

Memorial to the Memory of Fulton Thompson
Presented to the Circuit Court for Racine
County, Monday, April 12, 1948.

Fulton Thompson was born in Chester County, Pennsylvania, June 13, 1871, the son of John and Mary Thompson. He was united in marriage in 1908 to Elizabeth Clancy of this city and passed away at his home on the 6th day of November, 1947 at the age of seventy-six years. He was survived by his widow, two sons, John F. Thompson and Robert F. Thompson, two daughters, Mrs. David Davies and Mrs. William Fromm, and five grandchildren, all residing in the city of Racine.

He was seven years of age when his mother passed away and eleven at the time of his father's death. His father was a sincerely religious man, and his strong character made a deep impression on his son that remained with him throughout his lifetime. Upon finishing grade school, his parents being deceased, Fulton went to work on a farm near his home. He worked long hours for small pay. He had given up the idea of continuing his education when Dr. William Fulton, a friend of the family, prevailed upon him to resume his schooling. He entered a business college in the city of Philadelphia and upon graduation obtained a position with Barnes Safe & Lock Company in that city. While at work for that firm, he contracted typhoid fever, became seriously ill and was obliged to remain at home for several months convalescing. His second position was with Bristol, Peet & Opdike, a prominent law firm in the city of New York. This firm appeared in litigation that resulted in the first United States income tax law being declared unconstitutional. While still with this firm, he decided that he would like to be a court reporter and went to Poughkeepsie for more training. He finally learned that he could not develop the speed necessary for court reporting. This was a bitter disappointment to him, so he returned home and made up his mind to settle down and operate the farm. After a few months of farming, he decided to go back to his stenographic work and went to Stamford, Connecticut,

where he worked for the Yale Lock Company. There he made many good friends, one of whom suggested that he enter the University of Michigan and study law. At that time a high school education was not necessary for admission. He spent several months in study in order to pass the entrance examination and was accepted. That was the last year that the University of Michigan accepted students who lacked a high school education. Having a small inheritance from his father's estate, and by rooming with a fellow student in an attic where they were allowed to cook their meals, they were able to manage. In the summer he, like many of the students, worked in the Michigan fruit orchards and earned money for the following year. He graduated in 1900 and always had a deep affection for the University of Michigan.

Following his graduation, he engaged in the practice of law with a classmate in the city of Omaha, Nebraska. From there he went to Wausau, Wisconsin where he remained for a short time. While at Wausau, he addressed letters to the mayors of several Wisconsin cities seeking a place to practice law. The only response he received was from the mayor of the city of Racine. After studying a map of the state of Wisconsin and somewhat influenced by the letter he had received from the mayor, he opened a law office in the city of Racine January 1, 1901.

As a young attorney, he was elected to the office of district attorney in 1908 and served in that office for two terms. In the early years of his practice, he devoted a good portion of his time to the trial of cases in court and was considered an able trial lawyer. He demonstrated a high regard for opposing counsel, and remembering his own early struggles, he was especially considerate of the younger members of the Bar. He always had time to counsel with them and assist them in solving their problems. Mr. Thompson was first of all a student of the law and always interested in seeing that justice was done. His ability was most outstanding

in the field of real estate law, and he became recognized as an expert in that branch of the law. In 1923 he was elected president of the Racine County Bar Association, and was for many years a member of the Wisconsin State and American Bar associations. He practiced for several years with Richard G. Harvey, first under the firm name of Thompson & Harvey and then as Thompson, Harvey & Monk. In 1930 he formed a partnership with Floyd J. Monk and practiced under the firm name of Thompson & Monk until 1938 when his son, John F. Thompson, joined the firm. Thereafter the firm was known as Thompson, Monk & Thompson.

Although engaged in a busy law practice throughout his career as a lawyer, Mr. Thompson devoted a great deal of time to community service. For more than twenty-five years, he served as treasurer of the Young Men's Christian Association and was active in its work. As a member of the First Presbyterian Church, he served for many years on the Board of Trustees and was a member of the Board at the time of his death. He was one of the lay leaders of that church whose advice and counsel was always sought. He was a member of the Masonic Order taking an active part in the work of that organization and served as Worshipful Master of Racine Lodge No. 18. During the last ten years of his life, he was president of the Racine Tuberculosis Society, of which organization he had been a member for some twenty years. He also served on the Board of Trustees of Taylor Orphanage and was an active member of the local Kiwanis Club. He generously contributed his talents and his financial support to all community activities.

Mr. Thompson remained a student throughout his lifetime and continued to study the Classics. One of his enjoyable past-times was reading aloud to the members of his family. He was a student of history and a great admirer of Washington and Lincoln. He became an authority on Lincoln and collected a large number of books on the life of the martyred president. On numerous occasions,

he was called upon to address public meetings on the life of Lincoln.

He was a kindly gentleman and was considerate of everyone. His clients, members of his profession and a large circle of intimate friends enjoyed his quiet humor, his courtesy and his good fellowship. Helping others brought real satisfaction and pleasure to him. He was a man of even temperament and of rare patience. He was possessed of a keen sense of humor and many times used it in solving the problems of his clients. He had abundant will power and always had control of himself no matter how tense the situation. There was no envy, jealousy or hatred in his makeup. His affable and kindly disposition remained with him to the end. In the last years of his life when his health was failing, he made no complaint.

As lawyers are looked upon as quasi public servants, Fulton Thompson filled that role in a splendid manner. In his passing, his family has suffered an irreparable loss and the Bar of Racine County has lost an outstanding member. His work as a lawyer and as a citizen will stand as a monument to his memory.

Respectfully submitted,

Walter H. Whaley
Harold A. Kormanik
Floyd J. Moutz
Committee.

man and as a lawyer.

Fine traits of character in a lawyer command the respect of his fellow members of the profession as does the ability which he demonstrates in the practice of law and Fulton Thompson enjoyed the respect of the courts and of the members of the Bar.

With commendable accuracy and fidelity the Memorial presented depicts his life as a man, a citizen and as a lawyer. During a little less than half a century in the practice of his profession in this county he earned, richly deserved, and fully achieved a place of distinction and honor among the members of the Bar and the people of the community.

His voice will not again be heard in the forums where wrongs are remedied and rights adjudicated but the memory of his long and useful life and his devotion to the realization of the ideals of our honorable profession remains with all who knew him well.