

## Joshia Bushnell Grinnell-- A Man of Many Avocations

Lawyer, farmer, minister, railroad builder, wool grower, state senator, member of the United States Congress, and town founder.

These avocations all describe the many activities of Josiah Bushnell Grinnell, founder of the City of Grinnell.

### Born In Vermont

J. B. Grinnell was born Dec. 22, 1821, the son of Myron and Catherine Hastings Grinnell, in New Haven, Vt. He was brought up in an atmosphere of hard work, poverty, and a sternly religious training.

Although raised on a farm, he broke away from the farm at an early age in order to secure an ed-

ucation, supporting himself by teaching school. He attended college at Oneida Institute but was not granted a degree since the state of New York forbid Oneida the right to confer degrees because of its extreme radicalism.

After leaving Oneida, Grinnell went to the newly-opened territory of Wisconsin as a representative of the American Tract Society. He loved the prairies and began to dream of founding somewhere in this new western country a religious, moral, and educational community.

### Graduates From Seminary

Returning to the east, Grinnell graduated from the Theological Seminary at Auburn, N.Y., in 1846 and took up his first pastorate at Union Village. In 1851, he went to Washington, D.C., as pastor of Trinity church, raising money for the purchase of the church property by selling pews.

Grinnell's preaching against slavery aroused so much opposition that he went to New York. On Feb. 2, 1852, he married Julia A. Chapin. In New York he began a three-year pastorate, but his throat failed him as a result of too much outdoor speaking. As a result, he came west and founded Grinnell.

From the time of the founding of Grinnell until his death on March 31, 1891, Grinnell's main and abiding interest was in the settlement which bore his name, although his unstinted energy carried him far into many forms of activity and into public life.

### Abolition, Prohibition

During his entire public life, Grinnell was largely interested in two issues—abolition and prohibition. He was also a strong advocate of arming the Negroes to serve in the Union armies during the war. During his service in the state senate, he was also an earnest and successful advocate of free education.

During his declining years, he was more and more interested in the college, always his pride and joy.

Grinnell's death on March 31, 1891, was due to a recurrence of asthma and bronchitis.



J. B. Grinnell

Buy with confidence from your hometown merchant who services what he sells. Read his ads in the Grinnell Herald-Register

4/22/71



The old J. B. Grinnell home, pictured here, stood on Park Street just north of the former site of the Hotel Monroe. Many famous guests were entertained in the home including Henry Ward Beecher and John Brown. It was thought at one time that in the cellar of the home was a recognized station of the Underground Railway transporting slaves from the south to Canada. A portion of the home is now located just south of the Denniston & Partridge Lumber Yard on Broad Street.



**MODER**

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