



*Richard Franklin Pettigrew*

## *Dakota Images*

Representing the territory of Dakota and the state of South Dakota, Richard Franklin Pettigrew was a prominent member of Congress for fourteen years. He was born in Ludlow, Vermont, on 23 July 1848 and at the age of six, he and his family moved to a farm in Wisconsin. He went to the rural schools in Wisconsin and later attended both Beloit College and the State Law School, located in Madison.

In 1869 Pettigrew came to Dakota Territory as a chainman on a land surveying party, which worked in Moody and Brookings counties. He settled in Sioux Falls in 1870, built a law office, and began to practice law. As a member of the Republican party, he was elected three times to the upper house of the territorial legislature, and in 1880 the party sent him to Congress as a territorial delegate. With statehood Pettigrew was elected to the United States Senate in 1889 and again in 1895, an office that he held until March 1901. Although a delegate to the Republican National Convention in 1896, he became one of the organizers of the Silver Republicans when the Republicans defeated bimetallism. In the 1896 election his campaign contributed to South Dakota voting for the Populist presidential candidate William J. Bryan and the Populist gubernatorial candidate Andrew E. Lee.

Senator Pettigrew's most notable contribution concerned legislation affecting the public domain and forest reservations. As an ardent advocate of forest conservation, his legislation affected the regulation of the forests in the Black Hills. After leaving Congress he returned to Sioux Falls, where he died on 5 October 1925.

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