

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE BENCH AND  
BAR OF THE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT  
COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE FIRST  
CIRCUIT UPON THE DECEASE OF  
HONORABLE NATHAN WEBB**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649198498

Proceedings of the bench and bar of the United States Circuit Court of Appeals for the First Circuit upon the decease of Honorable Nathan Webb by Various

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Cover @ 2017

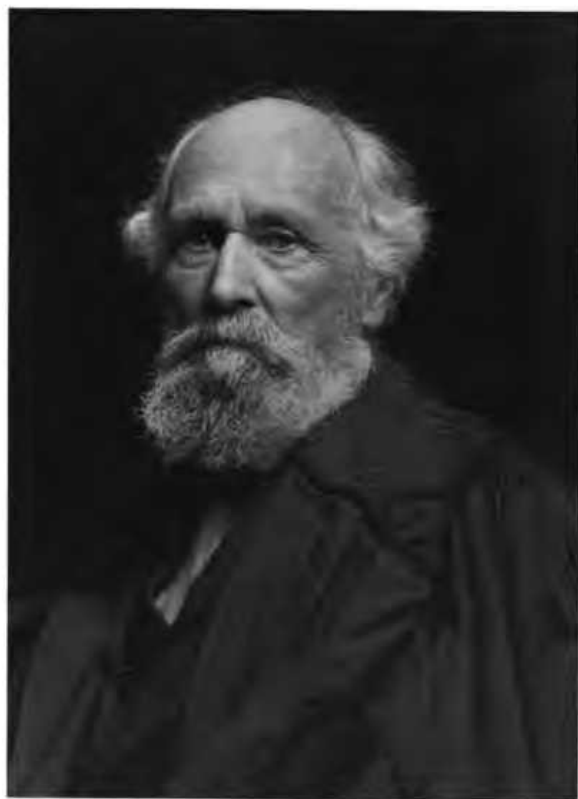
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**VARIOUS**

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COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE FIRST  
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HONORABLE NATHAN WEBB**





Nathan Webb  
May 7, 1900.

Proceedings of the Bench and Bar

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OF THE

<sup>U.S.</sup>  
UNITED STATES CIRCUIT COURT OF APPEALS (*1st circuit*)

FOR THE FIRST CIRCUIT

UPON THE DECEASE OF

HONORABLE NATHAN WEBB

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## MEETING OF THE BAR.

JANUARY 31, 1903.

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On Saturday, the thirty-first day of January, 1903, a meeting of the members of the Bar Association of Cumberland County was held in the United States Circuit Court room in Portland, Maine, to hear the report of the Committee appointed by the President of the Association, and consisting of Mr. Isaac W. Dyer, Mr. George E. Bird, and Mr. Lewis Pierce, to take appropriate action in memory of the late Honorable Nathan Webb, Judge of the District Court of the United States for the District of Maine. Honorable Henry B. Cleaves, President of the Association, presided.

Mr. George E. Bird, in behalf of the Committee, read the following memorial and resolutions:—

### MEMORIAL AND RESOLUTIONS.

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The members of the Bar Association of Cumberland County, in profound appreciation of the virtues, attainments, and character of the Honorable Nathan Webb, desire that there may be placed upon the records of the Circuit Court of Appeals, in which he

often sat, and upon the records of the District Court, in which he so long presided, a memorial of his distinguished services and career.

Nathan Webb was born in the town of Portland, on the seventh day of May, 1825, the son of Eli and Mary Webb. He obtained his early education in the public schools and Portland Academy. At the age of 17 he entered Harvard College, graduating in the class of 1846. Soon after he became a student in the office of John Rand, a learned counsellor, who until his retirement was one of the leaders of the Bar. He was admitted a member of this Bar on the nineteenth of November, 1849, and began the practice of his profession.

He was elected a member of the School Committee of Portland, in 1856, and rendered valuable service in this capacity until 1864. He was a member of the Maine House of Representatives of 1864 and 1865, appointed a Commissioner of the Circuit Court of the United States, March 22, 1866, and elected County Attorney of Cumberland County in 1865. He was re-elected in 1866, vacating the office in 1870 to accept that of Attorney of the United States for the District of Maine, to which he had been appointed by President Grant. He took the oath of office on the first day of March, 1870. Having served with distinction, he was again commissioned by the same president, on the fourteenth day of January, 1874. At the conclusion of his term, in 1878, he was a third time commissioned, but declined to serve, and resumed the general practice of his profession in connection with the late Honorable Thomas H. Haskell, who afterwards became Associate Justice of the Supreme



Judicial Court of Maine. Upon the decease of Judge Edward Fox, he was appointed in March, 1882, by President Arthur, to succeed him as Judge of the United States District Court of the District of Maine, and discharged the duties of that high office until his resignation, which took effect on the thirtieth day of June, 1902.

He became a member of the Board of Directors of the Maine General Hospital in 1884, was at once elected President of the Board and was annually re-elected until his decease.

In 1890, Bowdoin College, and six years later Harvard University, conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Laws.

He was married, June 17, 1867, to Jane M. Usher, daughter of Honorable Ellis B. Usher, of Hollis, Maine.

He died at the place of his birth, on the eighth day of November, 1902.

He was an exact and critical student of jurisprudence, and was conspicuous at the Bar for great learning and ability. He was a discreet and judicious counsellor, and as an advocate was fearless, eloquent and convincing.

He brought to the Bench ripe experience, abundant and varied knowledge, acute discrimination, a philosophical mind, and a rare mastery of the English tongue. While he kept himself familiar with the current decisions of the Federal courts and with those of this and some other States, he was not a laborious worker, but when occasion called he exhibited an extraordinary capacity for labor and for sustained and untiring mental effort.

His knowledge of legal principles had become such as to seem almost intuitive, and his application of them in the trial of causes was made with great readiness and accuracy. Many of his decisions were given orally immediately upon the conclusion of the arguments, and were remarkable for analytic power, logical arrangement, and felicitous expression. Some of his opinions were written, but few even of these, from his mistaken sense of their importance, were published. It is to be hoped that they still exist and may be made accessible to the profession.

No man was more sensible of the duties and responsibilities of citizenship. In no respect were they forgotten or ignored. He had an abiding interest in the material and moral welfare of the community and in the cause of education, and his efforts in behalf of the best facilities for the relief of the sick and suffering ended only at his death. His daily walk was above reproach. His life affords an example of civic virtue which invites imitation and challenges emulation.

He was a man of great independence of character, of strong personality, and undaunted courage. While he was not without ambition, he sought neither public nor private favors to advance his interests. The various public positions which he filled with such honor and success were tendered him in recognition of acknowledged fitness.

His reading was not confined to the law, but embraced a wide range in the best literature of the English and other languages, and apt allusion and quotation bore witness as well to the tenacity of his wonderful memory as to the cultivation of his taste.

His life was simple and unostentatious, unmoved by criticism or applause. He loved the open air, the sea, the country side with its trees and flowers and varied life, and not least his native city. He was not outreaching, he cared not for travel, sought not for wealth, and except to provide generously for those dependent upon him, he seemed to value money lightly.

The friends whom the course of events brought into his life he held to with unswerving loyalty. His companionship was delightful and his conversation was elevating, instructive, and marked with keen appreciation of humor.

While he was cordial and gracious to those he loved, such was his honesty and inability to pretend that he could not assume a friendliness he did not feel. His was too big a nature to be politic, he was too honest to be always gracious.

While not averse to social life, his greatest pleasure was found in gathering his friends about him in the simple and cordial hospitality of his own home, where his innate kindness of heart and broad sympathy were shown forth without restraint.

His long life was one of great usefulness, honor, and fidelity to duty, and in its every relation he was loyal and true to the highest aspirations of manhood.

*Resolved,* That we lament in him the enduring friend, the good citizen, the accomplished lawyer, the wise and incorruptible Judge, and the pure and upright man, and in grateful appreciation of the lustre he has shed upon the profession, and in remembrance of his affection for this association, we hold his memory in reverent regard, venerate his character, and, in sincere