine Lodge of Elks. He also served for many years on the Board of Directors of St. Luke's Hospital

Peter J. Myers was a good lawyer. He had the important legal virtues of diligence, hard work, and application. He had early established in his mind and conscience a very high sense of the duty of a lawyer to his client, and in carrying out that duty in all his legal associations and obligations he gave unstintingly of his time and his energy. He was strictly an advocate, believing in the merit and justice of those causes which he accepted, and thereafter giving to them everything that he had that might be of service to the client and to his cause.

He practiced generally in all branches of the law, and was particularly experienced and competent in probate and business matters.

For many years Peter J. Myers enjoyed a lucrative practice, numbering among his clients many of the leading citizens and more important corporations of the community, all of whom were as loyal to him as he was to them over many years of pleasant association.

In spite of a full, active and busy life as a lawyer Mr. Myers never lost his love for the land, nor ceased to derive a thrill from the processes of nature and the production of the fruits of the farm. He devoted much of his spare time to the supervision and management of his farms, and derived most of his physical exercise by actually working upon them during such time as he could spare from his other activities. Perhaps it was his love for the land that was an important factor in making Mr. Myers particularly active in the organization, conduct and management of drainage districts in Racine County. As a matter of fact, he had some part or other, usually important, in the organization of every drainage district in Racine County. In line with his affection for the soil and his deep interest in improving methods of agriculture and production, it is a great credit to his memory that he had such a substantial part in the reclamation of many, many acres of farm land in Racine County, by the establishment of drainage ditches, which might otherwise have been sterile and barren and not have done their share towards producing the crops and products for which the County is famous.

He, like most boys reared on a farm, enjoyed hunting, perhaps more than any other sport. He looked forward with keen anticipation to the opening of the hunting periods. His enjoyment came, however, not so much in the actual game secured but more from the pleasure of walking through the woods, meadows and swamps, and observing the wonders of nature and the habits of the birds and wild animals.

When we consider that Peter J. Myers was not only a busy and successful lawyer, but also participated actively in many of the religious, fraternal and civic projects of the City, and, in addition thereto, gave much of his time to the supervision and the operation of his farms, we can well understand he did not have much time left for the ordinary and social amenities and divertissements.

Nevertheless, he was socially minded; and when he found time, after his many activities, to devote to social intercourse with friends and family, he was a warm, friendly individual who contributed freely to the good fellowship and entertainment of every gathering in which he participated.

He was never too busy to be courteous and co-operative with his fellow lawyers, and kind and helpful to the younger members of the bar in this community, not only from a professional standpoint but with regard to their general welfare.

He was a most devoted husband and father, finding his greatest pleasure in his home environment with his wife and children. He has left for them a host of pleasant memories of their happy home life.

In his passing, the City of Racine has lost a good citizen, an excellent lawyer, and his multitude of friends have lost a pleasant companion and a co-operative and helpful associate.

Respectfully submitted,

E. R. Burgess
Lewis J. Quinn
Thomas A. Prussak

Committee

STATE OF WISCONSIN : CIRCUIT COURT : RACINE COUNTY :

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RESPONSE OF THE COURT TO THE MEMORIAL)
FOR MR. PETER J. MYERS PRESENTED ON)
APRIL 10, 1944.)
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Peter J. Myers was a good lawyer, sound in judgment, in business and law, and possessed not only the gift but also the ability to apply the theory of the law to practical situations. His services and advice were sought in many important matters by clients who came from every walk of life. He enjoyed a large and lucrative practice throughout the many years devoted by him to the practice of his profession.

Prior to coming to the bench my contacts with him were generally in connection with drainage matters. In this branch of the law he was recognized throughout the state as an authority. He had a prominent part in drafting the Wisconsin District and Farm Drainage laws. He knew that in southeastern Wisconsin the most fertile and productive soil was located in the low lands too wet for cultivation. It was the drainage of these lands which made possible the agricultural production for which this area excels. His early life, his love of the soil, and his never failing interest in farm problems were destined to cause him to contribute in greater measure than any lawyer of my acquaintance to the improvement and advancement of agriculture in this section of our state.

In the prosecution or defense of the rights of his clients, although invariably courteous to court and counsel, he at times appeared to be brusque and gruff but these mannerisms were merely weapons by which the contest was waged and never quite concealed

his kind and sympathetic nature. His sympathies were easily aroused by the troubles or misfortunes of the aged and those unable to protect themselves. He gave freely of his time and efforts to provide and maintain better hospital facilities for the sick and injured and for the relief of their pain and suffering. It is the rendition of such services, considered from a professional viewpoint, that the lawyer derives his deepest satisfaction and most pleasant recollections.

The greatest and most prolonged trial of his life did not take place in a court of law. It was the anguish which none of us here can measure of knowing that his son was in a Japanese prison camp and that he was helpless to provide for his son the food which his fields so abundantly produced.

Peter J. Myers richly deserved to be proclaimed a good citizen. The term "good" when applied to a citizen or a lawyer is a mark of high respect. He was a good husband and father, a good citizen and a good lawyer who merited and enjoyed the confidence and the affectionate regard of the members of the bar and a host of friends and acquaintances.

The Memorial of the Racine County Bar Association and this response will be spread upon the records of the court.

To the Honorable Courts of Record of Racine County.

MEMORIAL IN BEHALF OF HENRY N. BACON

Henry N. Bacon, a member of the Bar of this state and of the local Bar Association, died in this city on the 4th day of September, 1944.

Mr. Bacon was born at La Harp, Illinois, March 12, 1875. At a subsequent period the family settled in Oshkosh in this state. After the customary primary education, Mr. Bacon attended the law school at the University, and received his law degree with the class of 1897. During vacation while attending the University, he worked in one of the law offices at Oshkosh, and after graduation he practiced in that city for about two years. During these early years, he devoted much time and effort to the study of finance. As the result of these studies, he aided in establishing a bank at Campbellsport, Wisconsin. In 1907 two of the leading businessmen residing in the vicinity of Racine Junction, seeing the need for a local bank in that section of Racine, invited Mr. Bacon to come to Racine and assume the responsibility of establishing a banking institution at Racine Junction. Thereupon, Mr. Bacon became a resident of this city, and as a result of his efforts, Racine City Bank was duly incorporated and began business at the Junction. It will be remembered that for upwards of twenty years, Racine City Bank was a useful and thriving institution. Mr. Bacon was an officer and director of this Bank throughout these years. The bank was liquidated in the '30s. The bank building was acquired by the American Bank and Trust Company and now occupied by it as its Uptown Office. Also, for upwards of fifteen years prior to 1935, Mr. Bacon was Treasurer of the David G. Janes Company. He was well regarded by businessmen and bankers.

Other financial institutions with which he was more or less actively interested, either as officer or director, or both, were the Security Trust Company, Racine Junction Building and Loan Association, and the Racine Loan and Investment Company. He was President of the latter company at the time of his death. His ability and efforts effected a reorganization of this company, placing the same upon a sound and profitable basis. Mr. Bacon was also Treasurer for a number of years of the John H. Palmetoer Old Ladies Home, Taylor Orphan Asylum and Church of the Good Shepherd, Universalist.

About ten years prior to his death he resumed the practice of law, his work being limited to probate practice and the drafting of legal papers, especially serving his clients as financial advisor. His opinion of values was accepted as sound and trustworthy at a time when values were very difficult to determine.

One remembers Mr. Bacon for his integrity and honesty in all his transactions and his willingness to render services rather than accumulate wealth. Men and women sought his counsel and advice, not only because it was good, but also because it was uninfluenced by selfishness or any desire to advance his own interest rather than serve his clients.

Mr. Bacon is survived by his widow and two daughters. Mrs. Bacon and one of the daughters reside in Racine, and the other daughter at Oberlin, Ohio.

Fulton Thompson

Maya Bacon

Fredrick W. Zelen

STATE OF WISCONSIN : CIRCUIT COURT : RACINE COUNTY :

RESPONSE BY THE COURT TO THE MEMORIAL PRESENTED
BY THE RACINE COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION ON BEHALF
OF MR. HENRY N. BACON, Deceased.

To the roll of the deceased members of the local Bar Association has been added the name of Henry N. Bacon who departed this life on the 4th day of September, 1944.

Mr. Bacon was admitted to the Bar upon graduating from the University of Wisconsin, School of Law, at the age of 22 years. His admission to the Bar at that age demonstrated not only his industry but his ability as a student of the law. Unlike most lawyers he maintained an office for the practice of his profession for only a period of two years after his graduation and for about ten years prior to his death. During the interim such use as he made of his profession was in connection with his employment by banking, financial and investment institutions. Through study and experience he became well versed in the questions of law which arose in the conduct of the business of the institutions which he served. During the periods when he was actively engaged in the practice of his profession he seldom appeared in the trial of cases and, as the Memorial states, limited his work to probate practice, the drafting of legal papers and serving as financial adviser to his clients. During the time that he was associated with the institutions mentioned he gave legal advice to the many patrons of those institutions, all without hope or expectation of remuneration. He probably gave more gratuitous legal advice during his lifetime than any other lawyer of our acquaintance and many persons in time of trouble have been the beneficiaries of his generous assistance and advice.

My contacts with Mr. Bacon were not frequent but extended over

a number of years. His honesty and integrity impressed those who transacted business with him. His sense of fairness and of justice governed his conduct and compelled the conclusion that he was sincere and conscientious in his dealings with others. When a lawyer uninfluenced by selfishness or desire for personal gain makes some contribution to the welfare of his fellow men he not only serves well but reflects honor upon the profession of which he was a member.

It is, therefore, fitting and proper that we should be gathered here today for the presentation of the Memorial to the memory of Henry N. Bacon.

Response to

Memorial

in behalf of

Henry M. Peck

FILED

NOV 20 1884

Edw. G. Sawyer

CLERK OF CIRCUIT COURT

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