Class of 1886

In re Law 1886

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Moffit, John T., 1862-

In re Law '85

U of M.

1886-1927
Tipton, Iowa, May 20th, 1927.
In re Law ’86 U of M.

My dear Classmates:

Thought you might be interested in reading a little gossip from recent letters.

ALDRICH—3-21-27.

“Fully intended to run over to Ann Arbor Saturday but my little granddaughter was taken to the hospital—mastoid. Operation successful.”


Was appointed Superior Judge in Spokane without asking for it. Paper says he has always been known as “Judge.” I have a good kodak picture of him; wish he would send one to each member of the class. I wish each member would send one of himself to me. He has been United States Attorney; member of the U. S. Food Administration; President Washington State Bar.

AVERY, LINCOLN—11-13-23.

This letter was written after his son, a Harvard man, was drowned and he says “The young man he roomed with at Harvard came with me last year and is still here. This helps me a lot. My remaining son returns to college in February.”

BANNON—2-23-27.

“I heartily approve of President Little’s idea of bringing the Alumni more closely together. It will be of inestimable value to the University. I was sorry not to have seen the President and the Dean when they were in Portland in November.”

*BOYD:

Died September 2, 1926.

BRECK:

Has been connected with the Agricultural Department during the last administration. Mrs. Breck has been serving on the jury in Detroit for four months.

BROWNING—2-22-27.

“I had no further to go than many who have regularly attended. I confess I have been somewhat ashamed and really have no excuse except that I have not felt very well acquainted and that is probably my fault.”

BRUNSON—2-29-27.

“Recently I saw Breck, Tom White and
Spears all looked well.” He sent me a newspaper clipping about the death of our old professor, Henry Wade Rogers.

CARPENTER—2-23-27.
“I am still working back toward health; but my wife and I both have had the flu and accompanying bronchitis for two months. We are just waiting for health enough to go away on a long sea voyage.”

CLARY—2-16-26.
“I am on a farm now, in self defense. We are having quite a gas and oil boom at present and it might be my land could be leased.”

CRAWFORD—2-26-27.
“Ordinarily I could make the trip but I have been so busy adjusting some very important business matters that my time is almost entirely spent in Jackson and Greenville, Miss. I don’t know just when the pressure will let up.” Have not heard from Crawford since the floods developed but am hoping he may not be affected thereby.

CREVELING—3-30-27.
“I certainly have my hands full with one thing and another, but presume you are just as busy. I am getting along nicely physically and enjoyed the winter. Am with the Advertising Department of the Medical Review.”

CROZIER—2-22-27.
He had just offered Crozier Park property, on the shore of Lake Michigan, near Harbor Springs, to President Coolidge for a summer White House. On a trip south this winter he visited Walker and his family and called on the Pickens family.

DOE—3-23-27.
“Poor Boyd. I still think of him; many times, in fact, since we left Ann Arbor. I have his photo just as he looked in ’86. Many in the picture I can’t identify. It makes me mad.”

DRESBACH—5-24-26.
Has one child, Charles; graduated at the University in 1926. Mrs. Dresbach passed away during the year. He has a good practice.

“Live at the same old place. Once in a while I find time to write a verse or two, and enclose you a few. This valley in trapper days was called ‘Pierre’s Hole’; a
battle was fought there." Driggs has twelve living children.

DUDLEY:
Was your secretary's roommate writes personal letters frequently. He swore me to secrecy—but I am not going to keep it. On January 19, 1924 he was "coronet"ed a 33rd degree Mason, in Denver. Has a son and daughter.

DURNING:
"There were names mentioned there that I had forgotten and could not call the persons to mind. Forty years has completely wiped out some of those faces from memory. I live in the same place. Had a son in the service."

FARRAR—2-21-27.
"No member of our class attending the reunion looked so natural and so much like he did when he was in school as Boyd. He had a lovable disposition, a kind and cheerful smile for everybody; and I assure you I was deeply affected when I learned of his passing. He had looked to me to be in perfect health. My work is so exacting that I do not see my friends as often as I would like."

GALLUP—2-24-27.
"Had a mighty nice call from Spears the other day. I mowed the lawn day before yesterday. Am moving, preparatory to building me a new office." He closes by saying, "Have sold my library and intend to take my doctor's advice and do a lot of losing."

GARDNER—2-23-27.
"I think we should now be more zealous even than ever before to keep up the class spirit. I have been extremely busy with affairs outside of my office." There has been a new baby born in that family.

GARRIGUES—4-28-27.
"Just back from the Pacific coast; was quite disappointed in it as a winter resort. Of course the weather this year was 'unusual'; indeed from all I heard it was 'un-usually unusual.' Saw May and N. T. Mason; pleasant visits. Missed W. L. Mason and Carpenter."

GILBERT—5-17-26.
"I have yours regarding one of my promise to attend the reunion. but it tries me ill at home. As a matter of fact this is the
worse set-back I have had since I saw you last and for some time before that.
My late letters from others indicate that Gilbert has fully recovered his health.

GILL—1-4-27.
But you all know Gill. The letter was dated "January 4, 1926." Just a year behind. Ordinarily we think of him as being a year in advance. Gill was called to Murphysboro to attend a funeral. On his way home he spent a day at Memphis with Crawford. He says some things about Crawford and winds up by saying "his wife is equally interesting, as well as charming."

HAFF—4-18-27.
My last letters from him have all been from Mexico City he spends a large part of his time there. He sent us his picture, which we had at the last reunion, and says, "I wonder how many of us will be on hand at the celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the U of M in 1937? I was present at the semi-celebration in 1887."

HARTMAN—5-22-26.
"Am sorry to disappoint you; am sorry to disappoint myself. An affliction of long standing hinders me meeting once again."

HELMICK:
"This slip is more enjoyable than the recent ones announcing the departure of another of the band of '86. Have had the pleasure of snapping my fingers at several M. D.s. and surviving two kill or cure operations."

HOOPER—4-22-27.
Clippings show that Hooper (Democrat) was re-nominated in a Republican district; we will watch the elections in June. He has been a member of the court for twenty years. Gill visited him last summer.

HOUER:
Was a Republican candidate in the primary for mayor; a three-corner fight; defeated; then the Republican nominee was defeated at the election by a Democrat. He is still in the mortuary department of the M. W. A.

HUMPHREY—12-26-26.
"It seems that the older I grow the more strenuous I have to be. Our county seat is at Bessemer, six miles from Ironwood. I have been in every civil case this term except one. Have been at Bessemer every day for five weeks; start in again tomorrow. The two children are at home for the holidays; the boy from Ann Arbor and the
"girl from Madison." He does not write very often; the last I saw about him he was making an after-dinner speech; have written that the way to hear from him is to feed him.

KRAUS—2-28-27.

"As the years roll around each day seems to bring more and more to keep one busy handling the skein we call 'Life'; and as they roll by I find the desire to meet old classmates naturally grows stronger."

Kraus, after serving in Congress, was defeated on account of the activities of the Ku Klux Klan.

*LUFKIN:
Died October 2, 1926.

LYDICCK—4-13-27.

He has quit the practice. "I spent three mortal, miserable days in the courtroom while the case was going on; thoroughly tired. That experience awoke in me not the least desire to go back to the practice of the law. You gentlemen of the Bench and Bar can hang on to your jobs to the end; I want nothing of that. I will stick to my garden and let you fellows have all the worry of other people's troubles."

MASON, N. T.:
Spears called on me a few days ago; glad to renew my acquaintance with him. He hit me pretty hard for not attending any of the reunions; but I survived."

MASON, W. L.—11-14-25.

"Concerning Opsahl; El Cerrito is up the coast two hundred miles from here. His letter is certainly pataetic and his concl.ution very low at the time he wrote it." (You will remember Opsahl died November 21st—seven days later.) "Saw St. Raymer at Huntsberger's funeral; we both officiated as pall bearers. May was there. My practice is heavy and confining."

MAY, W. A. F.;—2-24-27.

"Met Spears here Monday he and his wife will be here until April 1st. Spears and Gill celebrated their birthdays February the 17th." (It occurs to your secretary that "ce'lebrated" is probably the right word.) "Am not in good health."

MEEKER—2-19-27.

"I go to Ann Arbor about once a year; generally drive through on my way to northern Michigan. Have the next reunion in five years, or sooner if you think best."
MERITHEW:

"If this meeting is for others than secretaries please inform me and I shall endeavor to be of service to you if nothing more than to take you to the depot on your return. Was at the Ohio-Michigan game at Columbus and met Tom White; have joined the heavy weight class."

MERRILL: (Mrs. Mary Merrill Schwenn)—2-10-26.

Address correct as set out in last directory.

"Am feeling very much disappointed that I find it impossible to attend the reunion. If it were something I could attend any old time the disappointment would not be so keen. I am blue about it. I drifted out of the profession a long time since. I have been a lone widow for six years. Had to give up city life on account of my health; am a suburbanite on a few acres and spend most of my time out of doors with my live stock, flowers, garden and orchard."

*MILLER, E. C.:

Died December 27, 1926.

MILLER, VOLNEY—3-1-27.

"Am leaving for a business trip through Michigan; my route takes me through Ann Arbor."

MOFFIT:

Just working. No change.

MUNN—10-22-20.

"Have recently returned from over-seas where I was engaged in the American Red Cross work." Munn came to our last reunion; had just returned from a trip around the world.

MCKENZIE—5-22-26.

"It isn't for the want of interest or feeling that I have neglected to write sooner. There is certainly hard punishments to read over the list of boys who will be there and then have to tell you 'I won't be able to go.' Boyd sent me a letter about forty years ago and signed himself "Attorney at Large." I have felt ashamed of myself ever since."

McMILLEN—4-21-27.

"I think I am improving a little; will keep you posted as to just how I am." Dec. 23, 96; "Have just returned from El Paso where I have been in the hospital. The doctor pronounced me cured of the kidney infection which I suppose was the dangerous thing. But I have arthritis, affecting
the lumbar region of the back and hip joints, which, while some better, is still quite bad, and I am weak."

Invitation to twentieth wedding anniversary on Sunday afternoon. He sends a picture of himself, wife, four daughters and one son. It is needless to say they look like their mother, they are good looking.

NEIMAN—3-22-27.
"I am down here in Ohio; in the bank, and farming. The family do the farming."

"You will be interested in knowing that a stranger—a traveling man—came to Kokomo several months ago; met Charlie Shewmon, a cousin of Allen; at the mention of Shewmon's name the man asked Charlie if he was related to Allen; Charlie told him he was; the man then described Allen even to a gold tooth, and his manner said he had met Allen in south Africa several years ago and become well acquainted with him; Allen told him he had a mother back in this section. But all that was several years ago. He called on Allen's mother and promised if he could find Allen he would report to her. But no report has ever come." This man, Allen's wife and mother are now all dead.

PICKENS—5-26-26.
"These frequent messages are reminders that we, too, must soon join that innumerable caravan." I recall with great pleasure many members of the class remaining."
He is in the land business.

PREWITT—5-10-27.
A telegram today says, "Come to Winchester, Ky., via Cincinnati as soon as convenient. Will go to Derby. Answer." It's hard luck that I can't go. We have pictures in our files of his old Kentucky home, built nearly a hundred years ago; and of pastoral scenes about the farm. He doesn't write often, but his heart is right, as shown by the telegram. In a former letter he said, "I took my class picture down, put it before me, looked at Huntsberger's picture,—and my roommate, Henry St. Rayner. A class picture is the greatest thing a member can possess."

RICE—7-30-25.
"I am trying to relieve you from this service—noting the death of members—so far
as I can, and then too, funeral expenses are running high; I am sticking it out a while longer. I keep so busy I don't realize time is so swiftly passing by. Have four children."

RICHARDSON—4-26-27.

"I didn't hear from you as a result of the reunion." (He is correct; I have not yet had time to get out that letter.) "Saw McMillen; he isn't in the best of health, sorry to say, but is still gaining. He has been quite successful in his profession."

RICHTER:

was at the last reunion—his first—accompanied by his wife. Writes very feelingly in reference to the fate of Jolly, who was unfortunate and died in a distant state, away from friends and was buried at public expense. Richter has investigated this case and enclosed a check asking that it be a contribution toward having Jolly's body placed in a marked grave.

ST. RAYNER—9-5-25.

Says the last time he saw Evans was at a Republican convention in Lincoln; that Evans had all kinds of ambition for both professional and political preference; many of which he afterwards realized. Also says that Huntsberger gave a dinner for him after his location in Los Angeles. While St. Rayner has never attended a reunion he has always been diligent in helping your secretary locate our classmates in the west. He roomed with Prewitt.

SCOUTON—2-26-27.

"If you are as busy as I am you are certainly traveling at a high rate of speed. Was favorably impressed with the band of youngsters that gathered at the class reunion." (He made one of his typical speeches at the reunion; secretary wrote suggesting he might use it in his letter.) Now he says, very modestly, "You will do me a favor by not referring in your Minutes to anything that I said." Do you remember his strong voice?

SEARL—3-21-27.

"We organized a county alumni the evening of the 18th and heard the proceedings from Ann Arbor, over the radio. Brunson and myself were the oldest graduates present." Mrs. Searl was at the reunion; she is the dearest old soul, quite gray, and very kind. His son is prosecuting attorney.
SHEPHERD—A banker.
He has had his first great sorrow; Mrs.
Shepherd passed away early in March, 1927.
There is no family. You will remember
what a good student Fred was; at one of
our reunions Dr. Hutchins was showing us
through the enlarged library and after look-
ing at the great stacks of books Fred said,
"I don't see how we got along in our time
without a library."

SMITH, B. S.;—2-25-27.
"The stroke I sustained seven years ago has
seriously impaired the use of my left arm
and leg, and by reason of that my wife
thought it best that I should not go to the
reunion. But don't strike me from the
mailing list."

SMITH, E. L.;—5-3-27.
"Have been in Florida all winter—Miami;
have a business connection there. Have had
a pleasant winter; most all sunshine and
warmth: near the ocean; have not seen a
flake of snow, nor even a frost. Will stop
at Huntsville, Nashville, and Chicago to
spend a day or two with son who is attend-
ing N. W. University. Will miss Boyd as
I always called on him."

"Was unable to go to the reunion; my sis-
ter with whom I made my home passed
away June 8th." Farrar brought good news
of him; they office in the same building;
he is a bachelor; has held various offices of
political preference.

SPEARS—4-17-27.
"On my return from California found your
letters. There are various reports of where
he was seen in California; have not been
able to get definite information as to some
of the things he did. He reports having
seen about all the California contingent;
he is one of our loyal, dependable fellows.
Has been very successful in a business way.

*TARPENNING:
Died April 23, 1927.

WALSER—2-24-27.
"But for a trial which is set for next Mon-
day against Southern Ry. Co.—damages,
personal injury—for $250,000 I would go
myself." Largest suit ever brought against
the Company. (He met the enemy and he
was theirs but for a relatively modest sum.)
"Crozier and Florence visited me."
WHITE—2-21-27.

"While you are out this way I want you to come to Detroit and make my family and myself a visit. Am still with the Auditor General's Department; am working mostly in Detroit. Have three daughters."

WOLFE—5-2-27.

"I roomed with E. C. Miller. Am greatly shocked at his death. Had a nice visit with him at the reunion—the first one he had ever attended. Seldom see any of the class."

WRIGHT, A. C.:—3-3-27.

"If I knew when you were going through Chicago I would run in to see you. I wanted to go to the last reunion but some jinx seems to attend me every time. Frequently called on Boyd; but didn't know of his passing until your letter."

It's quite likely that you have not read this whole letter, but if each one of you has been able to pick out something which interested you about some one of the fellows I will feel well repaid for the time it has taken to work it out. I am mailing a copy of it to some who are not members of the class.

Yours very truly,

John T. Moffit,
Sec'y Law '86, U of M.