

## Samuel Murdock

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rank of Colonel. His last years had been very quiet, and he was well-nigh forgotten at the time of his death, save by the soldiers whom he had led in so many battles and hard marches. His surviving men have none but proud and kind recollections of "Old A. J."

JUDGE SAMUEL MURDOCK was born near Pittsburg, Pa., March 13, 1817, and died at his residence in Elkader, Iowa, January 26, 1897. He came to Garnavillo, Clayton county, Iowa, and bought a farm in the year 1843. He remained there until 1876, when he removed to Elkader, which was his home until the day of his death. He was well known as one of the early legislators and jurists of Iowa. He was elected to the last territorial legislature in 1845, and to the State legislature in 1869. In the spring of 1855 he was elected judge of the Tenth Judicial District, which included ten counties in northeastern Iowa. Aside from his professional culture Judge Murdock possessed a wide knowledge of agriculture, horticulture, geology and natural history. Clayton and Allamakee counties had been the home of the mound-builders and no man in our State has ever made more thorough investigations in that direction. His interesting collection of pre-historic stone implements was purchased by the State and is now in the Historical Department. He also owned a large-geological collection which had been made by himself. He was a ready writer and very familiar with the early pioneers, not only of his own county but of the State at large. No man in Iowa has written finer or more truly appreciative biographical sketches of pioneers whom he knew than Judge Murdock. Really these sketches possessed so much merit, that they ought to be gathered into some permanent form of publication. They would make a valuable book. He was a genial, abiding, true friend, surpassed by very few as a conversationalist, and always a pleasant man to meet. No one could pass an hour in his company without being benefited by his large stores of information. This is but the briefest statement of his many excellent qualities. We trust that some friend more thoroughly informed than the writer, will yet prepare a biographical sketch for THE ANNALS, which shall do justice to the memory of that grand old man.

COL. ISAAC W. GRIFFITH was born in Trumbull county, Ohio, April 2, 1820, and died in Des Moines, January 6, 1897. For nearly forty years he was one of the most familiar figures in the capital city. He had enjoyed the acquaintance of most of the distinguished lawyers, legislators, jurists, soldiers and pioneers of early Iowa. In 1846 he volunteered under the first call for troops for the Mexican war, and was made a sergeant in the 15th U. S. Infantry. He participated in many battles and skirmishes, and at Churubusco lost his right arm at the shoulder. Disabled for most of the active vocations of life, Col. Griffith, as was eminently just and proper, was almost constantly in public employment. He served in the Legislature of 1849, as a member from Lee county, and deserves the distinguished credit of having introduced and secured the passage of the Iowa Homestead law. He first came to Des Moines with the appointment of Register of the U. S. Land Office in 1858, in which position he served with entire satisfaction to all with whom he had business relations. Despising no useful employment, when his term expired, he became the toll-gate keeper on the old wooden bridge which crossed the river at Walnut street. He was at times bailiff in the State and United States Courts. From his kindly nature, strict honesty, no less than from the serious character of his disability, he always possessed the sympathy of his wide circle of acquaintances. When Judge Mason's portrait was placed in the Supreme Court rooms, May 22, 1895, the compliment of unveiling it was accorded to Col. Griffith, who had long served as bailiff in his courts. From this brief statement it will be seen

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