

## Benjamin Franklin Allen

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## NOTABLE DEATHS

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BENJAMIN FRANKLIN ALLEN was born at Salem, Indiana, April 27, 1829, and died at Hollywood, California, April 14, 1914. The body was cremated and the ashes placed in the family lot in Woodland cemetery, Des Moines. He came to Des Moines in 1848, bringing several thousand dollars with him and began active and extensive business operations. He early exhibited great talent as a business man. With Jonathan Lyon, he at once entered the general mercantile business on the corner of Second and Vine streets. In 1850 with Charles Van he built a steam sawmill at the south end of the old Coon River bridge. There was a great quantity of good timber near, especially black walnut, and they had a big business. In 1851 he and R. W. Sypher purchased a steamboat at St. Louis and put it in the Des Moines River traffic. In 1855 he established a bank and soon obtained an immense business. He successfully came through the wildcat banking period of 1855 to 1858, maintaining his credit and winning recognition as one of the leading bankers of the West. In 1860 he was a member of the city council. In 1865 he organized the first gas company of Des Moines. The same year with others he organized the Hawkeye Insurance Company. He became a stockholder and director in the Rock Island railroad and assisted it to reach Des Moines in 1867. In 1869 he built on Grand Avenue the most magnificent residence in Iowa, later and now the mansion of Mr. F. M. Hubbell. The same year he was elected to the state senate and served in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth General Assemblies and was influential in securing the legislation providing for the new Capitol building. In 1871 he organized the Des Moines Water Company. In 1874 he went to Chicago and took over the Cook County National Bank. Here he met disaster, the failure swallowing up his entire fortune, including his Des Moines properties. Soon thereafter he went to Southern California where he was interested for a time in fruit growing, had an important position supervising forestry service in California for the Federal Government for some years, but for several years of his later life, lived in retirement. He is credited with doing more toward developing the city of Des Moines in its early history than any other one man.

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BERNARD MURPHY was born at Brookline, Massachusetts, September 24, 1847, and died at Vinton, Iowa, February 28, 1918. He came with his parents to Poweshiek County, Iowa, in 1859, where they located on a farm about four miles south-west of Belle Plaine. He worked on farms in this neighborhood and in the south part of Benton County until 1867 when he went to Vinton and commenced to learn the printer's trade. Remaining there until 1870 he went to Des Moines and was

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