

“Through all the trials and temptations of life he was faithful to his friends, to his home, to his family, to his country, and to his God. He was more than a learned lawyer or sagacious statesman—he was a good man.”

Materials for his biography are most abundant. They exist, and are easily accessible—in the Debates of the Iowa Constitutional Convention of 1857, in the journals of our State Legislatures of 1858–60, in the proceedings of Congress during his service of twenty years, in a large correspondence which has been carefully preserved, in the files of Iowa newspapers from the time he entered the State, in his printed speeches on many public occasions, and in the recollections of troops of friends. It is to be hoped that these may be utilized by some competent hand in the production of a Life of James F. Wilson worthy of the man and the State and Nation he served so long and so well.

GENERAL J. M. STREET.

Our sketch of the life of this distinguished friend of the Iowa and Wisconsin Indians is from the pen of his son, William B. Street, who is still living at the advanced age of seventy-five years. Though General Street was stationed but a short time in what is now the State of Iowa, his relations with the Indians living west of the Mississippi were intimate and close for many years. No adequate sketch of his life has yet appeared, though he is incidentally mentioned in many works of Indian and Western history, and many papers and official documents from his pen must be filed away in the Indian Bureau at Washington. There is abundant evidence that he was a man of large ability and judicial fairness, honest in his dealings, a genuine philanthropist, devoid of pretense, possessed of the highest moral and physical courage, a chivalrous

Christian gentleman. He thoroughly appreciated the Indians with whom he was so long and so intimately associated, believing them capable of great advancement in the arts of civilization, and of becoming quiet, peaceable citizens. His methods for accomplishing this great result were based upon "The Golden Rule." He won their confidence by kind treatment and exact, unwavering justice. They trusted him implicitly. For many years he acted as a foil to the greed of the rascally Indian traders—and very few of them were not unprincipled rascals—a character which they have constantly maintained, with only here and there an honorable exception, since the time whereof the memory of man runneth not to the contrary. He was a remarkable exception among Indian Agents, so remarkable, in fact, that he—a Whig—enjoyed the highest confidence of President Andrew Jackson. In the face of the hottest clamor for his removal, General Jackson, the bitter partisan, retained him in office throughout his administration, even when his removal was demanded by so great a statesman as General Lewis Cass.

Though from the pen of his own son, the article is fair and impartial, the conclusions of the writer according with those of other people who knew or wrote of General Street. He was a man whose clear head, large experience, and high sense of honor placed him, upon the Indian question, far in advance of his time. But the day is coming, and may not be far away, when justice will be done his memory, for the story of the wrongs of the Indians and of those who labored for them will yet be written. The cut of General Street, which accompanies the article, is copied from an India ink portrait presented by his son to the Historical Department of Iowa. The engraving showing the graves of the Street family and the Indian Chief Wapello, at Agency City, Iowa, is from a photograph by William Stoops of Ottumwa.

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