

Benjamin F. Clayton

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taking part in the Spirit Lake expedition in 1857 he took up farming in LaFayette Township. He was elected township clerk, served a time as deputy county treasurer and recorder, but returned to farming. On November 26, 1862, he volunteered as a private in Company B, Fourteenth Iowa Infantry, and was made first lieutenant. He was promoted to captain April 11, 1863, and served as such until the regiment was mustered out November 16, 1864. He was elected treasurer of Bremer County in 1865 and served six years. In 1872 he purchased the *Waverly Independent*, but later sold it and bought the *Waverly Republican*. In 1876 he sold that paper and bought the *Mason City Republican*, which he kept until 1883. He was mayor of Mason City for a time. In 1878 he was chief clerk of the Iowa House of Representatives, and again in 1880. The fall of 1880 he was elected state auditor and served during 1881 and 1882, but declined a renomination. In 1883 he removed to South Dakota, located near Chamberlain and engaged in farming. In 1887 he was elected treasurer of Brule County. While still serving in this position he was appointed on the board having charge of the building of the new Soldiers' Home at Hot Springs, South Dakota, and on its completion in 1890 became its first commandant. In 1892, without being a candidate, he was nominated for Congress and elected, and served in the Fifty-third Congress, but was defeated for the next term by the Fusionists. At the end of his service in Congress he was recalled to Hot Springs as commandant where he remained until 1903 when because of failing health he resigned and removed to Santa Cruz, California.

BENJAMIN F. CLAYTON was born near Carlisle, Kentucky, January 10, 1839, and died at Indianola, Iowa, March 16, 1922. He was the son of William M. and Mary (Adair) Clayton. His parents having died, he removed before reaching manhood to Decatur County, Indiana. In 1873 he came to near Macedonia, Pottawattamie County, Iowa, where he engaged in farming. In 1877 he was elected representative and was re-elected two years later, serving in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth general assemblies. He was elected again in 1883 and served in the Twentieth General Assembly. In 1884, 1885 and 1886 he was a member of the Board of Trustees of the Iowa School for the Deaf at Council Bluffs. In 1884 Governor Sherman appointed him a delegate to the Farmers' National Congress, at Nashville, Tennessee. At that meeting he was elected secretary, which position he held eight years, when he was elected president, which office he held four years. He was also on the executive committee for nine years. For twenty years he never missed a meeting of the congress. He was a candidate for the nomination of governor at the Republican State Convention at Cedar Rapids, July 1, 1891, and made a creditable run, but the nomination went to H. C. Wheeler. In the same year he removed to Indianola. For four years he served as mayor of that city. He was a trustee of Simpson College for over twenty years and was president of the board a considerable time.

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