

Standard Form For Members of the Legislature

Name of **Representative** Burnett, R. M. Senator \_\_\_\_\_

Represented Muscatine County, Iowa

1. Birthday and place 11 Feb. 1821 Onondaga County, New York

2. Marriage (s) date place

Frances M. Edwards 1849 Onondaga County, New York

3. Significant events for example:

A. Business He was an organizer of the Merchants Exchange National Bank, later the name changed to the First National Bank of Muscatine; he also was an organizer of the Muscatine Savings Bank

B. Civic responsibilities \_\_\_\_\_

C. Profession Book and stationery merchant nearly 25 years

4. Church membership Baptist

5. Sessions served 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> General Assembly 1866, 1868

6. Public Offices

A. Local \_\_\_\_\_

B. State Regent of the State University for 4 years

C. National \_\_\_\_\_

7. Death 23 Dec. 1891 Muscatine, Iowa; buried in Greenwood Cemetery, Muscatine, Iowa

8. Children Lewis D.; three additional preceded him in death, possibly two of them named Margaret and Elizabeth

9. Names of parents \_\_\_\_\_

10. Education \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

11. Degrees \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

12. Other applicable information Democrat, later Republican

- He lived in Oneida County, New York until 1852 when he came to Iowa. He located at Muscatine, Iowa where he engaged in the business stationary business.
  - He was compelled to retire from his business in 1876 because of the loss of his eyesight.
  - His wife, Frances, died 16 May 1864
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## SUDDEN DEATH OF HON. R. M. BURNETT.

One of Muscatine's Most Prominent Citizens Gone to His Reward.

From Wednesday's Daily.

The news spread like wild fire along the streets, this morning, about 10 o'clock, "R. M. Burnett is dead!" He had come down town, as was his usual custom, to have the young lady who was in the habit of reading to him at his old store room, now occupied by Neidig & Leysen, occupy the morning hours by reading, and was in his usual health and good spirits. About ten o'clock, while talking, he suddenly threw his head backward, apparently having fainted. Dr. Cal. W. Smith was summoned and with the aid of Messrs. Dolsen, Neidig and Joseph Biles, he was borne to the counter and laid down. He still breathed, and the JOURNAL'S manager, who happened in at this time in response to word sent him by his friend, Mr. Burnett, who wished to see him concerning something, was dispatched to Nesper's drug store for restoratives. In the meantime L. G. Burnett, who had been summoned, arrived with the family physician, Dr. H. C. McAlister. The restoratives were applied, but to no avail. The grand old man gave one long gasp and all was over, apoplexy having caused his death.

The news of his sudden demise fell like a thunderbolt on his many friends, who had been in the habit of seeing him going back and forth daily, escorted by his reading clerk or some friends. They could scarcely believe that Mr. Burnett had gone so suddenly to his reward, and many an eye was dimmed with tears, as they learned of his sudden taking away.

Deceased was born in Onondaga county, New York, July 11, 1821, consequently was in his 71st year. He resided in his native State until in 1852, when he came to Iowa, locating in Muscatine, engaging in the book and stationery business, which he continued for nearly a quarter of a

paratively retired from public life. These were some of his characteristics: He was outspoken with the candor of positive truth. He was frank and generous in his approval and equally free and severe in condemnation. There was an integrity in his friendship and an earnestness in his recognition of friends which endeared him to those who knew him intimately. The personal qualities which marked his private intercourse were still more conspicuous in his public life. There was always the same positiveness of manner and speech. His large frame, his vigorous health, (except the affliction of blindness for more than a dozen years,) and his commanding presence were not more remarkable than the robustness of mind, his stout heart, his stalwart courage and his unflagging energy.

His political opinions showed his sympathetic nature, as they were molded on the question of human rights. Being originally a Democrat, he became a Republican during the controversies of the Missouri Compromise and the attempt to establish slavery in Kansas. He saw with clear vision the magnitude of this issue, and all through that fearful struggle of the civil war he was the bold and outspoken friend and supporter of the Union cause. There was nothing negative about him. His policy was never timid nor vacillating. In short, he lived in a time to realize and illustrate the poet's earnest prayer:

"God give us men; a time like this demands  
Strong minds, great hearts, true faith, and  
ready hands;

Men whom the lust of office does not kill;  
Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy;  
Men who have honor; men who will not lie;  
Men who can stand before a demagogue  
And damn his treacherous flatteries without  
winking;

Tall men, sun-crowned, who live above the  
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In public duty and in private thinking."

J. H. Canon, who has been seriously ill with la grippe since Sunday, is better to-day but is still confined to his room.

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in Muscatine, engaging in the book  
and stationary business, which he  
continued for nearly a quarter of a  
century, being compelled in 1876 to  
retire from business on account of  
the loss of his eyesight. From his ar-  
rival here up to his very last moment,  
almost, he was interested in the wel-  
fare of his country and home city,  
and was always ready to talk in de-  
fense thereof. He was thoroughly  
posted in all matters of public inter-  
est and had a rare gift of eloquence.  
Always taking a prominent part in  
public matters, he was frequently  
called upon to address his fellow citi-  
zens, and in his characteristic, earn-  
est manner espoused the cause of  
right, receiving the closest and most  
respectful attention. One little inci-  
dent that vividly impressed this char-  
acteristic as a man and good citizen  
upon all was at the time of the Gar-  
field memorial meeting on our streets,  
when he so fervently invoked the  
Divine blessings upon our bereaved  
nation and the afflicted family.

Not only in matters of public in-  
terest did he take a prominent part,  
but in the church and Sabbath school  
he was active. He was one of the  
most earnest and faithful members of  
the First Baptist church, being dea-  
con of the church and superintend-  
ent of the Sabbath school for nearly  
thirty years. In both of these his  
presence will be greatly missed, as  
scarcely any one remembers when  
Mr. Burnett was absent from either  
the morning services or the Sabbath  
school, except when he was out of  
the city—to have his eyes treated or  
away on a visit to his old home. He  
was one of the most devout and con-  
sistent Christians in the city and  
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ill with la grippe since Sunday, is  
better to-day but is still confined to  
his room.

**Death of Nellie Biles.**

From Wednesday's Daily.  
Mrs. John Miller received a dis-  
patch last evening from St. Elma,  
Mo., announcing the death of her  
sister, Miss Nellie Biles, at noon yester-  
terday, at her home of her brother,  
John Biles, in that place.

The deceased was about 23 years of  
age and was the youngest child of D.  
S. Biles, who was Police Judge for a  
number of years. She went to St.  
Elma last September with her father  
for an extended stay with John S.  
Biles, who had recently lost his wife.  
She had not been well for some time  
but a letter received yesterday morn-  
ing conveyed the good news of her  
improvement and her sudden death  
falls with crushing force on her  
family.

The deceased was an active mem-  
ber of the Presbyterian church and  
her sweet disposition and admirable  
traits of character made her a fav-  
orite with all who knew her. Her  
father, two sisters, Mrs. John Miller,  
of this city, and Mrs. L. L. Cloyd, of  
Duluth, and one brother, John S., of  
St. Elma, survive her. The bereaved  
father will arrive to-morrow morning  
from Missouri with his daughter's re-  
mains which will be conveyed to the  
residence of John Miller. The fun-  
eral will be announced later.

**Justice Court.**

The case against W. S. Elliott, ar-  
rested on information filed by M. M.  
Morris, charging him with threaten-  
ing to kill, was dismissed by Justice  
Rowan to-day.

A. Romaine and T. P. Mitchell, of  
West Liberty, were in the city to-  
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thirty years. In both of these his presence will be greatly missed, as scarcely any one remembers when Mr. Burnett was absent from either the morning services or the Sabbath school, except when he was out of the city—to have his eyes treated or away on a visit to his old home. He was one of the most devout and consistent Christians in the city and it may be truly said of him "a good man has gone from us," and he has earned the crown that awaits the faithful.

He was ready to go. His lamp was trimmed and burning, and he was only awaiting the summons, "Well done thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord." Only a few days ago in conversation with friends he said nothing troubled him. He had everything his heart could desire and he was happy, which statement seemed remarkable to his friends, who thought he might be worrying over the loss of his sight. He was ready to go, and so suddenly did the messenger come that not a pain was felt by him in the final transition.

Mr. Burnett was twice elected to the Legislature, in 1866 and 1868, faithfully serving his constituency at both sessions. He for four years held the appointment of Regent of the University and was a valued official of that institution. He was one of the organizers of the Merchants Exchange National Bank, now the First National Bank of Muscatine, and was one of its directors from its organization. He also was one of the organizers and directors of the Muscatine Savings Bank.

Mr. Burnett was married in 1849 to Miss Frances Edwards, in Onondaga county, N. Y., who died May 16, 1864. By this union four children were born, all of whom, except Lewis G., now bookkeeper at J. M. Gobble & Co.'s, have preceded him in death.

It is no ordinary loss that this community sustains in the death of Hon. R. M. Burnett, though he had com-

mains which will be conveyed to the residence of John Miller. The funeral will be announced later.

Justice Court.

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Card of Thanks.

I desire, on behalf of the family, to thank the many friends for their kindness in our late bereavements in the death of Mr. and Mrs Essex.

J. L. CAPLAN.

A Merry Christmas.

Marriage licenses were issued Tuesday to the following young persons, who it is supposed will enjoy a very merry Christmas:

- William B. Phillips and Lorma Gibson.
- Edward H. Schott and Mary A. Leibrecht.
- H. W. Strake and Lilly McClaren.
- Ross Kennedy and Effie Ellsworth.
- Duke Darrel and Millie Simons.

MARRIED.

At the Presbyterian parsonage on North Mulberry street, Tuesday, Dec. 22, 1891, at 3 o'clock p. m., EDWARD H. SCHOTT, of St. Louis, and Miss MARY A. LEIBRECHT, Rev. S. H. Parvin officiating

The ceremony which bound together these two young lives was witnessed by a small circle of relatives of the contracting parties and was performed in the Rev. Parvin's study in his happiest manner. The bride is one of Muscatine's fair daughters and is well beloved by a large circle of friends for her many graces and womanly attainments. The groom is the son of Amos Schott and is a Muscatine boy through and through, though at present a resident of St. Louis. He is a young man of splendid character and is well thought of by all who know him. A happy future is predicted the newly married pair, and the JOURNAL joins in extending its hearty congratulations.

Mr. and Mrs. Schott left Tuesday for St. Louis, where the groom is engaged in the boot and shoe business, and, has a home awaiting them.

At the Presbyterian manse, Tuesday, Dec. 22, 1891, by Rev. S. H. Parvin, Mr. ROSS KENNEDY and Miss EFFIE ELLSWORTH, all of Rock Island county, Ill.

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# Individual Record

1880 United States Census

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**R. M. BURNETT**

Household

Male

**Other Information:**

Birth Year	<1821>
Birthplace	NY
Age	59
Occupation	Retired Book Seller
Marital Status	W <Widowed>
Race	W <White>
Head of Household	<u>Mary MCCORMICK</u>
Relation	Other
Father's Birthplace	---
Mother's Birthplace	---

**Source Information:**

Census Place	Muscatine, Muscatine, Iowa
Family History Library Film	<u>1254358</u>
NA Film Number	T9-0358
Page Number	<u>168C</u>

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