

Samuel Merrill, Orlando C. Howe, J. D. Wells

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NOTABLE DEATHS.

SAMUEL MERRILL, 7th Governor of the State of Iowa, was born at Turner, Maine, Aug. 7, 1822; he died at Los Angeles, Cal., Aug. 31, 1899. He grew up on his father's farm, receiving only such education as the country schools afforded in those days. As soon as he was qualified he also became a country school teacher. Later on, like many other young men of northern birth and education, of whom William H. Seward was the most conspicuous example, he went south for the purpose of engaging in teaching. Like Seward, however, he soon became convinced that this was no desirable field of effort, for a man of his views regarding slavery. He returned home and engaged in farming. But on reaching the age of twenty-five he abandoned this calling for that of merchandizing with his brother, Mr. J. H. Merrill, now of Des Moines, Iowa. In the years 1854 and '55 he had the honor of representing his town in the legislature of his state. He supported John P. Hale, the illustrious free-soiler, for the United States senate. During the following year the Merrill brothers emigrated to Iowa, settling in McGregor, where they commenced business as merchants and bankers. Their efforts in these lines proved highly successful. In the fall of 1859 Mr. Samuel Merrill was elected to the Iowa House of Representatives, serving in the regular and special sessions (1860-61) of that body. While he was for the most part a quiet and undemonstrative member, those who made his acquaintance understood that no man in the house kept a closer watch of its proceedings or was more fully informed concerning what was accomplished. Few members were better remembered by their associates. He took an active part in the extra session of 1861, when the first preparations were made for the long civil war. The Merrill brothers advanced the funds necessary to clothe the First, Second and Third regiments of Iowa volunteer infantry. Early in 1862 he was chosen colonel of our Twenty-first infantry, which saw its first service in Missouri. He commanded a brigade in the battle of Hartsville, Mo., in a manner to win distinguished credit for skill and bravery. Proceeding on to Vicksburg, Col. Merrill's regiment bore a prominent part in the battles of Port Gibson and Black River Bridge. At Port Gibson his horse was shot down under him and Gen. Carr highly complimented him in his report. He said, "The Twenty-first Iowa, Col. Samuel Merrill, first in battle and one of the last to leave the field." The next battle in which he led his regiment was that of Black River Bridge, where he received a wound which finally necessitated his leaving the service. Returning to McGregor he was elected president of the First National bank of that city. He was nominated as the Republican candidate for Governor of Iowa in the summer of 1867, and his brilliant record made his election a matter of course. Upon attaining the governorship it is truth to say that he gave the State one of the best business administrations it has ever had. He was the first Governor who came to the capital to reside. He said the final word in favor of impartial suffrage, and the General Assembly ratified the famous amendment, striking out the word "white." He also started the movement which resulted in better insurance laws. He frequently visited the public institutions and thoroughly watched over their interests. During his second term, which began in 1870, many important questions were before the legislature, all of which had been considered in his biennial message. Among these may be named, the codification of the laws, the erection of the new capitol, the establishing of a second penitentiary, the protection of the school lands, and the development of the Soldier's Orphans Home. He took an active part in the famous reunion of Iowa soldiers, at Des Moines, Aug. 31, 1870. His administration was filled with good and useful works. One other thing should not be forgotten. Up to the time of his administration the State Library was

a dust-heap of ill-assorted law books and "pub. docs." under very haphazard care. Governor Merrill appointed Mr. John C. Merrill (not a relative, however), State Librarian, and then began the work of improvement which has never since ceased. Librarian Merrill died not long after his appointment and Governor Merrill filled the place with Mrs. Ada North, who won distinguished credit for the admirable manner in which she discharged her duties for ten years, as well as for her later work of nine years as librarian of the State University. Intelligent library work was begun in the Merrill administration to which the credit of its inception is due. Governor Merrill remained in Des Moines at the head of important business interests until 1886, when he removed to California, where with several other gentlemen he made large purchases of real estate. This venture was not a very fortunate one and the Governor's investments are understood to have undergone a large shrinkage. About a year ago he met with a serious accident while riding on a trolley car, from which time his health failed until he died. Civic and military honors were paid to him at his funeral in Los Angeles, and his remains were brought back to his old home in Des Moines for interment in the family vault. The body lay in state for some hours in the capitol and was then taken to the Plymouth Congregational church of which the deceased had long been a member. Eloquent funeral addresses were made by Rev. Dr. A. L. Frisbie, Rev. Dr. George A. Gates, president of Iowa College, and Governor Leslie M. Shaw. The lying in state in the capitol was directed by Mr. W. H. Fleming, who was the private secretary of Governor Merrill, as well as of several of his successors. The remains were escorted to Greenwood cemetery by cavalry Troop A, Iowa National Guard, and many carriages filled with distinguished citizens. After the closing funeral exercises, three volleys were fired over the grave, "lights out" sounded by the bugler, and the dust of the illustrious statesman and soldier was left to its last sleep.

ORLANDO C. HOWE was born at Williamstown, Vermont, December 19, 1824; he died at Topeka, Kansas, August 31, 1899. We have few facts relating to the early life of Capt. Howe, though he was quite well known in northwestern Iowa forty years ago. Educated at Aurora (N. Y.) Academy, he studied law in Buffalo. He came west and settled at Newton, Iowa, in 1855. In the fall of 1856, in company with B. F. Parmenter and R. U. Wheelock, he visited Spirit Lake where these men each made a land claim with the intention of returning and making improvements the following year. They returned early in March, 1857, when they discovered that the entire settlement had been massacred by the Inkpadutah band of Sioux Indians. They immediately went back to Fort Dodge, and upon their report the famous Spirit Lake Expedition was organized. In this Expedition Mr. Howe was a private. His name appears in the roster of Co. B on the monument at Okoboji. He subsequently removed to Spirit Lake where he resided several years. In 1858 he was elected district-attorney of the Fourth Judicial District, serving four years. He afterwards returned to Newton and in 1863 entered the Union army as captain of Co. L, Ninth Iowa Cavalry, which served on the northwestern frontier. He practiced law some years in Newton after the war, and from 1875 to 1880 was Professor in the Law Department of the State University. Soon after this last date he removed to Medicine Lodge, Kansas, which was thenceforth his residence. After suffering many years from impaired health he became violently insane during the month of August last and was sent to the State Asylum at Topeka, where he died as above stated. He was a man of much ability, a pioneer who became deservedly prominent in northwestern Iowa, and socially an excellent Christian gentleman. His name is one that will always be connected with the early history of northwestern Iowa and of our great University.

REV. J. D. WELLS was born on January 3, 1849, in Wheatland township, Hillsdale county, Michigan; he died at La Junta, Colorado, July 27, 1899. He remained on his father's farm and attended the country schools until his fifteenth year, when he went to Hillsdale college, teaching and studying alternately until he was nineteen years old, when his father gave each of his three older boys \$1,000 which they invested in a farm near Monmouth, Illinois, where he worked until he was twenty-two years of age. He then sold his share in the farm and went to Ann Arbor University where he graduated at the age of twenty-six. He next became principal of the Dubuque high school for two years. From Dubuque he went to New York City to attend the Union Theological Seminary. After graduating, he entered upon his first pastorate in Litchfield, Michigan, in 1878. After two years he accepted a call to Kokomo, Indiana, where he stayed but a few months, retiring because of poor health. His next pastorate was in Woodstock, Illinois, where he stayed two years; leaving there, he went to Webster City, Iowa, where he preached six years. His next pastorate was Ames, Iowa, for three years, from which place he went to Wilton as principal of the Wilton Academy for two years. He afterward accepted a call to Shellrock, Iowa, where he preached one year. His health meantime failing from a pulmonary affection, he came to Des Moines and engaged in the printing business until his death as above. Mr. Wells attained a wide acquaintance both as a minister of the gospel and a teacher, and his death elicited expressions of respect and sympathy throughout the State.

REV. W. F. COWLES was born in Cortland county, New York, May 11, 1819; he died at Burlington, Iowa, July 13, 1899. After obtaining such education as the common schools of his neighborhood afforded he attended the Academy at Cortland, though his education was largely self-acquired after reaching his majority. He became a member of the Methodist Episcopal church at the age of eighteen and at twenty-three was licensed to preach. He was promoted to be deacon, elder and presiding elder. He settled in Burlington in 1851. His pastorates included Burlington, Dubuque, South Burlington, Keokuk, Oskaloosa, Ottumwa, Eddyville, Muscatine, Grinnell, Albia and Knoxville. He served as Presiding Elder in the Burlington, Oskaloosa, Muscatine and Mt. Pleasant districts. He was four times elected delegate to the General Conference of his church, and was twice at the head of the Iowa delegation. In his early manhood he was an out-spoken abolitionist. It was unpopular and even dangerous in many localities in this State to avow sympathy with the slaves at the time Mr. Cowles crossed the Mississippi. He was four years Collector of Internal Revenue, by appointment of President Lincoln. He filled this office and the pastorate of his church at the same time. During all his life in this State he was especially active and influential in behalf of public education as well as in the cause of his church. Few men have passed more useful lives.

WILLIAM L. JOY was born at Townshend, Vermont, August 17, 1829; he died at Corona, California, July 1, 1899. He graduated from Amherst College, Massachusetts, in the early fifties, studied law, and in 1857 settled in Sioux City. He had at different times as law partners, N. C. Hudson, A. F. Call, his son, C. L. Joy, and Craig L. Wright. Mr. Joy became one of the most prominent personalities of northwestern Iowa, and thoroughly identified with the interests and growth of Sioux City. He stood at the head of his profession as a lawyer, and his service in the Iowa house of representatives (the sessions of 1864-66) made him known throughout the State. His name was often mentioned in connection with higher public honors, but his ambition did not seem to run in that direction. He was a hard worker in his profession, an earnest promoter of the cause of educa-

tion, distinguished for his wide charities, and the foremost member of the Baptist church of his city and county. "He was always at the front when there was giving or doing." At the time of his death he was in California, whither he had gone hoping to recover his health which had been for some time seriously impaired.

CHARLES CARROLL GILMAN was born at Frankfort, Maine, February 22, 1833; he died at Eldora, Iowa, July 31, 1899. He came to Eldora in 1866, as the projector of a short railroad which afterwards became a part of the Iowa Central line. Upon its organization—then known as the "Central Railroad of Iowa"—he became its first president. Mr. Gilman was a man of large ability, far-seeing, influential, active, energetic and persevering. He succeeded in extending his railroad in both directions, and it gradually grew into one of the most important north and south lines in the State. He was the originator of the coal and clay industries in the vicinity of Eldora, which have since grown into importance. Through his ingenious experiments and inventions our Iowa clays came into new uses, creating demands for the manufactured products throughout the country. Aside from his great business ability he was widely esteemed for his fine social qualities.

MRS. VICTORIA TOURNOT BRUGUIER was born in St. Louis, December 12, 1826; she died in Sioux City, Iowa, July 13, 1899. "Mrs. Bruguier," says the *Sioux City Journal*, "was one of the oldest and most remarkable pioneer women of the Northwest, and her history a very romantic one." She was of Creole-French descent, and the fourth wife of Theophile Bruguier, and he was her third husband. Bruguier's three other wives were daughters of War Eagle, a celebrated Yankton-Sioux Indian. Bruguier died on his farm near Salix, Woodbury county, Iowa, February 18, 1896. Mr. O. C. Treadway, at whose house Mrs. Bruguier died, says of her, "no white woman ever lived who knew as much of the Indian character and the history of the Northwest." She had travelled much in the far west many years ago, making several trips to Salt Lake City. The growth of Sioux City from its first settlement had almost wholly taken place during her residence in that vicinity. The family were well known throughout northwestern Iowa and eastern Nebraska.

JOHN SHANE was born in Jefferson county, Ohio, May 26, 1822; he died at Vinton, Iowa, September 18, 1899. He was educated at Jefferson College, Pennsylvania. After teaching some years he studied law in the office of Edwin M. Stanton, Lincoln's great war secretary. He removed to Vinton, Iowa, and had resided there some years before the civil war. Enlisting in Company G, Thirteenth Iowa Infantry, he was elected its captain, and shortly after promoted to major, afterwards to lieutenant-colonel, and when Crocker was made a brigadier-general, Shane was promoted to the colonelcy. He bore a distinguished part in the battles of Shiloh and before Atlanta. After his return, Governor Kirkwood appointed him district judge to fill the vacancy caused by the promotion of Rothrock to the supreme bench. He was nominated and elected district judge, but suffered from partial paralysis to such an extent as to necessitate his resignation. He had been an invalid from this cause for the past dozen years.

MRS. NARCISSA T. BEMIS was born at Alabama, Genesee county, New York, May 8, 1829; she died at the summer home of the family, at Okoboji, Iowa, August 9, 1899. She was married to Hon. George W. Bemis, of Independence, Iowa, April 11, 1855, and that place was thereafter their home. During the period of the civil war Mrs. Bemis became distinguished through her efficient services in behalf of the Sanitary Commission, and in

later years in promoting the interests of the Children's Aid Society, the Chautauqua Club, the W. C. T. U., the Political Equality Club, and many other educational and charitable enterprises. Mr. Bemis was elected Treasurer of State in 1876 and re-elected in 1878, the family residing at the capital during his four years of service. While residing at Des Moines Mrs. Bemis became widely known, and is remembered with great respect and esteem throughout the State.

GUY WELLS was born in Wyalusing township, Bradford county, Pennsylvania, July 21, 1813; he died at St. Paul, Minnesota, June 27, 1899. He was a contractor and civil engineer, and settled in Fort Madison, Iowa, in 1839. He helped survey a portion of the line of the Illinois Central railroad, and was one of the contractors who built the penitentiary at Fort Madison. Removing to Keokuk in 1847, he assisted Gen. Samuel R. Curtis in the surveys for the Des Moines River Improvement. He was employed upon this work for eleven years and was during a portion of this time city engineer of Keokuk. He was prominent in projecting and building some of our early railroads. In 1878 he was appointed Assistant U. S. Engineer and brevetted Major. Thereafter his service was on the upper lakes and at Fort Snelling.

ALEXANDER C. BONDURANT was born in Sangamon county, Illinois, December 1, 1829; he died at his home in the town of Bondurant, Polk county, September 17, 1899. He was a pioneer farmer of the capital county, in which he settled in 1857. When he came to Iowa he purchased 320 acres of land, but at the time of death his estate had increased to 3,000 acres. Mr. Bondurant was a man of large ability, who, through honorable dealing, enterprise and public spirit, achieved a proud position in Polk county. He was a leading member of the Christian church, one of the builders of Drake University, and the founder of the flourishing village which bears his name.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

A BEAUTIFUL LIFE AND ITS ASSOCIATIONS. By Anna Howell Clarkson. Illustrated. New York: Published under the auspices of the Historical Department of Iowa, 1899.

It has been understood during the past two or three years by the author's friends, that she was writing a book, but if its subject was known it was only to a very few. While its main thought is an affectionate tribute to Mrs. Drusilla Allen Stoddard, who was long the almost idolized head of the ladies department of the Iowa Central University, at Pella, the work becomes incidentally a history of that admirable institution of learning and of the always thrifty, prosperous and cultured community in which it is located. It is a notable contribution to the early educational history of our State. Its tribute to the 124 young men—teachers and students—who enlisted from the college in the war for the Union—of whom ten were killed and fourteen died in hospitals—will be a perpetual incentive to like patriotic sacrifices. The book is a repository of local and state biography, illustrated with one hundred fine portraits, among which we recognize the faces of many who have attained more than State reputations. The author makes a strong, and we believe, an unanswerable plea, for the small college. We deem it one of the best books ever produced by an Iowan, and deserving a place in every public and private library in the State.

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