

[Mack, Daniel]

Death of Daniel Mack and Wife

BR. AUSTIN:—Daniel Mack, Esq., is no longer with us. On the 9th inst., his earthly career terminated, in the 54th year of his age. He had recently visited his relatives in Otsego and Delaware counties, and in one of them arranged some business concerns; and he had made his spring purchases in New York, from which he returned on the 26th ult., in excellent health and spirits. Though usually happy, he said his enjoyments during his absence had uniformly been much greater than he anticipated. Within two or three days after he reached home he was seized by a violent cold which resulted in inflammation of the lungs. The best medical aid and the most unremitting care proved of no avail.

Frequently in the councils of our Association and Convention, acquainted with many clergymen and laymen of our order, even in distant sections, who are or have been residents of our State, and intimately identified as he has been with the history of our cause in Northern New York for 30 or more years, his death demands more than a passing notice under the usual head.

As a husband he was affectionate and faithful and unwearied in his attention to the wants of his respected partner. As a parent he was kind and indulgent, tender and benevolent. His many toils to promote the happiness of his children, and rear them for usefulness, virtue and duty in their advancing and declining years, that they may inherit the peace and joy consequent upon well doing, we trust they will always gratefully remember, as well as be consoled in their present bereavement by the thought that God has abundantly blessed them by giving them such a father, and sparing him until the youngest has so far approached to womanhood, even though He has now removed him from them....

Many important trusts, some of them of the most difficult and complicated character, and not a few of them by those who disagreed with him in his political and religious opinions, were committed to him with a confidence seldom exceeded and never diminished; for they were executed to the entire satisfaction of all.—He has adjusted contention that otherwise would have utterly destroyed the harmony of neighborhoods, involved neighbors in ruinous litigations, and in some instances virtually sundered in families the highest and holiest earthly ties. And for much of this time and labor he received but [only] the consciousness of having performed his duty; and this he considered a sufficient reward. Mighty for good in this respect was the power of his example. Emphatically did he promote “peace on earth and good will among men.”

....His interest and efforts in the improvement of common schools long exercised a salutary effect; and he was one of the founders, and has been a trustee of, the Academy in this place from its organization to his death, which is more than twenty years, and his untiring exertions have probably accomplished more than those of any other individual for its prosperity.

He faithfully endeavored to confer happiness upon all, and was peculiarly distinguished for his benevolence. The editor of the *Canton Independent*, who was intimately acquainted with him, though of a different political and religious faith, besides specifying various other prominent virtues, says of him, in his paper:

For the last 20 years, he has been a druggist and apothecary in our village, and was a most valuable friend in sickness, devoting gratuitously much of his time to watching and nursing. He has long been one of the most prominent men of our town, and had a part in almost every enterprise calculated to forward the business

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prosperity of our village.... He was a native of Delaware county, the son of a revolutionary soldier who served in the most trying times of that war. He relied upon his own unaided efforts to build up his fortune, and by strict economy and close application to business, he acquired more than a competence—even wealth. Kind, benevolent and obliging, he drew around him many warm and devoted friends. He was remarkable for his industrious habits, his generosity to the poor...and to enterprises of public benevolence; and many of our townsmen, now prosperous in business, but who were once penniless, acknowledged to have been the recipient[s] of numerous favors at his hands.... As the remains of this good man were committed to earth, friends and strangers together wept for the loss of a common father and friend.

His was not a benevolence that rendered him indifferent to the acquisition of wealth; for he was by no means deficient in a fair proportion of desire for this, which combined with correct business habits, sound judgment, strict temperance, great plainness and republican simplicity in ideas and otherwise...made him to a respectable extent successful. He was not prodigal upon the one hand nor miserly on the other. He did not lavish and recklessly scatter this world's goods which he had accumulated, like the former, nor hoard them up, like the latter, that they might be of no benefit to any until he was dead and gone; but he understood the true aims and ends of life. During his brief illness many were the prayers that rose to heaven for his recovery, from the hearts of the needy he had liberally aided,...and many are the tears that shall fall from their eyes and moisten the sods that cover his grave; many the blessings that they will pronounce upon his name.

When the sentiment of a world's salvation was extremely unpopular and odious in the general estimation of community, where the believers in it in Northern New York were far between, he was its bold, unyielding and able advocate. He has usually been one of the most efficient officers and always one of the most liberal supporters of the Society of our order in this place. Conscientious even in the smallest matters in discharging his duty to his fellow human beings, he was not less so in performing his obligations to his Father in heaven. Hence he was one of the fearless few, who rejoice in the universal goodness, grace and love of God... He aided greatly in the erection of a house of worship in which it was proclaimed, and united with the church here at its organization. He punctually attended its meetings, unless prevented by unavoidable circumstances, and repeatedly publicly urged its members onward to greater zeal and engagedness...

During Br. Mack's last sickness he sought two private interviews with me. The first was before many of his friends believed his illness would prove fatal. He predicted the result, requested me to preach at his funeral, spoke concerning the character of the discourse, which he clearly intimated he desired should distinctly contain our distinguishing tenet, notwithstanding the relatives generally are of a different belief, and assigned as his reason for making these arrangements at that time, that most of the past two or three days his mind had been clouded by his disease, and might be henceforward until the termination, and utterly deprive him of that privilege.

The second interview was the day before his departure. He had arranged his secular affairs, and conversed with and bid farewell to each member of his household. After expressing more fully his wishes concerning his funeral, he added:—"They say that many situated as I am distrust the truth of our sentiments. I presume no one will say or think so of me..." His creed was characteristic of his life....

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The Presbyterian meeting house, which is the largest in the place, and which it is said will seat 1200 people, was offered and accepted for the funeral, during which the stores and other public places were closed, and crape suspended from the doors. Br. Abbott, and Rev. Mr. Wheeler (Methodists) very appropriately aided in the services. So immense was the concourse present that many were too remote to hear. As Br. M. was a firm friend, zealous supporter and a Knight Templar in the Masonic Fraternity, a very large procession of that order from this and other places was present, and their rites were performed at the dwelling house and the grave.

Four days after the announcement of the last illness of Br. Mack, his wife, SUSANNAH¹ MACK, was seized with the same disease, and died four days after his departure, and was buried four days after his interment. Her age was 55 years.

An adopted son and three daughters are left without any parent save their Father in heaven to whom they can look and on whom they can rely. Mrs. M. was an excellent woman, possessing and exercising industry, economy and all those qualities which marked the character of her beloved partner as a companion, parent, neighbor, friend of the needy and reliever of disease.

From her youth she has been a worthy member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and almost as long, Mr. M. had renounced all views that limit salvation, and believed that it was finally to be received by all intelligent beings. I know not how I can pay a higher tribute to the christian spirit of both of them, than to add what is undeniably true, that differences of religious opinion never caused the least contention between them, or even for a moment an unkind feeling. She did not question the piety of sincere, practical recipients of our faith, nor doubt that it would be well with her husband beyond the grave. Like him she died in reconciliation to the divine will, and she confidently expected to meet him in a better world to part no more forever.

The funeral was attended on Sunday last, in the Presbyterian meeting-house in this place. The discourse was delivered by the Rev. Mr. Wheeler (Methodist). The Rev. Mr. Pettebone (Presbyterian) and myself assisted in the services.

J. T. Goodrich

Canton, May 20, 1853

Christian Ambassador, Auburn NY, Sat. 4 Jun 1853
[abridged]

Transcribed on 2 Sep 2008 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY

¹ Compiler's note: I believe this name is in error. The 1850 census entry for the family at Canton NY shows a mother Lucretia, and daughters Harriet, Susanna and Emma.