

George Hamilton Van Houten

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NOTABLE DEATHS

FREDERICK MARION HUBBELL was born at Huntington, Fairfield County, Connecticut, January 17, 1839, and died in Des Moines, Iowa, November 11, 1930. The body was laid away in the family tomb in Woodland Cemetery. His parents were Francis Burritt and Augusta (Church) Hubbell. He was educated in their near-by district school, supplemented by three years in Birmingham, now Derby, High School. In 1855 he came to Des Moines and the next day after he arrived secured a clerical position in the office of P. M. Casady, receiver of the United States land office. In 1856 he went to Sioux City, taking a similar position in the land office there. Later he acted as deputy clerk of court, read law and on April 24, 1858, was admitted to the bar in Sioux City. In 1860 he helped organize Sioux County, but in 1861 returned to Des Moines and took employment in the law firm of P. M. Casady and Jefferson S. Polk and the next year became the junior member of the firm. When Judge Casady retired in 1865 the firm became Polk & Hubbell, and so remained until 1887, during which time it devoted its attention chiefly to financial enterprises and the industrial development of Des Moines. They took over and extended the first street railway in the city, they promoted the building of the railroad from Des Moines to Ames, and the building of the railroad to Adel and Fonda, they led in getting the Wabash Railroad into Des Moines, they built the Des Moines Union Railroad, and the Des Moines Water Works, as well as handled many other large enterprises. In 1867 Mr. Hubbell led in organizing the Equitable Life Insurance Company of Iowa. He served the first year as its secretary, was its president from 1888 to 1907, and from that time until his death, was chairman of its board of trustees. After the dissolution of the firm of Polk & Hubbell in 1887 Mr. Hubbell confined his activities principally to real estate investments in Des Moines, and to their development, being the head of the firm of F. M. Hubbell, Son & Co., Inc., Real Estate. Mr. Hubbell was a great business man, having judgment, foresight, and confidence in Des Moines. He did more for Des Moines in a business way than any other man, and is reputed to have built the greatest personal fortune in Iowa. He was the moving spirit in the building and maintaining of the Home for the Aged in Des Moines and was its president from the time of its organization in 1894 until his death.

GEORGE HAMILTON VAN HOUTEN was born at Rockport, Missouri, February 24, 1847, and died at Lenox, Iowa, October 17, 1930. Burial was in the cemetery at Lenox. His parents removed with their family to Madison County, Iowa, in 1848, to Cass County in 1852 and to Lexington, now an abandoned place about four miles northeast of Bedford, in Taylor County, Iowa, in 1855. He attempted to enlist in the Union Army several times in 1863, but was rejected because of his youth, but

on January 1, 1864, he enlisted in Company E, Fourth Missouri Cavalry, and was mustered out July 5, 1865. He had but limited opportunities for securing an education, but improved them to advantage. He taught school, preached some, but early engaged in farming, gardening and stock raising, and later became a nurseryman at Lenox. Horticulture greatly occupied his attention. For twenty-five years he was secretary of the Southwestern Iowa Horticultural Society, and was secretary of the Iowa State Horticultural Society from 1887 to 1890, and from 1896 to 1899 inclusively. He was a member of the Board of Trustees of Iowa State Agricultural College from 1889 to 1892. In 1891 he was nominated by the Republican party for lieutenant governor, along with Hiram C. Wheeler for governor, but they were defeated by Horace Boies and S. L. Bestow. In 1893 he was in the United States revenue service, his duties taking him to the Hawaiian Islands and to Alaska. In 1895 he was elected representative and was re-elected in 1897, serving in the Twenty-sixth and Twenty-seventh general assemblies. In 1906 he was again elected representative and served in the Thirty-second General Assembly. In his later years he became a world traveler, circumnavigating the globe and visiting many nations and countries of the world. He visited Palestine and Egypt at different times, making his last visit there when over eighty years of age. He had been farmer, soldier, school-teacher, preacher, nurseryman, editor, real estate dealer, politician, federal revenue officer, legislator, traveler and lecturer. His radio lectures from the Shenandoah stations on his travels made his voice familiar to many thousands.

JOHN R. PRIME was born in Utica, New York, July 4, 1847, and died in Minneapolis, Minnesota, May 24, 1923. His burial was in Woodland Cemetery, Des Moines, Iowa. In 1855 he was with his parents in their removal to Jonesville, Wisconsin, and in 1857 to Mitchell County, Iowa. Here he grew to manhood, being educated in public school and in Cedar Valley Seminary, Osage. He enlisted from the town of Mitchell, Mitchell County, February 15, 1864, in Company K, Twenty-seventh Iowa Infantry. July 15, 1865, he was transferred to Company K, Twelfth Iowa Infantry, and was mustered out January 20, 1866. He returned to Mitchell County and was appointed deputy county recorder. In 1875 he was elected county auditor, and by re-elections served until 1887. In 1878 he joined the Iowa National Guard and was rapidly promoted until he became a major, and in 1884 was assistant inspector general. From February 1, 1894, to February 1, 1896, during Governor Jackson's administration, he was adjutant general. He was largely accredited with the management of state authority in handling the so-called Kelly's Army in Council Bluffs and on across the state. September 14, 1899, he was commissioned major of the Forty-second Regiment U. S. Volunteers, and commanded companies E, F, G and H. He was in the Philippines from December 1, 1899, to June 27, 1901, and commanded the regiment part of the time, being mustered out and honorably discharged on this latter date. In 1918 he removed to Minneapolis.

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