

HISTORY OF  
Goodhue County  
MINNESOTA

ILLUSTRATED

EDITOR IN CHIEF

FRANKLYN CURTISS-WEDGE

ASSISTED BY

W. M. Sweney, M. D.; Jens K. Grondahl; C. A. Rasmussen; Julius  
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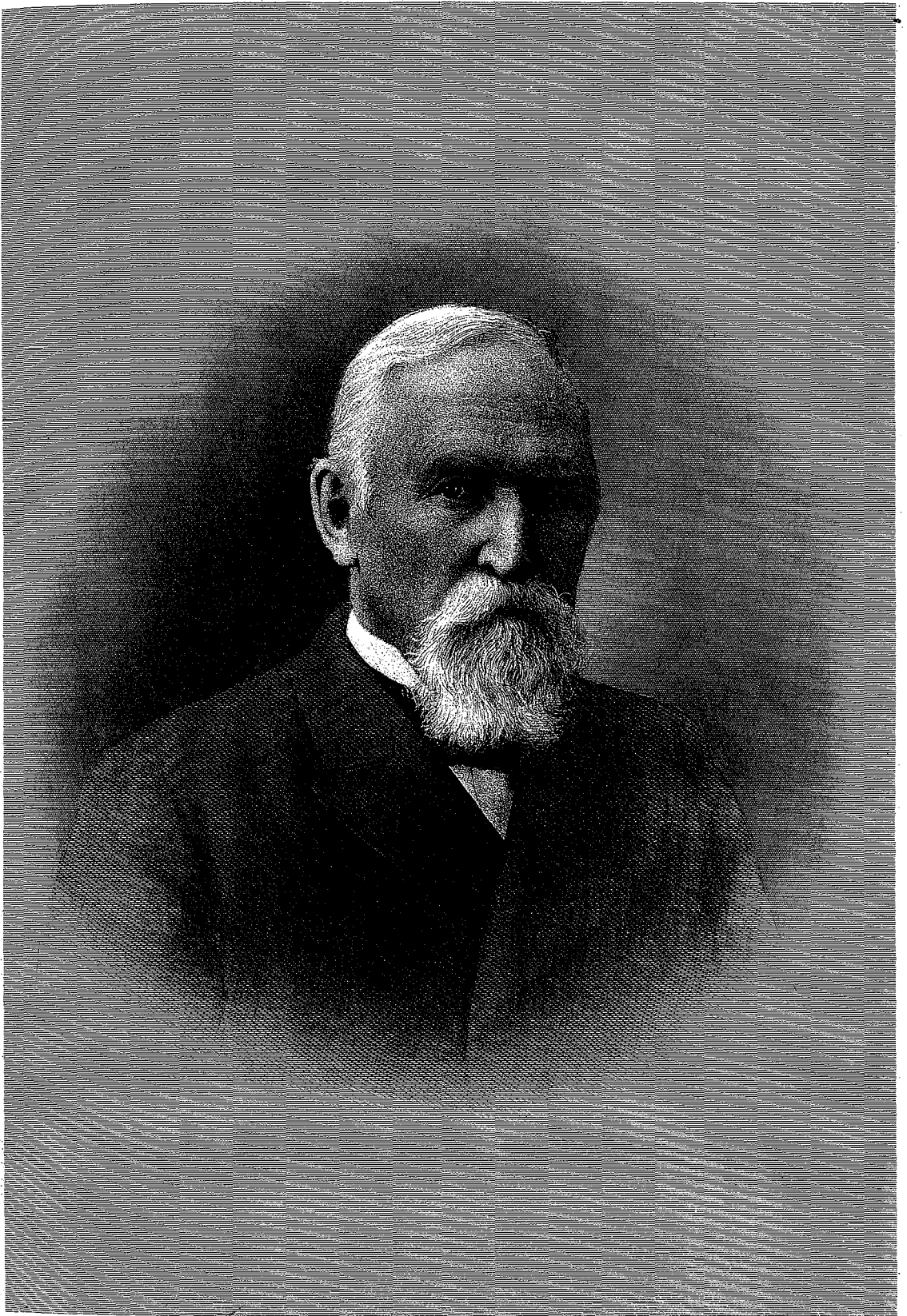
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CHICAGO  
H. C. COOPER, JR., & CO.

1909

that after the signing of the treaty ceding this and other counties to the whites the Indians moved to the designated reservation. After the Indian outbreak of 1862 they were removed to the Santee reservation in Nebraska. For several years after the outbreak an Indian's life was not safe in this county, among the indignant whites. The intense feeling after a time died away, and a few Indians wandered back. Their hearts longed for the scenes of their youth, and one by one they located on Prairie Island. Finally several families relinquished their rights in the Santee country, and in return the government built them houses and made them as comfortable as possible at Prairie Island. The annuities have now expired, and these descendants of the original owners earn their living on their little farms and do various work for the farmers of the county. Their children attend the public schools, and the families evidently live in contentment and happiness, although in their hearts they still long for the old days of hunting and fishing and the free, wild outdoor life, when the country was all theirs and the demands of conventionality unknown.

**Hon. William C. Williston**, now deceased, was one of the most eminent of Minnesota jurists, occupying the bench of the First Judicial district from 1891 until the time of his death, June 22, 1909. He was born at Cheraw, Chesterfield county, South Carolina, June 22, 1830, son of William K. and Annis (Chapman) Williston, the former of whom was a native of Simsbury, Conn., and the latter of South Hampton, Mass. The parents went to South Carolina in the late twenties, and there the father engaged in the mercantile business. In 1834 the family removed to Chardon, Geauga county, Ohio. There the mother died in 1863, and the father came to Red Wing, where he ended his days. During his boyhood, William was an apt pupil in the schools of his neighborhood, and early entertained the idea of studying for the legal profession. Such an opportunity later presented itself, and after several years of training in the office of Riddle & Thrasher, of Chardon, Ohio, he was admitted to the bar in 1854. His first practice was as a junior partner in the office of his preceptors, the firm name being Riddle, Thrasher & Williston. Two years later Mr. Williston left Chardon and came to Red Wing, becoming a partner in the firm of Wilder & Williston in 1859. In 1862 the Civil War had broken out, and repeated calls for volunteers were being sent to the northern states. Desiring to be of service to his country, Mr. Williston raised a company of volunteers, of which he was elected captain. This company was organized in August, 1862, with the expectation of doing service in the South, but the outbreaking of the Indian outrages caused a demand for fighting nearer home. Going into service as Company G, Seventh



A. C. Milliston

Minnesota Volunteer Infantry, Captain Williston's command was ordered with the rest of the regiment on an expedition against the Indians. The regiment engaged in the battle of Wood Lake, September 22, 1862, and was stationed at frontier posts until May, 1863, when again ordered on an Indian expedition, engaging the Reds in battle July 24, 26 and 28, 1863. Company G was then ordered to St. Louis, Mo., October 7, 1863, where Captain Williston remained till the spring of '64, when he tendered his resignation and after its acceptance returned to Red Wing, where he resumed his practice with Judge Wilder. In 1872 he entered into partnership with O. M. Hall, this arrangement continuing for several years. His first appointment as district judge came in 1891 from Governor William R. Merriam. He was elected to the position in 1892, and then successively re-elected until his death. His associate on the bench was the Hon. F. M. Crosby, of Hastings. Judge Williston represented the county in the legislature in 1873-74, served in the senate in 1876-77, was clerk of the city schools seventeen years, and city attorney several terms at various times. He was an independent voter, a communicant of the Episcopal Church for fifty years, and a member of the Masons. William C. Williston was married in 1854, at Chardon, Ohio, to Mary E. Canfield, of that place, daughter of Austin and Lodemia (Benton) Canfield. To this union were born two sons and two daughters. William F. C. is deceased. Julia W. is the wife of John H. Rich of Red Wing. Annie C. is the wife of Louis Phelps, now of Wyoming. Eugene, the youngest son, died in infancy.