

2-15 JOHN WESLEY HOLMES, 1907

John Wesley Holmes, was born at Richfield Springs, N. Y., on June 24, 1821. He died at his residence 1119 Spring St., Grinnell, Iowa, at an early hour Monday morning, February 11, 1907, being therefore in his eighty-sixth year.

The ancestral home of the family in America was Williamstown, Mass. The grandfather of the deceased, Isaac Holmes, is mentioned in the history of Williamstown, as having been active in gaining recognition there for the society of Baptists, and when recognition was granted he became their first tithingman. With three brothers, Isaac served in nearly all of the military expeditions of the Revolution in the Hudson river region, and with one of his brothers took part in the battle of Bennington and Saratoga. Clark Holmes, father of the deceased, settled at Richfield Spring where he taught school, farmed and became actively interested in the progress of the Methodist church. These same activities were successfully continued in western New York after his removal to Cattaraugus county. He lived to the advanced age of nearly 93 years.

The young manhood of John Holmes was spent in Cattaraugus county, N. Y., where he was continuously engaged in farming. He married Eliza Ann Utely, daughter of Captain Leonard Utely whose family came thither from Pawlet, near Bennington, Vt. Had the life just ended been extended 22 days, sixty one years of the marriage union would have been completed. This fact is so rare in human experience that it deserves mention in any obituary where it may be written.

In 1816, John Holmes volunteered and became musician in Company H, Seventy-eighth N. Y. Infantry. He was discharged in 1863 on account of injury caused by a fall from a

collective stairway on the outside of a building used as a barracks hospital for his company. His keen interest in the meaning and experiences of Rebellion days never flagged, even in the enfeebled days of the last year of his life.

On returning from the war he came to Grinnell with his family, the wife and five children. Since that time, October 1863, two children have been born. Of the seven four were sons and three were daughters. The wife and four of his children survive to mourn their loss. These are Mrs. Emma Susan Jones of Breda, Ia., Frank Leonard Holmes, and Lottie Jane McCoy of Grinnell, and David Eugene Holmes of Albany, N. Y.

Of the character of the deceased, it may be said that all knew him to be a man of energy, highly honorable in all his relations with men, and generous almost to a fault. A favor to a neighbor always stood in his thought before his own personal interest. Before the physical injury somewhat limited him, few men could claim so powerful and symmetrical a physique. Accompanying

The funeral services, held at the family residence were conducted by Professor L. F. Parker. The Grand Army veterans were in attendance. The stars and stripes were drawn across the form of the resting patriot-soldier. The life brought home from the civil war and which has since led the march at many patriotic gatherings was in the hand that has used it. The floral offerings were beautiful and abundant. The tributes eloquently and sympathetically paid to the memory of the departed one and the presence of many sympathizing friends, were appropriate and will long be cherished as a source of consolation and comfort to the surviving members of the family.