

He was at an earlier period connected with the building of the blind asylum at Vinton, and with two or three of the university buildings at Iowa City. He was also occasionally employed in the erection of county buildings elsewhere in the State. The people of Johnson county sent him to the Iowa house of representatives, where he served two regular terms—1864 and 1866. As a law maker he was at once alert, courageous, clear-headed and honest. Always courteous, never posing, doing nothing for mere show or effect, few men have ever so thoroughly commanded the respect and confidence of their associates in legislation. It was greatly due to his experience and energetic, judicious action, that the commissioners were able in the next decade to secure the large appropriations necessary to carry forward the capitol to completion. No suspicion of seeking self-aggrandizement in legislation, or in awarding public contracts, ever attached to his reputation. As a man of affairs, possessing rare executive ability, and the most exact knowledge of every department of his profession as a builder, Mr. Finkbine proved himself equal to the great responsibilities which devolved upon him. His knowledge was both minute and extensive, and he was able to meet every exigency that arose in the construction of our beautiful capitol. No structure ever erected in the State has evoked to such an extent the spontaneous pride of our people. It is the proud boast of everybody that not a dollar was wasted or stolen during the construction of that great work.

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CAPT. J. E. WILKINS was born near Canal Fulton, Wayne county, Ohio, April 5, 1830; he died at Carl Junction, Mo., June 9, 1901. He and his wife made the overland journey to California in 1853, where they remained three years, after which they returned to Geneseo, Ill. During the civil war Mr. Wilkins enlisted in the 112th Illinois Infantry, in which he served three years as a private soldier. He was captured at the battle of Riceville with a part of his regiment and sent to Libby prison. He was one of the famous party of ninety-seven who tunneled out of the prison and escaped, but before he reached the Union lines he was recaptured and sent to Macon, Ga. On the way thither he leaped from the train with other prisoners and again escaped. This time he was successful and reached the Union lines, but was so emaciated and broken in health that he was sent home on sick leave. After some months he returned and was promoted to a captaincy. He was one of the last Union soldiers mustered out of the service. He removed to Iowa in 1870, and settled first in Victor, a few years later coming to Des Moines which was afterwards his residence. He established "The Fair Store" on the east side of the river in company with C. B. Dockstader, another soldier of the civil war. The partnership lasted seventeen years, and at its expiration he established a department store on West Walnut street, which was mainly in charge of his sons. Capt. Wilkins had made investments in certain zinc deposits near Carl Junction, Mo., and was visiting that point when he met with an accident which caused his death. In coming from the train he fell or stumbled over some obstacle from which he received injuries that rendered him insensible and from which he died the second morning afterward. Capt. Wilkins was a man of wide acquaintance and highly esteemed by all who knew him. He was a member of Kinsman Post, G. A. R., of Des Moines, and also of the Iowa Commandery of the Military Order of the Loyal Legion. At the time of his death he was president of the Union of American War Prisoners. His sudden death was widely deplored. The public journals of Des Moines published elaborate notices of his life and patriotic services.

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DR. A. C. ROBERTS was born in Queensberry township, Warren county, N. Y., January 15, 1830; he died at Ft. Madison, Iowa, July 27, 1901. As a boy he spent much of his youth in hard work on his father's farm, obtain-

ing his education mainly from the common schools. Later he attended a high school at Adrian, Mich., but most of his study was at home. He taught in the common schools previous to entering upon his medical studies. He graduated from the medical college at Ann Arbor, Mich., in 1854. He came to Iowa in 1859 and settled in Ft. Madison where he resided until his death. He was employed as a contract surgeon in 1862 in the government hospital at Keokuk, afterwards receiving the appointment of surgeon in the Twenty-first Missouri Infantry. He was mustered out with his regiment in 1866. While in the army he also served as brigade and division surgeon. He was present at the battles of Tupelo, Nashville, Fort Blakely and Mobile. He left the army with a proud record. Since the war he has also served as pension surgeon. He founded in 1869 and was thenceforth the owner and editor of *The Ft. Madison Democrat*. *The Keokuk Gate City* speaks of him as follows: "Dr. Roberts was one of nature's noblemen. His stalwart frame was the abiding place of a brave, generous, loyal spirit, the strength of which gave him his commanding place in the community. He was absolutely fearless in his editorials, making no compromise with what he believed was wrong, and never faltering in his battle for what he believed to be right, no matter what the odds against him. His was a kindly nature and he viewed the world with kindly eyes. He was devoted in his loyalty to his friends and to his doctrines, though sometimes it may have worked to his disadvantage. Yet his nature was such that he forgot personal considerations where honesty with his own conscience was involved. His style was dignified and scholarly, and in person he was a fine type of the courtly gentleman of the old school. He leaves behind as a priceless legacy the fragrant memory of a noble life well spent."

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M. T. V. BOWMAN was born at Waterville, Maine, July 6, 1838; he died in the city of Des Moines, August 26, 1901. He attended Waterville and Hallowell academies and other institutions of learning, fitting himself for the profession of teaching. He taught in Ohio and Virginia, and was so employed in the last named state at the time of the John Brown raid. Returning to Maine he taught for a short time in the Hallowell grammar school. At the outbreak of the civil war he enlisted at once and was mustered in as a corporal in the First Maine Cavalry. He served in several non-commissioned offices, but was mustered out in 1862 or '63. In December of the latter year he re-enlisted and was at once promoted to first lieutenant and regimental commissary. His muster-out occurred at Petersburg, Va., August 1, 1865. Col. Bowman's service was active from the start. He was present in many of the great battles in northern Virginia, notably those of Winchester, the second Bull Run and Gettysburg. He was often detailed to the command of scouting parties, and was once for three weeks a prisoner in the hands of guerrillas. After the war he came to this State and settled (1866) in Newton, Jasper county. In 1870 he removed to Des Moines, since which time he has been engaged in the business of insurance and banking. He was one of the charter members of Crocker post, Grand Army of the Republic, and its second commander. He also belonged to the Iowa Commandery of the Military Order of the Loyal Legion, of which he was many years treasurer, and had served on the staffs of Governors Gear and Sherman. He always took a lively interest in educational matters, and for eleven years was a member of the executive board of Des Moines college. He was a man of the highest personal character, a brave and most useful soldier in the civil war, and a genial Christian gentleman whom it was always a pleasure to meet.

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NATHAN HOIT BRAINERD was born in Bridgewater, N. H., January 11, 1818; he died in Iowa City, Iowa, July 31, 1901. He was married in 1840 to Miss Eliza Hatch, of Blanford, Mass., who survives him. After Mr.

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