

## Eugene Criss

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the most brilliant among the many noted men who have been counted a part of this community. His natural ability was supplemented by an excellent education and years of study and training. There was an alertness, a keenness about his work as a lawyer which made him a dangerous opponent and gave him high standing before the bar. He was an orator of more than average ability, and a writer of strength and gracefulness, as many passages in a book he published a few months ago, 'John Williamson, of Hardscrabble,' will attest. Withal, he was a most genial and accomplished man, and a delightful social companion."

EUGENE CRISS was born in Preston county, Va., now West Va., July 27, 1822; he died at Sac City, Iowa, March 11, 1903. He resided a number of years in Illinois and Wisconsin, but in 1835, in company with John Coe, started to find a site in western Iowa where he intended to engage in milling and merchandizing. August 9 of that year they reached the present site of Sac City. The location pleased him, and he decided to settle by the 'Coon river, and help build up the city. At that time land had not yet been surveyed into sections, and no homestead entries had been made, but on July 4, 1854, Hon. John F. Duncombe had platted the town site of Sac City, which he had named Austin, in honor of one of the first settlers. After Mr. Criss' arrival it was changed to Sac City. From time immemorial that had been a summer camping ground for the Indians, and they continued to come there several years after Mr. Criss made his settlement. For a time his trade was largely carried on through the purchase of furs from the Indians and white settlers. These he hauled to Keokuk to be exchanged for supplies for his frontier store. His first residence was a log cabin, where with true frontier hospitality he always gave food and shelter to strangers who were traveling through this western country. Later on his residence was enlarged and became a station on the stage route from Fort Dodge to Sioux City. In 1856 he built a steam saw mill which furnished much of the lumber used thereabouts in pioneer building. He afterwards erected a flouring mill, and engaged also in farming and stock raising. He was one of the organizers of the first National Bank of Sac City, and was one of its directors and its vice-president at the time of his death. He served as county supervisor and also as county judge. In 1868 he represented Sac, Ida and Woodbury counties in the Iowa house of representatives. When his town was incorporated in 1875 he became its first mayor. In the early and later history of Sac county no one of the old pioneers bore a more prominent or useful part. He had a wide acquaintance and his name was a familiar one throughout the State. *The Sac Sun* of March 12, concluded its highly complimentary notice of Judge Criss with these words: "Judge Criss has been an excellent citizen, upright in his dealings, firm in his convictions, hospitable, and public spirited. No one in the county has been more widely known, and they who mourn his death are many."

MRS. M. L. D. PUTNAM was born at Greencastle, Pa., Sept. 23, 1832; she died at Davenport, Iowa, Feb. 20, 1903. Her father was Joseph Duncan, a member of Congress from Illinois at the time of her birth. Mr. Duncan's home was Jacksonville, Ill., but the lady members of the family were driven to Greencastle, Pa., by the prevalence of cholera at the national capital, and it was during their temporary residence there that she was born. Her father became the fifth governor of Illinois. He had distinguished himself by his services in the war of 1812, and received from congress a sword of honor. He had also, while a member of the Illinois legislature, been a leader in the pioneer effort to establish common schools in that state. On her mother's side Mrs. Putnam was a great-granddaughter of Hannah Caldwell, the one woman who was killed by British bullets during the war of the revolution.

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