

George W. Bemis

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GEORGE W. BEMIS was born in Spencer, Mass., Oct. 13, 1826; he died at Independence, Iowa, Sept. 24, 1905. When he was eleven years old his family removed to Genesee county, N. Y., where they settled upon a farm. His youth was mainly spent at the old home where he worked through the summer and attended school in the winter. He also attended Carey Collegiate Seminary in Otsego county, N. Y. Shortly after reaching his majority he spent two winters teaching in Wisconsin, and in 1854 removed to Iowa and settled in Independence, where he resided until his death. His first public employment was that of county surveyor of Buchanan county, while he also carried on an extensive real estate and banking business. He was chosen a member of the eighth general assembly in 1859, serving in the house during the regular session of 1860 and the extra war session of 1861. He was chairman of the committee on the State University and also a member of the appropriations committee. During the session of 1860 Mr. Bemis introduced an important bill relating to the duties of county surveyors, which elicited much discussion at the time. After the expiration of his legislative service he was appointed postal clerk on the Dubuque and Sioux City Railroad, in which capacity he served seven years. About the year 1868 a vacancy having occurred in the Board of Commissioners in charge of the erection of the insane asylum at Independence he was appointed by Governor Merrill to fill the place. He resigned from this position in 1871, but was reappointed by Governor Carpenter the following year. He served as State senator in the sessions of 1872 and 1874, where he held several important places on committees, and was chairman of that on public buildings. In 1876 he was elected State treasurer and re-elected to the same office in 1878. Upon the expiration of this latter office, he retired to Independence where he resided the remainder of his life. Mr. Bemis was a public officer of marked ability and most unquestioned integrity. He won distinguished credit in every place, and no breath of suspicion of the least wrong doing was ever raised against him. The State has never had a more efficient public servant.

ANDREW J. FUHRMEISTER was born in Dardensheim, Prussia, August 29, 1832; he died in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Dec. 13, 1905. His father was a veteran of the German army of liberation who fought under Blucher at Waterloo. The father came to America primarily to save his sons from compulsory military service in the German army and in the faith that in free America his sons could develop into more useful men. The family landed in Baltimore in 1841, and came by way of canal boat and rail to Pittsburg, thence down the Ohio river and up the Mississippi to Muscatine, arriving at Iowa City Oct. 14, 1843. They settled on a farm near Ely. Mr. Andrew J. Fuhrmeister was for many years in business at that place. He was a trustee of Putnam township for 21 years, secretary of the Ely Independent District for about 12 years, and treasurer of the West Side Mutual Insurance Company for 11 years. In 1891 he was elected to the general assembly, serving in the house of representatives one term.

GEORGE W. RUDDICK was born in Sullivan county, N. Y., May 13, 1835; he died in Waverly, Iowa, Dec. 12, 1905. He graduated from the Albany Law School in 1856, and immediately came west, settling in Waverly, where he resided until the day of his death. In 1859 Mr. Ruddick was elected to the State legislature, serving one term in the house of representatives. In 1868 he was elected circuit judge. Before the end of his term he was elected to the judgeship in the 12th judicial district. In 1894, after a continuous service of twenty-four years, he voluntarily retired from the bench. In 1892 he was a candidate before the Republican State Convention for supreme judge, and was a prominent though unsuccessful candidate. On his retirement he re-entered the practice of law.

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