

Memorial to the Honorable Willard A. Bents of Howard County

MR. SPEAKER: Your committee, appointed to prepare a suitable resolution commemorating the life, character and public service of the late Honorable Willard A. Bents, begs leave to submit the following memorial:

Willard A. Bents, better known as "Bill," was born at Cresco, Iowa, October 7, 1897, son of Alfred E. and Ella Bents, early pioneer settlers of Howard county. He attended the Cresco public schools and when a young man helped in the fruit growing and nursery business, which was begun in Cresco by his father in 1877. Bill took over the business after his father's death.

In 1932, he was united in marriage to Sadie Evans of Lanesboro, Minnesota. They are the parents of two children, Chryl Ann and James Willard Bents.

The Cresco horticulturist wrote for the Iowa state conservation commission and served as a member of the commission for several years, having been appointed by Governor George Wilson. He was also a member of the Outdoor Writers Association and served on the Iowa Agricultural Planning Committee.

He was a member of the Masonic lodge and Royal Arch Masons, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Cresco Wildlife Club. He belonged to the Congregational Church in Cresco and was also a member of the Izaak Walton League.

The Cresco man was a marksman of ability. He held the tri-state trap-shooting championship in 1929, 1930 and in 1932 and was Iowa champion in 1943.

In politics, Mr. Bents was a Democrat and was Representative from Howard county in the Fifty-first, Fifty-second and Fifty-second Extra General Assemblies. That he was regarded highly in the legislative circles was proved by his appointment to serve two years on the Committee on Retrenchment and Reform of the Iowa legislature. Because of failing health he was not a candidate for office of representative in 1948.

A beloved member of his community, his passing on January 30, 1949, at Cresco, Iowa, bereaves the state and his county of a respected and beloved citizen. Loyal, conscientious, capable, and interested in all matters of public benefit, his passing is mourned by all who were fortunate enough to be among his large list of friends and acquaintances.

*Therefore, Be It Resolved by the House of Representatives of the Fifty-third General Assembly of Iowa:* That in the passing of the Honorable Willard A. Bents, the state has lost a valuable and honored citizen and the House expresses its appreciation of his character and public service and tenders, by this resolution, its sincere and heartfelt sympathy to his beloved family in their great sorrow and loss.

*Be It Further Resolved:* That a copy of this resolution be spread upon the Journal of the House and that the Chief Clerk be directed to forward an enrolled copy to the family of the deceased.

LUKE L. CAFFREY,  
HENRY H. STEVENS,  
E. E. POSTON,

*Committee.*