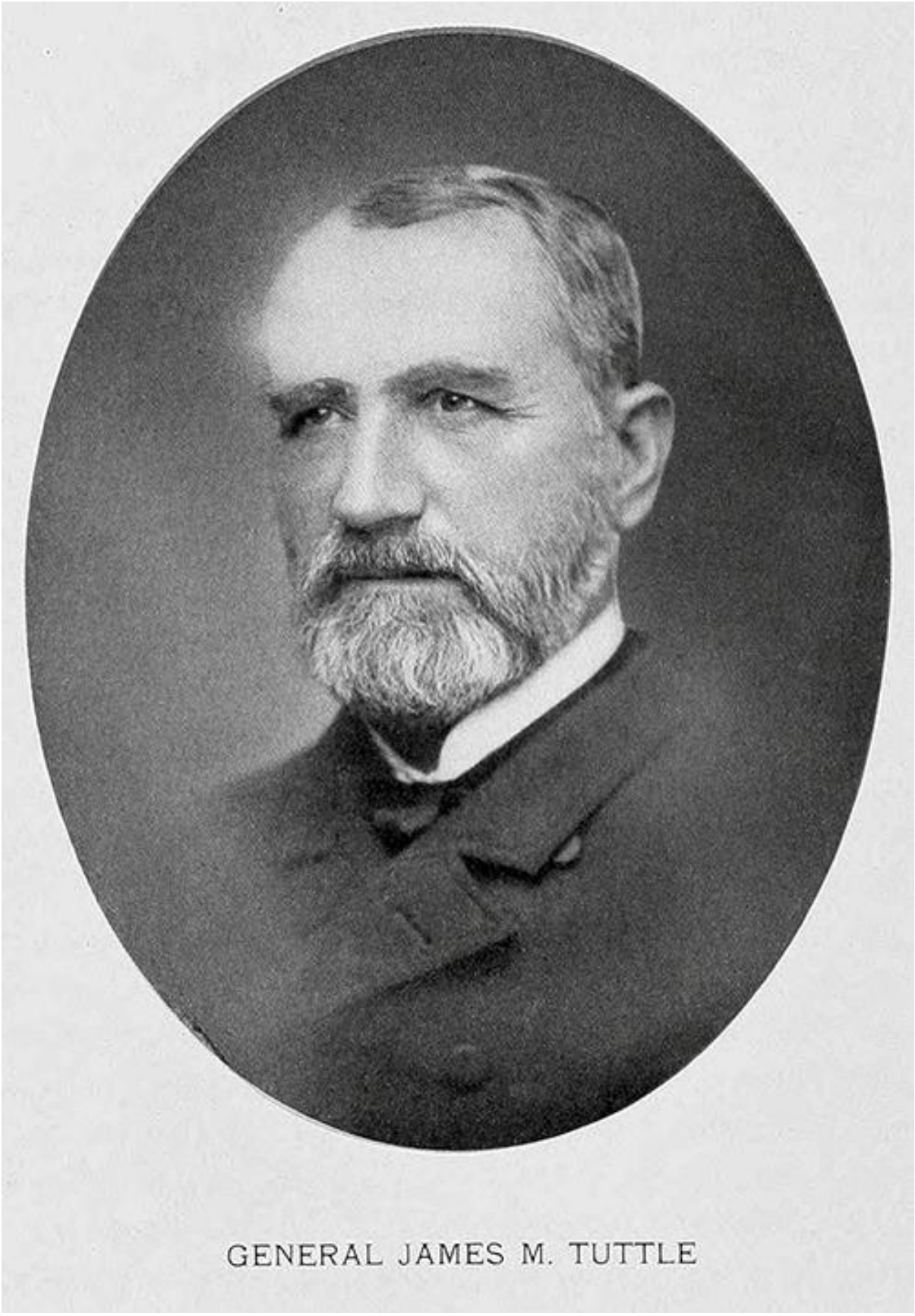

GENERAL JAMES M. TUTTLE

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A pioneer of Iowa, and an early settler of Polk County, was James M. Tuttle. He was born in Monroe County, Ohio, September Twenty-first, 1823, and passed his youth assisting his father, and acquiring an education in the "People's College," the common school.

In the Winter of 1833, his parents removed to Fayette County, where he worked with his father until 1843, when he engaged in business for himself until 1846, when he came to Farmington, Van Buren County, and engaged in mercantile business and farming.

In 1855, he was elected Sheriff of that county; in 1857, he was elected Treasurer and Recorder of the County, and re-elected in 1859.

He was a very quiet individual, no fuss and feathers about him. His office-getting was secured more by the efforts of friends, who appreciated his slow-going, sturdy, honest ways, than his own.

When Fort Sumter was fired upon, and the President called for men, Tuttle raised a company for the First Iowa Regiment, and was elected its Captain, but the Eastern states being nearer Washington, filled the quota quickly, and no Iowa soldiers were needed. The following May, his company was assigned to the Second Regiment. At the rendezvous he was chosen Lieutenant-Colonel of the regiment, and on September Sixth, following, was promoted to Colonel, to succeed Curtis, promoted to Brigadier-General.

Few officers have a better record than Tuttle, and few regiments won greater fame than the Second Iowa. It and the glory incident to the capture of Fort Donelson are inseparable—an incident that is known all over the Union.

It is not generally known that on that ocasion (sic) a crisis had come—a "forlorn hope." It was tendered to several regiments by General Smith, the commanding officer, but declined. When it reached Colonel Tuttle, General Smith said to him:

"Will you take those works?"

"Support me promptly, and in twenty minutes I will go in," was the reply, and he went in, but at fearful cost.

It was unquestionably the most gallant, reckless and successful charge of the whole war. The Colonel was a man who had no conception of fear. The whole Federal force had been sadly worsted. McClernand and Wallace had been defeated. The Second Iowa held the extreme right of Grant's forces, some six hundred yards from a point where a whole brigade the day before had made an assault and were repulsed.

General Smith, in giving his orders to Tuttle, said in loud voice, which every man in the regiment could have heard:

"Advance with the left of the regiment in front, with the right following about fifty yards in the rear. Half of the regiment is enough to be sacrificed at once." Passing along the line, he said: "I have selected this regiment to storm the enemy's works. It is a perilous undertaking, and I want to caution you young men that if you halt, if you hesitate, if you stop to fire a single shot between here and those breastworks, every man of you will be killed, every one, and for that reason, I cannot afford to sacrifice more than half of this regiment. Be cool, dispassionate, and reserve your fire."

The character of the ground intervening between the Second Iowa and the entrenched line of the enemy was such as to give all the advantage to the enemy. In front of the regiment, and just beyond an open field in which it formed for the charge, was a ravine whose sides, thickly lined with tangled brush, were very difficult of passage. Beyond was the steep, obstructed hillside, along the crest of which, and parallel to the ravine, were the earth-works of the enemy. Not more than one hundred yards in front of these works was a formidable abattis, to pass which an assaulting column must break its line of battle and move by the flank. Beyond the abattis there were no obstructions except the enemy's breastworks. When all was in readiness, the order to advance was given, and Colonel Tuttle, with the left wing of his regiment, forcing his way through the ravine, began scaling the hillside. The abattis was reached, and that obstruction was passed without the firing of scarcely a gun, but the instant after, and before the gallant band had again

come into line, it received the concentrated fire of three Rebel infantry regiments—not less than two thousand men. The slaughter was terrible. At the first fire, one hundred and fifty of those gallant three hundred men fell, either dead or wounded. Without a perceptible halt, the assaulting party closing up its ranks, moved steadily on, a daring which was too much for the enemy, and two whole regiments fled from their defense in precipitate flight. A Mississippi regiment to the right still remained, but the right wing of the Second coming up, that also fled to the ravine below.

Though the key to the Rebel position had been wrested from the enemy, the fighting was not half done. Between the main fort and the position held by the Second was a deep ravine, though which the enemy having passed, had taken up a position on the high ground, which bounded the opposite side. Colonel Tuttle promptly formed his regiment and moved against them. He had reached the ravine, and was engaging the enemy, when an Indiana regiment, having just gained the hill, commenced pouring severe musketry shot into his rear, causing momentary confusion. The Colonel waved his sword, and in other ways endeavored to signal the Hoosiers to cease firing, but believing they were engaging the enemy, they kept on. Alarmed for the safety of his regiment, the Colonl (sic) started to run back to it, when suddenly, he wheeled about, faced the enemy, and began moving backward, a maneuver it was afterward learned was to avoid being shot in the back, which he had declared should never happen.

When climbing the hill, he was grazed by a ball which passed through his coat sleeve and glove, hitting the hilt of his sword, wrenching it out of his hand, and knocking it over his head with such force as to paralyze his arm during the remainder of the engagement. A little later, he was standing on a log beckoning his men to come on, when a cannon ball struck the log, forcing it from under him, and he fell backward against a tree, causing an injury to his back from which he never fully recovered.

Colonel Godfrey, then a Lieutenant, who had a part in the hill climbing, says "Bill" Brenton, a private from Dallas County, came to him and said: "Liteutenant (sic), if you will take my gun and fire, I have lots of ammu-

nition, and will help you load, and we will give them h—l." Godfrey asked him what the trouble was, and holding up his gun, he saw it had been hit with a shot and broken into pieces. "We've got lots of ammunition," he repeated, "and we'll give them h—l yet."

That was the stuff the Second Iowa was composed of. Every man of it was as ready for the charge as their Colonel, and they knew as well as he what it meant.

Fifteen thousand prisoners, many ordnance stores, and much other property was the result of the victory. More than that, it forced back the Confederate line from the Potomac to the Mississippi, and was the beginning of the end of the war. The Second Iowa also truly made Grant, Smith, McClernan, and Wallace Major Generals, and ten others Brigadiers.

At Shiloh, April Sixth, 1862, the bloodiest battle of the war, considering the number of troops engaged, Colonel Tuttle commanded what was known as the "Iowa Hornet's Nest Brigade," consisting of the Second, Seventh, Twelfth and Fourteenth regiments. It held, for a whole day, the pivotal point of battle, and by heroic resistance, valor and sacrifice, stayed the progress of the enemy and saved Grant's army from destruction. For his skill and excellent judgment shown in the management of his brigade, in that hornet's nest of fusillade, Tuttle received high commendation from Grant, Sherman and Halleck.

On June Ninth following, he was rewarded with the star of a Brigadier-General. During the Fall of 1862 and Winter following, he was in command of a Division at Cairo. In the Spring of 1864, he was placed in command of the Third Division, Fifteenth Army Corps.

In September, 1864, he resigned, returned to his home, and soon after came to Des Moines, and for two years engaged in farming, until 1867, when, with his brother, Martin, he purchased the Murphy packing house, enlarged it, added a basement story, tanks, etc., for pork packing on a large scale. In 1873, the buildings were demolished and replaced with a massive stone structure, equipped for disposing of fifteen hundred hogs per day, and he continued in the packing business several years.

In his packing business, the want of transportation facilities was a serious drawback. However extensive his business, to get a market for it was an important item. In 1866, when at a mass-meeting of citizens, the Iowa and Minnesota Narrow-Gauge Railroad Company was organized, he was chosen one of the Board of Directors.

In April, 1871, when the Water Works Company was organized, he was one of the incorporators.

In October, 1871, he was elected Representative to the Fourteenth General Assembly, and displayed some of his fighting ability in the third, last and most important contest to secure the permanent location of the Capital in Des Moines. Another important measure before that Legislature was a radical change in the law respecting the taxation of the property of railroads, which, prior thereto, had paid to the state treasury a percentage of their gross earnings. The change was to tax such property the same as that of individuals, and substantially what the law is now. John H. Gear, who afterward became the popular Governor and known as "Old Business;" Ed. Campbell, of Ottumwa; John P. Irish, of Iowa City; Fred. O'Donnell, of Dubuque; John A. Kasson and John A. Greene, of Davenport, able debaters, opposed the measure, backed by a powerful lobby, at every step, and after it had passed the House, put on record a strong protest against it, but the General took the side of the people.

Politically, the General was a Democrat, but in no sense whatever a politician. When the tocsin of war was sounded, he joined with Baker, Crocker, Bussey and others to save the Union. In 1863, when he was in the field, he was nominated by his party for Governor, without consulting him, or his knowledge. He assented to the honor conferred, and issued an address to the people, declaring his position respecting the all-absorbing political questions then before the people:

"I am in favor of a vigorous prosecution of the war to the full extent of our power, until the Rebellion is suppressed, and of using all means that may be in our possession, recognized by honorable warfare, for that purpose. I am for the Union without an if, and regardless of whether Slavery stands or falls by its restoration; and in favor of peace on no other terms than the

Unconditional submission of the Rebels to constituted authorities of the United States."

His opponent was William M. Stone, and the Republicans being so largely in the majority in the state, he was defeated.

In 1866, he was nominated by the Democrats for Congress, against General G. M. Dodge, but the district being overwhelmingly Republican, he was again defeated.

In 1882, he had become a Republican, and he was again elected Representative to the Twentieth General Assembly, and was the leader in the House in support of, and securing the passage of, the Prohibitory Law, which placed ale, wine and beer in the class with intoxicating liquors.

His last civil office was in 1886, as President of the Board of Commissioners of the Iowa Soldiers' Home, which stands a fitting testimonial of his patriotism and fidelity, for to his untiring determination and wise legislative management, was it secured.

When he closed his packing business, he held a large stock of meats, and soon after, the market fell away until it forced him to sacrifice nearly all he possessed except his home, to hold it for an upturn, which did not come until too late for him. He then sought to recuperate his losses by engaging in gold and silver mining at Casa Grande, Arizona.

October Twenty-second, 1892, he received a paralytic stroke, which terminated fatally on the Twenty-fourth.

As a citizen, he took an active interest in public affairs, and was helpful in many ways to the community, all unknown to it. He was of sanguine, bilious temperament, large physique, slow of action, but sure; unostentatious, cared nothing for public *eclat*, or the tinsel and show of fashion; belonged to the plain people; was direct and decisive in speech; brusque in manner, but his heart pulsated with good-fellowship toward those who got on the warm side of him, or who were worthy his regard and confidence.

His dominant trait was persistency, even to obstinacy. He knew no such thing as defeat, whether as a soldier or in civil life.

Socially, he was, to the masses, reticent, and not what is termed a good mixer. He was not a member of any fraternal organization so far as I know,

except the Grand Army of the Republic, to which his attachment and fidelity was only equaled by his loyalty to the Union, a fidelity notably demonstrated at the National Encampment at Saint Louis, by his vigorous and successful effort to prevent the perversion of the encampment to partisan purposes, and his emphatic opposition to a return of Rebel flags captured during the war. He could never compromise with rebellion against the Government; he could not forget nor forgive it.

He was emphatically domestic. His home was to him all in all. Therein lay his happiness. With his wife, children, neighbors, and congenial friends around him, he was content, and it was there he was seen as he was, genial and happy in striving to make them happy.

It can be truly said of him that as a soldier, he won a fame that will remain so long as the victory at Donelson shall have a place in the history of the Republic. Very singularly, he seldom spoke of what he did during his service, yet often referred to acts of heroism and gallantry done by some of "his boys," for whom he had the closest attachment. Though sometimes apparently reckless, he exercised excellent judgment, was considerate of them, had implicit confidence in them, and they in him. He had only to give the sign for them to go in, and, *mirabile dictu*, how they would fight.

He died in Arizona, October Twenty-fourth, 1892.

May Fifth, 1907.

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