
FRANCIS MARION DRAKE.

A daring pioneer, a dashing soldier and leader of armed men, a far-seeing business man and financier, a successful builder and operator of railroads, the founder and generous patron of a university, the Governor of this great commonwealth—withal a philanthropist and Christian gentleman—such was the eminent citizen whose loss the State sustained when Francis Marion Drake on Friday, Nov. 20, 1903, obeyed Death's inevitable and irrevocable summons.

General Drake's character and career were far from the ordinary, regarded from the point of view of his achievements, although looked at from the view point of the manner and conditions of his life, they were largely typical of the life and careers of the great majority of his fellow citizens. He was blessed with parents of stout and rugged character and high purposes who thoroughly inculcated the lessons of industry, thrift, courage and high-mindedness. His infancy and boyhood were passed on the frontier and his mind and character were moulded amidst the hardships and dangers of the pioneer's life. Two journeys across the plains during the excitement of the gold discoveries, with Indian attacks and constant privations; shipwreck in the Pacific on his way home; these experiences early taught him many valuable lessons and developed his traits of character such as the power to do and command and to make generous and heroic sacrifices for the sake of others' welfare.

He had hardly got started in business here in Iowa when Lincoln's call for volunteers stirred his patriotic soul. Enlisting as a private he steadily rose higher and higher in responsible commands by the sheer force of merit, by deeds and demonstrated ability to command—until a grievous wound cut short his active army service. He was a real soldier. Attention to duty, the faithful and successful performance of every sort of task assigned him characterized

his conduct as well as courageous acts and daring deeds when the battle was on. It was this combination of qualities that won him his star. He had the true commander's eye for he was quick to search and see the enemy's weak point; and there he aimed his blows quick and hard. His was not a Fabian policy. Once he knew his ground and his men it was forced marches and sudden onslaughts before his foes could collect their wits and their forces.

Into business General Drake carried the same principles of action and his success was again equally eminent. He was not much given to talking. He studied his surroundings. He looked abroad into other states and perceived the nature of industrial development; and he was quick to discern the immense possibilities here in Iowa. But he not only foresaw what probably would happen, he proceeded forthwith to make things happen and he entered upon his successful career as a projector, builder and operator of railroads that now form so important a part of the vast network of arteries in our State and nation. From these and many other successful business ventures General Drake amassed a substantial fortune which in very large measure he devoted to philanthropy, to education and to his church. These objects of benevolence were his constant and chief delight.

He lived a quiet, unostentatious life at Centerville among the friends and neighbors of a life time. He never cared for the pomp and circumstance of wealth. He was modest and unobtrusive in his giving. It was with no suggestion or desire on his part that the educational institution that he founded at Des Moines was given his name. Although the chief donor to the University he never presumed on that fact in his relations with the faculty and the Trustees—rather he seemed to have been made more reluctant to interpose his opinions lest more weight than usual would not un-naturally be accorded them. An interesting instance of his modesty was his refusal to permit some of his friends to correct a perversion of the history of a battle he fought with

marked success, whereof his superior officer took the credit although absent and had given directions that would have led to contrary results, and Drake's name was unmentioned in the dispatches.

But while General Drake was modest and unassuming he who presumed too much on his graciousness, he who mistook his desire to please for lack of decision, very soon awoke to the fact that there was a great deal of oak and iron in his constitution. He was Governor while he occupied the office of chief executive. On matters chiefly or wholly political in character he consulted freely with his friends and coworkers; but when a matter touched him closely he shouldered responsibility promptly and exercised power vigorously. He could not be whipped about by the varying winds and waves of sentiment. One day at the dinner table of a well-known citizen in an eastern Iowa city some prominent Iowans fell into a lively discussion of the propriety of a then recent commutation of a death to a life sentence, by Governor Drake. He listened to the numerous unfavorable comments for some time in stern silence; but finally he suddenly blazed forth, bringing his clenched fist down on the table with a bang that made the china jump—"I never believed in hanging boys and I never will." The discussion was ended.

A GREAT MEDAL.

A bronze medal in the George E. Roberts Collection in the State Historical Department has a very interesting history. It was awarded to Joseph Francis, by act of Congress in 1888. He was a Massachusetts philanthropist who spent the better part of his life in devising plans and appliances for saving the lives of those who go down to the sea in ships. One of his inventions was the well-known life-car by

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