

NOTABLE DEATHS.

DR. THEODORE DETAR, who died in Florida, November 27, was a pioneer of Boone County, Iowa, having settled in Boonesboro in 1854. He was Captain of Company "D," 32d Iowa Volunteers, during the war, and lost a leg at the battle of Nashville. He was a kind and genial neighbor, a steadfast friend, an excellent physician, and one of the bravest soldiers that ever went to the front. He was nearly 67 years of age.

JUDGE MARTIN D. McHENRY died at Louisville, Ky., on the 12th of December. He was a member of the Kentucky Legislature several times, before he removed to Des Moines, in 1856. He was a prominent lawyer in central Iowa for many years. In 1885 he was appointed Receiver of the United States Land Office, at the Capital. He was a pronounced Democrat and Prohibitionist, and a man highly esteemed by all who knew him. At the time of his death he had reached the advanced age of 87.

MRS. SUMNER B. HEWETT.—This excellent lady, who had a large acquaintance in this State, died from an attack of the prevailing influenza, at her residence in Santa Barbara, California, on the 27th day of December last. Mrs. Hewett was born at Bluehill, Maine, December 9, 1827. She was married to Mr. Hewett at the same place, October 22, 1854. The couple came to Iowa in February, 1855, settling on a farm a mile and a half northwest of the present city of Eagle Grove. Mr. Hewett was one of the proprietors who laid out the town at the time the N. W. Ry. reached that locality. He held the office of Judge of Wright County, and was at one session of the Legislature one of the Secretaries of the State Senate. He also served a term in the House and was for many years one of the State Agricultural Board. For a long time in pioneer days this was one of the most hospitable homes in northwestern Iowa, where the lone wayfarer was always sure of a hearty welcome, and more especially during a winter blizzard. Mrs. Hewett held the office of Postmistress many years, beginning when the mail was carried on horseback once a week, and continuing until it came several times a day by the railroad. A few years ago Mr. Hewett built a residence at Santa Barbara, where they have since spent their winters. They are remembered with great respect and esteem by all who knew them.

ERASTUS G. MORGAN, one of the pioneer settlers of Fort Dodge, died in Chicago on the 4th of October. He was born in Ontario County, N. Y., January 31, 1829, and removed to Fort Dodge in 1855. He built the first brick house in Fort Dodge the next season. In 1857 he was elected County Treasurer, holding the office two terms. He was for many years a trustee of the Hospital for the Insane at Independence, and was an efficient member of the building committee during the period of the erection of the first buildings. He was one of the organizers, and afterward cashier and president, of the First National Bank of Fort Dodge. In 1877 Mr. Morgan was deputy Treasurer of State under Hon. G. W. Bemis, and afterwards for many years Secretary of the Board of Railroad Commissioners. He was an excellent business man, and filled with ability and fidelity the various important positions conferred upon him.

HON. JEREMIAH H. MURPHY died at his Washington residence, on the 11th of December, 1893. He was born in Lowell, Mass., February 19, 1835. In 1849 his father moved his family to Fond du Lac County, Wisconsin, and in 1852 settled in Iowa County, in this State, on a claim lying near Old Man's creek. Jeremiah Murphy was then seventeen years of age, a strong, energetic lad, and with a younger brother to drive the two yoke of oxen, they broke up 80 acres of prairie the first summer. In the winter following, the boys made enough rails and stakes to build an old-fashioned "worm fence" around a quarter section of the new farm. In 1854 Jeremiah entered the Law Department of the State University, at Iowa City, and completed a three years course. He then secured a position in the law office of William Smyth, of Marion, and a few months later was admitted to practice. He soon after formed a partnership with H. M. Martin, of Marengo, where the firm carried on a successful business for nine years, when Mr. Murphy removed to Davenport. He was always an ardent Democrat, and was a delegate from Iowa to the Democratic National Convention in 1864 and again in 1868. In 1873 he was elected to the State Senate, from Scott County, serving four years. In 1876 he was nominated for Congress against the veteran Republican leader, Hon. Hiram Price, but was defeated at the election. In 1881 Mr. Murphy was again the Democratic candidate, and this time was elected to Congress, serving four years. His principal work in that body was the promotion of the Hennepin canal scheme, for the success of which he worked with untiring zeal. He never ceased his labor until an appropriation was secured for that great project which is to connect Lake Michigan with the Mississippi river. He won a national reputation as the chief promoter of the Hennepin canal, and lived to see the great work inaugurated by act of Congress.

HON. SAMUEL A. RUSSELL, one of the well known pioneers of Washington county, Iowa, died at the home of his son in Nebraska, September 28. He was born in Baltimore, Md., November 21, 1816, went to Ohio when a young man and read law with Edwin M. Stanton, afterwards Lincoln's War Secretary during the rebellion. In 1846 he was elected to the Ohio Legislature as a Whig and served two terms. In 1850 he settled in Washington county, Iowa, and in 1853 was elected to the Legislature. In 1856 he was chosen one of the Presidential Electors on the Republican ticket. When the rebellion broke out he raised a company of which he was made captain and joined the 25th regiment; but was compelled to resign the first year on account of failing eyesight. He was again elected to the Legislature in 1863 and acquired an unenviable notoriety by making an abusive attack upon Annie Wittenmeyer, the grand woman who had charge of the sanitary work for Iowa soldiers in the field. The *Washington Press* says of this singular man: "Though a man of the most violent passions, irascible, abrupt, severe, he yet had a kind heart and lots of good streaks and traits. He was loyal to friends, a good lover and an equally good hater. One has to pity with a sore heart the sad life of the lonely old man. In his prime, he was a holy terror in debate. His wit had rattlesnake fangs, and when he struck an adversary in discussion, not even whisky could save him from the effects of Russell's awful bite."

BENTON J. HALL, of Burlington, died at his home on the 5th of January. He was the only son of Hon. J. C. Hall, who was one of the ablest legislators and lawyers in Iowa thirty years ago. The son graduated from Miami University in 1855, and at once began his law studies in his father's office. He was admitted to practice in all the courts of the State in 1857. He was City Solicitor of Burlington when a young man, and in 1872 was elected to the lower house of the Iowa Legislature. He took a prominent part in the revision of the statutes and the enactment of the Code of 1873. In 1881 he was elected to the Senate and during his term was recognized as one of the ablest members of that body. In 1884 he was nominated for Congress and elected, being the first Democratic Representative from that District in thirty years. In 1886 he was appointed by President Cleveland, Commissioner of Patents and conducted the affairs of that office with distinguished ability to the end of his term. The Burlington *Hawkeye* says of him: "Among men of his own years, he was universally accorded the highest station as a lawyer, citizen, statesman and gentleman; by the men of younger years, who grew up from boyhood under his own eye, he was looked up to as a model of every ennobling grace of mind and character. As a lawyer he was distinguished for his discriminating and logical mind. He was thoroughly grounded in law, and at the bar stood pre-eminent. He always treated an opponent with courtesy; bitterness had no place in his heart, or public utterances. Mr. Hall was learned in geological lore, and assisted at one time in the prosecution of one of the most valuable geological surveys ever made in Iowa. He also contributed largely to the preparation of the published records." He was in the full vigor of his intellectual powers when prostrated by the illness which terminated his life at the age of fifty-nine.

HON. HAWKINS TAYLOR, a well known pioneer lawmaker of Iowa, died at his residence in Washington, D. C., on the 15th of November. He was born in Barren County, Ky., November 15, 1811, and died on his eighty-second birthday. In 1836 he came to Iowa, which was then a part of Wisconsin Territory, and settling in Lee County, was one of the founders of the town of West Point. In 1838 he was chosen to the House of the first Territorial Legislature of Iowa. In 1857 he became Mayor of Keokuk, and was instrumental in projecting many important public enterprises for building up that city. He was a delegate from Iowa to the convention at Chicago which nominated Mr. Lincoln for the Presidency in 1860. He was appointed Postoffice Inspector for Kansas by President Lincoln in 1863, and held this position until 1865. During this time he also served on the Commission with Judge Charles Sherman, the brother of Senator Sherman, and Colonel Russell, who were appointed to settle the claims preferred against the Government by the Home Guards of Missouri. In 1868 he removed to Washington, D. C., where he remained until his death. Hawkins Taylor probably had a wider acquaintance with Iowa men and Iowa history, than any other man living, with the exceptions of Theodore S. Parvin and George G. Wright. He never lost his interest in our State, and has written historical sketches of early days in Iowa for the public journals for more than thirty years. It is known to his friends that he had a large amount of manuscript ready for the press before his death, relating to his recollection of Iowa men and affairs of pioneer days. It is to be hoped that some

arrangement may be made for the publication of these valuable writings, that will preserve them for history in the future.

GEN. DATUS E. COON, a distinguished Iowa soldier, was accidentally killed near San Diego, California, on the 17th of December. He was an old time editor in Iowa, having started the first paper in Mitchell county, in 1855. In 1857 he established the first paper published at Mason City. When the rebellion broke out he was authorized by Gov. Kirkwood to raise a company for the Second Iowa Cavalry. He was commissioned captain of Company I, was soon after promoted to Major, and finally became Colonel of that famous regiment. He was a gallant and able officer, winning the confidence of his men, as well as that of his superiors in command, and was brevetted Brigadier General before the close of the war. He was a member of the provisional legislature of Alabama during the reconstruction period, and was afterwards appointed Consul to Babaca, Cuba, by President Hayes: In 1878 he went to San Diego, as superintendent of the Chinese Exclusion Law, where he was living at the time of his tragic death, by the accidental discharge of a revolver in the hand of a friend.

PHOEBE K. MERICLE, one of the earliest settlers in northwestern Iowa, died at her home in Webster county in October last. She was born near Binghamton, N. Y., November 11, 1820. She was married to Jacob Mericle in 1841. In the spring of 1849 the young couple started west to make a new home. They traveled by canal and steamboat by the Ohio and Mississippi rivers to St. Louis, and thence up to Keokuk. From there they hired a team to convey them to the "Raccoon Forks," where they found but two families living on the site of the future capital of the State. They went up the Des Moines valley to the mouth of Boone river, reaching that point on the first of May, 1849. There was but one other family living north of Boone county at the time they settled at this place. The country was as new and wild as when Columbus discovered America. Buffalo, elk, deer, panthers and wolves were its only occupants, besides the Indians. The streams swarmed with beaver, otter and mink. The nearest mill was at Three Rivers, in Warren county. The only teams in that new country were oxen, three yoke of them making the ordinary road or breaking team. The Indians were lawless and helped themselves to any of the property of the few white settlers to which they took a fancy. The whites were powerless to prevent any of these outrages. It took a courageous woman in those days to face the dangers of the frontier settlements; but Mrs. Mericle was courageous and never flinched when great perils surrounded them. It is one of the lasting reproaches to our Government that the Mericle family were dispossessed of their homestead which had been settled upon by them long before it was surveyed. They were granted a patent, the highest title the Government can give to its public land, but the courts set it aside and by an act of infamy dispossessed the honest settlers and conveyed it to the grantees of a foreign corporation. The Mericles beaten after half a lifetime of expensive litigation, were driven from their home and impoverished in their old age. "Mother Mericle" passed away after a heroic, almost life-long struggle with hardships and wrongs which embittered her last days.

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