

## RODNEY W. TIRRILL

MR. PRESIDENT: Your committee appointed to prepare resolutions commemorating the life, character and public service of Rodney W. Tirrill, late of Manchester, Iowa, begs leave to submit the following report:

Rodney W. Tirrill was born December 22, 1835, in Stewartstown, New Hampshire, the son of Timothy and Mary Drew Tirrill. In 1850 the family removed to Lodi, Wisconsin, and in November, 1856, the son came to Delaware county and located at Manchester, which at that time had a population of about five hundred. He has been a resident here ever since and is believed to have lived here longer than any other person now living.

He received his education in the public schools of Colesbrook, New Hampshire, and attended the State University of Wisconsin and was preparing to enter Albany Law School when the Civil war interrupted his plans.

He enlisted in October, 1861, in Company F, Twelfth Iowa Infantry, and saw service with this famous regiment. At the battle of Shiloh, April 6, 1862, he was shot in the thigh and lay on the field helpless from Sunday evening until Thursday morning before his wound was attended to. He limped slightly throughout the remainder of his life, as a result of this wound. He was discharged from the service in January, 1863, broken in health but not in spirit, and on his return to Delaware county was elected county superintendent of schools, in which office he served four years.

He then established himself in the real estate, loan and insurance business, in which he remained active almost to the time of his death. In later years, however, he turned the business over to younger men, personally looking after his own personal interests.

In 1879 he was nominated by acclamation and without solicitation on his part, as candidate for State Senator, a unique testimonial of the high regard in which he was ever held by his townspeople. He was elected by a large majority and served four years. During this time he drafted the first oleomargarine bill passed by the Iowa Legislature and the first ever passed in the United States. At that time Manchester was known as the "Dairy City" because of the creamery at Spring Branch, which made the butter which was awarded first prize at the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876, and the other creameries in this vicinity which were producing butter which commanded a premium over the highest market prices and were advertised in the finest New York restaurants by the exclusive use of their product.

Mr. Tirrill was always an active member of the Grand Army of the Republic and beside holding many lesser honors, was department commander of Iowa in 1908. His interest in his comrades never failed and he proved himself a friend also of the boys of the World War, whose guest he was on numerous occasions.

On December 30, 1860, he was married to Miss Eliza Jane Weeks, who was born in Massachusetts, October 6, 1836, of Revolutionary ancestry. For more than sixty-five years they were true partners in joy and sorrow,

in wealth, and at last in sickness, as Mrs. Tirrill has been in very feeble health for weeks. Their two children died in infancy. In 1893, when he was 58 and his wife 57, they both entered the State University of Iowa, where he completed his interrupted law course and she studied English literature, French and German. He was admitted to the bar in 1894 and belonged to the Delaware County Bar Association, but he was never active in the practice. In 1900 and again in 1904, Mr. and Mrs. Tirrill traveled extensively through Europe, Palestine, Africa and the Orient, and through all the years both have kept their minds fresh and active and interested.

When he was eighty years old he built a home, the finest in his home town, containing every modern device for comfort and many beautiful things brought back from their world travels. This fine residence is on the corner of Franklin and Union streets. From there to the Maquoketa river a park was laid out by an experienced landscape artist and part of his plans have been followed out in a beautiful garden around a fountain from which a wooded lawn stretches to the river. This park has been given to the city of Manchester, and it is understood that when they are through with it, the beautiful home will also be devoted to public use.

Although Senator Tirrill's health had never been rugged, by careful and temperate living he kept himself surprisingly fit for one of his years and until September 4th had driven his own car around town on business or pleasure and walked with little difficulty. Aggravation of a malady of long standing compelled him to go to bed September 5th and it was decided best to perform an operation for his relief. On September 20th he was taken to the hospital at Anamosa.

Mr. Tirrill was a thirty-second degree Mason and believed in the Universalist faith, but attended the Congregational church since there was no Universalist service here. A native of the "Granite State," granite was truly indicative of his character. Firmly fixed in what he believed right, difficulties only polished his character, which endured through his long life, steadfast and unyielding. He was companionable and friendly and anxious to promote the community welfare, but had no patience for shiftlessness, vice or idleness. Although he leaves no children, he will be sincerely mourned by the people of this community, in which his life has been such an important part.

*Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved by the Senate of the Forty-second General Assembly of Iowa, That in the death of Rodney W. Tirrill the state and community in which he lived have suffered the loss of an influential and honorable citizen; and*

*Be It Further Resolved, That a copy of these resolutions be spread upon the minutes of the journal of the Senate and that the secretary be directed to send an engrossed copy thereof to the family of the deceased.*

GEO. F. SLEMMONS,

LARS J. SKROMME,

OSCAR ULSTAD,

*Committee.*

Senator Slemmons spoke as follows:

It was my privilege to know Mr. Tirrill but a short time, but in that time I learned to know him as a man of wonderful intelligence and kindly