

Standard Form For Members of the Legislature

Name of Representative Mapwell, Thomas Lee Senator \_\_\_\_\_

Served from Adams County, Iowa

1. Birthday and place \_\_\_\_\_ 1851

2. Marriage (s) date place \_\_\_\_\_

3. Significant events for example:

A. Business \_\_\_\_\_

B. Civic responsibilities \_\_\_\_\_

C. Profession Attorney; judge

4. Church membership \_\_\_\_\_

5. Sessions served 19<sup>th</sup> General Assembly 1882

6. Public Offices

A. Local County superintendent of schools

B. State Elected to the U.S. Congress and served 1914-1919

C. National \_\_\_\_\_

7. Death 28 Aug 1920 Corning, Iowa; buried Town WPA Burial Record:  
Walnut Grove Cemetery,  
Quincy Township,  
Adams County, IOWA

8. Children \_\_\_\_\_

9. Names of parents \_\_\_\_\_

10. Education Attended common schools of his neighborhood in  
Illinois

11. Degrees \_\_\_\_\_

12. Other applicable information Greenbacker, later Democrat

- His father died when he was age 7 leaving his mother with  
seven children. He attended school and helped support  
the family
- He later taught school and as clerk in a law office  
in a law firm at Rockville, Illinois where he spent his  
spare hours studying law and was later admitted to the bar.
- He never attended a law school and never attended college,
- He was successful due to working his way and applying  
himself to greatness.

### Sources Log For Legislation Entries

#### Applicability

| Source         | Non Applicable | Applicable | Information obtained   |
|----------------|----------------|------------|--|
| <i>Oratory</i> |                |            | <i>The Adams County Press, Corning, Iowa,<br/>Date: Sept. 4, 1928, p. 2, col 1, 2, 3</i> |
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SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 1920

### JUDGE THOMAS L. MAXWELL

The many friends in this county of Judge Thomas L. Maxwell of Creston, and in fact all over this section of the state, were grieved to learn of his sudden death at his home last Saturday night of heart trouble. He was 69 years of age.

It can be truthfully said that he belonged to that class of citizenship that is fast passing away—he hewed his own way, that is he was self-made. When he was seven years of age the father died and left the mother with a family of seven children, two of whom were older than the subject of this sketch, but the family was in moderate circumstances as were the large majority of the pioneers of that part of Illinois. As a boy he attended the district schools of Illinois and helped support the family. Shortly after dis-

responsibility to the mother and the other children.

Later Mr. Maxwell taught school and having the study of law chosen for his life work he secured a "job" not a position, as clerk in the office of a leading law firm at Rushville, Ill., where he spent his spare hours in the "study of law," and was later admitted to the bar. He never attended a law school and never attended a college, his education consisting of a common school education and the education secured by his own efforts. He applied himself and hewed his own way to a successful career and one of the best lawyers in Southwest Iowa, if not the best all-around lawyer in this section. His success shows the possibilities for those who will apply themselves. Most of the young generation of today marvel at the success of Judge Maxwell, especially the young people who are being told that without a college education you cannot succeed. Probably when he was young if he had had at his disposal the money so many have today he would have passed through a college—and might have made a great lawyer and might have made of himself what we have so many of today—an educated man. Probably the most noted cases he tried was the defense of Perigo on

finally resulted in an acquittal. Another case in which so many were interested and which he won a great victory was in the case of the defunct Corning State Savings bank. First he got the property of the president turned over to the bank for the benefit of the creditors, then he contended that the common depositor was a preferred creditor, as against creditor banks that had been loaning the defunct institution, etc. This had never been determined by the courts and Mr. Maxwell carried it to a successful end and the common depositor was finally paid about 73 per cent while the general creditor class, like the big banks and loan companies, received about 10 per cent. Every common depositor of the defunct bank is certainly indebted to Judge Maxwell for securing this decision in their favor. It was amusing, at the time



HON. T. L. MAXWELL.

the case was being heard in the lower courts, to be in the court room and hear and see Judge Maxwell, lone handed, fighting the best legal talent in Southwest Iowa and many of the able attorneys from other states.

While Mr. Maxwell was a democrat, he was not an extreme partisan. He had been honored with the office of county superintendent of schools and later represented Adams county in the Nineteenth General Assembly, having been elected in 1879 and was the democratic nominee for congress in 1894. He was nominated by the democrats for judge of the Third Judicial District, composed of the counties of Lucas, Wayne, Decatur, Ringgold, Taylor, Union and Adams, and while the district was

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It can be truthfully said that he belonged to that class of citizenship that is fast passing away—he hewed his own way, that is he was self-made. When he was seven years of age the father died and left the mother with a family of seven children, two of whom were older than the subject of this sketch, but the family was in moderate circumstances as were the large majority of the pioneers of that part of Illinois. As a boy he attended the district schools of Illinois and helped support the family. Shortly after the father's death the war between the north and south was declared and his oldest brother volunteered and that only added additional grief and

tended a college, his education consisting of a common school education and the education secured by his own efforts. He applied himself and hewed his own way to a successful career and one of the best lawyers in Southwest Iowa, if not the best all-around lawyer in this section. His success shows the possibilities for those who will apply themselves. Most of the young generation of today marvel at the success of Judge Maxwell, especially the young people who are being told that without a college education you cannot succeed. Probably when he was young if he had had at his disposal the money so many have today he would have passed through a college—and might have made a great lawyer and might have made of himself what we have so many of today—an educated fool.

Probably the most noted cases he tried was the defense of Perigo on the charge of murder who was tried in the lower courts in this county four times and twice was the case appealed to the supreme court and

er courts, to be in the court room and hear and see Judge Maxwell, lone handed, fighting the best legal talent in Southwest Iowa and many of the able attorneys from other states.

While Mr. Maxwell was a democrat, he was not an extreme partisan. He had been honored with the office of county superintendent of schools and later represented Adams county in the Nineteenth General Assembly, having been elected in 1879 and was the democratic nominee for congress in 1894. He was nominated by the democrats for judge of the Third Judicial District, composed of the counties of Lucas, Wayne, Decatur, Ringgold, Taylor, Union and Adams, and while the district was overwhelming republican he was elected by 9 votes and served four years and was re-elected in 1914 and his term of office expired January 1, 1919. His record is an enviable one and he had few reversals by the supreme court, and the reversals he did have, were largely where the supreme court reversed itself. As a judge he had very little time for the hardened criminal, but the boy or young man who was up for the first offense, and it was shown that it had been an error of the head and not the heart, such offenses elicited his sympathy and defendant was paroled and there are many such persons out on parole today and making good citizens.

The life and success of Tom Maxwell, as he was generally known among his friends and a name he liked to be called, rather than Judge Maxwell, starting under adversities at the foot of the ladder and ending well nigh the top, is one worthy of emulation by any young man or young woman and shows the possibilities of a determination to win.

In his young days he did not watch the clock and in his old days he had a clock to watch. He was always deliberate in his decisions and on an important question always took time to look it up and give it careful consideration before rendering an opinion, and the result was that many who imagine they are in a rush, thought he was too slow—and often to their sorrow.

His life was one well spent.

**PRESCOTT**

A. C. Nash is confined to his home this week with illness.

Mr. Milton Dudley of Iowa City is visiting his aunt Mrs. Albert Barr this week.

Mr. and Mrs. James Foy went to their daughter Mrs. Eugene David and family.

Miss Margaret Penn left Tuesday for Yorktown to visit her sister Mrs. Lucille Barker.

The Prescott meat market changed hands last week, Fred Ramsey having sold out to Art Moon.

Mrs. D. C. Miller of Liberty Center, Ohio, came last Saturday to visit her sister, Mrs. S. G. Ervin.

James Penn departed Sunday for Savanna, Illinois where he will be employed in the signal service.

Earl Gentle and daughter Dorothy of Murray visited relatives here

Mr. and Mrs. George Leigh and family motored to Lenox Wednesday

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