Standard Form For Members of the Legislature

Name of Representative Hall, Benton J. Senator Hall, Benton J. – Represented Des Moines County, Iowa

1. Birthday and place 13 Jan 1835 Oxford, Ohio

2. Marriage (s) date place

Louisa Webb 16 Apr 1857 Burlington, Iowa

3. Significant events for example:

A. Business Admitted to the bar in 1857; member of Des Moines County Bar Association

B. Civic responsibilities

C. Profession Lawyer

4. Church membership Episcopal

5. Sessions served 14th General Assembly 1872 – House of Representatives
19th, 20th General Assemblies 1882, 1884 – Senate

6. Public Offices

A. Local Burlington City solicitor 1850-1871; school board member

B. State Democratic candidate for Iowa Attorney General in 1862, but defeated

C. National Spring 1887 appointed by President Cleveland as commissioner of patents of the United States – served until spring 1889

7. Death 10 Jan 1894 Burlington, Iowa; buried Aspen Grove Cemetery, Burlington, Iowa

8. Children No children

9. Names of parents Jonathan Chapin and Achsah F. (Childs) Hall

Source: Iowa Territorial and State Legislators Collection compiled by volunteers and staff at the State Historical Society of Iowa Library, Des Moines, Iowa.

Hall, Benton J.

10. Education Educated in his primary education at Howe School of Mount Pleasant, Iowa

11. Degrees Attended Knox College, Galesburg, Illinois, later graduated from Miami University, Oxford, Ohio in 1855

12. Other applicable information Democrat

- When he retired from public life he opened a law office in Chicago, he was one of the best equipped patent attorneys in the United States. Failing health forced him to refrain from active business and he returned to Burlington, Iowa
- He came with his father to Burlington, Iowa in 1840, then they settled in Henry County, Iowa, but in a year or two they returned to Burlington.
- After graduating from college he returned to Burlington to study law in his fathers law office for 2 years.
- He was associated in law practice with E. B. Huston and H. N. Baldwin

Source: Iowa Territorial and State Legislators Collection compiled by volunteers and staff at the State Historical Society of Iowa Library, Des Moines, Iowa.

Nall, Benton J.

Sources Log For Legislation Entries

Applicability

Source	Non Applicable	Applicable	Information obtained
Obituary - The Weekly Gazette, Burlington, Iowa, Thurs. Jan. 11, 1894, p. 2, col. 5, 6, 7, 8			
Political Graveyard - www.bioguide.congress.gov			

Source: Iowa Territorial and State Legislators Collection compiled by volunteers and staff at the State Historical Society of Iowa Library, Des Moines, Iowa.

BENTON J. HALL.

HIS LIFE, CHARACTER AND LONG PUBLIC SERVICE.

Death Yesterday Afternoon a Sad and Lasting Shock to the General Public—His Career—The Bar Association Meeting—The Funeral.

The death of Benton J. Hall yesterday afternoon, while not entirely unexpected among his intimate friends, came as a sad and lasting shock to the public at large. Mr. Hall had been troubled with a serious liver complaint for a year past. During his brief residence in Chicago he was under the care of Dr. David, of that city, who told him that he had not longer than a year to live. Whether this ominous information made any fixed impression or not upon Mr. Hall's mind, he came home to Burlington about two months ago cheerful and sprightly as of old, and the friends who met him on the street little dreamed that after a few days they would know him no more on earth.

His ailment was cirrhosis, a disease of the liver. He began failing more rapidly soon after coming home to Burlington and about six weeks ago Drs. J. C. Stone and James Ransom were called to minister to him. He was advised that his condition was very serious and that he had best remain indoors. After that he was not seen again at his old down-town haunts. Dropsy made its appearance, and he grew slowly but steadily worse. He was able to move about the house until the first of the present week, when he suffered a slight hemorrhage. The physicians did not conceal from him his true condition, but continued to do all they could to give him relief. He knew that the end was now approaching rapidly, and he viewed the coming of the shadow with philosophical calmness. Early yesterday morning he suffered a severe hemorrhage, and at 7 o'clock passed into a state of unconsciousness, from which he did not revive.

Like shadows thrown softly from a passing cloud, death fell upon one of our best beloved sons and stilled a great and generous heart, and while his associates in the halls of justice and in the tribunals of men, give expression to their sorrow and lament the loss of a leader, the grieving multitude without these circles must murmur their words of sympathy, must speak the universal grief as they meet in private intercourse. But they speak not of his legal learning, of his political exploits, nor of the overpowering eloquence of a voice that sought the law of reason and fondled the words of the heart, but of that rare and exquisite courtesy, that gracious and gentle manner, and, above all, of that high regard for the bond of the hearthstone, of the sanctity of the home—that hallowed domestic ground on which he trod with the noble woman who so deeply mourns his loss, and the memory of whose love and devotion must bring into her desolate life a halo of peace.

No one had more unbounded sympathy, no one more tender in the expression of the finer impulses and affections that live in the sanctuary of the heart. Many who heard his remarks upon the murder of Garfield at the public meeting held to prepare for the memorial services, felt the reverence and respect. A thousand pities that such words, so finely wrought

[illegible] than any other simple citizen, of Burlington. He was for eight terms city solicitor, for years president of the school board, a member of both houses of the legislature and of congress, and candidate of his party for attorney general and judge of the supreme court.

These all came to him as a favorite of his party and the people, but it can be truly said that they did not come from his self seeking. He could not push himself and he never did. The offices sought him because of his ability and integrity and reliability. In these qualities he was popular, but not in any ability to solicit support for himself. He was not a success as a politician or wire-puller.

HIS SPEECH ON HENDRICKS.

That the man, who is now naught but a memory, may be better understood and appreciated, even by those who met him in the closer association of neighbor and friend, these extracts are taken from his magnificent address in the house of representatives on the life and character of Vice President Hendricks:

"When we consider how empty and tasteless are the rewards of honor and the successes of ambition, how vain are the consolations of wealth and power, how full the world is of wreck and failure; when we look down upon the plains of human life and witness the restless, wearied struggle for existence, the discontent and misery, we are led to ask: Where is there refuge, what is happiness and where may it be found? It is not in camp or court, or the busy marts, where want and penury call aloud. It is only in the home—in that domestic bliss, the only happiness that survived the fall. It arises from the pure and lofty consecration of two lives—one man and one woman—to each other. This is not a mere privilege, but a necessity to our humanity. Without it life loses its zest, love its reward, and hope its realization. No one who, by precept or example, imperils the high standard of this awful necessity can be regarded as a friend to his fellows or lover of his race. In this direction, with what safety and satisfaction can we turn to Mr. Hendricks. The immaculate purity of his private life is the property and glory of the nation. We may not lift the veil even in this hour of desolation and intrude the sanctity of that blissful union between him and her who yet lingers here. We know the golden cord is broken, but the casket yet retains its treasure. Frail pitcher of beauty upon the head of purity, borne safely by faithful feet to the journey's end through rough and tempting paths! Where can the image find pediment or lodgment for contemplation and the perfection of our lives save in the people's homes and beside their hearths? And there the life and purity of the Indiana man has helped to elevate it."

In concluding this address which brought Mr. Hall into national fame as an orator of high intellectual powers, he thus expressed himself upon the philosophy of life:

"But, Mr. Speaker, why these ceremonies and eulogies? Though they might gratify, they reach him not. Are they not really for ourselves? Is it ordained for all to die, and is there a great undertone, never ceasing, which like a solemn bell, when we listen reminds us of mortality? Alas! the deep strain of human life pours in so constant and imperceptible! As generation after generation disappears, the sullen roar of that broad tide which pours itself down the distant and precipitous cataract into the dark valley of the shadow of death is so remote, inaudible and low, we live as if we were immortal and would never die. Only when the dreadful dart comes home strikes with sudden danger in the window some lofty character entrenched [illegible]

[illegible] missioner of patents, of the United States, to fill a vacancy in that office. He served with distinction in this responsible position until the close of Cleveland's administration in the spring of 1889. Retiring then from public life, he opened a law office in Chicago, with a view to devoting himself to patent business. He was conceded to be at this time one of the best equipped patent attorneys in the United States. But his failing health forced him to refrain from entering actively into business, and he returned to Burlington fully realizing that his days of active life were over.

BIOGRAPHICAL.

Mr. Hall was a native of Oxford, Ohio, where he was born Jan. 13, 1835. On the 13th of this month he would have been fifty-nine years of age. He was the only son of J. C Hall, and came with his father to Burlington in 1840. Shortly afterward the family settled in Henry county, but came back to Burlington a year or two later and made this city their permanent home. Young Hall received his primary education at the Howe school, of Mt. Pleasant, afterward going to Knox college, Galesburg, where he continued till his junior year and was graduated from Miami university, of Oxford, Ohio, in 1855. Upon his return from college he entered upon the study of law in the office of his father, and after two years reading under the tutelage of that eminent jurist was admitted, in 1857, to practice in all the courts of the state. At different subsequent periods he was associated in the practice of law in this city with E. S. Huston and W. W. Baldwin.

On April 16, 1857, he was married in this city to Miss Louise Webb, of Lafayette, Ind, who has been to him always a faithful, helpful companion. No children blessed their union, and he is now survived by only one of his own kindred, a nephew, Mr. Benton Hall Pollock, the son of his sister, Mrs. Josephine Hall Pollock.

MEETING OF THE BAR.

The Des Moines County Bar association, of which Mr. Hall was an esteemed member, met this morning at the court house to take sympathetic action upon the death of their deceased member. Judge James D. Smyth convened the meeting and called Hon. George Frazee to the chair. W. L. Cooper was made secretary.

On motion of Mr. Illick and amended by Mr. Blake, the chair appointed a committee of four, Mr. Geo. Frazee, Mr. W. W. Baldwin, Mr. Thomas Hedge and Mr. E. S. Huston (it being in the motion that the chairman of the meeting act as chairman of the committee) to draft a suitable memorial resolution.

On motion of Mr. Kelley the chair appointed a committee consisting of W. C. McArthur, John N. Mercer and W. L. Cooper to procure a suitable floral offering upon behalf of the association.

It was decided that the meeting adjourn to reconvene at the call of the committee on resolutions. The association will attend the funeral in a body.

THE FUNERAL.

It is conjectured that the funeral will be held on Monday afternoon. It will not be earlier than that day. The widow is greatly prostrated, and has not as yet signified positively the day and hour when the remains shall be laid to their final rest.

MEMORIAL SERVICE

[illegible] record the minutes. On motion a committee consisting of Messrs. John Blair, J. J. Fleming and James Frame were appointed to draft resolutions [illegible] on the death of Mr. Hall. On motion a committee composed of Messrs. John J. Fleming and D. D. [illegible] was instructed to wait upon the mayor and request him to issue a proclamation asking the business men to close their places of business at the hour of the funeral as a mark of respect to the memory of the deceased. This committee performed its duty at once to the mayor, who was present, and he issues the following

Proclamation.

To the Citizens of Burlington:

Inasmuch as this city has sustained an irreparable loss by the death of our esteemed fellow-citizen, Hon. B. J. Hall, it is proper that we give expression to the grief that animates the public mind. Therefore I request that the business establishments of the city be closed on the day of the funeral of the deceased as a mark of respect to his memory.

[Signed,] PETER FAWCETT,
Mayor.

The Jackson club also held a meeting Saturday evening and appointed a committee consisting of Max Poppe, John Gillespie and S H. Jones to draft resolutions expressing the high regard in which Mr. Hall was held by the club, and the respect in which it holds his memory. The club resolved to attend the funeral in a body.

Resolutions By the Citizens' Association.

WHEREAS, It becomes our painful duty to record the death of our lamented citizen, Hon. Benton J. Hall, who has served us in national as well as local affairs and who has discharged every obligation with credit to himself and to his constituents; therefore be it

Resolved, That we, as citizens, desire to express our appreciation of his long and valued services in the different offices which he served for so many years;

Resolved, That from his first entrance into public life until his untimely death he has been a tried and faithful servant to his constituents, an ardent promoter of every principle calculated to elevate American citizenship.

Resolved, That his untiring zeal in the performance of his duties, his constant courtesy in discussion, his painstaking accuracy of observation, and his ever available and profound knowledge were qualities which commanded the highest respect of his associates and stimulated the emulation of all who shared the results of his labors.

Resolved, That the remembrance of his genial disposition, modest and gentle manner and scholarly attainments will ever serve as a cherished lesson from the well ordered life of a cultured gentleman, an honored citizen and model lawyer.

Resolved, That we tender to the sorrowing relatives of the deceased our profoundest sympathy in this final hour of affliction and bereavement.

JOHN BLAIR,
JOHN C. FLEMING,
JAMES FRAME.

DEATH OF MRS. MACFLINN.

An Invalid for Many Years Passes to Her Rest.

This morning shortly before daybreak the spirit of Mrs. C. E. MacFlinn passed to its final rest, and a term of many years of suffering by a patient woman ceased.

Mrs. Charlotte Ewing MacFlinn was a native of Germantown, Ohio, where she was born in 1823, being 63 years of age at the time of her death. She has lived in Burlington since 1853, and [illegible]

Source: Iowa Territorial and State Legislators Collection compiled by volunteers and staff at the State Historical Society of Iowa Library, Des Moines, Iowa.

heard. Many who heard the remarks upon the murder of Garfield at the public meeting held to prepare for the memorial services, will recall them with reverence and respect. A thousand pities that such words, so finely wrought into passages of such inspiring eloquence, were only preserved in the memories of those who listened with bated breath as they fell extemporaneously from the lips of our lamented friend.

HIS LIFE AND CHARACTER.

In manner he was always dignified courteous and kind. He was very affectionate in disposition but somewhat reserved.

In early life he was an enthusiastic outdoor sportsman, and greatly excelled in whatever he undertook.

His natural reserve kept him from joining any of the many secret societies that have flourished so much within the past twenty-five years, and whatever his personal popularity, it rested upon his ability and integrity alone and derived no assistance from friendship drawn from these associations.

He inherited a mind of unusual strength and activity. His father was a lawyer of mark, his chief characteristic being great force and clearness. Judge J. C. Hall always was spoken of as one of the most powerful lawyers of the west, and won his way by sheer force of intellect to a position upon the supreme judicial bench of the state. From his mother Mr. Hall derived a poetic, imaginative faculty, which sometimes led him into refinements, but added a charm of imagery and fancy that contributed to make him popular as an orator.

Nothing could exceed the personal devotion of Mr. Hall to the memory of his father, and sometimes in the power with which he bore down upon a jury or court, or captivated an audience, it seemed as if the son excelled the father.

He was of a very conservative disposition—never following after fads of any kind, and it was always easy to know where he stood upon any public question. If he was sentimental, he was never unsound. Always a democrat of the old school—a strict constructionist, opposed to all sumptuary legislation or doubtful experiments in finance, he was steadfastly loyal to his party.

While of a reserved temperament, he was a man of the greatest courage in expressing his convictions regardless of the consequences. During the war period, being a democrat, he did not hesitate to speak his mind freely even in the midst of great excitements in the community. Similar courage he often exhibited in the conduct of his legal business—never concealing his views nor mincing his words through cowardice.

His mind was especially useful and serviceable in legislative and judicial directions. When in the state senate he was a recognized leader—was looked to for leadership.

But the judicial quality was most conspicuously shown in the position of commissioner of patents. This is essentially a judicial position, requiring, to make it a success, a rare combination of scientific ability and talents of a jurist. These Mr. Hall possessed and exhibited to a remarkable degree, according to the unanimous opinion of those who were best qualified to judge—the examiners and members of the bar.

Mr. Hall was favored with public honors to a greater extent, perhaps, than any other Iowa citizen. Only when the dreadful dart comes home, strikes with sudden rapidity in the circle of our friends, and strikes down some lofty character, enthroned in popular affection, are we startled out of deaf, absorbed pre-occupation into the consciousness of our immortality, and then—then trembling and crouching, we wait expectant till the mourning days are past, and it strikes still nearer; then fear and fright again. Fear and fright are the instruments of safety. They forewarn and add speed to flight. But there is no safety, no flight from the universal presence. Only one refuge, one help—prepare, prepare! It requires long years of studious application and wide experience to prepare the garment to appear in before that august tribune whose seat is near these precincts. The highest social life adorns itself with nicest care, puts on its costliest raiment when it comes before presidents and ministers of state; but there is a tribunal, a court, where none may enter unbidden and without preparation, not the preparation of an hour or a week, snatched in weakness and tremblings from long years of health and boastful strength, but that which comes from long communion with the divine attributes, a noble and willing submission to His visitations and His judgments, the observance of His statutes, and a faith that places all things in the hollow of His great hand."

HIS POLITICAL CAREER.

Mr. Hall's initiation to public office occurred as far back as 1859, when he was elected to be city solicitor for Burlington. He was re-elected to this office five times, the last time in 1871. This was the only city office ever held by him excepting as member of the city school board, of which body he was president for a term of years. He was once in early days the recipient of a gold-headed cane from the children of the schools for his services in behalf of the schools.

In 1861 he became the candidate of his party in Des Moines county for the state legislature, and was defeated at the polls. He was a stalwart democrat. In the years that followed his first legislative race he suffered himself to become the candidate of his party many times, though never with the chances of election in his favor—owing to the adverse political complexion of the county and state. He was earnest in his political convictions, and never could refuse when his party friends came to him and asked him to be their standard bearer.

In 1862 he was the democratic candidate for attorney general of Iowa, and was defeated by C. C. Nourse, of Des Moines. In 1871 he was elected over J. Wilson Williams to represent Des Moines county in the state legislature. In 1873 he was the choice of his party for Iowa supreme judge, but was defeated by J. M. Beck.

He was elected to the state senate in 1881, defeating Mr. Jno. Patterson. In 1882 he consented to be the democratic candidate for congress from the first district, though the district was overwhelmingly republican. He was defeated by Moses McCold.

Again in 1884 he became the democratic candidate for congress, and was elected, defeating John S. Woolson. He was defeated two years later by John H. Gear.

In the spring of 1887 he was appointed by President Cleveland to a com-

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MEMORIAL SERVICE

THE LAST TRIBUTE TO HON. BENTON J. HALL.

Quiet and Unobtrusive, Like the Man in Whose Memory the Rites Were Held—Civic Bodies Attended—Beautiful Floral Tributes.

The final tribute to the character of Benton J. Hall was paid this afternoon by his friends, who gathered at the residence on Columbia street and looked their last upon the form and face that in life they held in respect and esteem. The marked feature of the obsequies was the quietude and absence of parade, a feature uncommon in the funeral service of a man who has held public place and performed public services that have filled the life of Benton J. Hall.

The Bar association came first and passed through the quiet house and looked upon their old fellow-member's mortal remains. The face of the dead man was beautifully peaceful, and almost natural. It almost seemed that the gentle spirit still shone through its habitation of clay. It was a face the lineaments of which were good to look upon even in death. After the Bar association came the Jackson club, in line, wearing an appropriate badge of mourning. There was also the board of county supervisors, city officers and prominent men in all kinds of business and profession, of all politics and creeds.

Rev. J. M. D. Davidson administered the funeral rites of the Episcopal church and Dr. Salter made a few brief remarks upon the high character of the departed and concerning his long residence in the community. A quartet of ladies composed of Mrs. C. P. Funck, Mrs. S. H. Jones, Miss Kay Spencer and Mrs. C. H. Koss sang two hymns, "By Cool Siloam's Shady Rill" and "Abide With Me."

There were some beautiful floral tributes, among them a large scroll of leaves and roses from the Bar association and a cross and wreath of roses from the Jackson club. At the front door was hung a wreath of white roses instead of the usual black crape and rosette. The innovation was in marked good taste.

Mrs. Hall, who was completely prostrated by her husband's death, is somewhat better today, but was not able to see anyone. She has directed that the body be conveyed to the receiving vault at Aspen Grove and left there for a few days. This will be done tomorrow afternoon or the next day. The removal will be private, attended only by the relatives and pall bearers. The following named gentlemen have been selected to bear the pall: W. W. Baldwin, Jno. J. Fleming, James T. Martin, R. F. Hosford, W. L. Cook and Jno. J. Searley.

IN MEMORY DEAR.

Civic and Political Bodies Express Regret at Mr. Hall's Death.

The Citizens' association met Saturday evening to take appropriate action in memory of Hon. B. J. Hall. There was a goodly attendance and the sincerest of feeling was manifested. President Frame called the meeting to order, and organization was effected by electing G. C. Henry to preside and C. H. Ross to

at the time of her death. She was born in Burlington [illegible] and [illegible] intelligence attracted to her a circle of sincere friends from among the best people of the community.

For twenty-seven years she has been a sufferer with rheumatism, and for the last four years confined to her invalid's chair. About two months ago she was stricken with paralysis, and since then has been entirely helpless.

She is survived by three daughters and one son, all of whom deeply mourn the death of an ever kind and generous mother.

KNOWLEDGE

Brings comfort and improvement and tends to personal enjoyment when rightly used. The many, who live better than others and enjoy life more, with less expenditure, by more promptly adapting the world's best products to the needs of physical being, will attest the value to health of the pure liquid laxative principles embraced in the remedy, Syrup of Figs.

Its excellence is due to its presenting in the form most acceptable and pleasant to the taste, the refreshing and truly beneficial properties of a perfect laxative; effectually cleansing the system, dispelling colds, headaches and fevers and permanently curing constipation. It has given satisfaction to millions and met with the approval of the medical profession, because it acts on the Kidneys, Liver and Bowels without weakening them and it is perfectly free from every objectionable substance.

Syrup of Figs is for sale by all druggists in 50c and $1 bottles, but it is manufactured by the California Fig Syrup Co. only, whose name is printed on every package, also the name, Syrup of Figs, and being well informed, you will not accept any substitute if offered.

ELY'S CATARRH CREAM BALM

Is quickly absorbed. Gives immediate relief. Not a liquid, snuff or powder. Heals the Sores. Protects the Membrane from Additional Cold, Restores the Senses of Taste and Smell.

IT WILL CURE HAY-FEVER

A particle is applied into each nostril and is agreeable. Price 50 cents at Druggists or by mail.

ELY BROTHERS, 56 Warren St., New York.

FOR MEN ONLY!

A POSITIVE CURE for LOST or FAILING MANHOOD, General and NERVOUS DEBILITY, Weakness of Body and Mind, Effects of Errors or Excesses in Old or Young, Robust, Noble Manhood Fully Restored. How to Enlarge and Strengthen Weak, Undeveloped Parts. How to Expand and Develop Muscle and Weight. Full Directions and Proofs sealed free. Address ERIE MEDICAL CO., BUFFALO, N.Y.

Source: Iowa Territorial and State Legislators Collection compiled by volunteers and staff at the State Historical Society of Iowa Library, Des Moines, Iowa.

HALL, Benton Jay, 1835-1894

HALL, Benton Jay, a Representative from Iowa; born in Mount Vernon, Knox County, Ohio, January 13, 1835; moved with his parents to Iowa in December 1840; attended Knox College, Galesburg, Ill., and was graduated from Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, in 1855; studied law; was admitted to the bar in 1857 and practiced; member of the State house of representatives in 1872 and 1873; served in the State senate 1882-1886; elected as a Democrat to the Forty-ninth Congress (March 4, 1885-March 3, 1887); was an unsuccessful candidate for reelection in 1886 to the Fiftieth Congress; appointed Commissioner of Patents by President Cleveland and served from April 12, 1887, to March 31, 1889; resumed the practice of law; died in Burlington, Iowa, January 5, 1894; interment in Aspen Grove Cemetery.

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