

Solomon Francis Prouty

ISSN 0003-4827

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Recommended Citation

"Solomon Francis Prouty." *The Annals of Iowa* 16 (1928), 310-311.

Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0003-4827.5179>

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NOTABLE DEATHS

ALEX R. MILLER was born in Marion Township, Washington County, Iowa, February 6, 1865, and died in Washington, February 6, 1927. His parents were Peter P. and Barbara Sommer Miller. Alex attended country school, worked on his father's farm, learned the carpenter's trade, attended the Eastern Iowa Normal School at Columbus Junction, and the Washington Academy, taught country school, taught singing school, read law with Dewey & Eicher of Washington and was admitted to the bar January 18, 1893. He had only begun practicing when on March 15, 1893, he became part owner of the *Washington Democrat* and began his newspaper career with W. N. Hood as his partner. On the death of the latter in October, 1898, Mr. Miller became sole owner of the paper. In 1900 he was the First District candidate for presidential elector on the Democratic ticket. From 1904 to 1908 he was the First District member of the Democratic State Central Committee. In July, 1914, he was appointed by President Wilson postmaster at Washington. His work becoming so heavy he sold his newspaper during the latter part of his service as postmaster, which service continued for eight years. In 1926 he was the candidate on the Democratic ticket for governor of the state. He was a versatile writer with an engaging style, sparkling with kindly humor. This facility of expression coupled with a good platform presence made him a successful public speaker. For several years he was regularly employed as a lecturer by the Redpath-Vawter Chautauqua and Lyceum Bureau, and also filled hundreds of speaking engagements on all sorts of occasions. He was a member of the Methodist church, a Sunday School teacher, and a citizen of fine character and usefulness.

SOLOMON FRANCIS PROUTY was born near Delaware, Ohio, January 17, 1854, and died in Des Moines, Iowa, July 16, 1927. His parents, Mr. and Mrs. William Prouty, were removing with their family across country to Iowa in 1855, when Mrs. Prouty died en route. The father with his children located at Knoxville. As a boy Solomon worked on farms in summers and attended common school in winters. He entered Central University, Pella, in 1870 and attended two years, attended Simpson College, Indianola, two years, then returned to Central University from which he was graduated in 1877. The fall of 1876, during his junior year in college, he won first prize in the state oratorical contest at Cedar Rapids, and the following spring he represented Iowa in the inter-state oratorical contest at Madison, Wisconsin, where he won second prize. For the next four years he was professor of Latin in Central University. During that time, in 1879, when only twenty-five years old, he was elected representative from Marion County and served in the Eighteenth General Assembly, in which he advocated abolishing railway passes and was active in legislation along educational and progres-

sive lines. He was admitted to the bar in 1882 and practiced at Pella until 1892 when he removed to Des Moines and formed a partnership with Ira M. Earle. In 1898 he was elected district judge and served the following four years. In 1902 he became a candidate for the Republican nomination for Congress, but in a closely contested campaign, lost to the then incumbent, J. A. T. Hull. In 1904 he was again a candidate in a no less strenuous campaign, and again lost to Captain Hull. Both of these campaigns were in primaries in Polk and most of the other counties in the district, conducted under party rules. Besides his law practice Mr. Prouty had engaged extensively in commercial lines. The Des Moines Knitting Company and the Des Moines Lumber Company were two of the several concerns in which he was interested. He became a large manufacturer of walnut lumber, and an extensive rice grower. He was financially successful. In 1908 he again became a candidate for Congress, contesting the nomination with Congressman Hull under the new primary law, but again lost. In 1910 he contested with Mr. Hull for the fourth time and this time won in the primaries, and won in the election over his Democratic opponent, Clint L. Price. In 1912 he had no opposition for renomination, and was re-elected, this time his Democratic opponent again being Mr. Price. He was an active, progressive and useful congressman, but declined further service. His later years were spent looking after his business interests and in retirement.

JOEL MILO FENN was born in Marietta, Ohio, August 9, 1844, and died at Murray, Iowa, May 7, 1914. His parents removed with their family to the vicinity of Salem, Henry County, Iowa, in 1855. Here the son obtained his education in common and normal schools, and taught several terms in Henry County. He then removed to near Osceola, Clarke County, and continued teaching a few years when he changed to farming and stock raising. For a few years he was also engaged in the nursery business. He resided in Murray the later years of his life. In 1906 he was elected representative, and was re-elected in 1908, serving in the Thirty-second and Thirty-third general assemblies.

S. W. MOORHEAD was born near Blairsville, Pennsylvania, March 4, 1849, and died in Keokuk, Iowa, August 11, 1927. His education was obtained in common school, in Blairsville Academy, and in Edinboro State Normal School, near Erie. He began teaching school when seventeen years old and followed it for a few years. In 1870 he removed to Batavia, Jefferson County, Iowa, where he published for a time the *Batavia Herald*. While there he taught a class in shorthand both at Batavia and at Mount Pleasant. In 1871 he removed to Afton where he published the *Afton News*. While there part of the time he accompanied Judge McDill on the judicial circuit as court reporter. In 1872 he sold out and went to Council Bluffs as editorial writer on the *Council Bluffs*

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