

Standard Form For Members of the Legislature

Name of Representative Mitchell, Thomas Senator \_\_\_\_\_

Represented Palk County, Iowa

1. Birthday and place 3 Mar 1816 Claremont, Sullivan County, New Hampshire

2. Marriage (s) date place

① Almira Scept 14 Aug 1841 Iowa

② Anna Caroline Mattern 17 June 1861

3. Significant events for example:

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

B. Civic responsibilities President of the Old Settlers Association

C. Profession Farmer; paper mill employee; sold books and paper books  
Springfield Paper Mill Company; publisher

4. Church membership Universalist

5. Sessions served 7<sup>th</sup> General Assembly 1858 - House of Representatives

6. Public Offices 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> General Assemblies 1874, 1876 - Senate

A. Local Jurat Palk County sheriff being elected in 1846. Palk County commissioner for  
bylaws; postmaster of North Junction Palk County Iowa; First City Bank Depositor 1851-1865

B. State \_\_\_\_\_

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

7. Death 15 Jul 1894 Colfax, Iowa - Buried Mitchellville Cemetery, Mitchellville Iowa

8. Children Erwin Z. (died 8 Mar 1864 in Civil War); Mary Ann (Mrs. M. R. Kopie);

Charles Melville; Hester A. - by 2<sup>d</sup> wife - Henry Herbert; Maudie

9. Names of parents William and Dorothy (Blake) Mitchell

Mitchell, Thomas

10. Education He was educated in the common schools near his  
Clarendon, New Hampshire neighborhood

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

12. Other applicable information His first education

- At age 6 his father died so he had to look after himself so got employment as a  
farm worker. In 1836 he got a job in a paper mill. And in 1837 he went out  
the next selling books and paper for the Springfield Paper Mill Company.
- In 1839 he started westward and arrived at Keosauqua, Van Buren County, Iowa in 1840.
- He soon went to Fairfield, Jefferson County. And in April 1844 he moved to Polk County, Iowa.
- Here he made a land claim and built a log cabin and in spring 1847 he made a  
post office and became postmaster.
- In 1867 he laid out the town of Mitchellville, named for himself.
- He was well known for actively participating in the Underground Railroad, helping slaves  
escape to Canada.
- His first wife, Almira, died 16 June 1860.





Thomas Mitchell. Founder  
of Mitchelville.

*cut 954*

... sister, Miss Alwilda Adams, Iowa, are taking special consti- tution from an eminent physi- iver, and numerous friends of ere will be glad to know they proving.

... the appointment of Hon. son, of Knoxville, as pension s Moines are regarded as good Trimble has declined the office. t soldier we know who is ac. th Charley will be glad if he re- office when the change is made. ng from a visit to DeSoto, where n to attend the funeral of her er, Mrs. A. M. Haggard stopped ht with Colfax friends, resuming ome to Oskaloosa this morning. ard's father died only about two o, and his mother died last Tues-

... M. Reese and babes, and Mrs. Reese, all of Davenport, are here long visit in the spring city and d at Des Moines. Will Reese is wife and children at the home otson, the lady's father, on Mon- s. George Reese meets an impedi- isiting George's mother—Mrs. Al- in the shape of a case of diphthe- D. Alexander being prostrated disease.

Miller, of Fremont, Nebraska, was visitor, Tuesday. He was en route m the east.....Rev. Merritt Nick- ex-printer, was in this place Tues- visit of business and pleasure..... lment, who has been visiting in he past two months, returned home evening.....Messrs. John Topper rles Ryan and Misses Maude Allen ie Morrison formed a pleasant pic- y which camped on the river near t Sunday.—Motor.

... easing incident was that connected Mingo band's serenade of Frank he sick boy near Mingo, lately at t of death after undergoing a sur- eration. Propped up by pillows he to the inspiring music of his young and as he could not go out to thank s faithful attendant, Miss Maude ry, volunteered to do it for him. roduced to the band by Mr. Everett le such a graceful and affecting dress as proved a fitting finale to e pleasant affair.

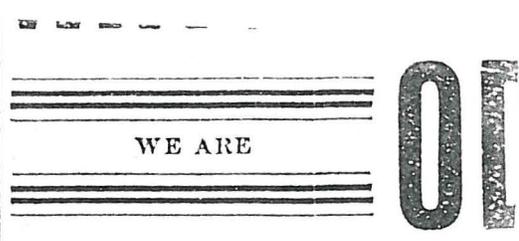
... e Slavens, who returned Tuesday g from an over-Sunday Chicago ys the stories afloat here that only ums and the foreign mail were n destroying property, burning

progress of the fire Patterson's dog at- tempted to eat the trousers off John Edmundson, and did rip them nearly off of him.... Three milk cows belong- ing to J. H. Reid were poisoned and died one day last week by getting into Wm. Wearmouth's potato patch and eating potato tops that had been sprink- led with Paris green to kill the bugs. It was a serious loss to Mr. Reid.....

Died, at his home in this place, Sun- day, July 15, 1894, **Thomas Mitchell**; aged 78 years, 4 months and 12 days. Deceased was the founder of this vil- lage, north of which he located in April, 1857. A wife and four children survive him. Mr. Mitchell was the first sheriff Poik county ever had, being elected to the office in 1846. In 1856 he was elec- ted a member of the general assembly and subsequently, in 1873, after having meantime served six years as county commissioner, he was elected a mem- ber of the State senate. He was also at the time of his death a resident mem- ber of the board of trustees of the in- dustrial school. Among his grandest works for Iowa was securing the fixing of the western boundary line of the state at the Missouri river. He was a good man and his death is regarded as a statewide misfortune. His funeral last Tuesday was attended by an im- mense concourse of people, delegations from Des Moines, Newton, Colfax, Prai- rie City, Fairfield, Altoona and other points swelling the sad procession that followed his honored remains to their last resting place.

A MOONLIGHT PICNIC is the latest fad among Colfax young people and those who participated in the one on Tuesday evening report a splendid time. There were present: Misses India and Myma Ryan, Maud Allen, Sadie Morrison and Nita and Mayme Stephenson, and Messrs, Gran. and Chas. Ryan, Pat Shea, Sam. Seigel, Frank Morrison and "Doc" Topper.—Motor.

... of 15-year-old girls to Rhodes the even-



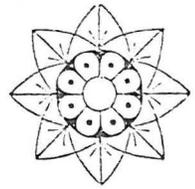
In more than one sense. On what OTHERS DO, but are

**FIRST** To give all discounts.

**FIRST** to advertise just what we

Then again we are odd be- itors, but are ORIGINAL competition during this sale any competitor can afford talking.

**OUR BIG CLEAR**



**FC**

**CLOSING SUMMER**

You who think you are not fail to attend our One can buy your Dry Goods on every-thing in our store **HALF OFF.**

**FRENCH GIN**  
That formerly

**CHIFFONET**

STATE OF IOWA,  
*Office of Secretary of State*

*Des Moines, October 20, 1875.*

*Hon.* .....

Dear Sir: It has been the custom of each House of the General Assembly to cause to be prepared and published a table showing certain statistics in connection with the names of the members thereof. To make this historical data **CORRECT** is the object of furnishing you this blank, and it is hoped that you will aid me in making it as complete as possible by making a full return of the items below to this office as early as practicable.

**PLEASE GIVE FIRST NAME IN FULL.**

Name..... *Thomas Mitchell*

P. O..... *Mitchellville*

County..... *Polk*

Occupation..... *Farmer*

Nativity..... *New Hampshire*

Married or Single..... *Married*

If in the Service: Regiment and Rank.....

Years in Iowa..... *thirty five*

Age..... *fifty nine*

Weight..... *190 Lb*

Herewith please find copy of Rules of the last Session, which, it is requested, you will preserve, owing to the scarcity of the edition.

Yours, very respectfully,

JOSIAH T. YOUNG

S

THE UNITED STATES  
BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY

AND

PORTRAIT GALLERY

OF

EMINENT AND SELF-MADE MEN.

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IOWA VOLUME.

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CHICAGO AND NEW YORK:  
AMERICAN BIOGRAPHICAL PUBLISHING COMPANY.

1878.

and gatherings, from the most grave and profound literary lecture to the most fantastic negro-minstrel performance; this is so well understood in the community that he is always expected at public entertainments.

He was one of the early settlers of Muscatine, and has been intimately identified with its history and interests up to the time of his removal to Davenport, and has taken an active part in all its public enterprises. Although naturally inclined to be in-

dolent, yet he has accomplished a vast amount of work; when once aroused and interested, he goes onward with great celerity, and produces desired results in a brief space of time.

He has had large experience in his profession; very few important cases have been tried in eastern Iowa, where he has been accustomed to practice, with which he has not been connected, and the present firm of Cook and Richman have an extensive and lucrative practice in all the courts.

## HON. LLOYD SELBY,

CORYDON.

ONE of the most successful business men and prominent citizens of Wayne county, Iowa, is Lloyd Selby, a merchant in Corydon since 1856. He was born in Licking county, Ohio, on the 26th of November, 1833, and comes from an old Maryland family. His father, John Selby, a mechanic in his younger years, is living with his son in Corydon, and is now in his eightieth year. The mother of Lloyd was Clarinda Herrick, whose father died in Janesville, Wisconsin, a few years ago, aged ninety-three years.

Lloyd had a very ordinary common-school education. At fourteen he was employed in a store at Johnstown, and he has made the commercial business his life-work. When of age he left Licking county, came to Corydon, Iowa, and has here been in trade twenty-two years. He has carried on farming and stock-raising by proxy while merchandising, and is no doubt the best business man in this vicinity. He has three well improved farms in Wayne county, others in the states of Missouri and Kansas,

and is a heavy stockholder in the Wayne County Bank, located at Corydon, which is the county seat. He has been its president since its organization in 1875. He has one of the best homesteads in the county, one-fourth of a mile east of the city limits, and is a hospitable, christian gentleman.

Mr. Selby was elected state senator in 1873, to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Hon. M. Read, and served in the fifteenth general assembly, doing good work on four or five committees. He has been quite active at times in the Corydon school board, and has held other local offices, being a practical, energetic and serviceable citizen, ready for any work that will advance the interests of the town or county.

He is a Royal Arch Mason; a member of the Methodist Episcopal church, and a man of pure and noble qualities of character.

In January, 1862, he was joined in wedlock with Mrs. M. L. Miller, daughter of James May, of Pennsylvania, and they have two children.

## HON. THOMAS MITCHELL,

MITCHELLVILLE.

SOMETHING more than a year before the territory now embraced within the county of Polk was, according to the treaty stipulations made by the United States government with the Sacs and Foxes, opened for settlement, the subject of this sketch, who is now one of the oldest and most highly respected citizens of that county, located twelve miles east of Fort Des Moines, entered a claim and built

a comfortable log cabin, which was used as a hotel for a number of years. He was at that time in the prime of youthful manhood, having been born on the 3d of March, 1816, among the granite hills of Claremont, Sullivan county, New Hampshire, where his early life was spent acquiring those sterling traits of character for which the sturdy sons of New England have so long been noted.

His father, William Mitchell, was born near Boston, Massachusetts, and moved to Claremont when about twenty-three years of age. He was of Scotch-Irish descent, as was also his mother, whose maiden name was Dolly Blake, who was a native of Hampton, New Hampshire. When young Thomas was about sixteen years of age his father died, leaving a large family with little means of support. He soon obtained work on a neighboring farm, where he continued to labor for about seven years, completing his limited education by attending district schools in the neighborhood.

He started west in November, 1839, and spent the first winter in St. Charles county, Missouri, and in the following March removed to Fairfield, Jefferson county, Iowa, where he continued to reside about four years. In April, 1842, he was elected one of the commissioners of Jefferson county, and served for two years, when he again removed and located at the crossing of Camp Creek, then Indian county, where he has since continuously resided. In 1846 he helped to organize Polk county, and was in the fall of that year elected its first sheriff. Two years later he ran for representative, the district containing thirteen counties, but was defeated by Manly Gifford, of Jasper county. He was, however, in 1857 elected to represent Polk and Jasper counties in the

first legislature which met at Des Moines, and took his seat in that body in January, 1858.

In 1859 he was elected one of the supervisors of Polk county, which office he held by reëlection for a period of six years.

In the fall of 1873 he was nominated and elected to a seat in the upper house of the Iowa general assembly, of which body he has since been an active and influential member.

He was first married on the 14th of August, 1841, to Almira, daughter of Benjamin Swift, a farmer, then of Thetford, Vermont, by whom he had five children, as follows: Oran F., lieutenant of company I, 8th Iowa Cavalry, who died at Waverly, Tennessee, on the 8th of March, 1864, aged twenty-two years; Mary Ann, the wife of M. R. Hoxie, who has three children, Thomas Mitchell, Carrie and Elsie; Charles Melvill, aged twenty-six, a farmer of Polk county, Iowa, who is married to Lizzie Delong, and has one son, named William Delong; and the youngest, Walter A., eighteen years of age, who is attending school at the seminary of Mitchellville. Mrs. Mitchell died on the 16th of June, 1860, aged about forty years.

Mr. Mitchell was married on the 17th of June, 1871, to Anna C. Mattern, by whom he has two children, Harry Herbert and Maud, aged respectively six and two years.

## ALLEN BROOMHALL, LL. B.,

### MUSCATINE.

ALLEN BROOMHALL, attorney and counselor at law, and president of the board of directors of the public schools of Muscatine, was born in Belmont county, Ohio, on the 26th of May, 1834, his parents being James Broomhall and Rebecca *née* Bond, who were members of the Society of Friends (Hicksite). The Broomhall family is of English origin, the founders of it in America having settled in Chester county, Pennsylvania, soon after the first landing of William Penn, where a large colony of the descendants are still to be found.

The father of our subject moved to Ohio with his parents in the year 1808, where he subsequently married Rebecca Bond, who was also descended from the Penn Colony stock. He died in 1837, leaving four orphan children, three of whom were older than our subject.

An heirloom, very highly prized, which has de-

scended from father to son for the last two hundred years, being now in the possession of our subject, is a huge tome of "William Penn's Sermons," bearing date as far back as 1650.

Allen Broomhall received the rudiments of his education in the log school-houses of his native place, and subsequently took a course in the classical institute at Barnesville, Belmont county, Ohio. He removed to Iowa in 1856, and settled in West Liberty, Muscatine county, where he purchased and improved several farms, and made some profitable investments in real estate. In 1857 he removed to Atalissa in the same county, where he started a lumber yard, and conducted several other enterprises. He also commenced the study of law under the direction of Hon. J. Carskadden, of Muscatine, which he pursued with pertinacity during his leisure hours.



THOMAS MITCHELL

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## THOMAS MITCHELL

**T**HOMAS MITCHELL may be justly recorded as the god-father of Polk County. His generous, humanitarian heart embraced all men and all things. His very face was a smile. Everybody called him "Uncle Tommy."

He was born March Third, 1816, in Claremont, Sullivan County, New Hampshire, and was of Scotch-Irish descent. His father was a farmer, and Thomas spent his boyhood days on the old home farm, receiving such education as the common schools of that day afforded. When he was sixteen years old his father died, and he had to look out for himself. He got employment on a farm at eleven dollars a month the first year, and fourteen dollars a month the second year. In 1836, he got a job in a paper mill at four dollars per week. The next year he was paid the same, and eight cents an hour for overwork, and twelve hours was a day's work. In 1837, he went on the road selling books and paper for the Springfield Paper Mill Company. In 1839, he bid good-bye to his rock-ribbed native state, and started for the Mississippi Valley. He spent the Winter of that year in Saint Charles County, Missouri, on a farm, at fifteen dollars per month.

March Eighth, 1840, he arrived at Keosauqua, and soon after went to Fairfield, where he resided until 1844, when, in April, he came to Polk County. The whole country hereabouts was then under military control. He obtained a permit from Captain Allen, commanding officer of Fort Des Moines, to make a land claim and cultivate it, provided he would build a bridge over the creek now called Camp Creek, an important thing, as it was on the direct trail from Keokuk and Iowa City to Fort Des Moines, and, in the Spring and Fall, the stream was nearly impassable.

Near the creek and a grove of wild Crab Apple trees (now Apple Grove), he erected, with his own hands, a double log cabin of green timber, with a puncheon floor (split logs with the flat side up), and "pole" bedsteads, and there, with his wife and two small

children, no cabin nearer than Marengo eastward, Red Rock, in Marion County, southward, and "The Fort," twelve miles westward, he began his work of civilization, and laid the foundation of his later popularity and usefulness. It necessitated pluck and hard work. Trials and hardships were abundant. For nearly five months his wife did not see the face of a white woman.

As time went on, his cabin became the favorite stopping-place of travelers and immigrants. The latch-string was always out; his heart was as open as his cabin doors. Although he brought with him a good supply of provisions, the demands upon it made necessary frequent trips to Keokuk and Fairfield for corn meal and bacon, often over bad roads in inclement weather, and requiring many days' absence from home.

The demand upon his hospitality so increased that he was forced to make his cabin a tavern, for travelers would stop there, tavern or no tavern, and he was too kind-hearted to turn them away. Hungry, weary, and unsatisfied with stops made farther east, they would cheer up as they plodded on with: "Wait till we get to Tom Mitchell's, then we'll be all right." A good, square meal of bacon, corn bread and milk for twenty-five cents was sure. If the newcomer was poor, it was all the same, he was as welcome as those who paid, and was sent off with a hearty handshake and blessing. A prominent business man of this city, probably remembers one day in the early Forties, when, as a young man, late at night he reached "Uncle Tommy's" tavern, tired and hungry after a hard day's tramp, with but ten cents in his pocket, enough to pay for lodging only. He went to bed supperless. The next morning he arose, paid for his lodging, and was about to depart, when he was asked if he would not have breakfast. The aroma from the cooking in the kitchen was a sore aggravation, but he declined. "Uncle Tommy" suspected the real cause of his abstinence, and questioned him. Taking him by the hand, he told him to wait and get a good breakfast—just as welcome as though he had money to pay for it. He took breakfast, came to "The Fort," served several years as clerk in a store, and then went into business for himself.

Judge Casady says he took his first meal in Polk County in "Uncle Tommy's" cabin, after a long, weary day's journey, and it was one of the most satisfying he ever ate.

In the Spring of 1847, "Uncle Tommy" moved to the north end of Apple Grove, and, there, he made a post-office, and he the postmaster.

With logs and his own hands he built a cabin, which is what is now Beaver Township. He employed a teacher, paying her out of his own pocket.

Very soon after the military organization for the management of other local affairs was organized, territorial government, counties were organized along the Mississippi River. As other counties were organized to the older counties for judicial purposes, Polk and Mahaska were attached to older counties. It was different. It had been so in other counties by the Claim Club, it was able to manage its own government. There was no nearby county attached, and it was given an independent jurisdiction. It was *sui generis* in that respect. Its importance, it was given jurisdiction north and west of it, and the several counties out of it were attached to Polk and Mahaska.

In January, 1846, the Legislature of Iowa, in defining its boundaries, selected Commissioners for the territory provided for an election to elect commissioners into election precincts, but with the exception of Camp Precinct, in which "Uncle Tommy" lived, all the southeast part of the county was attached to Four Mile townships. "Uncle Tommy" lived in that place. There was no registration of voters across the country, cast his ballot, and he went his way.

Daniel Trullinger, who lives on the site of Des Moines, June Twentieth, 1846, was used in the foundations and chimneys, and worked through the Summer for a

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With logs and his own hands, he built the first school-house in what is now Beaver Township (then a part of Camp). He employed a teacher, paying her three dollars a week from his own pocket.

Very soon after the military abandoned "The Fort," it became apparent that organization for good government, good roads, and management of other local affairs was necessary. Under the Territorial government, counties were first organized along the Mississippi River. As other counties were formed, they were attached to the older counties for judicial and election purposes, until they were able to take care of themselves. Thus, Louisa, Washington, and Mahaska were attached to older eastern counties, but with Polk it was different. It had been so largely settled and well governed by the Claim Club, it was able to maintain a separate municipal government. There was no nearby county to which it could be attached, and it was given an independent existence without proba- tion. It was *sui generis* in that respect. To give prestige to its importance, it was given jurisdiction over all territory in the state north and west of it, and the several counties subsequently carved out of it were attached to Polk until they could go alone.

In January, 1846, the Legislature organized Polk County, fixed its boundaries, selected Commissioners to locate its county-seat, provided for an election to elect county officers, and apportioned it into election precincts, but without clearly defined boundaries. Camp Precinct, in which "Uncle Tommy" lived, embraced nearly all the southeast part of the county, or what is now Camp, Beaver, and Four Mile townships. "Uncle Tommy's" house was the polling place. There was no registration, no challengers. The voter rode across the country, cast his ballot in "Uncle Tommy's" hat, and went his way.

Daniel Trullinger, who lives on Morton Street, says he first saw the site of Des Moines, June Twenty-Eighth, 1843; made the brick used in the foundations and chimneys of the garrison buildings; worked through the Summer for one dollar a day, and went away;

came back in 1846, arrived at "Uncle Tommy's" just in time to vote, which he did within fifteen minutes after arrival. Forty-two votes were cast at that precinct. "Uncle Tommy" was elected the first Sheriff of the county, to serve until the next election, in August, when he was reelected.

At the April election, the candidates for County Surveyor were A. D. Jones, a wide-awake, shrewd fellow, who had been at "The Fort" less than five weeks, and a man named Woodward, who, it is said, represented the country. Jones spent the entire day at "Uncle Tommy's" place, working for himself, but didn't get a vote. Woodward received a majority of the total votes cast, but, by a system of mathematics not uncommon in those days, he was counted out, and the place given to Jones. The entire vote of the county was one hundred seventy-five.

The next day after the election, the District Court for the first time convened in room Twenty-Six, in one of the log buildings which was being used for a public school, the teacher, a Miss Davis, having to vacate for the court. On opening court, "Uncle Tommy" was ordered to hunt up twenty-three good men for the Grand Jury. Catching them on the run, with no time for toilet making, the next day he brought them into court, "Uncle Jerry" Church being coatless, for which he explained to the court that the Sheriff was in too big a hurry to allow "dressing up."

The jury was charged by the court, whereupon they went down to 'Coon River, sat on some logs, discussed the generality of things in general for an hour, decided there was nothing doing for the court, made due report of their finding, which was accepted, and they were discharged. The court then adjourned to September.

At the September term, "Uncle Tommy" captured his first prisoner, an indicted man, who had escaped from a Missouri jail. A mob gathered to rescue him, but "Uncle Tommy" and his deputy, "Pete" Myers, eluded them, and the next day delivered him to Missouri officers, who were on his trail.

Immediately after the passage of the Act organizing the county and creating a Commission to locate the county-seat, public sentiment was aroused respecting the location. Speculation relative thereto had been rife for some time—even prior to the legislative

enactment. Jeremiah Ch called him, laid out a tow bank, and named it Dudle river, to draw travel that v the coming of the locating

Doctor T. K. Brooks, v the trading post, and Willi where the packing-houses Brooklyn, a town of magni iveness. Another town on Jericho, with a vigorous ho

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In the deal they unwitting boundaries, causing consid the townships were restored Doctor A. Y. Hull figured story.

enactment. Jeremiah Church, or "Uncle Jerry," as everybody called him, laid out a town, two miles down the river on the west bank, and named it Dudley. He established a rope ferry over the river, to draw travel that way, and with great expectations, waited the coming of the locating commissioners.

Doctor T. K. Brooks, who had purchased the land occupied as the trading post, and William Lamb, who owned a farm adjoining, where the packing-houses and starch works are now, laid out Brooklyn, a town of magnificent distances, and picturesque attractiveness. Another town on the river, below Dudley, was named Jericho, with a vigorous hornblower on its walls.

There were others, and all rivals of "The Fort." The Legislature being in session, they sent a strong lobby to secure the county-seat elsewhere than at "The Fort" certain, and at Brooklyn if possible. The principal objection to "The Fort" was that it was not central enough—too far north and west. The delay and procrastination of the locating commissioners intensified the struggle of the lobbyists. Judge Casady was the Senator from this district, and being a resident of "The Fort," he kept close tab on the Brooklynites, who, failing to make much progress, came home, and "Uncle Tommy" decided to have a hand in the game.

One very cold morning in February, he and Doctor Fagen started on horseback for Iowa City, over the bleak, desolate prairie, one hundred and twenty miles away, without fee or hope of reward. They made their first night's halt at Bennett's cabin, about four miles east of what is now Newton, nearly frozen, jaded and hungry. Refreshed with corn bread, bacon and sleep, they went on. Arriving at the Capital, they joined Casady in a scheme to fix up the geography, and in a few days secured an amendment to the Act of January Seventeenth, by which a tier of townships was set off from the east side of Polk County to Jasper County, and a tier of townships from Warren County added on the south side of Polk.

In the deal they unwittingly "foozled" the congressional district boundaries, causing considerable political strife until 1853, when the townships were restored to their original position, with which Doctor A. Y. Hull figured conspicuously. But that is another story.

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Having laid the foundation for the settlement of the county-seat question, "Uncle Tommy" came to "The Fort," and, to personally identify himself therewith, during the Summer built a cabin of hewn logs, between Market and Elm near Fifth, which stood as a landmark, notably from the three large Poplar trees near it, until 1880, when it was torn down to give room for the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad depot.

Immediately after the State was organized, it became apparent that the Capital must be removed farther west. Fort Des Moines was rapidly coming into public notice. Bills were before each succeeding Legislature to secure a re-location, but the conflicting interests of rival localities caused defeat, and it was not until 1855 that it was located, and then not at Fort Des Moines, but "within two miles of the junction of the Des Moines and Raccoon rivers," for the putting of "Fort Des Moines" in a legislative Act in those days was like shaking a red rag at a bull—a signal for a fight.

During all those years of dilatory contest, "Uncle Tommy" was an active participant for Des Moines.

When the county was first organized, it was politically Democratic. "The Fort" was the political center. Barlow Granger, Judge Casady, and R. L. Tidrick controlled political affairs. Barlow was the Grand Sachem. His office was the seat of power, and special care was taken that no Whig got a place. Sometimes citizens would make an effort to elect a Whig, who was eminently qualified, deservedly popular, on purely personal grounds, and succeed in getting a majority on the face of the returns, but Barlow usually had a card up his sleeve to play, which won the game. Polk County embraced a large territory "for election purposes," and a poll list from some far-off, forgotten precincts would come straggling in, actually without seal or the signature of election officers, even after the elected Whig had received his commission, and the Democrat was counted in, but nobody got mad about it. The emoluments of office then were not worth a vigorous contention.

In 1848, however, the Whigs put up a game to win. It was the election of President and Congressmen. The congressional candidates were Daniel F. Miller, of Keokuk, and William Thompson, of Henry County. Kaneshville (now Council Bluffs) had been

made a voting precinct. Nauvoo, had made a sett their vote was the proble balance of power. The possible device. The M Monroe County Democrat given out that he had the their scheme, and W. H. Court) sent a special me purse and notice that, "T like hogs, at so much per Tommy" had a scheme. leaders of the Church. I from Nauvoo, three hund a rest of several days at pitched their tents and ra host, distinguished himse sent them on their way re

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made a voting precinct. The Mormons, who had been driven from Nauvoo, had made a settlement at and near Kanessville. To get their vote was the problem. It was quite evident they held the balance of power. The Democrats got at work quick with every possible device. The Mormons were poor; money would talk. Monroe County Democrats sent John Webb there, and it was soon given out that he had the Mormons "fixed." The Whigs learned their scheme, and W. H. Seevers (later Judge of the Supreme Court) sent a special messenger to "Uncle Tommy" with a big purse and notice that, "The Democrats are buying the Mormons like hogs, at so much per head. We must outbid them." "Uncle Tommy" had a scheme. The control of the Mormons lay with the leaders of the Church. In July, 1845, when on their pilgrimage from Nauvoo, three hundred of them, leaders included, halted for a rest of several days at his tavern, weary and hungry. They pitched their tents and raised their banners. "Uncle Tommy," as host, distinguished himself by his kindness and hospitality, and sent them on their way rejoicing.

Taking the purse from Seevers' messenger, he added half a hundred dollars to it, called up his deputy sheriff, "Pete" Myers, who was no slouch in politics, gave him a fast horse, and told him to go to "The Fort," get more money, and then go to Kanessville, "without stopping." With the money raised, a newspaper office was purchased and presented to Orson Hyde, the church leader, and *The Guardian* was at once issued, as the "Protector of the Rights of the People"—first the Mormons, second the Whigs.

Immediately after the election it was rumored that the Mormons had voted solid for Miller. Albia had been selected as the place to count the votes, and Judge Jonathan C. Hall, of Burlington, to watch the count for the Democrats. The poll books were in custody of one Pickett, a Mormon. Kanessville, though a voting precinct, had not been attached to an organized county. "Pete" Myers, Doctor Brooks, and Charley Van got their heads together for protective purposes. They decided that, to make the Kanessville vote legal, Pickett, on his arrival here, *en route* to Albia, should be made a public officer, and sworn in as the organizing sheriff of Pottawattamie, such county then being only in embryo.

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Barlow and his coadjutors got onto the scheme, and suggested to Wallace, the County Clerk, a radical Democrat, that he resign, which he did instanter. When Pickett arrived there was no County Clerk to install him as organizing sheriff. "Pete" and Charley put the screws to Lewis Whitten, Deputy Clerk, and "persuaded" him to do it. Pickett then went to Albia and delivered the poll list to Dudley C. Barbour, County Clerk, who had heard of the Whig newspaper scheme. He threw them on the table, and requested Pickett to go back and sit down awhile, as he was busy and not ready to receive the lists. A crowd was present, there was also confusion, politics and whiskey. Judge Hall came in later, approached Pickett, chatted with him a few moments, and asked for the poll list of Kaneshville, but it was missing—couldn't be found. As the poll list had not been officially received, the canvass went on; Thompson was declared elected, was given the commission, and took his seat. The Whigs were wild with rage, and Miller at once made a formal contest for the seat before Congress. A committee, after investigation, reported that Miller was entitled to the seat, to which Thompson demurred, on the ground that a majority of the Mormon vote was illegal, aliens, etc. He asked, and was granted, ninety days to get proof thereof. Depositions were taken before Judge Charles Mason, ex-Judge of the Supreme Court, a just and upright man. On one occasion, Miller raised a question of jurisdiction in the case, when Mason quickly drew a lot of papers from his pocket to verify his position, and out of them tumbled the missing poll list. Explanation was made, the Judge declaring he received them honestly, but how he was not at liberty to say. Judge Hall was then put on oath, and said that when he arrived at Burlington he found the poll list in his saddle-bags; how they got there he knew not. He delivered them to Thompson.

The contest was continued to April, 1850, when a congressional commission, sitting at Kaneshville, found every vote cast for Miller was legal. Thompson was ousted. Miller then ran again, and was reelected.

Orson Hyde and Almon W. Babbitt, of Illinois, known as the fighting Mormon Congressman, were summoned before Brigham Young, at Salt Lake City. Both were vigorously denounced by

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Young for their political pranks. Hyde was dismissed from the Church; Babbitt snapped his fingers at Brigham and went his way.

In 1849, when Barlow started his hebdomadal *Star*, "Uncle Tommy" paid him the first dollar in money received on subscription.

In 1852, the Polk County Agricultural Society held its second Fair on the District grounds at Horseshoe Lake, on 'Coon bottoms; the first was held in the court-house yard. "Uncle Tommy" was a Director of the Society, and, with a Mr. Bennett, exhibited seventeen fine Durham cattle, the first brought into the county. He was also elected one of the managers of the state Society when it was organized in 1853.

The same year, he and Isaac Cooper were appointed executors of the first will filed in the county—that of John L. Frederick, an early settler. The will fixed their pay at one dollar and fifty cents per day.

In 1854, came one of the most exciting political contests ever had in the county. The Democrats had nominated Judge Curtis Bates, successor of Barlow as editor of the *Star*, for Governor, and the Whigs had nominated James W. Grimes, of Burlington. The presidential election the previous year had shown that Polk County was close—that thirteen votes would defeat the Democrats. Where to get them was the question. Local pride, and the prestige given Des Moines and the county in the nomination of Bates, was an important factor which Barlow and his coterie did not fail to pound into the ears of susceptible Whigs—Democrats didn't need it. As election day approached, the Whigs were in despair. "Uncle Tommy" and Granville Holland put their heads together one day, and decided that something must be done. This is what was done: They went all over the county, bought all the hogs they could find, paying one and one-half cents per pound—a high price then—hired sixteen good Democrats to drive them to Ottumwa, the nearest market, starting them so as to arrive at their destination the day before election. "Uncle Tommy" and Granville went down with a team, sold the hogs on their arrival, gave the team to the sixteen drivers, mounted two fleet horses, arrived home in time to put in good work at the polls and vote. The drivers did not get

home until the day after election. The county record shows the vote was: Grimes, four hundred fifty; Bates, four hundred fifty, and the Democrats for the first time were defeated.

In 1856, the Slack Water Navigation [Obstruction] Company, having sold its half-constructed dams, old scows, and other junk, to the state of Iowa, and gone out of business, and the State having entered into an agreement with the Keokuk, Fort Des Moines and Minnesota Railway Company (now the Valley road), by which it was to take the river land grant and complete the road, the Legislature appointed "Uncle Tommy," W. W. Belknap (later Secretary of War), and C. C. Carpenter (later Governor), a commission to transfer to the railroad company the franchises, rights, and privileges of the defunct Navigation Company, which was done with most distinguished consideration.

In 1858, "Uncle Tommy" was elected Representative in the Legislature, at its first session in Des Moines, and he secured the passage of a law to take out the crooks and curves in that holy terror to farmers and teamsters, in the Spring and Fall, the tortuous Skunk River, by which a large area of land was reclaimed.

In 1859, he was elected a member of the Board of County Supervisors, and held that office six years.

In 1867, he laid out the town of Mitchellville, became a resident thereof, founded and built a seminary, which for many years was a flourishing school, but, becoming overshadowed by the schools at Des Moines, went down, was sold to the State, and transformed into the present Industrial School for Girls. He also helped to organize the Universalist Church, and erected a meeting-house, in which the present engineer of our Weather Bureau Service, Professor Sage, was the preacher.

In 1868, at the organization of the Old Settlers' Association, he was a prominent factor, and was elected President.

In 1874, he was elected State Senator, reelected in 1876, and was one of the most efficient members of that body in support of all efforts to improve the educational and moral interests of the people generally, the county and Des Moines especially, for he was always deemed a component part of the Capital City he had so diligently labored to establish and promote.

Politically, he was During the notable F well-known station on escaping to Canada. government, the chure sunny nature, beloved in quietude until Jul "the other shore," one

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Politically, he was a Whig, and an Abolitionist from birth. During the notable Free Soil fight in Kansas, his cabin was a well-known station on the "Underground Railroad" for negroes escaping to Canada. He was a humanitarian, a lover of good government, the church, and the school; public-spirited, of genial, sunny nature, beloved by everybody. His later years were passed in quietude until July Fifteenth, 1894, when he passed over to "the other shore," one of God's noblemen.

Religiously, he was a devoted Universalist, but his humanitarian spirit embraced all creeds. He loved a Methodist or Presbyterian as fervently as a Universalist. He gave largely and cheerfully to churches of all denominations, for, like Abou Ben Adhem, he loved his fellow-man.

Socially, his whole life was a benefaction to the county and the state. He made everybody about him, wherever he was, happier and better. The darkest night, the most tempestuous storm, the most piercing cold, could not prevent him serving his friends, and they were numberless, for he touched human life in Polk County in all its phases. For half a century his counsel was sought by leading men in the state in matters of public import, so widely known was his probity and honor. He was once wealthy, but he built and equipped school-houses, employed teachers, built churches, gave to good objects large sums—in fact, his whole life was a charity to do good. Through an unfortunate investment, he lost heavily, and died poor in worldly effects, but the richest man whose name is on the death-roll of the county or state—rich in true riches, an unsullied name, and possessing the reverence and affection of the people with whom he had lived.

November Fifth, 1904.

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# HISTORY OF IOWA

FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES  
TO THE BEGINNING OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

FOUR VOLUMES <sup>22</sup>/<sub>35</sub>

By BENJAMIN F. GUE

*Illustrated with Photographic Views of the Natural Scenery of  
the State, Public Buildings, Pioneer Life, Etc.*

WITH PORTRAITS AND BIOGRAPHIES OF NOTABLE MEN AND WOMEN OF IOWA

VOLUME IV  
IOWA BIOGRAPHY



SEAL OF THE STATE OF IOWA

THE CENTURY HISTORY COMPANY  
41 LAFAYETTE PLACE  
NEW YORK CITY

5161a

**THOMAS MITCHELL** was born in Sullivan County, New Hampshire, March 3, 1816. He was reared on a farm and had but a common school education. In 1840 he came to Iowa and first made his home in Jefferson County but in 1844 came to Fort Des Moines and obtained permission of Captain Allen, its commander, to build a log cabin on Camp Creek for the entertainment of travelers. It was the first public house in the upper Des Moines valley. The country was then occupied by the Indians and the Fox chief, Poweshiek had a village on the Skunk River where Colfax stands, which was the home of more than a thousand members of that tribe. Mr. Mitchell was a warm friend of the chief. In 1857 he was elected to the House of the first General Assembly which convened at Des Moines. In 1867 he founded the town of Mitchellville and a few years later secured the location at that place of a Universalist Seminary. In 1873 Mr. Mitchell was elected to the State Senate, serving four years. He was a radical abolitionist, kept a station on the "Underground Railroad" and was always ready to entertain John Brown with his escaping slaves on their way to freedom in Canada and convey them to the next station. Mr. Mitchell was a man of broad and liberal views, large benevolence and great public spirit. He was of the best type of the pioneers who laid the foundation for the future greatness of the State. He died on the 14th of July, 1894.

**WILLIAM O. MITCHELL** is a native of Iowa, born in Van Buren County, April 4, 1846. At the age of sixteen he enlisted in Company C, Thirteenth Iowa Volunteers, serving three years. During that time he was eight months a prisoner confined in the Andersonville stockade, Salisbury and Florence prisons, from the last of which he escaped. During his term of service he participated in the Vicksburg campaign and many other engagements. After the close of the war he graduated at Cornell College, Mount Vernon, and began the study of law, being admitted to the bar in 1872. He located at Corning in Adams County and in addition to practicing law became largely engaged in farming. He has done probably more than any other one man to call public attention to the famous "Blue Grass Region" of southern Iowa as a stock country. He was in 1891 elected Representative in the House of the Twenty-fourth General Assembly and had the unusual honor of being chosen Speaker the first term of his legislative service. He was reelected to the Twenty-fifth General Assembly, serving as chairman of the committee of ways and means. In 1895 he was elected to the Senate, serving in the Twenty-sixth and Twenty-seventh General Assemblies and at the extra session.

**SAMUEL A. MOORE**, pioneer legislator and soldier, was born at Lawrenceburg, Indiana, December 16, 1821. He was educated in the log cabins of Dearborn and Bartholomew counties, and at eight years of age became an apprentice in a printing office where he remained four years.

FamilySearch™ International Genealogical Index v5.0

North America

## Family Group Record

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### Husband

[thomas Mitchell](#)[Pedigree](#)**Birth:** 03 MAR 1816 Claremont, , , New Hampshire**Christening:****Marriage:** 1841 , , Iowa**Death:** 15 JUL 1894 Mitchellville, Polk, Iowa**Burial:**

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### Wife

[Almira Swift](#)[Pedigree](#)**Birth:** 1812**Christening:****Marriage:** 1841 , , Iowa**Death:** 1860 Mitchellvill, , , Iowa**Burial:**

---

### Children

1. [Orrin Mitchell](#)

Male

[Pedigree](#)**Birth:** 1842 , , Iowa**Christening:****Death:** 1864 Waverly, Humphreys, Tennessee**Burial:**2. [Mary Ann Mitchell](#)

Female

[Pedigree](#)**Birth:** 1844**Christening:****Death:** 1930 , El Paso, Texas**Burial:**3. [charles Mitchell](#)

Male

[Pedigree](#)**Birth:** 1846 , , Iowa**Christening:****Death:** Mitchellville, Polk, Iowa**Burial:**4. [Walter Ainsworth Mitchell](#)

Male

[Pedigree](#)**Birth:** 1857 , , Iowa**Christening:****Death:** 08 FEB 1882**Burial:**

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You searched for **Thomas Mitchell** in **Iowa**

### Iowa State Census Collection, 1836-1925

Name: **Thomas Mitchell**  
 Birth Year: **abt 1816**  
 Birth Place: **NH**  
 Gender: **Male**  
 Marital Status: **Married**  
 Census Date: **1856**  
 Residence state: **Iowa**  
 Residence County: **Polk**  
 Locality: **Beaver**  
 Roll: **IA\_64**  
 Line: **5**  
 Family Number: **25**  
 Neighbors: [View others on page](#)

Household Members:	Name	Age
	<a href="#">Thomas Mitchell</a>	40
	<a href="#">Almira Mitchell</a>	40
	<a href="#">Orin Mitchell</a>	14
	<a href="#">Ann Mitchell</a>	12
	<a href="#">Charlie Mitchell</a>	7
	<a href="#">Ann Patric</a>	18
	<a href="#">Wm Mitchell</a>	23
	<a href="#">Ed Mitchell</a>	22
	<a href="#">Isa Mitchell</a>	29
	<a href="#">John Mitchell</a>	26
	<a href="#">Harry Mitchell</a>	13
	<a href="#">R I Walker</a>	27
	<a href="#">Wm Griff</a>	22
	<a href="#">H M Hoxie</a>	25
	<a href="#">Renben Ellis</a>	32

#### Source Information:

Ancestry.com. *Iowa State Census Collection, 1836-1925* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2007.  
 Original data: Microfilm of Iowa State Censuses, 1856, 1885, 1895, 1905, 1915, 1925 as well various special censuses from 1836-1897 obtained from the State Historical Society of Iowa via Heritage Quest.

#### Description:

This database contains Iowa state censuses for the following years: 1856, 1885, 1895, 1905, 1915, and 1925. It also includes some head of household censuses and other special censuses from 1836-1897. Information available for an individual will vary according to the census year and the information requested on the census form. Some of the information contained in this database though includes: name, age, gender, race, birthplace, marital status, and place of enumeration. [Learn more...](#)

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### Thomas Mitchell

Birth **3 Mar 1816** in [Claremont, Sullivan, NH](#)  
Death **15 Jul 1894** in [Mitchellville, Polk, IA](#)

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#### Timeline [\(View details\)](#)

**1816**  
3 Mar [Birth](#)  
[Claremont, Sullivan, NH](#)

**1861**  
17 Jun [Marriage to Anna Caroline Mattern](#) [4 source citations](#)  
Y;Y;Y

**1894**  
15 Jul [Death](#)  
[Mitchellville, Polk, IA](#)  
Age: 78

#### Comments

*No comments have been added yet.*

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#### Family Members

##### Parents

No Father

No Mother

[Show siblings](#)

##### Spouse & Children

[Anna Caroline Mattern](#)  
1837 -

[Harry H. Mitchell](#)  
1870 -

[Maude Mitchell](#)  
1875 -

[John H. Mitchell](#)  
1877 -

[Family group sheet](#)

#### Source Information

[view details](#)

Bertie L. Mann2.GED

1 citation provides evidence for **Marriage**

Early German American Schupp/Shupp/Shup Families and Their

1 citation provides evidence for **Marriage**

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**Thomas Mitchell**

Birth **3 Mar 1816** in [Claremont, Sullivan, New Hampshire](#)  
Death **15 Jul 1894** in [Mitchellville, Polk, Iowa](#)

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6

[Photos \(1\)](#)  
[Stories \(0\)](#)  
[Audio \(0\)](#)  
[Video \(0\)](#)

**Timeline** [\(View details\)](#)

**1816**  
3 Mar [Birth](#)  
[Claremont, Sullivan, New Hampshire](#)

**1894**  
15 Jul [Death](#)  
[Mitchellville, Polk, Iowa](#)  
Age: 78

**Comments**

*No comments have been added yet.*

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**Family Members**

**Parents**

[William Mitchell](#)  
1768 – 1832

[Dorothy "Dolly" Blake](#)  
1778 – 1851

[Show siblings](#)

**Spouse & Children**

No Spouse or Children

[Family group sheet](#)

**Source Information**

*No source citations have been added yet.*

**Web Links**

*There are no weblinks available for this person.*

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## Thomas Mitchell

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**Birth:** Mar. 3, 1816  
 Claremont  
 Sullivan County  
 New Hampshire, USA

**Death:** Jul. 15, 1894  
 Mitchellville  
 Polk County  
 Iowa, USA

Fairfield Tribune, July 18, 1894, Pg. 7, Col. 3

Death of Thos. Mitchell.

A PIONEER GONE. Death of Thomas Mitchell, an Early Resident of this County, at his Home in Mitchellville, Iowa, Last Sunday. Founder of Mitchellville, Iowa, Brother of Hon. H. B. Mitchell of this City.

.... Mr. Mitchell was a personal friend of John Brown of Harper's Ferry fame and it was at his home that Mr. Brown stayed during his last visit to the state, shortly before his tragic death. The subject of this sketch has figured prominently in so many historic events a short article can not even briefly mention them.

Born in Claremont, Sullivan County, New Hampshire, Mar. 3, 1816, one of a large family of children of William and Dolly Blake Mitchell. His father died when he was 16 years old.... Returned from Iowa to Thedford, Vt., to marry Almira Swift Aug. 14, 1841, whom he had courted while working in a paper mill back in his eastern home. Came at once to Fairfield, remaining here until the fall of 1842, when they came to what is now Polk County, a tract of land that the government had just entered into a treaty with the Sacs and Foxes for settlement. The result of this union was five children -- Orrin, the oldest, enlisted in the 8th Iowa Cavalry and died at Waverly, Tenn., and was brought back and laid to rest at his boyhood home, Mitchellville; Mary A., wife of M. R. Hoxie, now of Taylor, Tex.; Charles, who married Lizzie DeLong, also lives at Taylor, Tex.; Walter A., who died at the home of his brother in Taylor in 1881, and Allie, who died in infancy, before her mother's death. Almira Swift Mitchell died June 16, 1860.

On 17 June 1861, Mr. Mitchell married Anna C. Mattern by whom he has had three children, Harry H., Maude and John.

Coming to what is now Polk County, as before stated, in 1842, Mr. Mitchell entered the tract of land where the beautiful little city which bears his name, Mitchellville, now stands, built thereon three log cabins, 18 x 20 ft., which were the first buildings outside of Fort Des Moines, and opened for the entertainment of emigrants. One of these houses still stands at Mitchellville, a noble monument to one of



*Thomas Mitchell*

Added by: [Katie Lou](#)



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A Photo

Iowa's noblest pioneers. In 1846 he removed to what is now Beaver township, and named the place "Apple Grove", a name which has ever since held to it....

There is 1 more photo not showing...

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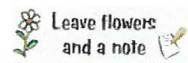
Photos may be scaled.  
Click on image for full size.

**Family links:**

**Parents:**

William Mitchell (\_\_\_\_ - 1832)

Dolly *Blake* Mitchell (\_\_\_\_ - 1851)



**Spouse:**

Almira *Swift* Mitchell (1816 - 1860)

**Children:**

Allie Mitchell (\_\_\_\_ - 1868)\*

Orrin F. Mitchell (1812 - 1864)\*

\*[Calculated relationship](#)

**Burial:**

[Mitchellville Cemetery](#)

Mitchellville

Polk County

Iowa, USA

Created by: [Katie Lou](#)

Record added: Mar 21, 2011

Find A Grave Memorial# 67253306

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