

Sheldhal, where he operated a grocery. In 1887 when the Northwestern Railroad was built he left Sheldhal and helped to establish the town of Slater, where he helped organize the first bank, and continued to live the balance of his life, holding prominent positions of public trust in the affairs of the town. Elected to the 21st and the 22nd General Assemblies of the state, he had a shaping hand in the establishment of the Old Soldier's Home in Marshalltown. Since 1923 he has served the House of Representatives continuously as doorkeeper. In 1927 he was elected State Commander of the Iowa Department of the G. A. R., and in 1936, was elected National Grand Commander. A member of the Lutheran Church, he was one of twelve men who, in 1890 at St. Paul, organized the United Norwegian Lutheran Church.

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JOHN PARKER RISLEY, State Commander of the Iowa Department of the G.A.R., died March 27, 1938 in Des Moines, Iowa. He was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, August 30, 1846, and was brought to Iowa by his parents in 1856 when they settled in Clinton County. He first enlisted in the Civil War by running away to join the 75th Illinois Infantry, but was discovered by his parents and returned home. A few days later he succeeded in joining the 20th Iowa Infantry, in which, together with the 29th Iowa, he served throughout the remaining two years of the war. Following the war he engaged in farming and the grocery business until 1915, when he was appointed chief oil inspector for the state. In 1922 he was appointed adjutant general of the Iowa G.A.R., also assistant adjutant general of the national G.A.R., in charge of the records of the Iowa G.A.R. veterans. In this office he continued for fifteen years, until June, 1937, when he was elected state commander of the Iowa G.A.R.

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W. F. SEVERA, business man and philanthropist, died in Cedar Rapids March 29, 1938. Born on September 3, 1853, in Chrudim, then in Austria, now Czechoslovakia, he came to the United States at the age of fifteen in 1868. Locating first at Cedar Rapids, then at Belle Plaine, he returned to the former city in 1880 to establish a successful pharmaceutical business. In 1903 he founded a wholesale drug company bearing his name that has been eminently successful. In addition to his drug interests he dealt in real estate, founded the Bohemian American Savings Bank, which later became the American Trust and Savings Bank, and was also one of the founders of the Iowa Electric Power and Light Company. As notable as his business enterprise was, his interest in the welfare of those of his native country and the aid he offered them is equally noteworthy. He established the Council of Higher Education of American Students of Czech Extraction which had its first headquarters in Cedar Rapids. On the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of this council he was presented with the Order of the White Lion to America by Thomas G. Masaryk, President of the Czechoslovak Republic.

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