

## NOTABLE DEATHS.

CHARLES PITKIN BIRGE was born January 8, 1835, in Franklin Mills (now Kent), O.; he died at Keokuk, Iowa, Oct. 23, 1903. His parents had removed from Connecticut to Ohio in 1834. Charles remained at home attending school until his father removed to Aurora, O., in 1845. He attended school during the winter of '50-'51 at Oberlin, O., where he boarded with the publisher of the town paper, spending much time in the printing-office where he learned to set type. Up to the year 1856 he was employed in various mercantile establishments as clerk, having lived in several towns on the lower Mississippi river and in Arkansas. He settled in Keokuk in 1856, where he engaged in the wholesale grocery business on Fourth street, with C. A. Kellogg as his business partner. The firm became one of the most successful and widely known in southeastern Iowa. In 1861 he joined the City Rifles, a company of home soldiers whose muster roll included such names as Noble, Belknap, Worthington, McDowell, Bruce and Hillis, the most of whom became distinguished during the civil war. Mr. Birge gave much time and effort to the establishment of the Keokuk Public Library, and was one of the first vice-presidents of the Association. He served on the city board of education six years, when he was appointed commissioner of Prison Labor for Iowa, by Gov. Gear. He was also prominent in the efforts which were made in the later seventies to improve the navigation of the Mississippi river. He was one of the founders and vice-president for many years of the Keokuk Savings Bank. He presented to the city his residence as a Home for the Aged. He gave to the city a beautiful drinking fountain which stands in Rand Park. The Keokuk Public Library contains a number of valuable medallions and casts which he presented to that institution. He presented to the State Historical Department, not long before his death, a rare collection of silver medals which had been given by the U. S. Government to Indian Chiefs in the west, but which had been acquired by him during his business life, together with several other articles of lesser value. He had also been an indefatigable collector of material relating to the Battle of Athens, Mo., which will some day prove of great use to the historian. Personally, he was a genial companion, and an excellent man every way. Works for the benefit of the public and for the diffusion of knowledge always enlisted his best efforts. In the truest sense of the word he was a philanthropist. The Keokuk papers of Oct. 24, 1903, contain eloquent tributes to his merits as a citizen and a man.

GIDEON SMITH BAILEY was born June 3, 1809, near Louisville, Ky.; he died at Vernon, Van Buren county, Iowa, Nov. 5, 1903. His death removes the last surviving member of our first territorial legislature. His early youth was spent in Indiana. There were no public schools at that day, but he improved every opportunity to learn, and at eighteen was himself teaching school. With a little help from his father, and by splitting rails and doing other work for his board, he secured the means to study medicine. In 1832 he began the practice of his profession in Charlestown, Ill. The Lincoln family was among his patrons and he attended Abraham Lincoln's father in his last illness. In 1837 he came to Iowa and settled at Vernon on the claim that became the farm where he lived for over 66 years. He was a member of the house in the first (1838-9) and second (1839-40) territorial legislatures; a member of the council in the third (1840-1) and fourth (1841-2); a member of the first constitutional convention in 1844; a member of the senate in the seventh and eighth state legislatures (1858-60). He declined the governorship of the Territory, tendered by President Polk. In 1845 he was appointed U. S. Marshal for Iowa, a very important position in that early day, entailing an immense amount of

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