Neil Woodington

Clan William

When things go really wrong

by Lori Hahn

William Munson > Samuel II Munson > Freeman Munson > Henrietta Munson > George Woodington > Clyde Woodington > Neil Woodington

My 2nd great grandmother, Mary Ann Munson's sister Henrietta married Moses Woodington (covered last issue) who had left Pennyslvania to move to Wisconsin and pioneer. Generations later, their great grandson, Neil Allen Woodington, who had such an awesome start in life, would bump up against life-changing problems.

He was born 03 Apr 1927 in Altoona, Wisconsin, to Clyde Woodington and his wife Grace Murn Bradley, Clyde was a long-time locomotive engineer of the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad. Neil attended school in Eau Claire County and was a good student. In 1945, he was awarded a $200 scholarship by the Eau Claire Elks Lodge. He also won the Elks Americanism Essay contest that year.

He attended law school at the University of Wisconsin and graduated first in his class in 1950. The guy who graduated second, Robert C. Kelly, would go on to become his business partner and co-defendant at his criminal trial.

He married his first wife, Jeanette M. Hall in 10 Sep 1949 in Lamatine in Fond du Lac County; they took out a license on September 4th. Jeanette filed for divorce and it was granted in March 1963. Woodington was ordered to pay $1,100 per month in alimony and child support for their five daughters. He was also ordered to maintain life insurance to benefit the daughters.

His second wife, Betty J. Nedlose, married Woodington on 08 Apr 1963 in Miami, Florida. They had one daughter together. They divorced in 1971.



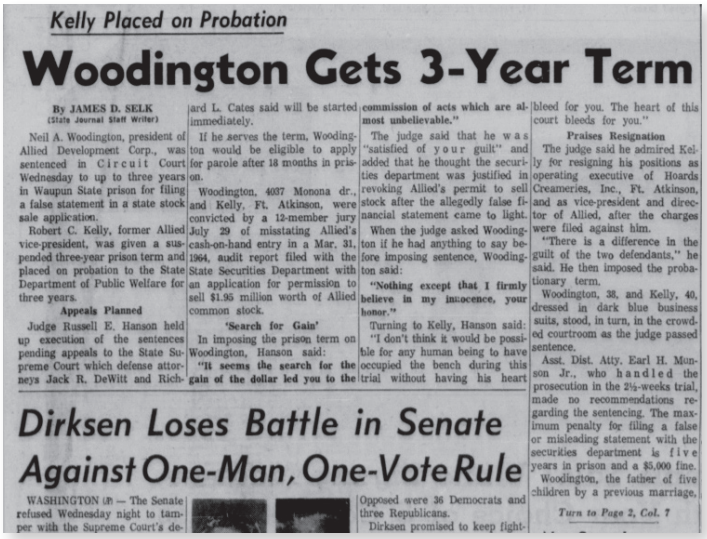
AT ALLIED SENTENCING — Atty. Jack R. DeWitt, standing in light suit, asks for leniency for his client, Neil A. Woodington, standing next to him. Also awaiting sentence is Robert C. Kelly, left. His attorneys, Richard L. Cates and David Lieffler, are seated next to him. Seated at far right is Asst. Dist. Atty. Earl H. Munson Jr., the prosecutor. —State Journal Photo by Edwin Stein

In the years 1964-1968, Woodington would face his greatest challenges. Two of the companies he ran, Madison American Guaranty Insurance Co. (MAGIC) and Allied Development Corp.found themselves under investigation for potentially filing false statements relating to a stock offering. Those companies later went into bankruptcy.

The trial was big news in Wisconsin. Woodington, as president, was found guilty of filing a false or misleading financial statement and sentenced to three years in state prison. His partner, Robert Kelly, who was reportedly portrayed by his lawyer as yet another victim of Woodington, was also convicted and sentenced to probation.

Woodington stated repeatedly he thought that the investigation started by then Attorney General George Thompson before the election of 1964 was politically motivated. Thompson was a Republican and MAGIC general counsel Clarence Bylsma was a prominent Democrat. Thompson lost the election. Investors and other creditors in the companies lost about $8 million.

Woodington appealed to the State Supreme Court, and while his conviction was upheld, the Court made comment on the harshness of the sentence. Woodington's subsequent appeals failed and he was sent to Waupun State Prison in 1967, shortly thereafter being moved to Thompson Prison Farm in Cambridge. There, he was ultimately granted work release, where he worked as a "financial advisor" for a company set up by Clarence Bylsma in Madison.



Kelly Placed on Probation

Woodington Gets 3-Year Term

By JAMES D. SELK
(State Journal Staff Writer)

Neil A. Woodington, president of Allied Development Corp., was sentenced in Circuit Court Wednesday to up to three years in Waupun State prison for filing a false statement in a state stock sale application.

Robert C. Kelly, former Allied vice-president, was given a suspended three-year prison term and placed on probation to the State Department of Public Welfare for three years.

Appeals Planned

Judge Russell E. Hanson held up execution of the sentences pending appeals to the State Supreme Court which defense attorneys Jack R. DeWitt and Richard L. Cates said will be started immediately.

If he serves the term, Woodington would be eligible to apply for parole after 18 months in prison.

Woodington, 4037 Monona dr., and Kelly, Ft. Atkinson, were convicted by a 12-member jury July 29 of misstating Allied's cash-on-hand entry in a Mar. 31, 1964, audit report filed with the State Securities Department with an application for permission to sell $1.95 million worth of Allied common stock.

'Search for Gain'

In imposing the prison term on Woodington, Hanson said:

"It seems the search for the gain of the dollar led you to the commission of acts which are almost unbelievable."

The judge said that he was "satisfied of your guilt" and added that he thought the securities department was justified in revoking Allied's permit to sell stock after the allegedly false financial statement came to light.

When the judge asked Woodington if he had anything to say before imposing sentence, Woodington said:

"Nothing except that I firmly believe in my innocence, your honor."

Turning to Kelly, Hanson said: "I don't think it would be possible for any human being to have occupied the bench during this trial without having his heart bleed for you. The heart of this court bleeds for you."

Praises Resignation

The judge said he admired Kelly for resigning his positions as operating executive of Hoards Creameries, Inc., Ft. Atkinson, and as vice-president and director of Allied, after the charges were filed against him.

"There is a difference in the guilt of the two defendants," he said. He then imposed the probationary term.

Woodington, 38, and Kelly, 40, dressed in dark blue business suits, stood, in turn, in the crowded courtroom as the judge passed sentence.

Asst. Dist. Atty. Earl H. Munson Jr., who handled the prosecution in the 2½-weeks trial, made no recommendations regarding the sentencing. The maximum penalty for filing a false or misleading statement with the securities department is five years in prison and a $5,000 fine.

Woodington, the father of five children by a previous marriage,

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Dirksen Loses Battle in Senate Against One-Man, One-Vote Rule

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Senate refused Wednesday night to tamper with the Supreme Court's de-

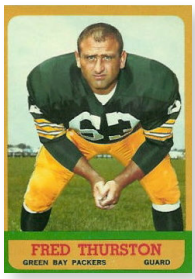
Opposed were 36 Democrats and three Republicans.

Dirksen promised to keep fight-

Both Woodington and Kelly were disciplined by the State Bar in 1968. Woodington was disbarred for life and Kelly was suspended from practice for six months

An attorney, Jack McManus, who stated he'd provided counsel and advice to Woodington related to his disbarment proceedings, sued him in Nov 1967 for $11,500 in unpaid fees. The fallout from the original trial was significant, driving other litigation such as this regarding the players.

After his release from prison on May 9, 1968, Woodington became what his second wife called, "a promoter." He had moved to New Brighton, Minnesota and was involved with a number of interests
After his release from prison on May 9, 1968, Woodington became what his second wife called, "a promoter." He had moved to New Brighton, Minnesota and was involved with a number of interests such as the Diesel Driving School as well as restaurants co-owned with Fuzzy Thurston, former Green Bay Packer, both in Wisconsin. The two restaurants were put under court control and the owners, including Neil Woodington, were barred from entering the restaurants. Woodington was accused of "wrongfully taking money from the corporation, issuing bad checks to employees and suppliers, and grossly mismanaging corporation business" according to the Madison Wisconsin State Journal 12 Nov 1979.



Woodington married Carole McFarland in 1976 in Reno. They divorced 29 Dec 1980. Also in 1980, Woodington moved to Scottsdale, Arizona. He had other business interests under the auspices of The Woodington Group which included such businesses as Dollars and Sense, a direct-mail publishing venture he ran in Colorado.

That company would be taken over by several of his children and run into its own legal and criminal issues in the 1990s. He died in 1989 at his home in Scottsdale at 62.

According to the Capital Times (Madison, WI) reporter Mike Miller's 07 May 1997 article titled, "Daughters follow in dad's crooked footsteps," his three daughters were meeting justice themselves. Daughter Rebecca was sentenced to 13 years, Deborah was sentenced to five years, and a third sister, Sara, had previously pleaded guilty ans at the time of the article was pending sentencing, outcome unknown. The three were convicted on charges related to a massive investment scam that caused 330 investors to lose over $3.6 million. The authorities had been building a case for 10 years. Husbands of the three were also charged.

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