

James Robert Hanna

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Board of Education in 1909 Governor Carroll appointed him a member and he held the position until 1925, being president of the board the last eleven years of his service. In 1917 Grinnell College conferred on him the degree of LL.D. He was a member of the Board of Regents of Columbia College, Dubuque, at the time of his death. He stood high in the estimation of those associated with him in his profession, in business, and in the educational field.

OTIS EZRA SMITH was born near New Albany, Indiana, August 16, 1853, and died in Indianola, Iowa, May 11, 1931. His parents, Joseph and Jeanette Casey Smith, removed in 1860 with their family to Camp Point, Illinois, and in 1862 to near Ashawa, Polk County, Iowa. Otis Ezra entered Simpson College, Indianola, in 1874. Varying his work in college with teaching, he was graduated from Simpson in 1879. He then taught at different places for a few years, farmed two seasons in Dallas County, after which he served as superintendent of schools at the town of Monroe for four years, was in North Des Moines High School eight years, was superintendent of Shenandoah schools six years, and of Indianola schools twenty-one years, retiring in 1924. He taught in summer institutes in both Iowa and Nebraska and for several years in Simpson College. For eleven years, ending January 1, 1918, he was secretary of the Iowa State Teachers Association. He was a member of the Educational Board of Examiners, and in his later life for a time had charge of the placement bureau in the office of the state superintendent of public instruction. Besides the high character of his professional work as an educator, he was outstanding as a Sunday School teacher, as a churchman and as a citizen.

JAMES ROBERT HANNA was born in Geneseo, Illinois, June 12, 1866, and died in Des Moines, Iowa, February 24, 1931. His parents were James Steel and Hattie Louise (Hunt) Hanna, who removed with their family to Colfax, Iowa, in 1870. Owing to his mother's death and the scattering of the family, James R. was put on his own resources at the age of thirteen. He rode cattle ranges in Nebraska, worked as a farm hand and early began teaching country school. The Western Normal College, Shenandoah, Iowa, granted him the degree of B. S. in 1890, and Highland Park College, Des Moines, gave him the degree of A. B. in 1892, A. M. in 1898, and LL. D. in 1916. He became a teacher in Highland Park College, was at the head of the English department, and later was dean of liberal arts, terminating his active work there in 1910. He was a trustee of the Des Moines Library board from 1906 to 1910. He was a prominent advocate of the commission plan of government for Des Moines, and was a candidate for commissioner in the first election under that plan, but was defeated. However, in the second election under that plan, 1910, he was elected mayor, and served from 1910 to 1916. For a time he was president of the Euclid Avenue State Bank, and was a member of the Municipal Water Works board. He lectured extensively on prohibition and on municipal government.

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