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**January 14, 2015**

**THIS WEEK: Journals of the Sixth Iowa General Assembly**

**BACKGROUND:**

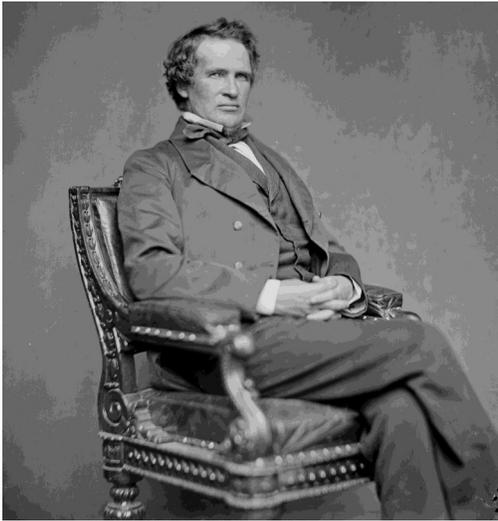
The sixth General Assembly convened in Iowa City December 1, 1856, and adjourned January 29, 1857, a 60-day session. There were 24 Republican



members in the Senate and 12 Democratic members. The Republicans had the majority in the House of Representatives with 44 members. There were 28 Democratic members in the House, a total of 108 members in the Iowa Legislature.

**Iowa State Capitol  
Iowa City**

The presiding officer of the Senate was William Hamilton, President of the Senate. Samuel McFarland was Speaker of the House of Representatives.



James Grimes, a Whig, served as Iowa's governor during the Sixth General Assembly having been inaugurated on December 9, 1854, at the age of 38. The 1850 census showed Iowa's population at 192,214.

**Governor James Grimes**

## **From the Journal of the House of Representatives, December 1856:**

Samuel McFarland's comments upon being elected Speaker:

*Gentlemen of the House of Representatives:*

I thank you for the honor conferred upon me in calling me to preside over your deliberations. I acknowledge my inability to perform properly the duties you have



**Samuel McFarland**

imposed upon me, and ask in advance your indulgence for any errors I may commit. I hope to receive your good counsel and active co-operation in explaining and enforcing the rules of order. We come together here as strangers; I trust we shall go away as friends. Our country has just passed through another exciting and interesting Presidential Campaign. Party spirit has run high-bitter animosities have been engendered. May we, in our deliberations, forget all these feelings, and go to work to advance the interests and increase the prosperity of our young and flourishing State. Dwelling here in the great Valley of the West, the central State of the mightiest empire the world ever saw, we should seek

to make our laws a model for other states and nations; and by their observance, our people virtuous and happy.

*SAMUEL MCFARLAND Born August 18, 1824, in Washington County, Pennsylvania, and died December 7, 1862, at the age of 38. He was a Lieutenant Colonel in the 19th Iowa Infantry and gave his life for his country at the battle of Prairie Grove, Arkansas, while leading a charge.*

## **From the Journal of the Senate, December 1856:**

Senator (William) Coolbaugh brought to the notice of the Senate the fact that the last session of the General Assembly, both Houses had passed a bill restricting the duties of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Senate File 32 and that this bill had never been presented to the Governor for his approval. A special investigating committee was formed and reported the next day that the bill had been found among a package of original Senate bills in a secretary's desk. The bill was reintroduced as Senate File 1 and passed the Senate the third day of the legislative session.

Senator Coolbaugh served from 1854 to 1862. He represented Des Moines County. Coolbaugh was a financier. He established a bank at Burlington and then moved the bank to Chicago opening the Union National Bank. He was very successful in business but took his life because of failing health. On November 13, 1877, Coolbaugh shot himself at the foot of the Stephen Douglas Memorial in Chicago.

*Note: The presidential campaign of 1856 presented John Fremont as the candidate for the new Republican Party. James Buchanan won the election for the Democratic Party after the incumbent, President Franklin Pierce, failed to win his party's renomination. Millard Fillmore also ran on the American Party ticket also known as the Know Nothing Party.*