

Standard Form For Members of the Legislature

Name of Representative Redhead, Wesley Senator _____

Represented Polk County, Iowa

1. Birthday and place 22 July 1825 near Penrith, Northumberland
England

2. Marriage (s) date place
 (1) Isabelle Clark 21 Oct 1851 Johnson County, Iowa
 (2) Anna Seymour 5 Mar 1860 Des Moines, Iowa

3. Significant events for example:

A. Business Partner in Polk County in coal mining; director of the
State National Bank in Des Moines; vice president of the State Printing Company

B. Civic responsibilities Mason

C. Profession Lawyer, bookseller, tailor; Erie Canal boat driver; worker in
iron works in Newbury; woolen factory worker; merchant; fisherman; surveyor;
coal miner; raised cattle

4. Church membership Methodist Episcopal

5. Sessions served 21st General Assembly 1886

6. Public Offices

A. Local Appointed postmaster 10 Oct 1853-1862; Des Moines city
councilman; county supervisor; school board for several terms
city alderman

B. State _____

C. National _____

7. Death 9 Jan 1891 Des Moines, Iowa; buried Woodland Cemetery, Des Moines, Iowa

8. Children Mildred (Mrs. E. E. Dorr); George S.; Charles H.; Herbert Stora;
Lizzie K. (Mrs. J. P. Joristrom; died 1889); children who died young - Anna Belle; Sarah Martha;
James; Mary; Elbert

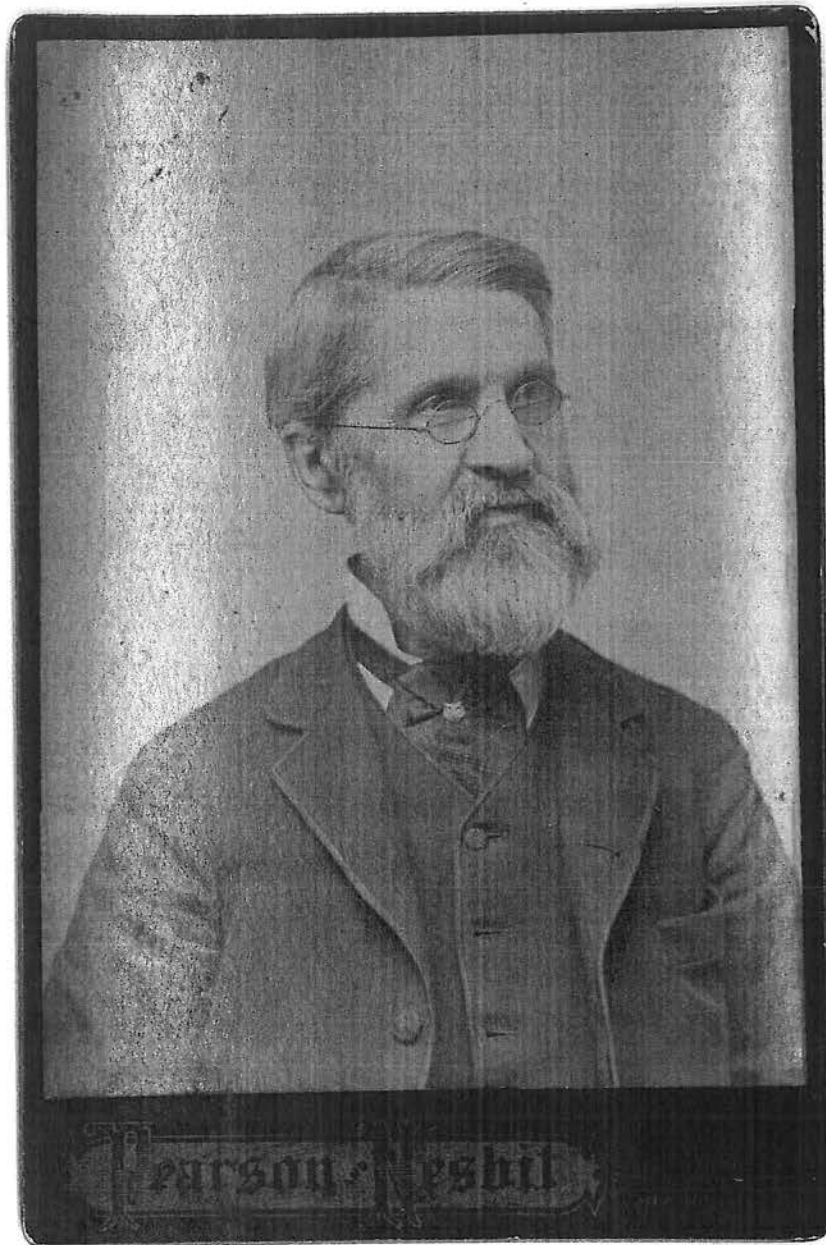
9. Names of parents Nicholas and Sarah (Forest) Redhead

10. Education He was educated in the schools of Cincinnati, Ohio
part time until age 14.

11. Degrees _____

12. Other applicable information Democrat, later a Republican

- He moved with his parents to Montreal, Canada in 1829 at age 4.
- He later moved to Cincinnati, Ohio after both parents died with cholera (1831-1832)
to live with an uncle
- At age 14 he moved to Fairford, Vermont to live with his oldest brother, but he ran away and worked driving horses on a canal, later working on farms and as a cabin boy on a steamboat
- In Sept 1844 he came to Muscatine, Iowa where he worked in a newspaper office and then learned the tailor's trade and worked until 1851 in this trade
- He came to Des Moines, opened a book and stationery business
- In 1844 he organized the first coal mining company in Des Moines called the Des Moines Coal Company and was the principal agent, secretary and superintendent of the organization.
- He was also Secretary and Treasurer of the Des Moines Acorn Coal Company in Marion County, Iowa, Treasurer of the Des Moines Lumber Company,
- In 1855 he opened a branch of the Aetna Fire Insurance Company
- He was vice-president of the Equitable Life Insurance Company.
- In 1879 he purchased the land which is the first State Fairground.



DEATH OF WESLEY REDHEAD

The Quiet Close of a Long and Busy Life Yesterday Morning at 10:30.

Cancer of the Stomach the Cause, at the End of a Long Illness.

One of the Oldest Residents of Des Moines, Coming Here in 1831—His Age 65 Years.

SKETCH OF HIS LIFE.

Wesley Redhead died at his home, "The Gables," at half past ten yesterday morning. By noon the sad intelligence was known all over the city, and Des Moines was in mourning for one of her oldest citizens, one of the best known and most influential men that ever lived in this city.

That Mr. Redhead had been dangerously ill for months has been generally known, but the news of his death just at this hour was entirely unexpected. Wednesday night "The Gables" was a home of rejoicing over the marriage of his youngest daughter, Mildred, which was shadowed by no immediate fear of danger to the beloved father. Thursday he was still well, so well, indeed, that hopes were entertained of his ultimate recovery, and there was no thought of his dying within months. But the disease with which he suffered, a complication of disorders of the stomach, was a peculiarly treacherous and insidious one. During the last year he has suffered intensely at intervals and seemed on the verge of the grave, and again he would apparently be on the high road to recovery, resting easy and himself and all about him hopeful.

Early yesterday morning there was a sudden change for the worse and when daylight came he sank rapidly. Towards the last he sank into an easy slumber, from which the transition to that of death was so gradual and painless that the time of final change was difficult to tell.

At his bedside when the last slow breathings finally fell away into eternal silence were his wife his daughter, Mildred Redhead Dorr, his sons George and Charles, his son-in-law, Dr. Dorr, his partner, Mr. Norton, and a few intimate friends.

Mr. Redhead's death is the third that has occurred in the last ten days among the early and honored pioneers of Des Moines. Mrs. Shankland, Judge Mitchell and now Wesley Redhead, were all known and loved

H. Dorr. Another daughter, Lizzie K., was the wife of Mr. Forrester. He died about two years ago.

In politics Mr. Redhead was up to the breaking out of the war a Democrat when he became and has since remained a loyal Republican. He filled many public offices of responsibility and honor besides the post-mastership. He served one term as member of the legislature, was a county supervisor and member of the city council and school board for several terms.

An autopsy was held yesterday afternoon which confirmed the diagnosis of Dr. Priestley. He died of cancer of the stomach.

The following account of his life and character is contributed by a friend who knew him intimately:

Hon. Wesley Redhead, one of the oldest and best citizens of Des Moines, died at his residence on Brooks street, in this city, at 10:30 a. m., Jan. 9, 1891, aged 65 years, 5 months and 18 days, the immediate cause of his death being cancer of the stomach. Mr. Redhead, one of the best known and most successful business men of Des Moines, was born near Pearfith, Northumberland, England, on the 22d of July, 1825.

In 1829, when but 4 years of age, he emigrated with his parents to Montreal, Canada. In 1831 his father died of brain fever, his mother having died but a few weeks before, thus leaving an orphan family consisting of six sons and one daughter, to fight their way through life alone. He and one brother went to live with an uncle in Cincinnati, Ohio, where he received his education and began his finally successful career. When 14 years of age his uncle sent him to Fairfield, Vt., where he remained but a short time, finally going to Whitehall, N. Y. Two years later he went to Saratoga Springs, remaining there two years, when he returned to Cincinnati, during all this time working at whatever he could find to do.

He came to Muscatine and in 1844 went to Iowa City to visit a brother, where he labored as a printer for one year. About forty years ago he came to Des Moines, when the city had but about 500 inhabitants. He held the appointment of postmaster for nine years, being appointed to that office by President Fillmore to succeed Hoyt Sherman. He was a leader among the people. Twenty years ago he was a member of the city council. In 1856, he was a representative from this county in the general assembly and was one of the most influential men in that body. But however useful or successful his career in political life may have been, it was as a business man that he was best known in the community. Here he was more than ordinarily successful.

He has been identified very intimately with the business interests of the city from almost the commencement of his life here. The book store operated by him, among the first in the state, was very successful. He was one of the principal owners of the Des Moines Coal Co., and held interests in the Black Diamond mine. The various positions held by this man in banks and other business spheres would take much time to describe and only a few of the older citizens would be able to appreciate.

The firm of Redhead & Wellslager continued to be known for several years as a very prosperous business house and after Mr. Wellslager, the present firm of Redhead, Norton, Lathrop & Co. was organized to bring the

\$20,000

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A Bridge Wants the Count

The Board Will Today—Other

DIEZEL

The board of at 9 o'clock and of passing on bills more interesting

Seven of the before the board as instructions in regard manner of assessing minute and lengthy lect. Among the they should give amount of his or their attention to if grieved they can council when it sit tion, so as to relieve of over-assessment.

The assessors were moderate in their assessment has been one rapidity. Such statement that in the amount of assessment fifth, but the fees doubled. Another tion to the fact that assessing the person as great as that of a personal the year he paid a per diem and take too long over the

The report of the for the month of there were fifty-six pence was \$551.07 asylum was \$80.83.

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THE
WESTERN LIFE - BOAT

AND JOURNAL OF

BIOGRAPHY, HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY.

VOL. I.

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EDITED BY
A. C. EDMUNDS.

DES MOINES :
WESTERN LIFE-BOAT PUBLISHING CO.
1873.

61,864

Wesley Chapel, Pittsburg, then Monongahala City, two years, Uniontown station one year, and Redstone circuit two years. In 1846, he was transferred to the Iowa Conference. The following have been his fields of labor: Mt. Pleasant, one year; Iowa City, two years; Burlington, one year, Dubuque District, two years; Iowa City, four years; Conference Missionary, one year.

These years of labor bore heavily upon the health and strength of Father Young. His privations were many, his exposures severe, his labors arduous. The Iowa City District, when presided over by Father Young, extended from the mouth of Cedar River to the north line of the State, including the settlements on both sides of the Cedar and Iowa rivers. Roads were unmade, streams were unbridged, settlements far distant from each other, and all the hardships of the pioneer ministry were endured. In consequence of sickness, he was unable to perform the work of a Conference Missionary, and at the close of that year he was granted a superannuated relation. Since then he has resided at Iowa City with his daughter, Mrs. Judge Carleton, where, surrounded by a host of friends, he is spending his remaining years.

Though Father Young, in early life, was of the Calvinistic faith, yet afterward he was a strong advocate and defender of Arminianism. Some years ago he wrote and published an able work upon this subject. He has occupied almost every important and responsible position in the church, at one time adding to his duties as pastor those of a college professor, and always and everywhere his work was well done.

Thus far his life has been well spent, and though the infirmities of age press heavily upon him, his mind is clear and his soul exultant.

WESLEY REDHEAD.

A LIVE BUSINESS MAN OF DES MOINES, IOWA.

But few business men of Central Iowa have made a better business record, or have won by industry and strict integrity a more prominent place in the public esteem. Below is a phrenological chart of character as given by Prof. O. S. Fowler, in March, 1867:

You, sir, have just one of the very best of heads, and it is supported by an excellent body, so that your natural talents are a good way above the average. You are, unmistakably, a man of mind, and also moral worth; and the two united entitle you to universal

respect. You may thank your mother, who you resemble most. Have both a strong mind and elevated moral tone, as well as good body, and owe it much more to her than your father. You have one weak spot; your vitality is not equal to the drafts made upon it; are a little deficient in nutrition; have good fair lungs; better muscles; a better nervous system and brain; consume vitality faster than you manufacture it. You are inclined to undertake too much, your eagerness and earnestness exceeding your strength; a great natural worker, a real genuine plodder; all the time potting over the one thing in hand; prosecuting every undertaking with the utmost assiduity, and that fixedness of purpose which challenges opposition and will insure success, break down all obstacles. Nothing can stand before your indomitable will; always have been, and always will be successful, because you plan wisely, execute with great energy and determination, and then hold on to till the very last. Have this predominant talent of head for planning and contriving, for thinking, reasoning; adapting ways and means to ends. Arguing, but this faculty shows itself more in originality, in planning power; in adapting ways and means to ends and creating of resources than anything else. Few men anywhere can make as much out of as little, or accomplish as much with as limited means; turning the means at command to as good advantage as yourself. In the resource-creating department, I consider that you have no superior and few equals; always working head-work; remarkable sagacious to look through results and determine on the best ways and means to be pursued; are long headed and clear headed, and often steal a march on your peers, because you see further through the undertaking of measures than they; calculate results better; are not so good in details; should have clerks to manage them; should give your attention mainly to the ways and means department. Have a rather poor memory of dates and items, but a first-class one of facts, places and the subject-matter. Have a perfectly correct eye; are a good judge of quantity and bulk; see at a glance how wide, how deep, how far, how much. Have a first-class judgment in everything; are systematic; conduct your business so as to accomplish the most with the least; were always good in mathematics; are rather poor in fine colors, dress goods, etc.; are more noted for sound common sense than any other one trait; are quite agreeable and prepossessing, gentlemanly and courteous; never rude; hence, popular; are just as honest and fair a man as there is; any one could not be any more strictly, rigidly honest and upright, hence, are universally trusted; very careful of your

reputation; extremely careful not to make promises unless you know you can fulfill them, but when you promise you will almost compass sea and land to redeem that promise. Have a most indomitable will, never to be driven off or beaten back; never allow obstacles to overcome you; no man ever raises his hand against you and prospers; you always whip him and are sure to keep right on your side, and feel very strong in matters of right and duty; are the most indomitable man in this city, whenever you plant yourself, you just stick

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WESLEY REDHEAD

right to it, and hold on till the very last; are cautious where you plant yourself. Have that versatility of talent which can attend to this, that and the other in rapid succession, but never give up; are quite fond of home; thoroughly patriotic. Fairly friendly, but a little too busy to express your social feelings much; very fond of children, and willing to sacrifice anything for their sake; ought to be married if you are not. Show a good deal of policy; make everything you touch pay; there seems to be almost a magic in your business operations, they succeed so splendidly; the real reason is they are so admirably managed. Are among the toughest men; may calculate on living to be old; are not quite clinging enough; are cool, deliberate, but remarkably active; never have been and cannot be discouraged; but hope on, hope

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ever; hope against hope. Have little faith, and worship much more in nature than in churches. If a christian, will live a good christian life, but believe very little; strongly inclined to liberal views of religion. As good hearted a man as there is in town; have given quite freely, though wisely; are public spirited; seem to be risky, but in fact risk next to nothing; are plain and substantial rather than ornamental; more serious than off-hand; a really great arguer, reasoner, and logician. Have fair speaking talents, but it depends more



WESLEY REDHEAD.

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on the excellence of the subject-matter than on language, but if you had been trained would have excelled as a lawyer; more especially in managing a case. In business everything goes like clock work. Read a man right through at a glance. Trust your first impressions of men they never mislead you, and should always follow your own conviction as to business, duty, everything, they will be found next to infallible. You have every single prerequisite for a most successful life, especially after 40; calculate on succeeding better and better till 70. You have just caution enough to save you from failure, along with that tremendous energy which seems to risk where you do not. You know just how and where to take men. Your future will be one of steady improvement on the past.

Wesley Redhead was born in Penrith, Northumberland county, England, July 22d, 1825. He emigrated with his parents from there in 1829; landing in Montreal, Canada, where his father started a dry goods store (having followed the same business in the old country). He continued in business two years, and until the cholera of 1831-2, which was very fatal in that country. The mother was first stricken and died in four hours after the attack. The father survived the "good wife" but two weeks when God called him. His death was by brain fever; the family left was one girl and six boys, of which Wesley was next to the youngest, being at that time six years old. He was taken, together with a brother next older, by an uncle to Cincinnati, Ohio, where he lived until 14 years of age, going to school a small portion of the time and working as devil in a printing office the balance. He was one of the first news boys now so common in our large cities. He used to occupy his leisure hours in selling papers and magazine on steam boats. In 1839 his uncle, thinking he was, as the saying is, going to the devil by acting the devil in a printing office, so he sent him to live with the oldest brother who was then carrying on the cabinet making business in East Fairfield, a small town in the northern part of Vermont. In going there the route was via Ohio river to Portsmouth, Ohio, then by the Ohio canal to Cleveland, thence by the lake to Buffalo, thence by canal to Whitehall, thence lake Champlain to St. Albans, thence by stage 12 miles to East Fairfield. It took three weeks to make the trip. Now it could be made in as many days. Wesley lived with his brother four months and could not stand it any longer, so he ran away. His entire capital consisted of five cents in cash and a very common suit of clothes. He walked to St. Albans and managed to work his way to Whitehall, where he hired out to drive horses on the canal. Any one acquainted with the section he ran away from could not possibly blame him, for it was certainly the most God forsaken country

on the face of the earth. After working on the canal during that season he hired out to a farmer in Washington county, N. Y., for his board and clothes and a three months schooling during the winter and so worked for two years when he went to Saratoga Springs and got an engagement as dipper boy at the Congress Spring—staying there two seasons. He laid up a little money and returned to Cincinnati, his friends not having heard from him for five years, they scarcely recognized him. He then hired out as cabin boy on a steam boat bound for the upper Mississippi. When he arrived at Bloomington, (now Muscatine) in Sept. 1844, having a brother living at Iowa City, he concluded to go there and see him, so in company with others they hired a hack and arriving at Iowa City late at night, he stopped at Swan's Hotel. Just before starting from Bloomington, to accommodate a stranger he changed a three dollar bill for him, and upon arriving at Iowa City he gave it to the driver for his fare. After getting to sleep the driver came and woke him up saying the bill was a bad one. It was very startling news to him, as he had but very little left, and on counting what he had he found that he had just enough to pay the driver, and for his supper and lodging, and nothing left to pay for his breakfast, so like an honest young man he went without it. He obtained employment in the office of the Iowa Capitol Reporter, conducted by Jessie Williams, Esq., who was then Territorial Printer, at \$3 per week, agreeing to do the devil work of the office, and set a column a day. The constitution of the State was printed that winter, and he had the honor of giving it its color with the ink roller in the capacity of devil. The next year, 1845, he went Anamosa, Jones county, to run a carding machine, having had a little experience in that business in the East. While getting along very prosperously he was taken with the billious fever; after getting over that he was taken with the fever and ague which was then the curse of a new country. He had to give up his situation. He returned to Iowa City and had the chills for nine

months. Not being able to do any hard work, in order to support himself, learned the tailoring business, and served three years time, and worked at that trade as jour tailor until the winter of 1851, when he concluded to hunt a location to start in business for himself. He selected Fort Des Moines, where he carried on the business for one year. The business being always distasteful to him, at the end of that time he obtained a situation as clerk in a store, where he worked for nearly one year at \$25 per month; boarding himself. He was then appointed Postmaster by President Filmore. He was the successor of Hoyt Sherman, Esq., who resigned the office because it did not pay him to keep it. Soon after getting the office he started a very small book store in connection with the office. It was the fourth book store started in the State. His sales at that time,—as his old books show—were an average of about \$5 per week. The average sales of the firm of Redhead & Wellslager, of which Wesley is the senior member, average about \$300.00 per day—showing that a small beginning faithfully lived up to will continue to grow. He held the office of Post Master for nearly nine years. When he resigned the office, it was one of great profit. He has never suffered himself to remain idle, although he is possessed of sufficient means to live comfortable during his life. He has for the last seven years been giving his personal attention to the business of the Des Moines Coal Co., a business he started for the purpose of developing the interests of Des Moines. He is principal owner, Secretary and Superintendent; also Secretary and Treasurer of the Black Diamond Coal Co, in Marion county; also Treasurer of the Des Moines Scale Co.; Director of the State National Bank, and Vice-President of the State Printing Company. He is also carrying on a large farm, and at his beautiful suburban home, situated a mile and a half from his business,

to occupy his raising fine said to be the see Wesley l 'He does not never hayin, any one. E first time in Clark, of Io Clark, and a ernor Kirkevett and Wn a family of the Old Buc raised near, uinterrupt helpmate fo happiest of a higher an this union. Annie Seyr tucky, she l and came to living five c and one gir a very hap discord so c of our land. they have mother wh rights and f possibly ha We have longer than BOAT, for t model for y markable l starting wi most have, own merit fixed pur Frugality, than than : his way in of this ske respectabil

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to occupy his leisure time he has engaged in raising fine Berkshire hogs. His herd is said to be the finest in the state. You can see Wesley has not much time to be idle. He does not waste any time in litigation never having been sued and never suing any one. He has been married twice, the first time in October, 1851, to Miss Isabel Clark, of Iowa City, a sister of Hon. Ezekiel Clark, and a sister of the wives of Ex-Governor Kirkwood, Edward Lucas, I. E. Jewett and Wm. Rutton of Iowa City, as noble a family of women as was ever raised in the Old Buckeye State—they being born and raised near Mansfield, Ohio. He lived in uninterrupted happiness with his chosen helpmate for seven years, which were the happiest of his life, when God called her to a higher and better life; no children blessed this union. In 1860 he led to the altar Miss Annie Seymour, who was raised in Kentucky, she being a ward of Judge McHenry, and came to Des Moines in 1857. They have living five children—three boys and two girls and one girl, their first, in Heaven. Theirs is a very happy family, not having any of the discord so common in many of the families of our land. The parents both being orphans, they have adopted Mrs. Burges for their mother who lives with them and has all the rights and privileges their own mother could possibly have under any circumstances.

We have written this sketch a great deal longer than most of the sketches in the LIFE BOAT, for the reason that it affords a good model for young men, and is rather a remarkable life. It gives a life lesson to boys starting without any of the advantages that most have, and has been successful from his own merits alone, and any young man with fixed purposes of Honesty, Industry and Frugality, which is far better to start with than than a capital of greenbacks, can make his way in the world as well as the subject of this sketch and arrive at competence and respectability.

THE UNITED STATES
BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY

AND

PORTRAIT GALLERY

OF

EMINENT AND SELF-MADE MEN.

IOWA VOLUME.

CHICAGO AND NEW YORK:
AMERICAN BIOGRAPHICAL PUBLISHING COMPANY.

1878.

le to leave his home. His residence is two miles from town, on a high point of land, overlooking from the cupola of his stately mansion no less than seven counties, and on the 4th of July between two and three hundred citizens went out in carriages and on foot to make him a neighborly call and present him with three sets of silver, worth more than a thousand dollars, as a token of their regard and their appreciation of his services in building up the city. Judge N. M. Hubbard made the presentation speech, and we cannot better conclude this brief account of Judge Greene's life than by giving the address in a slightly condensed form:

MR. GREENE.—In behalf of the ten thousand good people of Cedar Rapids, and at the request of their committee, I have the pleasure and the honor to present you this silver service. Like your genius, it is brilliant; like your judgment, it is solid; like the lives and characters of your excellent wife and yourself, it is pure; and like the memory in the hearts of all our people of your public deeds and spirit, it is lasting. It is given by our people as a spontaneous heart-offering to testify our respect and esteem for you.

When the committee made known this plan our people hunted them, eager to share in the honor, and the committee were compelled to limit the amount of their subscriptions that more might participate in this gift.

Praise belongs to the dead, not to the living, and I shall therefore pronounce no eulogy. It is enough to say that the history of the growth and prosperity of the State, and especially of Cedar Rapids, is your history. . . . In the building of all our railroads, in the beginning and progress of all our public improvements as a city, upon the foundation and superstructure of all our manufactories, are found the impress of your organizing, executive mind, and the up-building of your hands. And now, after the unceasing labor of head and heart and hands for twenty-five years, and you feel that the great strain is loosening the tension of the fibre and of the nerve,—though the spirit flags not,—as you look off from this beautiful mound home, the work of your hands, upon that beautiful city which owes so much to you, perhaps you sometimes wonder whether the busy delvers and dwellers therein realize and appreciate the labor, the energy, the unflagging zeal, the unconquerable will and the executive power you have expended for their prosperity. *Let this token assure you. . . .* Be assured our people bring this offering, not alone for what you have done for Cedar Rapids, but for your greatness and goodness of heart and brain also; for your good example; for your public enterprises in behalf of mankind, accomplished and to be accomplished; for your virtues; for your manly, noble character, and, finally, for what you are.

WESLEY REDHEAD,

DES MOINES.

THE subject of this sketch, a native of Penrith, county of Northumberland, England, was born on the 22d of July, 1825. When he was four years old his parents immigrated to Montreal, Canada, where his father resumed his occupation of dry-goods merchant. During the cholera epidemic of 1831 and 1832 the mother was stricken and died four hours after the attack, and in two weeks the father died of brain fever, leaving a family of one daughter and six sons. Wesley, the next to the youngest, being then six years of age, and his next older brother, went to live with an uncle at Cincinnati, Ohio, where he lived until he was fourteen years old, attending school a part of the time, and worked as "printers' devil" the remainder of the time. He was one of the first newsboys, now so common in our large cities, and employed his leisure hours selling papers and magazines on the steamboats. In 1839 his uncle, fearing that he would be contaminated by the evil influences incident to the character of his work, sent him to live with the eldest brother, then a cabinet-maker at Fairfield, Vermont. He lived with his brother four months, but becoming dissatisfied, ran away, having five cents in his pocket and wearing a common suit of clothes.

He walked to St. Albans, and thence worked his way to Whitehall, New York, where he hired out to drive horses on the canal, continuing thus employed during that season; he then hired out to a farmer in Washington county, New York, receiving, as a compensation for his work, his board and clothes and three months schooling during the year. After two years thus spent he went to Saratoga Springs, and was employed during two seasons as "dipper boy" at "Congress Spring." Having saved a little money he now returned to his friends at Cincinnati, who had not heard from him for five years and hardly recognized him.

He next hired out as cabin-boy on a steamboat bound for the upper Mississippi, but when he arrived at Bloomington (now Muscatine) in September, 1844, he concluded to visit a brother who was living in Iowa City. Accordingly, hiring a hack in company with others, he arrived at his destination in safety late at night and stopped at Swan's Hotel. Before leaving Bloomington, as an accommodation he had changed a three-dollar bill for a stranger, and upon his arrival at Iowa City gave this bill to the driver for his fare, but he had scarcely got to sleep when the driver awoke him with the information that the

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bill was worthless. It was sad news for him, as he found by counting his money that he had barely enough to pay the driver and settle for his supper and lodging. Not being able to pay for a breakfast he went without.

He soon obtained employment at three dollars per week in the office of the "Iowa Capitol Reporter," conducted by Jesse Williams, Esq., who was then territorial printer.

The constitution of the state was printed that winter, and Mr. Redhead had the honor of assisting in the work by using the ink-roller in the capacity of devil.

The next year, 1845, he went to Anamosa, in Jones county, to operate a carding machine, and was getting along well with his work when he was stricken down with bilious fever, from which he recovered only to be taken with fever and ague, then very prevalent in the new country. Being obliged to give up his situation, he returned to Iowa City, where he had the chills for nine months.

Not being able to engage in hard work, he learned the tailoring business, serving three years, and afterward worked as journeyman tailor until the winter of 1851, when he decided to start in business for himself. Going to Fort Des Moines, he continued his business for one year and then discontinued it, obtaining a clerkship in a store, where he worked one year at twenty-five dollars per month. At the expiration of that time he was appointed postmaster by President Fillmore to fill a vacancy caused by the resignation of Hoyt Sherman, Esq. He soon afterward opened a book-store in connection with the office; it was the fourth book-store started in the state, and the sales averaged about five dollars per week. As showing the growth of this business it may be stated that the present firm of Redhead and Wellsley conducts a business of about three hundred dollars per day. He held the office of postmaster for nine years and then resigned. Since about 1869 Mr. Redhead has been largely engaged in the Des Moines Coal Company, being principal owner, secretary and superintendent. He is also secretary and treasurer of the Black Diamond Coal Company in Marion county, and besides is treasurer of the Des Moines Scale Company, a director of the State National Bank, and vice-president of the State Printing Company. He also conducts a large farm one mile from the city, giving special attention to raising hogs, and having some of the finest "Berkshires" in the state. Mr. Redhead is never idle,

and in all his varied career has never sued any one or has himself been sued.

He has been twice married: first, in October, 1851, to Miss Isabel Clark, of Iowa City. Mrs. Redhead was a sister of Hon. Ezekiel Clark and of the wives of ex-Governor Kirkwood, Edward Lucas, J. E. Jewett and William Rutton, of Iowa City, a noble band of women from Mansfield, Ohio. After seven years of uninterrupted happiness Mrs. Redhead died, leaving no children.

In 1860 he led to the altar Miss Annie Seymour, a native of Kentucky, who removed to Des Moines in 1857, a ward of Judge McHenry.

Of the seven children who have been born to them, Annie Bell, born on the 9th of September, 1861, is deceased; David was born on the 3d of October, 1862; George Seymour was born on the 11th of June, 1863; Lizzie Kirkwood was born on the 27th of November, 1865; Middy was born on the 30th of January, 1868; Charles Wesley was born on the 11th of December, 1869, and Robert Stone on the 27th of July, 1872.

The parents both being orphans have adopted Mrs. Burges for their mother, who lives with them, enjoying all the rights and privileges that a mother could ask.

Such is a brief outline of Mr. Redhead's career. As showing his personal characteristics we append extracts from a phrenological chart, given by Prof. O. S. Fowler in March, 1867:

You, sir, have just one of the very best of heads, and it is supported by an excellent body, so that your natural talents are a good way above the average. You are, unmistakably, a man of mind, and also moral worth; and the two united entitle you to universal respect. You may thank your mother, who you resemble most. Have both a strong mind and elevated moral tone, as well as good body, and owe it much more to her than your father. You have one weak spot; your vitality is not equal to the drafts made upon it; are a little deficient in nutrition; have good fair lungs; better muscle; a better nervous system and brain; consume vitality faster than you manufacture it. You are inclined to undertake too much, your eagerness and earnestness exceeding your strength; a great natural worker, a real genuine plodder; all the time poring over the one thing in hand; prosecuting every undertaking with the utmost assiduity, and that fixedness of purpose which challenges opposition and will insure success, break down all obstacles; nothing can stand before your indomitable will; always have been, and always will be, successful, because you plan wisely, execute with great energy and determination, and then hold on to the very last. Have this predominant talent of head for planning and contriving, for thinking, reasoning; adapting ways and means to ends.

Have a first-class judgment in everything; are systematic; conduct your business so as to accomplish the most with the least; were always good in mathematics; are rather poor in fine colors, dress goods, etc.; are more noted for sound common sense than any other one trait; are quite agreeable and prepossessing, gentlemanly and courteous;

never rude; hence, popular; are just as honest and fair a man as there is; any one could not be any more strictly, rigidly honest and upright, hence, are universally trusted; very careful of your reputation. . . . Have that versatility of talent which can attend to this, that and the other in rapid succession, but never give up; are quite fond of home; *thoroughly patriotic*. Fairly friendly, but a little too busy to express your social feelings much; very fond of children, and willing to sacrifice anything for their sake; ought to be married if you are not. Show a good deal of policy; make everything you touch pay; there seems to be almost a magic in your business operations, they succeed so splendidly; the real reason is they are so admirably managed. Are among the toughest men; may calculate on living to be old; are not quite clinging enough; are cool, deliberate, but remarkably active; never have been and cannot be discouraged; but hope on, hope ever; hope against hope. Have little faith, and worship much more in nature than in churches. If a christian, will live a good christian life, but believe very little; strongly inclined to liberal views of religion.

As good-hearted a man as there is in town; have given quite freely, though wisely; are public-spirited; seem to be risky, but in fact risk next to nothing; are plain and substantial rather than ornamental; more serious than off-hand; a really great arguer, reasoner and logician. Have fair speaking talents, but it depends more on the excellence of the subject-matter than on language, but if you had been trained would have excelled as a lawyer, more especially in managing a case. In business everything goes like clock-work. Read a man right through at a glance. Trust your first impressions of men, they never mislead you, and should always follow your own conviction as to business, duty, everything, they will be found next to infallible. You have every single prerequisite for a most successful life, especially after forty; calculate on succeeding better and better till seventy. You have just caution enough to save you from failure, along with that tremendous energy which seems to risk where you do not. You know just how and where to take men. Your future will be one of steady improvement on the past.

SOLMON L. LAWRENCE,

WILTON.

SOLMON L. LAWRENCE, son of Elisha Lawrence and Patience *née* Clarke, was born at Weybridge, Addison county, Vermont, on the 1st of March, 1811.

This branch of the Lawrence family in America trace their lineage to John Lawrence (son of Henry and Mary Lawrence), born at Wisset, England; baptized on the 8th of October, 1609; came to New England about 1630; married and settled in Watertown, Massachusetts,—said John Lawrence being sixteenth in descent from Sir Robert Lawrence, of Ashton Hall, England, who attended his sovereign, Richard Cœur de Lion; to the war of the crusades in the Holy Land, where he so distinguished himself in the siege of Acre that he was knighted, and obtained for his arms, "*argent, a cross raguled, gules*," A. D. 1191, which is still worn by the descendants of the family in Gloucestershire and Buckinghamshire, England.

Our subject is sixth in descent from John, of Wisset,—the intermediate links in the ancestral chain being Elisha Lawrence, born at Cheshire, Connecticut, 1764 (moved to Weybridge, Vermont, being the thirtieth family who settled in that township), son of David Lawrence, born at Canaan, Connecticut, who was the son of Jeremiah Lawrence, who was the son of Daniel Lawrence, born on the 7th of March, 1681, who was the son of Enoch Lawrence, born on the 5th of March, 1648 (at Groton, Massachusetts), who was the eighth child of the original John Lawrence.

The family is now quite numerous in New England, and has branched off into many of the middle and western states. The men of this lineage have been remarkable for large framework, great strength, courage and endurance and extraordinary longevity, a large proportion of them reaching to over fourscore and ten years, and but few dying before the age of seventy. They were also men of peculiar probity of character, high standing and great influence in their communities, many of them attaining also to great wealth. They were likewise men of piety, the family furnishing a large number of deacons and distinguished ministers to the church. There have also been a large number of scholars and noted authors in the family, as well as physicians, lawyers, soldiers and statesmen. They were also men of great benevolence and generosity. In short they have always been among the best citizens of the country, both before and since the revolution.

The following is the epitaph on the tomb of Colonel William Lawrence, of Groton, Massachusetts, fourth in descent from the original John, who died A. D. 1764:

He was a gentleman who in military life rose from the rank of lieutenant to the command of a regiment. In the year 1739 he was made justice of the peace; afterward *quærens ius*, a special justice of the court of common pleas for the county of Middlesex, and a standing justice of that county. He for many years represented the town of Groton, with the districts of Pepperell and Shirley, in the general assembly of this province. In all his public trusts he acquitted himself with fidelity and honor. In private life his behavior was becoming his christian profession. He was remarkably industrious in the improve-

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A History of the County, its Cities, Towns, &c.,

Biographical Sketches of its Citizens, War Record of its Volunteers in the late Re-
bellion, General and Local Statistics, Portraits of Early Settlers and Prom-
inent Men, History of the Northwest, History of Iowa,
Map of Polk County, Constitution of Iowa,
Miscellaneous Matters, &c., &c.

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DES MOINES:
UNION HISTORICAL COMPANY,
BIRDSALL, WILLIAMS & CO.
1880.

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sion. The Doctor succeeded in collecting the scattered articles, found the colts and returned to the stable from whence they had started in the morning, and renewed the journey by driving the colts together, although one had never been harnessed. They started on a full run, going past the cabin above mentioned at a rate of speed that left the dogs far in the rear. They soon quieted down and came the rest of the way in safety. The Doctor still owns and drives one of them, and notwithstanding its advanced years is still a "colt," and likely to remain so. He opened an office in Exchange Block, October 1, 1860, which he still occupies. Dr. Brownell was the only dentist at that time in Central Iowa, and soon after removed to New York State, leaving the subject of this sketch the oldest resident of his profession, and in which he has been satisfactorily successful. Was married October 11, 1855, to Miss Amelia Rawson, of Richfield, Ohio. She is the daughter of Dr. S. Rawson, who was an eminent medical practitioner of that city for upwards of forty years. He is now 84 years of age, and resides with his daughter. Dr. and Mrs. Rawson have two children: Nellie and Alonzo P.

REDHEAD, WESLEY—A native of Penrith, county of Northumberland, England. Was born July 22, 1825. When four years of age he emigrated with his parents to Montreal, Canada. During the cholera epidemic of 1831-2 his mother was stricken and died, and two weeks later his father died. Wesley, then six years of age, and his next older brother went to live with an uncle at Cincinnati, Ohio, where he lived until fourteen years old, attending school a part of the time and working as "printer's devil" the remainder of the time. He was one of the first newsboys, now so common in our large cities, employing his leisure hours in selling papers on the steamboats. In 1839 he was sent to live with his eldest brother, a cabinet maker, at Fairfield, Vermont, but after remaining a short time ran away. He walked to St. Albans, and thence worked his way to Whitehall, N. Y., where he hired out to drive horses on the canal, continuing in this employment during that season. He then hired out to a farmer in Washington county, and two years later went to Saratoga Springs, where for two seasons he was employed as "dipper boy" at Congress spring. Then returned to Cincinnati. He next hired out as cabin boy on a steamboat bound for the Upper Mississippi, but on arriving at Bloomington (now Muscatine), in September, 1844, he concluded to visit a brother living at Iowa City, and accordingly arrived at his destination safely and late at night. He soon obtained employment at \$3 per week in the office of the *Iowa Capitol Reporter*, conducted by Jesse Williams, then Territorial Printer. The next year, 1845, he went to Anamosa, Jones county. Was getting along well, when he was taken sick, and being obliged to give up his situation, returned to Iowa City, where he was ill for nine months. Not being able to engage in hard work, he learned the tailoring business—served three years, and afterward worked as a journeyman tailor until the winter of 1851, when he decided to start in business for himself. Coming to Fort Des Moines, he continued his trade one year, and then clerked for the same length of time. At the expiration of that time he was appointed Postmaster by President Fillmore, to fill a vacancy caused by the resignation of Hoyt Sherman. He held the office nine years, and then resigned. While holding that position he opened a bookstore, the fourth one started in the State, the sales averaging about \$5.00 per week. Since 1869 Mr.

Redhead has been largely engaged in the Des Moines Coal Company, being principal owner, Secretary and Superintendent. He is also Secretary and Treasurer of the Black Diamond Coal Company, in Marion county, and besides is Treasurer of the Des Moines Scale Company, a director of the State National Bank, and Vice-president of the State Printing Company. Mr. Redhead has been twice married. First, in October, 1851, to Miss Isabel Clark, of Iowa City. After seven years of uninterrupted happiness she died, leaving no children. In 1860 he led to the altar Miss Annie Seymour, a native of Kentucky, who removed to Des Moines in 1857, a ward of Judge McHenry. They have six children living: David, George S., Lizzie K., Middy, Charles W. and Robert S. Have lost one, Annie Bell.

REED, W. A.—Is one of the oldest citizens and prominent business men of Des Moines. Though he emigrated to this place late in life, he is so thorough a representative of the New England enterprise and energy which form so valuable an element in the population of the West that he rapidly built up a prosperous business. Was born of Quaker parents, in Lynn, Mass., on the 1st day of June, 1807. His grandparents on both sides were among the first settlers of Massachusetts. During his boyhood until ten years of age he attended the Friends' school. At that date his father moved to Ohio, which was then emphatically *the* West, and a sparsely settled country. The long and tedious journey thither by the primitive means of emigration occupied two months. Born so early in the century, Mr. Reed retains a vivid personal recollection of many of the stirring incidents of that eventful period of our national history. He saw the famous Chesapeake and Shannon fight, near Nahant, and well remembers the sadness and despair in Boston when it was known that the stars and stripes were lowered on the Chesapeake and both vessels were sailing seaward. In company with his father he attended the military funeral of Lawrence and Ludlow at Salem. He also saw the first steamboat built at Boston. After the emigration of the family to Ohio the subject of this sketch remained with his father until his father's death, having assisted him in clearing a wood farm, and after his decease cleared one for himself. When he was twenty-one years of age he commenced the manufacture of leather at Massillon, Ohio, and with much energy and small capital was successful. In his twenty-fifth year he joined the first temperance organization of Massillon. In June of that year he returned for a visit to his native place, and was in Boston in July when Andrew Jackson's veto message of the United States Bank was received, an event which produced intense excitement among the best men of the city. In March of that year the death of his mother occurred. In October he was married to Miss Eleanor S. Wright, of Millersburg, Ohio. During the following ten years three sons and three daughters were born to them. In 1849 Mr. Reed went to California in quest of better health and of the gold which was then drawing men like a magnet to the Pacific coast. He was successful in his two-fold enterprise during a sojourn of sixteen months, regained his health, and returned home. In the winter of 1850-1 he engaged in active business. At the age of fifty he moved to Des Moines, where he found friends and business, and during a business extending over the last twenty-three years, characterized by integrity and success, he has been one of the solid merchants of the city. To its growth he has contributed, having during that time built a brick house and brick store and eight residences. He has

A MEMORIAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL

RECORD OF IOWA

ILLUSTRATED

"A people that take no pride in the noble achievements of remote ancestors will never achieve anything worthy to be remembered with pride by remote descendants."—MACAULAY.

"Biography is by nature the most universally profitable, universally pleasant, of all things."—CARLYLE.

"History is only biography on a large scale."—LAMARTINE.

VOL. I

CHICAGO
THE LEWIS PUBLISHING COMPANY
1896

hearted hospitality and kindly feeling existing in neighborhoods that is scarcely equaled at the present. The first election held in Otter township was at Mr. Hollingsworth's home. He aided in the erection of the first school-house in the township, and was one of the directors of the second school. He can relate many interesting incidents of those early days ere the busy hum of industry was continuously heard and before railroads had been introduced into this section of the country. He is still living upon his first farm of 200 acres, and now in his declining years is surrounded with the comforts and luxuries which a well spent life merits.

HON. WESLEY REDHEAD.—In the death of this gentleman, which occurred January 9, 1891, Des Moines lost one of its best known and most successful business men. For forty years he was connected with the history of the city and was not only a prominent factor in commercial circles but was actively and efficiently interested in all that pertained to the welfare of the community and the uplifting of the city.

A native of England, Mr. Redhead was born near Penrith, Cumberland county, on the 22d of July, 1825, and was a son of Nicholas and Sarah (Clark) Redhead. His parents removed to Montreal, Canada, in 1829, and the father engaged in merchandising, which pursuit he had also followed in England, carrying on business along that line until his death, which occurred from brain fever in the summer of 1831. The great cholera scourge at that time had just terminated the life of the mother of our subject, and the father survived her loss but two weeks. The orphaned family consisted of six sons and a daughter, Wesley being the sixth in order of birth and only six years of age. In company with a brother he went to live with an uncle in Cincinnati, Ohio, where he was educated and began his career as a wage-earner in a printing-office, serving as the youngest apprentice or "print-

er's devil." He was one of the first newsboys of Cincinnati. His uncle, believing the influences surrounding the nephew to be bad, sent him, when fourteen years of age, to Fairfield, Vermont, where his eldest brother was engaged in the cabinet business. Three weeks were consumed in making the journey, traveling by steamboat, canal and stage. After spending four months with his brother, he became so dissatisfied with his surroundings that he decided to run away and depend upon his own exertions for a livelihood. So he set out with a cash capital of but five cents and poorly clothed. Walking to St. Albans, he thence made his way to Whitehall, New York, where he engaged as a driver on the Erie canal. At the close of the boating season he hired out to a farmer in Washington county, New York, receiving for his services his board, clothing and three months' schooling. This connection continued two years, when, having a desire to see a greater variety in life than the occupation of a farm hand afforded, he went to Saratoga Springs, where he secured a position as dipper boy at Congress Springs, and was so employed for two seasons. During that period he was brought in contact with many noted people of this country and some distinguished tourists from abroad. Having saved a little money, Mr. Redhead returned to Cincinnati, where he surprised his friends with a visit after an absence of five years, during which they had heard nothing from him.

His next experience was in the capacity of cabin boy on an upward bound Mississippi steamboat. Having reached Bloomington, now Muscatine, Iowa, in September, 1844, he decided to visit a brother who was a resident of Iowa City. On arriving at his destination he secured employment in the office of the Iowa Capital Reporter, which was conducted by Jesse Williams, who was then Territorial Printer. The amount of young Redhead's wages was fixed at \$3 a week, and his duties were intended to include the "devil's" work of the office and the setting of one column of

the paper per day. The first constitution of Iowa was printed that fall by Mr. Williams, and his new employee had the honor of performing a share of the labor on that historic instrument. The following year, 1845, he went to Anamosa, Iowa, where he operated a carding-machine for a time until compelled by impaired health to abandon that work, when he returned to Iowa City. Being unfitted for hard labor he learned the tailor's trade as being one that he thought likely to require less physical effort than many others. He served a three-years apprenticeship to that business and continued to work as a journeyman until the winter of 1851, when he came to Fort Des Moines, and engaged in business for himself in the line of his trade, but, the business proving distasteful, he abandoned it after one year's experience and engaged as a merchant's clerk, at a salary of \$25 per month.

In 1853 Mr. Redhead was appointed Postmaster at Fort Des Moines to succeed Hoyt Sherman, resigned. He filled the position nine years, during which time the business of the office assumed important proportions. Shortly after being made Postmaster he put in a small stock of books, having the fourth book store in the State. Trade in that line was limited and his weekly sales at first did not exceed \$5, but he afterward built up an excellent business. He admitted to partnership R. T. Wellslager, who continued with him several years, and later the firm of Redhead, Norton & Lathrop became proprietors of the largest book store in Iowa, and wholesale stationers and jobbers in books, stationery, fancy goods, etc.

In November, 1864, Mr. Redhead organized the first coal company at Des Moines, and began the first systematic coal-mining. His efforts in that direction attracted the attention of others, and in August, 1865, the Des Moines Coal Company was organized, consisting of Wesley Redhead, James M. Starr, William Vincent, B. F. Allen, William Phillips, Hoyt Sherman, John Teesdale, James W. Davis, L. W. Demus, Frank Butler and E. Sanford. The coal-mining interest of this region was

then given its first impetus and has since grown to magnificent proportions. A set of Fairbanks scales were procured and the first weighing of coal in the city was done by Mr. Redhead, who is entitled to the credit of being the pioneer coal man of Des Moines.

The following bit of coal-mining history clipped from a history of Polk county, published by the Union Historical Company in 1880, seems specially appropriate to the sketch of our subject. It is said that the presence of coal in and around the present site of the city of Des Moines was first noticed by the soldiers who built and occupied the fort. It is also said that the blacksmith shops in connection with the garrison were supplied with coal from certain coal-banks adjacent, and it is stated as a matter of history that A. N. Hayes and Captain Allen opened a coal shaft and stone quarry on the banks of the Des Moines as early as the year 1843. Notwithstanding the fact that coal was known to exist in large quantities and that it had been mined in small quantities as early as 1843, at the time Professor Hoyt's book on the geology of Iowa was published, in 1870, nothing but a superficial and miscellaneous system of mining had been adopted, and the amount mined scarcely equaled the limited demand of the home market. About this time Wesley Redhead, a gentleman who had been identified with the interests of Des Moines and Polk county from the very first, commenced prospecting for coal in a systematic manner, with the view of engaging in the mining business on a grand scale. He made persistent efforts to achieve success, and called to his aid all the resources at his command. In addition to his time and labor he expended over \$8,000 of his private funds, and still his investigations had not been crowned with success. He finally secured the services of John Gibson, of Derbyshire, England, whose extended experience in the coal mines of the Old World had eminently fitted him for the prosecution to a successful issue of the investigation which his employer had so long conducted in vain.

The circumstances attending the final effort and its triumphant conclusion are related by Mr. Dixon in his Centennial History of Polk County, and also in an editorial published in the Des Moines Leader of June 4, 1873. A synopsis of both accounts are here introduced. Mr. Dixon says:

"A few rods south of Coon Railroad bridge, on land belonging to Mr. Redhead, west of South Park, a drill was introduced in 1873, under the direction of Mr. Gibson, foreman. In the descent seventy feet were attained, the drill passing through three inferior veins of coal and reaching at the depth indicated a flint rock, so stubborn and invincible as to bring discouragement even to the old Derbyshire miner, who advised Mr. Redhead at this point to abandon the work. Even the geologist had stated that if success was not realized within that distance of the surface, it would be useless to proceed further. Mr. Redhead did not participate in this gloomy view of the subject. He quietly inquired of the foreman how many feet of rod were left, and, being answered that there were twenty, he urged the employment of every inch, declaring that if this did not bring the anticipated triumph of human enterprise over stubborn nature he would furnish a hundred feet more and work these up before he would abandon his long cherished plans. They went to work again, consumed all of four weeks at the slow rate of three inches per day, in penetrating this massive rock, three feet in thickness. When the drill finally passed through the resisting mass, it quickly descended through a vein five feet thick of black diamond coal, signaling in its passage the superiority of genius over inanimate matter. It was late in the evening when this great triumph was achieved, but, late as it was, James Clark, an employee of Mr. Redhead, who had been a witness of the thrilling scene just enacted, hurried away to report to that gentleman the auspicious result. To Mr. Redhead this report must have been intensely gratifying. He immediately went to B. F. Allen and on communicating his grand discovery secured from

the banker an investment of \$35,000. A shaft was sunk to the required depth and in a short time all the appliances belonging to a first-class mine were visible to the spectator, and scores of operators down deep in the earth were busily engaged in bringing out from this great store house of nature its exhaustless treasures."

The following is from the Leader of June 4, 1873:

"WESLEY REDHEAD'S CAT OUT OF THE BAG."

The Leader of the 3d stated that Wesley Redhead had at last been successful in his prospecting for coal, but owing to pressure of other matters a detailed account of his work and discovery did not appear in that day's issue.

It has always been a cherished theory of Mr. Redhead that the supply of coal about Des Moines is inexhaustible, and that a better quality than any now in the market would yet be found. In pursuance of this object he has worked early and late, incurring an expense of about \$8,000, until at last his labor has been crowned with glorious success. Last January he commenced sinking a shaft in South Park near Seventh street bridge. Two gangs, each consisting of eight men, were employed alternately night and day. A thin vein of coal was found near the surface and further down two larger veins were passed through. When the shaft had reached the depth of 111 feet below the surface, the foremen and other experienced miners were of the opinion that further search would be fruitless, but Mr. Redhead was confident, and, to use his own expression, was 'bound to dig to China or find coal.' The work was continued and fourteen feet further down—125 feet below the surface, and ninety feet below the bed of Coon river—the shaft struck a vein of coal four and a half feet in thickness. This discovery was made on the 2d, and on the 3d a load of coal was mined and conveyed to Mr. Redhead's office in this city. The best judges pronounced it of a superior quality and equal to any mine in Iowa.

Directly above the coal vein the drills passed through twelve feet of slate, which was strongly impregnated with sulphur. It will be known as the Black Diamond coal and will be mined by the Des Moines Coal Company, of which Mr. Redhead is president. Work will be pressed forward as rapidly as possible and the practical benefits arising from the discovery be demonstrated. A track will be laid to the shaft from the Indianola branch of the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad, and the necessary machinery for hoisting put in by the company. Mr. Redhead is deserving of the thanks of Des Moines and the vicinity for the perseverance he has shown and the discovery which he has made. He was the first man to introduce anything like system in the business of coal-mining in Des Moines, and now his last great achievement places him in the rank of a benefactor, and he will undoubtedly receive the just encomiums of the people which he so richly deserves."

Mr. Redhead gradually purchased the interest of the others of the company, and in 1874 became sole proprietor. In May, 1880, James P. Clark was admitted as a partner and the name of the company was changed to Pioneer Coal Company, Mr. Redhead being president. He afterward again became sole proprietor, remaining as such until his death. At one time he was secretary and treasurer of the Black Diamond Coal Company of Marion county, also treasurer of the Des Moines Scale Company, a director of the State National Bank, and vice-president of the State Printing Company. He organized the Pioneer Hay Company, of which he was president, the company having been incorporated in 1885, with a paid-up capital of \$60,000. They did a wholesale business in Iowa upland-prairie hay, and in breeding and dealing in fine horses and high-grade cattle. Mr. Redhead became sole owner of the stock and the business proved a very profitable one. He also had a large farm and an elegant suburban residence, situated about one mile and a half from his office. He owned extensive tracts of land in Polk county,

and in addition to his other business interests was treasurer of the State Insurance Company of Iowa, one of the most important insurance companies of Des Moines. He also located the present State Fair site, which he sold to the State.

Mr. Redhead was twice married. In October, 1851, he wedded Miss Isabel Clark, of Iowa City, a sister of Hon. Ezekiel Clark, and of the wives of ex-Governor Kirkwood, Edward Lucas, I. E. Jewett and William Rutton, of Iowa City, as noble a family of women as was ever reared in the Buckeye State. She died in 1858, and in 1860 he was united in marriage, at Des Moines, with Miss Annie Seymour, daughter of Austin and Martha (Miller) Seymour, and the ward of Judge M. D. McHenry. The lady was reared in Kentucky and removed to Des Moines in 1855. Eight children were born of their union, three sons and five daughters, three of whom are living, viz.: George S.; Lizzie K., deceased; Mildred; Charles W.; Herbert S.; Annie Belle; Sarah M., deceased; and one who died unnamed.

Mr. Redhead held a membership in the Methodist Episcopal Church, to which his widow also belongs. He belonged to the Masonic fraternity and attained to the Scottish rite degree. In politics he was a Democrat until 1861, when he became a Republican. He served in the Legislature of Iowa one term; also was Supervisor of the county and a member of the City Council and School Board, serving in those positions for many years. He was identified with nearly all the large enterprises that have been established in Des Moines. As his record shows, his life was a very busy one. Possessed of a restless energy, cool determination and great self-reliance, he fought the battle of life unaided except by his natural intelligence, energy and integrity. That he succeeded beyond the ordinary expectations is conceded, and in doing so he materially aided in the development of the natural resources of Polk county, built up extensive business enterprises and gave employment to a

large number of men. The history of such a man serves to encourage the young whom adversity has left at the foot of the ladder to greater effort and fuller hope.

HON. BENJAMIN GREENE is numbered among Iowa's pioneer settlers and has been a prominent factor in political, business and social circles. He is a man of marked personality, a recognized leader, and no consideration of self-interest has swerved him from what he believed to be the path of duty. He is pre-eminently a self-made man, and by his native abilities has risen step by step to a position which commands the respect and excites the admiration of all.

Mr. Greene is a native of Otsego county, New York, born March 4, 1819, and his ancestry can be traced back to the nobility of England. He is of both English and Welsh descent. One of his ancestors, who belonged to a noble family of England, served in the army of Cromwell. He bore the name of Clark, which he afterward changed to Greene in order to avoid being killed at the time he fled to South Carolina to save his life. He was the possessor of a sword that had been used in eleven pitched battles, and which Napoleon was to have had as a souvenir. Members of the Greene family also lived in Rhode Island in early Colonial days; and Nathaniel Greene of Revolutionary fame, who served under the immediate command of George Washington, was an own cousin of Silas Greene, the father of our subject.

Silas Greene was sixteen years of age at the time when the war for independence was brought to a close. A short time before the cessation of hostilities, although only a boy, he went as a soldier to Block island, where he was wounded and suffered many hardships. He married Deborah Brown, who also descended from one of the old New England families that was established in America early in the seventeenth century. In 1800 they re-

moved to Otsego county, New York, where they spent their remaining days, the father dying at the very advanced age of ninety-two years, while his mother died at the age of eighty years. In the family were twelve children, of whom three sons are still living, one brother having reached the advanced age of eighty-seven years.

At the age of sixteen Benjamin Greene entered upon his business career as teacher of a public school. He had acquired his own education largely through his own efforts, never attending school but three months after the age of fourteen years, yet he was studious, ambitious to learn and made the most of his opportunities. At the age of eighteen he went to the home of a brother in Belvidere, Illinois, where he remained for four years, and then returned to New York, where he studied law and taught school until 1846. Seeking a broader field of labor and opportunity he went South and traveled through Mississippi, and not finding any suitable situation he returned North by boat up the Mississippi river to Keokuk, Iowa, where he followed the profession of teaching until early in 1849,—the date of his arrival in Adel, which has since been his home. He was among the first settlers in this section of the State, and since that time has been prominently identified with the work of development and progress in Iowa, his name being inseparably connected with the history of this community.

In the fall of 1848, before locating in Adel, Mr. Greene was married, in Van Buren county, Iowa, to Miss Permelia C. Sturgis, who was born in Smyrna, New York. Mrs. Greene is a daughter of A. B. and Emily (Hogland) Sturgis, both of whom were members of old New York families. Five children were born of this marriage and the family circle yet remains unbroken. Ada became the wife of Hon. Wm. S. Russell, of Perry, by whom she has four children; Sturgis H., who is engaged in the practice of law at Portland, Oregon, is married and has three children; Mary is the wife of John B. White, a prominent attorney of

BURIED IN WOODLAND

Woodland-St. Ambrose-Emanuel-Odd Fellows Cemetery
M.L. KING PARKWAY & WOODLAND AVENUE
Des Moines, Polk County, Iowa

established 1848

compiled by
Kaye Sanchez

member of the
Association for Gravestone Studies
The Iowa Historical Society
and
The Terrace Hill Society

1995-1998

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4043 51 Street
Des Moines, Iowa
50310-1845

WESLEY REDHEAD

Wesley Redhead was born near Penerith, Cumberland County, England on July 22, 1825, the son of Nicholas and Sarah (Forest) Redhead. At the age of four years he came with his parents and 5 brothers and sisters to Montreal, Canada. His parents died in 1831, soon after they arrived of cholera and he went to live with his Uncle in Cincinnati, and later became an apprentice in a print shop. His Uncle sent him to Fairfield, Vermont for a better environment, and he learned the business of "cabinet making." After a month, Wesley decided that it was not for him and he walked most of the way to Whitehall, New York, where he got a job as a driver on the Erie Canal. When it froze up, he worked on a farm for two years. In 1842, he moved on to Saratoga Springs, where he worked as a "dipper" of the aqueous fluid. He then moved on to being a cabin-boy of a Mississippi Riverboat. In 1844, he deserted the ship and went to Iowa City, where his brother lived. There he went to work on the *Iowa Capitol Reporter*, "at three dollars a week, setting up columns. "I am making a trifle more than enough to pay my board." He was one of the first newsboys in the U.S. having sold papers to crowds at the boats harbored in Cincinnati. He lasted a year and then moved on to Anamosa, where he ran a carding machine in a woolen factory, but soon his health failed and he went to Iowa City where he became an apprentice to learn the tailoring business.

In 1851, Wesley came to Ft. Des Moines and opened a tailor shop, and on October 1, married Isabelle Clarke, who was born and raised in Mansfield, Ohio. They had six children, David, George S., Lizzie K., Middy, Charles W., Robert S., and Annie Bell. Isabelle was a sister of Governor Kirkwood and during the Governor's prolonged stay in Des Moines, he stayed with the Redhead's.

In 1852, he became a clerk in a general merchandise store of J.M. Griffith, at twenty dollars a month and the following year was appointed by President Fillmore as postmaster, to succeed Hoyt Sherman. He kept the office in the building erected by Sherman and put in a supply of books and stationery, becoming the head of the most extensive book store in the state. By 1855, he had opened a branch of the Aetna Fire Insurance and wrote the first policy of insurance on property in town. That was the same year as the contest between the "east siders" and the "west siders" to obtain the Capital on "their side. Wesley donated one thousand dollars to the "war fund."

In 1856, he was admitted to the Bar, as an aid in business affairs and the next year he removed the Post Office to Sherman Block and in 1858, his wife Isabelle (Clark) died.

In 1860, he married again, to Anna Seymour, daughter of Austin and Martha (Miller). She was raised in Kentucky and moved to Des Moines in 1855. They had three sons and five daughters, George S, Lizzie K, who died young, Mildred, Charles W., Herbert S., Annie Belle, Sarah M. who died and one child unnamed.

In the early Sixties, he became interested in coal mining and cattle raising and in 1864, he organized his own company and began mining coal, in a systematic way and had varied success.

WESLEY REDHEAD

Page 2

In 1865, along with several investors, he organized the Des Moines Coal Co. and they mined more extensively, being one of the largest employees in the state.

Redhead, represented the county in the Lower House of the Twenty-first Assembly, and was a member of various committees and later, chairman, authoring many of its bills, in 1866. He was elected a member of the Board of County Supervisors, to represent Des Moines Township. Redhead also attracted attention by proposing that a couple not be permitted to apply for a marriage license without providing evidence of their ability to support themselves and any children that they might have. He introduced a bill to that effect while serving in the Iowa House of Representatives in the late 1860's, but it didn't pass.

In 1867, Redhead was elected Vice-President of the Equitable Life Insurance. He was one of the organizers of the People's Savings Bank and one of its Directors.

Wesley served on the standing committees on Banks and Banking, Schools, Agriculture, Police Regulations, Fish and Game, Board of Public charities, and Library, becoming its chairman. He authored many bills and was elected a member of the Board of County supervisors. Wesley rose to the Scottish Right degree in the Masonic Fraternity.

Full of energy and fun-loving, he owned the first bicycle in Des Moines in 1866, a "velocipede." His fine residence on the east side of town was also built in 1866, designed by William Foster, was just as much a city landmark in its time on the east side, as Terrace Hill was on the west side and it became the social center of east Des Moines. It was believed that there were mineral springs which possessed, "virtues of high order." on the property of Wesley Redhead.

In 1867, he retired from active participation in the law firm of Redhead & Wellslager, to spend more time in the development of his coal projects. He persisted in drilling coal and at one time, it was most of the valuable industries in the state and he was a valuable employer. He was known for his boundless energy and for promoting business enterprises. In 1872, Redhead became a director and was elected Vice-President of the State Printing Company, who printed auxiliary newspaper sheets.

He retired from his law firm to develop more coal projects. He owned a large tract of land near Seventh Street Bridge and he was determined that stratified coal existed beneath it. In 1873, a prospecting drill started, with a day and night crew. He was advised to quit at a depth of seventy feet, when inferior coal was found, but he persisted on, declaring "go to China, or find coal." The work went on, the drill only advancing three inches per day, for four weeks, when the rock was penetrated, and fine coal was found. He got B.F. Allen, to invest thirty-five thousand in his company and became one of the largest employers in the state. Coal was considered one a very valuable commodity at that time. He became one of the largest employers in the state, and he gradually purchased all the shares in the company and in 1874, became its sole owner. "He developed one of the most valuable natural resources of the city and county."

WESLEY REDHEAD

Page 3

In 1879, Redhead was actively instrumental in obtaining the State Fair in Des Moines, and furnished some of the land on which it is located.

In 1885, he organized the Pioneer Hay Company, which purchased prairie land, bale prairie hay and the breeding of fine cattle. Out of it came the noted Redhead herd of Hereford cattle, which was known all over the country. He also served as an active member of the Public School Board. In 1870 and 1871, he served on the Sixth Ward, as its Alderman.

Wesley Redhead was intensely popular, a pillar of the Asbury Methodist Church and was known for his honesty.

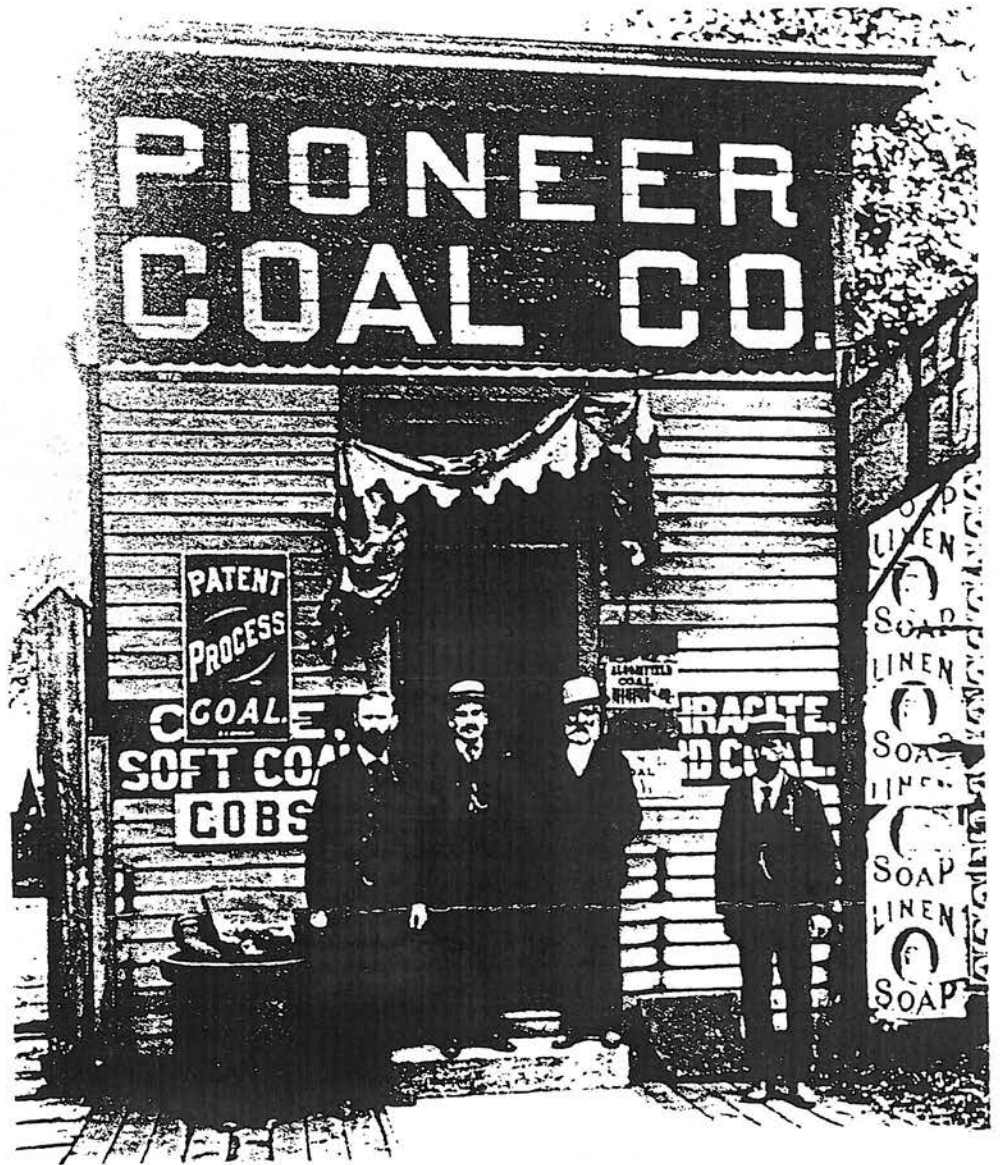
"The serious illness of Wesley Redhead, coupled with the desire to see his daughter married, advanced the date of the wedding of Mildred Redhead and Dr. Edward E. Dorr from January 21 to January 7th. The ceremony was pronounced at the bedside of the invalid father. Two days later, he died, leaving a "wide gap" in the ranks of the old settlers. "Seven Gables," the east side home of the Redhead Family, was a serious social center, not alone for the pioneers, but also for the younger generation, and for newcomers as well as Mr. Redhead's name is written in several chapters of Des Moines' history for the man was generous and public-spirited. While imminently successful in his business undertakings, he died with the reputation of having lived not unto himself alone, but for the good that he could do. He was 66 years of age. The funeral brought to as bearers these long-time friends: Judge Wright, Phillips and Casady, Isaac Brandt, R.T. Wellslager, Col. Ford and M.M. Norton."

A park was presented to the city of Des Moines, by Wesley Redhead at Dean Ave. to Logan Ave. between E. 17th and E. 18th Sts.

On his grave marker:

Wesley Redhead, 64 years, died 9 Jan 1891,
Isabelle Redhead, wife of Wesley, 34 yrs.9mo 24 da. Feb 1859
Anna Belle, daughter
Sarah Martha, daughter
Mary, daughter
Lizzie K. daughter, wife of J.P. Forrester-22yrs.5 mo. 7da.-4 May 1888
Mildred, wife of Dr. E.E. Dorr-1863-1893
Jamie, his son
Little Mary, daughter
Elbert, son

(His monument of "white bronze" was restored in August of 1996, by removing the base, which over the years has "crept" from the weight of the top part, and replacing the base with four granite blocks. This had never been done before, but was accomplished by the Winterset Monument Co., here in Des Moines.)

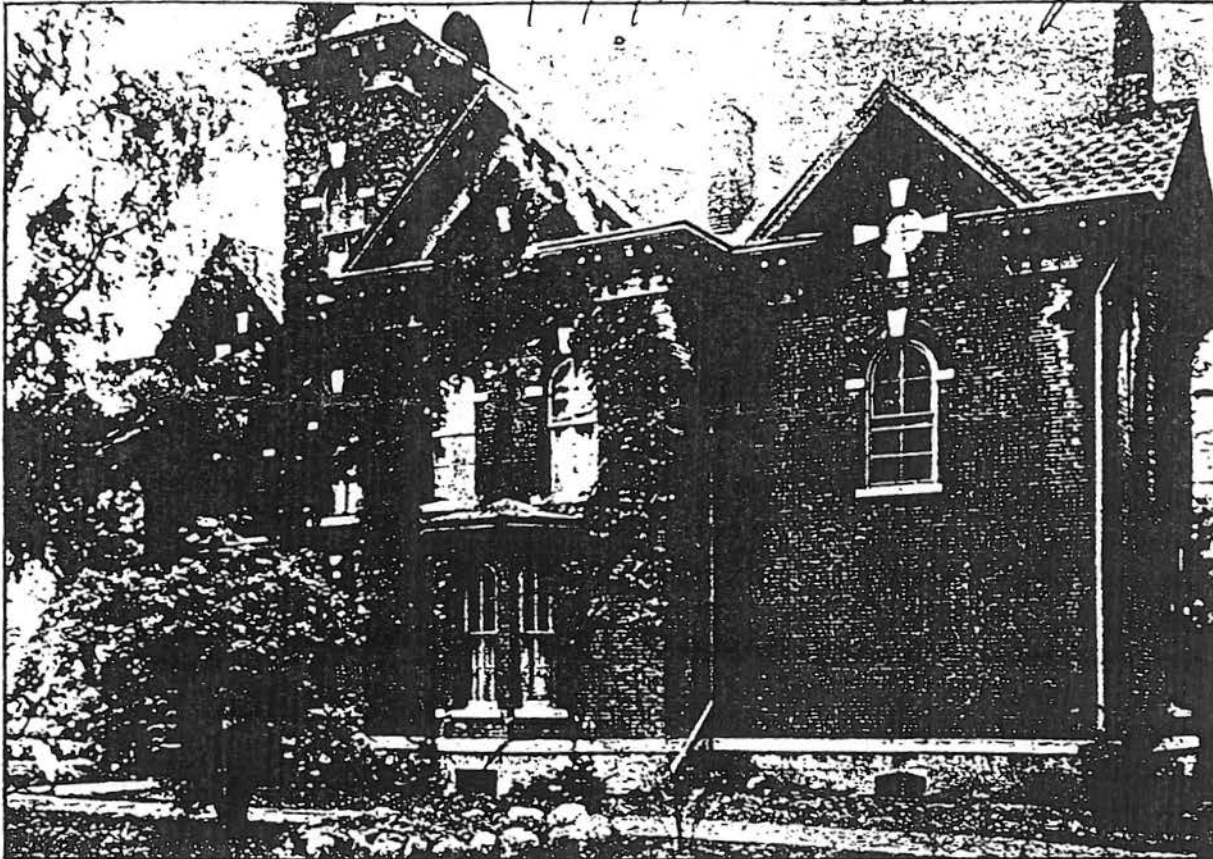


Wesley Redhead
with the white beard

THE FRONT ROW

★ By Elizabeth Clarkson Zwart

Req 11/17/74 Picture Sect. p. 2



The Redhead House — 60 doorways

THERE are a thousand tricks for putting oneself to sleep, *but few of us live in a house so big that a count of its doorways might send us off.*

But one day in the late 1950's a teacher phoned Mrs. Herbert Redhead. Her class had walked by the old red-brick Redhead mansion on Dean Avenue, and she thought the children might better visualize the whole house if they knew how many doors they would be passing through if they lived inside.

That night Mrs. Redhead pulled up the covers and closed her eyes and walked through the house.

In the morning she reported to the teacher. There were 60 doorways, and seven of them led into the kitchen. There were also 42 windows, eight fireplaces, nine staircases and five porches.

They just don't build them that way anymore.



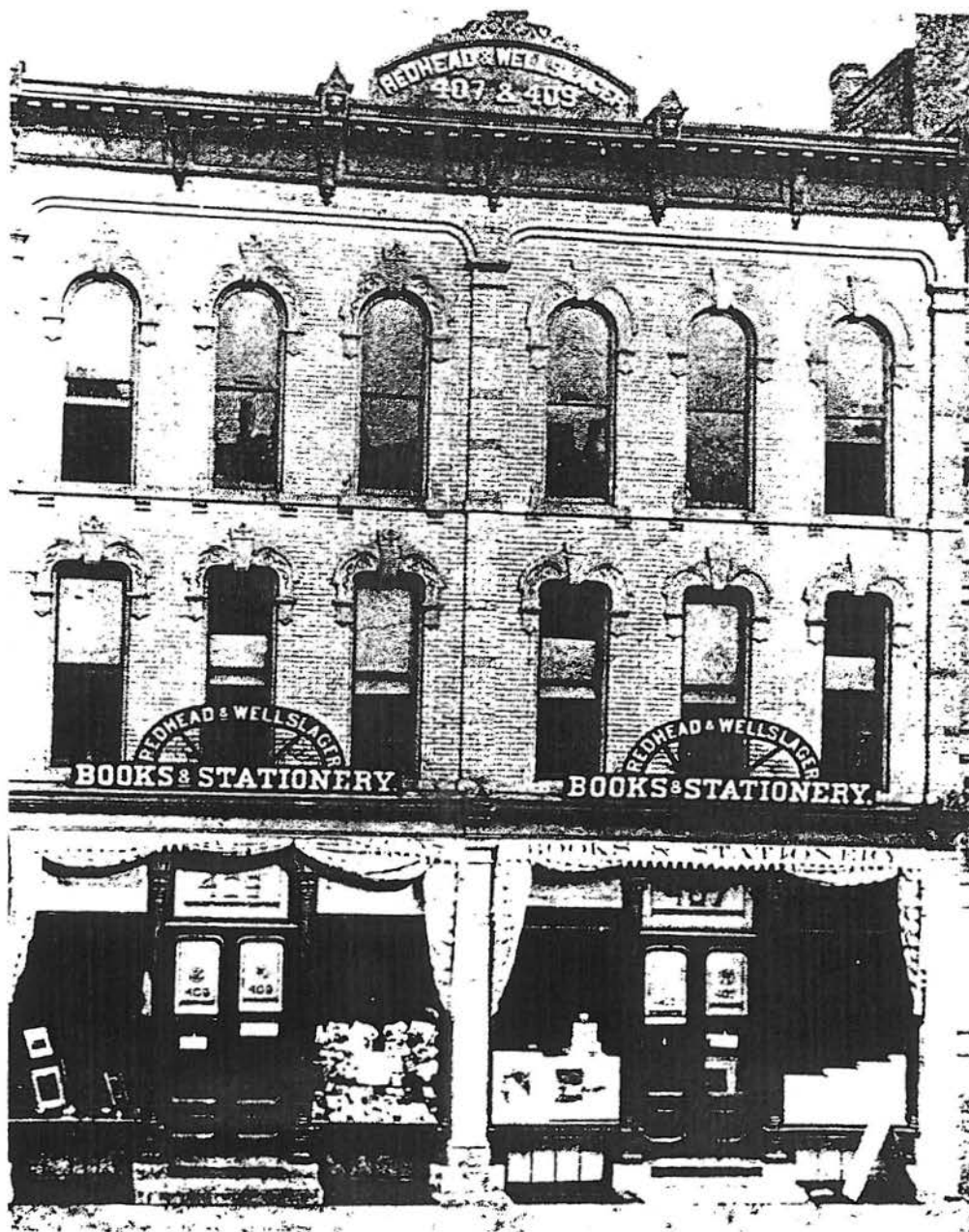
Lamb next to
REDHEAD MONUMENT
believed to have been placed there
for Little Mary, daughter of
Wesley & Isabelle Redhead



WESLEY REDHEAD, 64 YEARS, DIED 9 JAN 1891
ISABELLE REDHEAD, wife of Wesley, 34 yrs.9mo.24da Feb 1859
ANNA BELLE REDHEAD, daughter
SARAH MARTHA, daughter
MARY, daughter
LIZZIE K. daughter, wife of J.P. Forrester 22yrs.5mo.7da-4 May 1888
MILDRED, wife of Dr. E.E. Dorr-1863-1893
JAMIE, his son
LITTLE MARY, daughter
ELBERT, son
(Lamb next to the Redhead monument is believed to have
been placed there for one of the children)

This white bronze monument was restored in 1996, by removing the base which had crept, causing the monument to tilt and replacing it with four granite blocks for a base.

REDHEAD BROUGHT READING AND LEARNING TO DES MOINES WHEN HE BUILT THIS FINE BOOK STORE IN 1876 AT 4TH AND COURT.





You searched for **Wesley Redhead** in **Iowa**

Iowa Marriages, 1851-1900

Name:	Wesley Redhead
Spouse:	Isabel Clark
Marriage Date:	21 Oct 1851
County:	Johnson
State:	IA

Source Information:
Dodd, Jordan, Liahona Research, comp., *Iowa Marriages, 1851-1900* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: The Generations Network, Inc., 2000.
Original data: See extended description for original data sources listed by county.

Description:
This database contains marriage information from various counties in the U.S. state of Iowa from 1851-1900. Information that may be found in this database for each individual includes their name, spouse's name, marriage date, and marriage county. [Learn more...](#)

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Individual Record

FamilySearch™ Pedigree Resource File

Wesley Redhead Compact Disc #121 Pin #290146
Sex: M

Pedigree

Event(s)

Birth: 22 Jul 1825
England
Christening: 21 Aug 1825
Sandgate Chapel Wesleyan, Penrith, Cumberland, England
Death: 9 Jan 1891
of Des Moines, Polk, Iowa, USA

Parents

Father: [Nicholas Redhead](#) Disc #121 Pin #291352
Mother: [Sarah](#) Disc #121 Pin #291353

Notes and Sources

Notes: None
Sources: Available on CD-ROM Disc# 121

Submitter

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Regarding Wesley Redhead and Annie Seymour

Redhead has been largely engaged in the Des Moines Coal Company, being principal owner, Secretary and Superintendent. He is also Secretary and treasurer of the Black Diamond Coal Company, in Marion county, and besides is Treasurer of the Des Moines Scale Company, a director of the State National Bank, and Vice-president of the State Printing Company. Mr. Redhead has been twice married. First, in October, 1851, to Miss Isabel Clark, of Iowa City. After seven years of uninterrupted happiness she died, leaving no children. In 1860 he led to the altar Miss Annie Seymour, a native of Kentucky, who removed to Des Moines in 1857, a ward of Judge McHenry. They have six children living: David, George S., Lizzie K., Middy, Charles W. and Robert S. Have lost one, Annie Bell.

rctow added this on 7 May 2008

Wesley Redhead
1825 - 1891

THAYER Family Tree

by AUNTBARB1955 on 3 Jul 2010

Attach to a person in another tree

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Wesley Redhead, portrait, Western Monument Company, Des Moines, Iowa, white bronze

Added by: [clio](#)
4/13/2010

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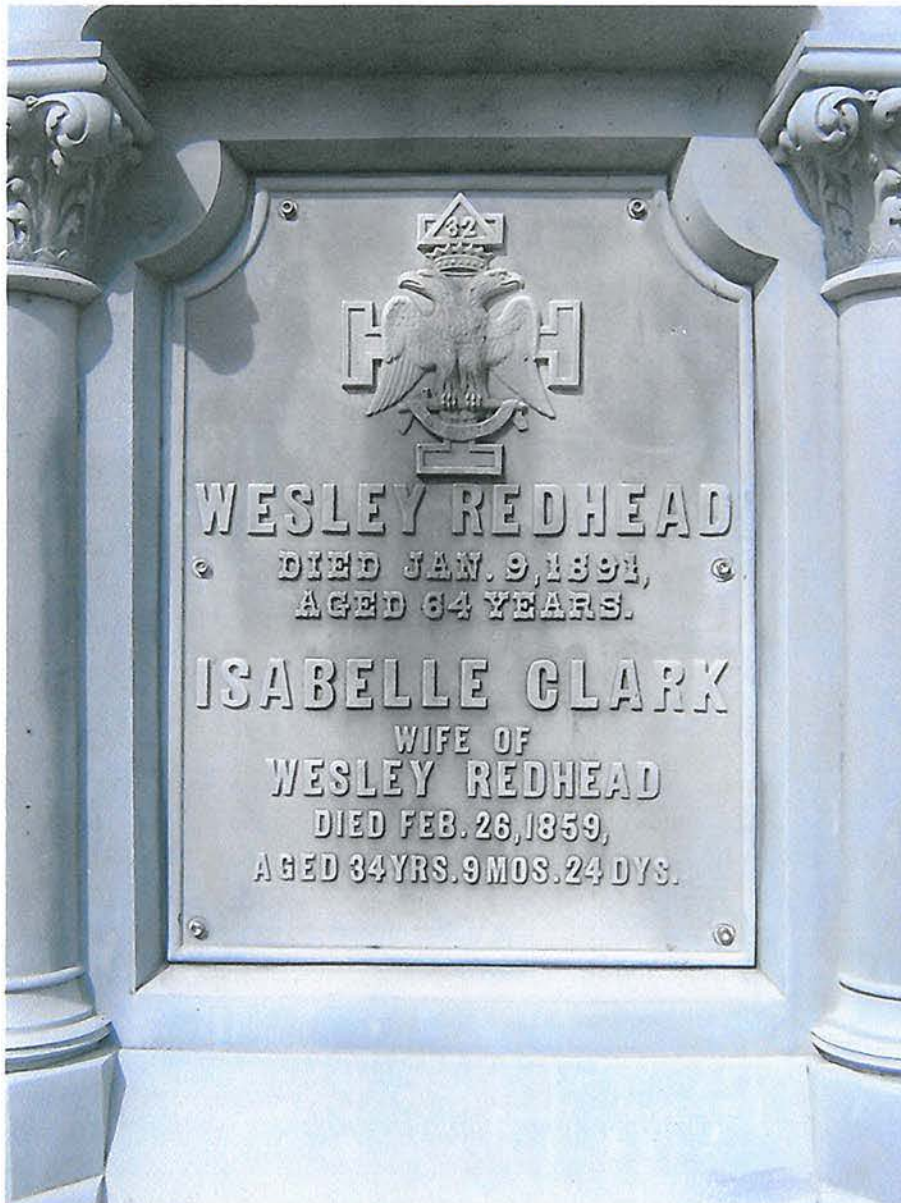


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Added by: mark l. legg
4/14/2007