



*Pieces of Iowa's Past*, published by the Iowa State Capitol Tour Guides weekly during the legislative session, features historical facts about Iowa, the Capitol, and the early workings of state government. All historical publications are reproduced here with the actual spelling, punctuation, and grammar retained.

March 24, 2011

**THIS WEEK: Origin of the Pioneer Lawmakers Association**

**BACKGROUND: Aldrich, Gue, and Finkbine**

**CHARLES ALDRICH** was a newspaper reporter. In 1860, he was chosen Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives for Iowa's Eighth General Assembly and in 1862 was reelected. **BENJAMIN F. GUE** was a newspaper editor and a member of the Iowa House of Representatives (1858-1862) and a member of the Iowa Senate (1862-1866) and the sixth Lieutenant Governor of Iowa (1866-1868). **ROBERT S. FINKBINE** was the builder of the permanent Capitol of Iowa. In 1863, Finkbine was elected to the House of Representatives, serving during Iowa's Tenth General Assembly. Two years later, he was reelected to the Eleventh General Assembly.

### **Origin of the Pioneer Lawmakers Association**

Hon. Norman Boardman, of Lyons, who was the senator from Clinton County, in the Ninth and Tenth General Assemblies, from 1862 to 1866, first proposed the reunion of members of the early legislatures of Iowa.

On the 26<sup>th</sup> of September, 1885, he wrote as follows to Ex-Lieut. Governor B.F. Gue, of Des Moines:

"I see in eastern papers that all the living members of the Vermont legislatures are to have a reunion in October, with very interesting exercises. Why cannot we have one in Iowa?

"In conversation with Gov. John Scott, of Nevada, a few days ago, I found that he was heartily in favor of such a reunion, and I would like to have your opinion on the subject. Will you please confer with such of the old members as you may be able to see, and let me know the result." - NORMAN BOARDMAN

Upon this suggestion many of the old law-makers were consulted and in January the following call was issued and published in the papers throughout the state:

### **REUNION OF OLD-TIME LAW-MAKERS**

At the suggestion of many members of the early State legislatures, a call is hereby issued for a reunion of the old-time law-makers of Iowa, to be held at Des Moines on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> days of February, 1886. All surviving members and officers of the Territorial and State legislatures up to and including the Eleventh General Assembly, are to attend and participate in the reunion.

(Signed)

GEO. G. WRIGHT - Member of the Second and Third General Assemblies

ISAAC W. GRIFFITH - Member of the Second

C.G. DIBBLE - Member of the Third

P.M. CASADY - Member of the Second and Third

P. GAD BRYAN - Member of the Fourth and Fifth

J.B. GRINNELL - Member of the Sixth and Seventh

J.W. CATTELL - Member of Sixth Seventh, Eleventh, and Twelfth

W.G. THOMPSON - Member of the Sixth and Seventh

B.F. GUE - Member of the Seventh, Eighth, Ninth, Tenth, and Eleventh

L.L. AINSWORTH - Member of the Eighth and Ninth

ED. WRIGHT - Member of the Sixth, Seventh, Eighth, and Eleventh

JOHN SCOTT - Member of the Eighth and Twelfth

H.B. MITCHELL - Member of the Fourth

N. BOARDMAN - Member of the Ninth and Tenth  
JOSEPH DYSART - Member of the Ninth and Fifteenth  
C.W. LOWERY - Member of the Ninth  
JOHN G. FOOTE - Member of the Ninth and Tenth  
JOHN RUSSELL - Member of the Ninth, Tenth, Eleventh,  
Twelfth, Thirteenth, Eighteenth, and Nineteenth  
C.F. CLARKSON - Member of the Tenth and Eleventh  
WM. SANDERSON - Member of the Tenth  
L.R. BOLTER -Member of the Eleventh, Fifteenth, Sixteenth,  
Nineteenth, Twentieth, and Twenty-first  
R.S. FINKBINE - Member of the Tenth and Eleventh  
HOYT SHERMAN - Member of the Eleventh  
CHAS. ALDRICH - Chief Clerk of Eighth, Ninth, Eleventh, and  
Thirteenth

The first session of the Reunion opened at Foster's Opera House  
in Des Moines, at 10:30 A.M., February 24, 1886.



**CHARLES ALDRICH**  
(b. October 2, 1828 – d. March 8, 1908)



**BENJAMIN F. GUE**  
(b. December 25, 1828 – d. June 1, 1904)



**ROBERT S. FINKBINE**  
(b. July 9, 1828 - d. July 8, 1901)