

Mrs. W. T. Francis Author of Anti- Lynching Bill

Author of the Minnesota Anti-Lynching Bill.

Mrs. W. T. Francis, wife of Attorney W. T. Francis, one of our most prominent club women and civic workers of the city, has the distinct honor of being the "Mother" of the Minnesota Lynching Bill.

This bill was framed and put into legal in February, 1921, by Attorney Francis, then it was introduced by Representatives Nordlin, Levine and Christensen in the House at the State Capitol on the 15th of April, 1921. These same gentlemen were present at one of the largest mass meetings ever held in St. James Church, and announced they would do the utmost in their power to aid in the passage of the bill, which is as follows:

An act to prevent lynching; to fix indemnity for the dependents of any person lynched, and to provide for the removal from office of the sheriff and deputy sheriffs having charge of any person lynched.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Minnesota:

Section I. Lynching defined.—Lynching is the killing of a human being, by the act or procurement of a mob.

Section II. Damage may be recovered.—Whenever any person shall be lynched, the county in which said



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lynching occurred, shall be liable in damages to the dependents of the person lynched, in a sum not exceeding seven thousand and five hundred dollars, to be recovered in a civil action.

Section III. Officers guilty of malfeasance in certain cases.—Any Sher-

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iff, Deputy Sheriff or other officer having the custody of any person whom it is sought by a mob to take from his custody who shall fail or neglect to use all lawful means to resist such taking, shall be deemed guilty of malfeasance and shall be removed from office by the Governor in the manner, and upon the same procedure as is provided by law for the removal from office of County Officers guilty of malfeasance or non-feasance in the performance of their official duties.

Section IV. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage.

Approved April 20, 1921.

On the 20th of April the bill was passed by unanimous vote in the Senate, whereby Minnesota was one of the foremost states in the Union to denounce that National horror known as lynching.

From the time the bill was introduced in February until its passage on the 19th of April, Mrs. Francis labored incessantly both night and day so that her efforts would not be vain, as she knows no failure in any undertaking, be it great or small.

As a fitting tribute to her whose achievement will go down in history for its remarkable record, the citizens of St. Paul tendered her a public testimonial on the 1st day of May, 1921, and presented her with a large silver loving cup as a token for her services.

That terrible blot of civilization ~~known as lynching will never mar~~ the state of Minnesota and our children's children in generations to come can point with pride to this noble woman of our own race who did so much to remove this stain of civilization.