

Standard Form For Members of the Legislature

Office
number?

Name of Representative Rep. Jacob H. Senator Dipson
Jacob H. - Represented Wapello County, Iowa

1. Birthday and place 25 Dec 1832 New Castle County, Delaware

2. Marriage (s) date place

Sarah Ann Vernon 1856

3. Significant events for example:

A. Business _____

B. Civic responsibilities _____

C. Profession Lawyer

4. Church membership Quaker

5. Sessions served 9th, 10th General Assemblies 1862, 1864 - Senate

6. Public Offices 15th, 16th General Assemblies 1874, 1876 - House of Representatives

A. Local _____

B. State Secretary of the Senate 1866

C. National _____

7. Death 1 Jan 1889 Ottumwa, Iowa

8. Children Jesse Benton; two additional children preceded their father in death

9. Names of parents James and (Heseld) Dipson

10. Education *Educated in the public schools in Delaware and the Academy of Milton Durand in Unionville, Pennsylvania*

11. Degrees *He graduated from the law department at the State and National Law School at Congers, New York in 1856.*

12. Other applicable information *Republican, later Independent - He moved to Ottumwa, Iowa in February 1856*

LATEST NEWS ITEMS.

From Tuesday's Daily. R. W. Boyd, Esq., of Eddyville, is attending court.

Wm. Hardesty, of Eddyville, was in the city today.

A little touch of winter and the "Beautiful Snow" has come at last.

Gilmore's packinghouse, Rock Island, Ill., burned yesterday. Loss, \$25,000; insurance \$10,700.

Judge H. C. Ohrt, an old and well known resident of Burlington, died on the 5th inst., aged 63.

The twenty-third annual meeting of the Iowa Horticultural will be held in Des Moines, Jan. 15 17.

Jah Tilling, a member of Co. K, Iowa Cavalry, died at the Soldiers' Home Saturday last, aged 57.

We understand that John Dummer has sold his Fourth street residence to John Gray and proposes to leave town.

Rev. U. R. Walton has been appointed by the Baptist church to do mission work in the city. He is a good man for the place.

A. B. Keith, formerly editor of the Dennison Bulletin, is now city editor of the Des Moines Leader and gets up a good local page.

W. H. H. Asbury has resigned his place as a member of the Soldiers Relief Commission and L. M. Godley was today appointed to fill the place.

Officers raided the Blackstone House, Okaloosa, Saturday night, for gamblers, prostitutes and liquor, and very naturally found them all together and took them in.

Dr. A. O. Williams was today re-elected county physician; Pat Brady, overseer of the poor for Center township, and Dan Harter, janitor at the court house.

Esquires Bickley and Riordan, and Constables King and McKaig have been daily harassed and are now ready for any sort of business in their line. They all have been busily engaged in house-keeping.

A nest of burglars has been broken into at Nevinville. James Stewart, Walter Towne and James Reeves are under arrest and nine watches and revolvers stolen have been recovered at Stewart's residence.

A crayon portrait man, who furnished life sized likenesses for \$4.00, has been doing Okaloosa. He took orders and

DIED.

DIXON—At 10 minutes after 10 o'clock p. m., January 1, 1889, at his home in this city, suddenly passed away, of heart disease, the Hon. J. W. Dixon. He was a prominent citizen of thirty-

two years residence among us, save a two years' residence in Des Moines during that time. He was out about the city, apparently in his usual health, on New Year's day.

The deceased was born in New Castle county, Delaware, Dec. 25th, 1832, and came to this city in February, 1856. He was an attendant at the State and National law school of Poughkeepsie, N. Y., where he graduated in 1856. He was chosen State Senator from this county in 1861; was secretary of the State Senate during the winter of 1865-66, and was elected, from this county, to the Lower House of the Iowa General Assembly in 1875, and again re-elected. He was ex-Governor Gear's opponent for Speaker of the House in a memorable contest which lasted nearly or quite two weeks, the House being in a deadlock.

The deceased was a very talented man. He was a lawyer by profession, but our observation of his life leads us to believe that his profession was never congenial to his tastes. He had many very warm friends who will linger with tenderness about his open grave. An estimable wife and two talented and lovable daughters survive him.

FISHER—At Batavia, Iowa, Dec. 19th, 1888, Mrs. Elizabeth Fisher, in her 77th year.

She was brought up in eastern Ohio, her maiden name Davidson. Her first husband, John R. Wallace, died in 1844. Of her four children one son died in the army and one son and one daughter survive her. In 1853 she married Joseph Fisher, coming with him to Iowa in 1857. They resided for some years near Merfinsburg and moved to Batavia in 1874. Mrs. Fisher was an esteemed member of the Presbyterian church. Many friends will miss her and will sincerely sympathize with the bereaved husband.

KENT—At his home in Adams township of heart disease, January 6th at 4 p. m., John Kent, aged 73 years.

Mr. Kent eat a hearty dinner and was in his usual good health and had stepped out into the front yard to feed the chickens. In a few minutes after he was found dead by one of his little grand children.

A respected citizen; honest and upright in his dealings with his fellow men, and his sudden death causes profound sorrow

THE CITY COUNCIL.

Straighten Out Some Streets in South Ottumwa and Pass a Snow Ordinance.

The city council met Monday evening, the first regular session of 1889. Present—Mayor, Solicitor, Clerk, Aldermen Blake, Burgess, Bohe, Gibbon, Hinsey, Russell, Van Gent, Wilson, Keyboe, Bowles and Pickler.

Hinsey presented a plat for an addition laid off by Hannah Curtis, who desired the council to approve the same and accept the streets and alleys laid out.

Referred to the street committee.

Mrs. Ella Battermore, of Davis county, presented a claim against the city for \$2,000 for damages received by her falling off the bridge abutment the evening of Nov. 27th. Referred to claims committee.

A deed was presented from Carey Inskoop for 6 feet off the south side of lot 23, Taylor & Williams' addition, for street purposes. Referred to street committee.

P. G. Ballingall presented a petition, asking for permission to erect a temporary frame building with iron sheathing, for a lunch house, his outlet near the new depot.

Blake moved to lay on the table, as it would be a violation of the ordinance on fire limits.

W. W. Cory presented the matter for Ballingall, and said that Ballingall had no idea but that the council would grant this privilege. The railroads did not object to it. The building would be removed in eight or ten months at farthest. Ballingall had contracted for the building and had paid \$200 on it, and it was doing a great injustice to him to now deny him this privilege.

Burgess thought the petition ought not to be laid on the table without investigation. Such privileges had been granted heretofore, and if adjacent property owners did not object he would favor granting the prayer of the petition. He moved its reference to the fire committee and Blake agreed to the motion.

Bowles moved that the petition be rejected. Secured by Wilson.

An aye and nay vote was demanded by Burgess, and the vote stood as follows:

Ayes—Burgess, Bowles, Russell, Wilson—1.

Nays—Burgess, Bohe, Hinsey, Keyboe, Pickler, Van Gent, Gibbon—7.

The motion to refer to the fire committee was then carried without opposition. The petition of W. B. Smith was presented with a suitable plat, for the vac-

and adopted. Ayes 7, nays 4. Blake, Gibbons, Pickler and Van Gent voting no.

Dowles brought up the question of the removal of the fence of the base ball club on the South Side.

Keyhoe moved a reconsideration of the vote by which it was ordered removed. Secured by Bowles.

The motion was put and the vote reconsidered.

On Hinsey's motion the resolution was then laid on the table, by a unanimous vote.

The repair of the street in Highland Park near the new school ground was referred to the street committee.

Keyhoe brought up the matter of a dangerous sidewalk in front of the property of W. H. Cooper on North Court street. After considerable discussion it was generally agreed that if the walk was not repaired, to pass a resolution at next meeting ordering a new walk.

The council then adjourned.

WAPELLO COUNTY AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY-DIRECTORS' MEETING.

The board of directors met at Secretary Manning's office, over the postoffice, at 10 o'clock January 4th. Present, E. Johnson, J. W. Garner, T. D. Foster, Geo. Z. Cowan, S. E. Adler, H. L. Hedrick, Wm. Krauer, John Fullen, L. S. Shepard, W. H. Boston, F. W. Simmons.

Mr. John Fullen was called to the chair.

Secretary Manning presented some routine business, allowance of bills, &c. Vice President Newell came in and took the chair.

J. W. Garner and W. H. Boston were elected members of the executive committee, the third member was referred to the next meeting of the board.

The secretary was authorized to attend the state board meeting of the agricultural society at Des Moines next week, the 9th.

Messrs. Adler, Hedrick and Simmons were appointed a committee to check up the treasurer's account for the past year.

The secretary then submitted a report on speed program and the result of the conference at Creston, and was authorized to recommend to the Iowa State Fair

Circuit the same purses. If this can be accomplished Ottumwa will be the central point for the two great Iowa circuits.

The board then elected the following superintendents for the coming year: Homes—L. S. Shepard; assistant, G. Z.

in 1856, was Miss Elma Coffin, a daughter of Thomas C. Coffin, one of the early settlers and builders of Ottumwa, a native of Ohio, and a scion of the famous whalers and sea voyagers of Nantucket, Massachusetts. She and the daughters are the faithful comforters of the Major's declining years.

Hamilton was, in many respects, different from his legal partner, for Williams was ordinarily mild and undemonstrative, while Hamilton was very demonstrative and emphatic in both speech and action, and carried a good deal of vim, sometimes mingled with vinegar, into what he did and said. He was very positive in character, a little dictatorial and somewhat irascible. I thought the Major had some faults, and he had the same opinion of me. We differed materially along certain lines not now necessary to mention. The sometimes spirited interchange of our mutual opinions bred mutual asperities. But I can do him justice all the same, and have endeavored to in this brief portrayal. Besides, the assuaging hand of time has long since effaced and blotted out those asperities, and all the unkind words that were spoken, as effectually as was the blasphemous oath of Uncle Toby (as related by Sterne in the story of *Le Fevre*) which the accusing spirit bore up to Heaven's chancery, and handed in, and upon which, the Recording Angel, as he wrote it down, dropped a tear and blotted it out forever.

Jacob W. Dixon was born in New Castle County, Delaware, in 1832. His father was James Dixon, a prominent man of affairs. His mother was a Heald, a prominent Quaker family of Chester County, Pennsylvania, whose ancestors came with and belonged to the colony of William Penn. He received his preliminary education at the public schools, and at the Academy of the noted Milton Durnal at Unionville, Pennsylvania. He taught school one season and then entered the National Law School of Poughkeepsie, New York, where he remained two years and from which he was graduated with honors. He came to Ottumwa in 1855. In 1856 he married Miss Sarah Ann Vernon, whose ancestors were also Quakers, belonging to the Penn colony. For a period Mr. Dixon and myself were law partners in Ottumwa.

J. W. Dixon was, in many respects, one of the ablest men I have ever known. He had a highly philosophical mind, quick of discernment and inclined to abstruse investigation. He was fond of the natural sciences, took great interest in geology and had a good deal of astronomical knowledge. He was a cogent reasoner, and a clear, concise speaker. He was powerful in denunciation and convincing in argument. He was stubborn in his opinion when once formed, combative, and always a formidable antagonist in any dialectic struggle. Notwithstanding his determined character, he was, nevertheless, a natural diplomat of the first order, and had the opportunity been given, he would have distinguished himself by his diplomatic skill in any court of Europe, and been able to successfully untangle, if the subject were capable of it, the most difficult problems of international affairs.

But with all these gifts, he did not become a great lawyer, nor even aspire to; for the simple reason that while he liked some of its lines, as a whole he did not like the pursuit, and did not apply himself to it with that continuity necessary to exalted success.

In the outset he had been a Republican and an ardent advocate of John C. Fremont, for whose wife his first daughter, Jessie Benton, was named. He was no less ardent for Abraham Lincoln. In the first year of the war he was elected State Senator on the Republican ticket. Wapello had been one of the banner Democratic counties of the State, and he was the first Republican elected to the Legislature from that County. Both of the House members elected, Joseph H. Flint and Thomas D. McGlothlin, were Democrats. He served as Senator in the Ninth and Tenth General Assemblies, and was a leader in both of those bodies.

In 1873, from various causes, he had become dissatisfied with the management and some of the policies of the Republican Party in the State, and was nominated and elected on the Independent ticket as the Representative of Wapello County in the House of the Fifteenth General Assembly, which convened on the Twelfth of January, 1874. The fact that he was elected by the Independents and Democrats as a candidate for Speaker of the House against John H. Gear, indicates the high estimate placed upon his abilities; and the length of that memorable contest, and the strength which Dixon developed, justified the selection, for he commanded strength enough against his Republican opponent to withhold the result, which it was thought at first would be soon and easily gained, on the tie vote of fifty against fifty, for a long period. The House stood, fifty straight Republicans; forty-six Independents; four straight Democrats, the contest finally ending in the election of Mr. Gear. In the fall of 1875 he was again nominated and elected to the House of the Sixteenth General Assembly, which convened on January 10, 1876. In both of these Legislatures he had a prominent place on the most important committees, and was a foremost and influential member.

By thus suffering himself to be the candidate of the Independents and fusionists, opposed to the regular nominees of the Republican Party, his political hold on it became loosened, and he lost that caste necessary to an aspirant within its folds. But he maintained from beginning to end, and with that unconquerable will for which he was distinguished, the correctness of the position he had taken.

He continued to be an independent Republican, but the political mantle was so loosened and public policies and men became so changed that he took thenceforth but little active interest in politics, and in a little more than a decade suddenly died at his home in Ottumwa. Thus passed in his prime one of the strongest characters and one of the ablest men Iowa has produced.

His life had been a fitful one. He had suffered sorrows and disappointments on the way. In the early years he and his wife were left childless by the sudden

death of their two oldest children, and not many years after, he received an injury to his knee, followed by blood poisoning, and for months lingered between life and death, attended by the highest surgeons that could be obtained in that part of the State, suffering such intense agony that the administration of opiates was almost constantly required. At the end of a year he was able to leave his room on crutches, but the final result was a stiff knee, which seriously interfered with his locomotion and ability to exercise, and made him a partial cripple for the remainder of his days. Politically, he failed to reach the highest points his early career presaged, and which he undoubtedly would have reached if he had not faltered in party allegiance. But he bore all these with calm philosophy; and I have often heard him repeat the lines of Pope:

All nature is but art, unknown to thee;
All chance, direction, which thou canst not see;
All discord, harmony, not understood;
All partial evil, universal good;
And spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,
One truth is clear, Whatever is, is right.

He was an incessant reader, and this was the solace of his later years. He was fond of history and books of travel, and of novelists who graphically describe human traits and social conditions as they really are. Of these, Dickens was his especial favorite, and on the wall by the side of his bed, hung a framed portrait of that author. He was kind hearted, indulgent, forgiving, and while intense in contest, cherished no malice, and took real pleasure in doing a favor. A fine sense of humor, a glow of animal spirits, coupled with natural refinement, were a part of his being. He was a free thinker in religion, broad in his views respecting public policies, and had but little faith in severe sumptuary laws that are more honored in the breach than in the observance.

In personal appearance, Mr. Dixon was somewhat striking. He had regular features, a resolute expression, a noble and expansive brow, a well-rounded figure.

Homer Thrall and *John A. Johnson* must have come to Ottumwa about the same time, in 1855. They were both there when I came. Mr. Thrall was a brother of Dr. Seneca B. Thrall, who is lovingly remembered by all those living during his time. Homer Thrall was a partner of J. W. Dixon, under the firm name of Dixon & Thrall. He remained in Ottumwa but a short time, returning to Ohio in 1858.

John A. Johnson was a Kentuckian and came to Ottumwa in 1854. He was a large, fine looking man, rather pompous in manner, and as I thought, rather brow-beating. This last impression I received at the very outset of my career as a young lawyer, for in one of my first cases before a Justice of the Peace, Johnson was on the other side, and as I conceived, endeavored to intimidate me by the superiority of his learning and his aggressive bearing. But I later came to know that, not-