

Standard Form For Members of the Legislature

Name of Representative _____

Senator _____

George W. - Second Representative, Humboldt and Pocahontas counties

1. Birthday and place *19 Apr 1833 near Springfield, Sangamon County, Illinois*

2. Marriage (s) date place _____

Mirtha Ann Randall 18 Dec 1856 Cerro Gordo County, Iowa

3. Significant events for example:

A. Business _____

B. Civic responsibilities *G.A.R.*

C. Profession *Farmer; miller; millwright; bridge builder*

4. Church membership *Methodist*

5. Sessions served *25th and 26th General Assembly 1894 and 1896*

6. Public Offices

A. Local *School board president*

B. State *Member of the first Republican party convention in Iowa*

C. National _____

7. Death *22 Oct 1927 near Rolfe; buried Clinton - Garfield County, Iowa*

8. Children *Frank; Kate (Mrs J. A. Crimmer); Jim (Mrs G. W. Jones); Gail and an adopted son, John Henderson*

9. Names of parents *John H. and Elizabeth E. (Powell) Henderson*

10. Education

Self taught, had little opportunity for an education other than about 3 years cumulative

11. Degrees

12. Other applicable information

Republican

- Military service - Civil War - 74th Iowa Inf., later 41st Iowa Inf. and finally Co. H. 7th Iowa Cavalry
- Parents married in TN circa 1827 and later located in La Salle County, IL and fled during the Black Hawk War 1831-1832 going to Sangamon County, IL, later back to La Salle County
- After marriage lived in Cerro Gordo County, Iowa
- In 1875 moved to Sac County, Iowa
- In Jan 1882 they moved to their farm in Pikesburg County, Garfield Twp. naming the 240 A farm Highland Farm
- Settled in area now called Mason City, Iowa in 1855 where he engaged in milling
- In Civil War he built Fort Sully and Fort Randall. He was a scout and carried messages
- Deeply interested in education and helped plan the first high school in Mason City
- Had a life-long study of woods, prairie, streams, lakes and quarries, as well as a student of trees, herbs and flowers.
- Lover of good literature and reading in general.
- Wife, Martha A., born 1840, died 1937, also buried in Clinton and Garfield Cemetery, Rolfe, Iowa.

George W. Henderson, Pioneer, Soldier, and Politician Passed To His Reward

Senator George W. Henderson, venerable pioneer, soldier, farmer and politician, after putting ninety-four and one-half years of real life behind him, peaceably went to sleep at his home, Highland Farm, southeast of Rolfe, Saturday, Oct. 22, 1927.

To our mind he was one of the most remarkable old men in Iowa. He saw Iowa almost in its virgin state, watched it develop into one of the greatest producers in the Union, retained his faculties to the end, and did not quit life until the machinery wore out. His last day on earth he ate his meals and only a few moments before the call came was assisted to his bed. A few days before he had been in Rolfe, making his customary rounds. Only during the last two or three years has his step lost its elasticity and his body begun to show stooped from the weight of the years it carried. He kept himself well posted on current events, and to the last was able to discuss them. He was not one who was continually referring to the good old days, but said: "These are the best days of my life." In other words, he kept up to date and enjoyed seeing the world advance.

George W. Henderson was born near Springfield, Sangamon county, Illinois, April 19, 1833. He was the son of John H. Henderson, a Kentucky pioneer, and Elizabeth Powell, the daughter of an old North Carolina family. Shortly after their marriage

where he established Highland Farm, which has been the family home for forty-five years. Mr. Henderson served the Fiftieth Senatorial District in the Twenty-fifth and Twenty-sixth General Assemblies of Iowa, also the special session which codified the laws.

Four children were born to the Hendersons: Frank, who died in Sac county; Mrs. J. A. Crummer of Pocahontas, Iowa; Mrs. G. W. Barnes of Boise, Idaho; and Gail, who died in 1914. Last year Mr. and Mrs. Henderson celebrated the seventieth anniversary of their wedding day by keeping "open house" all day at the old home. Mr. Henderson leaves besides his wife and children, six grandchildren and eleven great-grandchildren, besides those of an adopted son, John Henderson of Bradgate; one sister, Mrs. Martha Clark of Wheaton, Ill., many cousins, nieces, nephews, and a host of friends.

As a Pioneer

As a pioneer his experiences would fill a volume. He visited Iowa before it was admitted to statehood, when a lad, with his friend, Seth Stevens, on foot on a hunting trip with no equipment but rifle and ammunition, slept under the stars for weeks and used the crafts of the frontiersman to obtain a living. Later he helped in the task of bringing the first steam locomotive into Iowa. A portable track was spiked to the ice and it was brot across the Mississippi in this manner. Marvelous as this may seem to you, young reader, Mr. Henderson hauled grain to market in Chicago before this now great metropolis had a railway. Imagine if you can what this man saw in the line of development.

Early Indian Scares

The people of northern Iowa were much afraid of Indians, and had just reasons for their fears. After the so-called Grindstone War at Clear Lake the pioneers gathered at Masonic Grove for protection. Mr. Henderson and a scout friend followed the Indian marauders into Minnesota, keeping under cover until they overtook the offenders in a big camp of reputedly friendly Indians. The chief apologized and promised good behavior of his braves in the future. Mr. Henderson did not blame the Indians as much as the whites in this unhappy incident. Returning from this scouting trip by way of Spirit Lake, he blazed out a claim at what is now Pillsbury's Point at West Okoboji.

remembers this incident as a little girl, standing between her mother and grandmother in the inky darkness, with the roar of the flood in her ears, and says it can never be forgotten. But such incidents were not unusual in the life of this beloved pioneer.

As Citizen and Promoter

Mr. Henderson was largely instrumental in securing the first railway to enter Mason City. He was sent from his town to the meeting of railway officials and presented the advantages of a line to that thriving little town so vigorously that the railway came. He was deeply interested in schools and helped plan the first high school built in Mason City while president of the school board. He contributed to the building of every college in his part of Iowa. The church received financial support and strong moral backing from him throughout his long life. All plans for community betterment met with his approval. He kept posted up to date and to live with him was equivalent to a liberal education to his grandchildren.

As a Politician

He was a believer in representative government and deplored the use of the word 'politics' to express contempt. "Politics is the science of good government," he often said. "Why put odium on a good word because some will play dirty politics?" He was a member of the first convention held by the republican party in Iowa, representing a large part of the northern section of the state when the party was organized at Iowa City. He was always a leader in the discussion of party issues, seldom asking any favors for himself. His term in the state senate was given to him as a reward for service and was justly deserved. He was always a "regular," and had great faith in the party, and could give reasons for such faith.

A Student of Nature

Few but the members of his family knew of his life-long study of nature in woods, prairie, stream, lake and rock quarry. He could name every species of tree in Iowa forests and recognize all the herbs and flowers of the prairie. He also was a student of the habits of wild fowls and animals. He located his farm near the Des Moines river because of the woods, the water and the rolling land, which made a beautiful site for a home. But all of his achievements and qualities fade into insignificance beside the strength and beauty of his character and his life. His family may well feel proud of what he did, the service he rendered to home and country, but what he was in his great kindness, patience, cheerfulness and love should be the real source of their



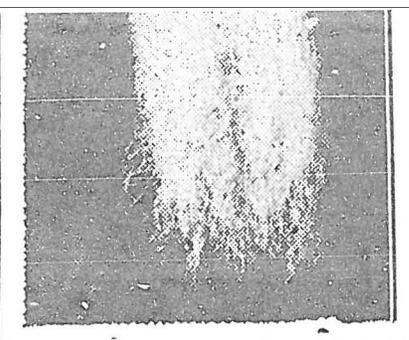
Source: Iowa Territorial and State Legislators Collection compiled by Volunteers and staff at the State Historical Society of Iowa Library, Des Moines, Iowa.

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in 1827 they located in LaSalle county, Illinois, from which place they were obliged to flee from the ravages of the Indians in the Black Hawk War, and took refuge in Springfield, where the son, George W., was born. When the Indian war was ended the family returned to LaSalle county and made their home near Ottawa, where the father died. Here amid the privations of pioneer life young George became the main support of his mother and six smaller children. No schools had been established and George was twelve years old before he ever saw a school house, but he was the son of educated parents and had the advantages of their culture. Three years of actual schooling was all he received, but his extensive reading and active interest in good government and the advance of civilization made him a man of real culture in early life. He learned "the art of doing things" thru the multiplied activities of pioneer life, and was always ready with his splendid strength to take the 'heavy end' of every job. His pioneering interests took him to Iowa at an early age and he settled at Masonic Grove, now Mason City, in 1855, and engaged in milling operations, grinding flour and sawing lumber for settlers.

On December 18, 1856, he was married to Martha Ann Randall, daughter of Judge E. Randall of Mason City. In 1861 he enlisted in the 14th Iowa Infantry Volunteers and was transferred to Company M, 7th Iowa Cavalry, and served three years and forty days in the Union Army. On his discharge he took up the duties of citizenship with the same zeal that had marked his service in the army. He was honored by many positions of trust wherever he made his home. In 1875 he moved his family to a farm in Sac county, and in 1882 moved to Garfield township, Pocahontas county,

keeping under cover until they overtook the offenders in a big camp of reputedly friendly Indians. The chief apologized and promised good behavior of his braves in the future. Mr. Henderson did not blame the Indians as much as the whites in this unhappy incident. Returning from this scouting trip by way of Spirit Lake, he blazed out a claim at what is now Pillsbury's Point at West Okoboji, and he and his friend finally landed at Masonic Grove, where they were hailed with joy, as all that they had fallen victims to the tomahawks of the Indians. Later Mr. Henderson sold his claim at the Lakes to Gardner and Luce, who moved their families there and became victims of the Spirit Lake Massacre a few years later. Mr. Gardner was the father of Abbie Gardner-Sharp, who was carried into captivity by the Indians and is one of the state's best-known historical characters.

Machinist and Builder

Mr Henderson was an expert sawyer and when in the army was detailed to build Forts Sully and Randall. His services were invaluable to Uncle Sam as a scout and in carrying messages during the Civil War. He was a tireless walker and made many trips to unexplored points on foot. When the Iowa land office was opened in Des Moines in 1865 he walked to that place from Mason City to file on a claim, carrying the necessary \$200 filing fee on his person. He was also an expert swimmer and boatman. His swimming ability stood him in good stead at Shilo, when his company was surrounded on a peninsula and about to be captured. Mr. Henderson jumped into the bayou and swam two miles or more past the Confederate forces and escaped. A later incident took place on Lime Creek near Mason City, in March, 1865. The stream was terribly swollen and filled with floating chunks of ice. Some workmen were marooned at the mill and threatened with drowning. No time was to be lost. Word was passed to the men that Mr. Henderson would cross to their rescue, and against the protest of Judge Randall, his own wife and his mother, he went to the rescue and piloted his little boat safely thru the rushing waters and dangerous ice, returning safely with the frenzied men, who knew not how to help. Mrs. Crummer, the daughter,

and animals. He located his farm near the Des Moines river because of the woods, the water and the rolling land, which made a beautiful site for a home. But all of his achievements and qualities fade into insignificance beside the strength and beauty of his character and his life. His family may well feel proud of what he did, the service he rendered to home and country, but what he was in his great kindness, patience, cheerfulness and love should be the real source of their appreciation. His sturdy adherence to honor and honesty was always tempered with mercy. No passing prejudice ruled him and he often admonished others to take for their rule the great law of kindness. He was a lover of good literature and reading was ever his recreation at home. The best newspapers were available in his home. He was an adept at reading old poems, and his quaint humor, always to the point, made him an excellent entertainer.

The Last Rites

Funeral services were held at the home Tuesday afternoon, Oct. 25, and at the Methodist church in Rolfe. Befitting his service as a soldier the funeral was given a military appearance by the presence of American Legion boys in uniform, who acted as guard of honor and escort, and who fired the customary salute over the grave. The services were in charge of his pastor, Rev. J. H. Walker, who was assisted by Rev. L. O. Dale of Pocahontas and Rev. W. A. Winterstein of Laurens. Rev. Winterstein paid a brief tribute to the departed and the sermon was delivered by Rev. Walker. The church was crowded, noticeable in the audience being the county officials and members of the board of supervisors. Relatives and friends from a distance who attended the service were: Mrs. G. W. Barnes, Boise, Idaho; Mr. and Mrs. Fred Randall, Mrs. Margaret Cline, Mrs. Ray Bogardus, Mrs. Burton Bogardus and Mrs. Ben Randall, Mason City, Iowa; Mrs. Lucile Williams, Des Moines; Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Henderson of Austin, Minn. Interment was made in Clinton-Garfield Cemetery.

Miss Bertha Bowers of the County Credit Bureau and Mrs. Katherine Boozell, county recorder, were over from Pocahontas Friday and were pleasant callers at The Arrow office.

REAU MEETING

Township Unit of the met at the Randall Thursday evening, Oct. ge number in attendance of the evening officers. A good presented and the opinion who expressed himself s the liveliest meeting hip has held. One of tated he was greatly e pep and enthusiasm e Garfield Unit, which ving in numbers. One the evening was the izes won by members : Clubs, County Agent the trick very nicely. of the unit wishes to peciation to members the on time so adde h t a reasonable er, visitors are always rfield township meet-

HEART FAILURE

an passed away sud- Oct. 21, of acute dial- eart, scarcely giving call a doctor. He was he Betts Construction rfield township at the d away at the grading brother-in-law of Mr. y was brot to the Me- home in Rolfe to be shipment and burial. tts and daughter, the of the deceased, ar- ux City the following panied the body to for interment. Mr. idower aged fifty-nine ed considerable prop-

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