
Francis Rawle

The Council of The Historical Society of Pennsylvania desires to place on record its sorrow at the death of Francis Rawle, which occurred on the twenty-eighth of January last. Following so soon the passing of our late President Hampton L. Carson, and of our Librarian, Thomas Lynch Montgomery, it emphasizes the serious losses we have sustained, all within less than a year, for these three were outstanding figures in the administration of the Society, and were personally endeared to us as well.

Mr. Rawle had been a member of the Society since November 6, 1883, a Councillor from 1916 to 1921, a Vice-President from 1921, and President of the Council from October, 1925, until his death. He had served as a Trustee of the Gilpin Library Fund from November, 1920, and later was made a Trustee of the General Endowment and Miscellaneous Trusts Fund. It was as President of the Council that he created the deepest impression of service, for he was an ideal chairman of a Board, always gracious, tactful, and with a charm of manner that was one of his most attractive qualities. Combined with this was a keen intelligence, and a memory stored with a wealth of wit and anecdote. To see him and listen to his comments on current affairs, or to hear his reminiscences of the past, was always a pleasure. He remembered Lowell, Emerson, Holmes and Longfellow.

Mr. Rawle, who was born in Mifflin county, Pennsylvania, on August 7, 1846, came of a family greatly distinguished in the legal and social life of the State, and it was fitting and logical that he should have himself become an eminent lawyer. After receiving his preparatory education at Phillips Exeter Academy he entered Harvard University, from which he later re-

ceived the degrees of Bachelor of Arts (1869), Bachelor of Laws (1871), and Master of Arts (1872). He was admitted to the Bar in 1871, and in 1878 he helped to found the American Bar Association, of which he afterwards became treasurer until 1902, when he filled a term as President of the Association. He was keenly interested in his Alma Mater, and, from 1890 to 1902, he was a member of Harvard's Board of Overseers. In 1887, he served as a delegate to the London meeting of the Association for the Reform and Codification of the Laws of the Nations. He was the author of numerous legal and historical tracts, he revised several editions of Bouvier's *Law Dictionary*, and at one time was an official visitor to the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis. He was a director of the Library Company of Philadelphia, and a member of the American Philosophical Society, the Philadelphia Club, the Franklin Inn Club, the Harvard Club of New York, and the Varsity Club of Cambridge.

It may be said without exaggeration that Francis Rawle was a distinct asset to all of these organizations, and helpful as well, and that he enjoyed in them a well-deserved popularity.

In 1873, Mr. Rawle married Margaretta C. Aertsen, who died in 1894; he is survived by two children of that union. He is the last member of his family to belong to the famous law firm established almost a century and a half ago by William Rawle, one of the great practitioners of his time. It may be said of Francis Rawle that he proved worthy of his ancestry, as a lawyer, as a man of affairs and as a gentleman. The Council will miss him both as a friend and as an officer of the Society, and will deeply regret to see his vacant place at the head of our council table.

It is ordered that a copy of this minute be sent to each of his sons, with the sympathy of his colleagues.
