

Kendrick W. Brown

Captain Kendrick W. Brown was one of those tireless "Knights of the Grip" who played a dynamic role in the growth of his home town and state. There can be little doubt that the successful salesman did much to further the economic growth of Iowa. What is equally important, men like K. W. Brown played a significant role in developing the social, cultural, and religious growth of their home communities. It was given to few men to give so much of themselves for the lasting benefit of others.

Kendrick W. Brown was born in Jefferson County, New York, on July 4, 1842. He responded to Lincoln's first call for volunteers in 1861 and served four years in the army, being wounded several times during his service. He was mustered out as Captain in Company "K" of the 186th New York Volunteer Infantry.

Brown was married in 1866 to Lydia Ann Gates. The young couple came at once to Ames, Iowa, where he became the first grocery merchant. He was shortly enticed to take up salesmanship and in 1872 became a traveling salesman for a New York hat and glove house, in which he continued for forty years.

A charter member of the First Baptist Church in Ames, Captain Brown was widely known throughout Iowa. His three passions were his home, the church, and the furtherance of the cause of temperance in Iowa. It was in the cause of temperance that Captain Brown gained statewide fame, running for Lieutenant Governor of Iowa on the Prohibition ticket in 1906, and for Governor of Iowa on the same ticket in 1908. He garnered 9,118 votes for governor.

His first wife, Lydia, died on February 6, 1885 and he later married Margaret Mitchell. For sixty years K. W. Brown lived in his spacious brick home in Ames. During this period he was identified with every worthwhile enterprise for the upbuilding of the community in which he took great pride.

When Kendrick Brown died on April 30, 1926, he was nearly 84 years old. His wife Margaret, four children, ten grandchildren, and two great grandchildren survived him. His exemplary character won for him a legion of friends and admirers throughout Iowa, scores of whom traveled long distances to attend his funeral.

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