

Standard Form For Members of the Legislature

Name of Representative Kearty, John E. Senator _____

Represented Linn County, Iowa

1. Birthday and place 5 Sept 1817 Lancaster County, Pennsylvania

2. Marriage (s) date place

① Esther Hensley 1838

② Mrs. Clarissa Jeff

3. Significant events for example:

A. Business He held the first notarial commission in Linn County Iowa
and held it for about 50 years

B. Civic responsibilities _____

C. Profession _____

4. Church membership United Brethren

5. Sessions served 6th General Assembly 1856

6. Public Offices

A. Local _____

B. State _____

C. National _____

7. Death 14 May 1900 Lisbon, Iowa; buried Lisbon Cemetery, Lisbon, Iowa

8. Children Christian H.; Barbara A.; Henry C.; Abraham E.; David H.;
Elizabeth A.; Samuel A.; John H. (predeceased his father in death); Mary M. (predeceased
her father's death)

9. Names of parents Christian Kearty

10. Education _____

11. Degrees _____

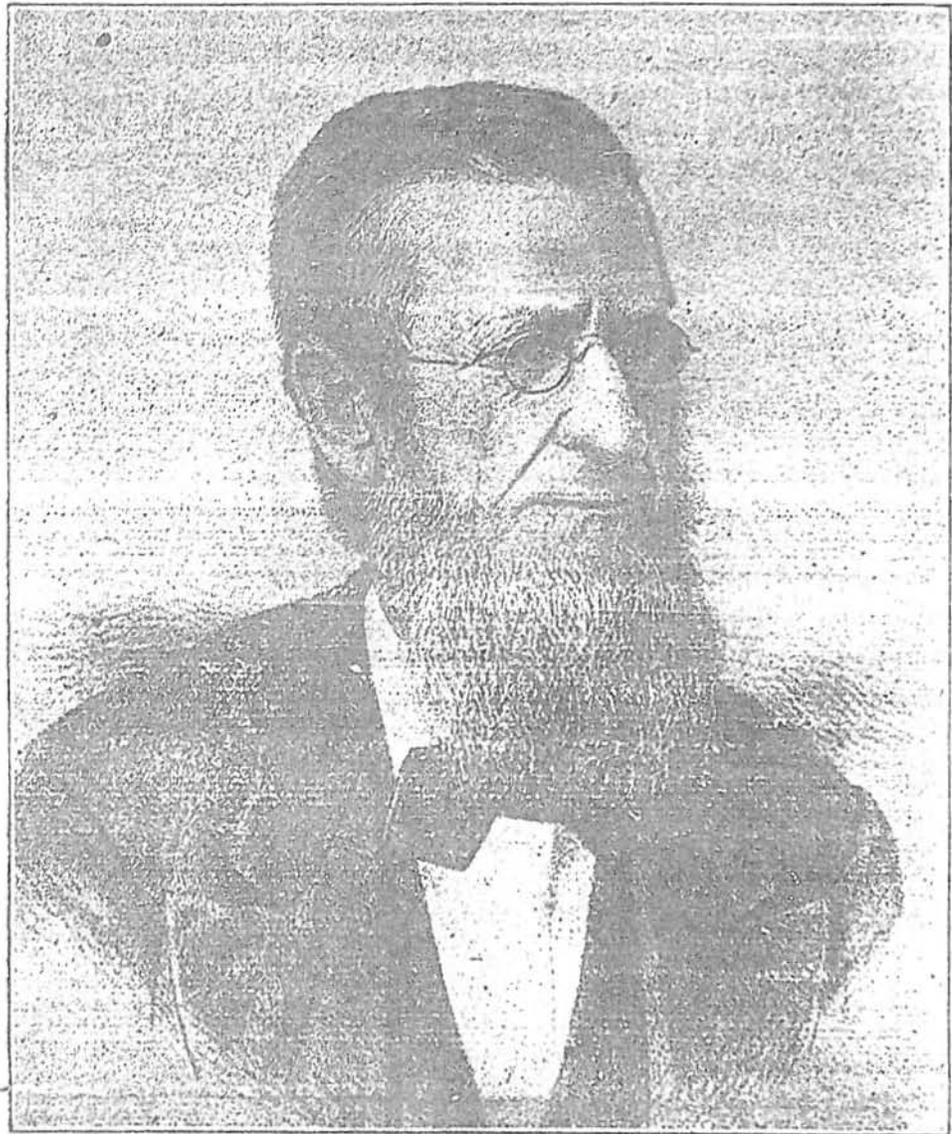
12. Other applicable information Republican

- His first wife, Esther, died in 1876
- He came to Iowa with a colony of Pennsylvania farmers settling on the prairies and woodlands where Leiden would be built.
- He tried to farm, but was not satisfied since he had been a business man in the east.
- He decided to lay out a town, deciding on the place today named Leiden. Iowa. With M. Hoover and J. W. Eby they laid out the original Leiden.

PASSING OF A PIONEER.

The news that the Hon. J. E. Kurtz was dead, though not altogether unexpected, came as a shock to the citizens of Lisbon. He had been so long a familiar figure in the city that it seemed strange to think that his familiar

John H., Barbara A., Henry C., Abram E., David H., Elizabeth A., Mary M., and Samuel A. all of whom are now present with the exception of two, John H. and Mary M. who preceded their parents to the shores of eternal



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form would no more be seen and that his voice would no longer be raised in council, His was one of the large names in the history of the development of this part of the state of Iowa and has been associated with all the history of the development of this community from the first conflict of the settlers with the virgin soil to its present prosperous condition.

J. E. Kurtz was born in Lancaster County, Pa. on the 5th day of September in the year, 1817, hence the span of his life has covered almost all the history of the century, and has seen during its course the most important part of the development of the nation.

He was the 6th. issue of the second generation of the family of Christian Kurtz, who was born and reared in Manheim, Wurtemberg, Germany, and emigrated to America in 1755. This early ancestry was noted for its sturdy mental, moral and physical qualities, and for its men and women possessing the highest ideals of honor and integrity, true types of the old German Lutheran stock of the Old World. These qualities were hereditary in Father Kurtz in a marked degree and were conspicuously evident throughout his long and useful life.

In 1838 he was married to Miss Esther Hershey, who was also a descendant of the same stock, and was the youngest daughter of Rev. Christian Hershey, whose life and council was such an inspiration to the early settlers of this portion of the country, and whose generosity and unselfish devotion built for this community the first U. B. Church in the state of Iowa, and one of the earliest churches built in the state by any denomination.

From this union were born

rest. In 1876 the beloved wife of his youth departed for her eternal home, and after a few years he was again united in marriage, this time with Mrs. Clarissa Taft who now survives him. She has been a true and devoted wife, a kind and affectionate mother, and to her is due much praise for the comforts and repose of the latter years of Mr. Kurtz's life.

Mr. Kurtz came to Iowa with a colony of sturdy Pennsylvania farmers headed by Rev. Christian Hershey in 1847. The country was then new and its resources undeveloped and the company had a difficult journey in trying to get to their new home. They came down the Ohio in flat boats, then up the Mississippi in steamboats and then finally out into the wilds of the interior by wagon and thus reached their destination. Here they found but little save the native prairie and woodland, though a few families had come here and started a settlement some years before. When the colony first came Mr. Kurtz purchased a farm and started to till the soil but having been an active business man in the east he was not satisfied with remaining on a farm and so began to plan for a different line of activity. As a means to this end he determined to lay out a town and after some investigation decided on the present site of Lisbon and in company with M. Hoover and J. H. Eby, he took the necessary steps and laid out the original town of Lisbon.

He was identified with the first business institutions and built the first store building in town. From that time to the time of his death he was closely identified with all the public interests of the town. Up to the time of his retirement on account of the infirmities of age he was continuously interested

early days that illustrate In religious matters Kurtz was active. He was converted in the early days of the U. B. Church. He remained a faithful member nearly a half century. His pastor says "He was a faithful attendant at the services, and in the early days made special effort at prayer and Sabbath School. He was very regular in his devotions. Thus his life ripened and his years went slowly and his end was peace."

He had been very successful some time but was



BUSINESS

E. L. SIMMONS

Mr. Simmons is a native of this region having been born near Olin, in 1835. He came to Lisbon in 1855. Fred Houbbold was his first shop and has since been here. He is a first class and does a big business and is a good workman and he has prospered. The fact that he has built a fine building. He has a room in connection with his shop fixed up in a first class style. When in business in his line, give him

W. H. THE

Mr. W. H. The subject of this sketch was the creamery business a considerable portion of his life. In 1890 he came here and at once comm

NEER.

Barbara A., Henry C., David H., Elizabeth and Samuel A. all now present with a number of two, John H. who preceded their shores of eternal



in various lines of business activity.

He was the possessor of the first notarial commission issued in the county of Linn, and held the commission for about 50 years giving up his commission on the 4th. of July 1897. From time to time he has held nearly all the elective offices in the gift of the people of the community and was a member of the Seventh General Assembly of the state, being the first Republican member of the Assembly ever elected from this district. This was the last session of the Assembly held in Iowa City. Throughout his entire life he was prominent in political matters and always active in the cause of good citizenship. He was a steadfast foe of the liquor traffic and even in the early days was active for its suppression. About 1857 he was the custodian of the liquor confiscated here and it was in his yard that the liquor was afterward destroyed. The influence that he leaves is one that counts for uprightness and morality, and the impress of his character will long be felt in the municipal life of Lisbon, the city of his founding.

Father Kurtz was a man who always had the respect and confidence of the entire community, and in the earlier days his wisdom and council was constantly sought in the settlement of local difficulties and business disagreements, and almost invariably the decision given was satisfactory to both parties who would comply with the terms of the verdict rendered and thus settle the question at issue. Many incidents are told of the early days that illustrate this.

In religious matters also Mr. Kurtz was active. He was converted in the early 50s and joined

be about the house, but on Saturday morning it became apparent that the closing scene was near at hand, and on Monday at shortly before 1 p. m. he passed over the dividing line and was numbered no more with the living upon earth.

On Mr. Kurtz's 80th. birthday a family reunion was held to honor the day and there were present 7 sons and daughters, 7 sons and daughters-in-law, 38 grandchildren and 8 great grandchildren so that at the time of his death Mr. Kurtz was at the head of a patriarchal family. One brother and two sisters also survive him, these all live in Lancaster County Pennsylvania.

With the passing of Father Kurtz one more of the links that bind the past to the present is gone. Of those who were heads of families in the first colony that came to Lisbon only one, J. H. Eby, of Cedar Rapids, is now left. Of those who have seen the whole development of Lisbon but few are left and the early days are beginning to seem like history of former times rather than as events in which the present had a part. The city is brought to realize that it is more than a generation old. But the impress of the sturdy characters such as Father Kurtz has been indelibly impressed upon the life of the city and will remain.

Out of respect to the founder, the business places of the city were all closed during the funeral services.

The obsequies were conducted by Rev. W. I. Beatty D. D. pastor of the U. B. church assisted by other pastors of the City churches. They were conducted in the United Brethren church which was handsomely and appropriately decorated in

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In religious matters also Mr. Kurtz was active. He was converted in the early 50s and joined the U. B. Church, of which he remained a faithful member for nearly a half century. Of this his pastor says "He was always a faithful attendant at preaching services, and in the later years made special efforts to be present at prayer meeting and Sabbath School". He was also very regular in his family devotions. Thus his Christian life ripened and matured as the years went slowly by. And the end was peace."

He had been very feeble for some time but was still able to

head of a patriarchal family. One brother and two sisters also survive him, these all live in Lancaster County Pennsylvania.

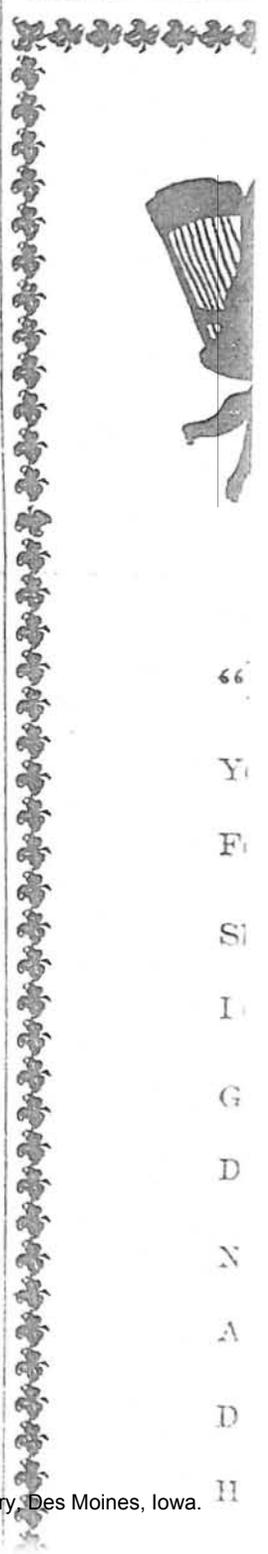
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