

Henry W. Rothert

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DAVID BRANT was born at Shelbyville, Indiana, July 6, 1850, and died at Iowa City, Iowa, June 4, 1919. He came with his mother and stepfather to Monroe County, Iowa, in 1855. They went on to Ringgold County in 1857. The stepfather went into the Union army, leaving the farm to the care of David when he was but twelve years old. Ambitious for an education he went to Iowa City in 1872, walking sixty miles of the way, and entered the academy where he remained two terms. He then attended the University three years. Leaving the University he became editor and part owner of the *Iowa City Journal*. He later disposed of his interest in the *Journal* to take a position on the *Iowa City Republican*. In 1881 he went to Cedar Rapids as city editor of the *Cedar Rapids Republican*. In 1883 he established the *Walker News*, conducting it seven years. In 1890 he became city editor of the *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, which he also represented six years as legislative correspondent at Des Moines. He was elected representative from Linn County, serving in the Twenty-sixth General Assembly and in the Twenty-sixth extra session in 1897 when the code was revised. In 1897 he went to Clinton as editor of the *Clinton Herald*, remaining there four years. In 1902 he returned to Iowa City as editor and manager of the *Iowa City Republican*, later acquiring its ownership and continuing with his two sons, its publication until his death. As an editorial writer he was original, aggressive and forceful. He was a delegate to the Republican national convention in 1908. He was well acquainted with Iowa politics and affairs, had a retentive memory, and wrote a series of valuable reminiscent articles for his paper not long before his death. He had been a familiar figure at district, state and national conventions for many years. He bitterly denounced the legislation for extending and improving the State Capitol grounds in 1913.

HENRY W. ROTHERT was born in Germany, September 11, 1840, and died at Council Bluffs, Iowa, January 29, 1920. Burial was at Keokuk. He came with his parents to Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1850. He graduated from high school in that city and at once entered the hardware business with his brothers. In 1858 they established a branch house at Keokuk and Henry removed there and took charge of it and soon built up a very prosperous business. He began public life in 1868 by being elected alderman from the Third Ward and served three years. In 1871 he was elected mayor and was re-elected in 1872. In 1873 he was elected senator and served in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth General Assemblies. He was president *pro tempore* of the senate of the Sixteenth General Assembly and when on February 1, 1877, Governor Kirkwood resigned to become United States senator, and Lieutenant Governor Newbold became governor, under the constitution Mr. Rothert became acting lieutenant governor,

serving as such until January, 1878. In 1881 he was elected to the senate again and served in the Nineteenth and Twentieth General Assemblies. Although those assemblies contained many men of note and ability, he was a real leader and greatly influenced legislation. In 1881 he was appointed register of the land office at Cheyenne, Wyoming, and held the position nearly four years, resigning when Cleveland was inaugurated. He was then called by the board of directors of the Union Pacific Railroad to investigate and report on their entire land system, which he did. Up to this time his career had been that of a successful business man and a political leader. For years he was chairman of the Republican county central committee of Lee County, and he was perhaps the dominant political figure of the county during the later years of his residence there. In August, 1887, at forty-seven years of age, he turned his back on what appeared to be further and more distinguished political honors, and entered his life work as superintendent of the Iowa School for the Deaf at Council Bluffs. His mind had been directed to this work because of the deafness of a son. When in the senate he had been active in furthering legislation for the deaf. His nine years of service on the board of education of Keokuk, several of the later years as its president, had familiarized him with general educational work. In 1887 he found the School for the Deaf was a small institution with quite limited buildings. He remained its superintendent thirty-two years, or until August, 1919, when he resigned. During that time epidemics of sickness, floods and fires were visited upon them. At one time nearly the whole plant was burned down. Under his constructive management the school became one of the best equipped and best organized in the country. Mr. Rothert was active in Masonic circles, being grand master of the Grand Lodge of Iowa in 1875 and 1876. He was a man of large administrative and executive ability, of strong intellect and of generous sympathies.

JAMES HANNIBAL SHIELDS was born near Bowling Green, Missouri, May 8, 1840; he died at Dubuque, Iowa, September 30, 1914. He received his early education in the schools of Dubuque, was prepared for college at Alfred Academy in western New York and spent some time in Union College, Schenectady. He studied law in the office of John B. Henderson, of St. Louis, and was admitted to the bar in Dubuque County in 1862. He was elected city attorney of Dubuque in 1863 and served two terms. In 1882 he was elected district attorney and held that office for four years. In 1889 he was elected senator and served in the Twenty-third and Twenty-fourth General Assemblies. In the last twenty years he withdrew almost entirely from politics and the practice of law, confining his attention to the real estate business.

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