

[Montgomery, Asa]

MARRIED NEARLY 60 YEARS  
MR. AND MRS. ASA MONTGOMERY OF STANWIX  
For Over Fifty-six Years They Have Lived Together –  
Residents of Rome and Vicinity for Many Years –  
Mr. Montgomery's Interesting Story.

For over fifty-six years Mr. and Mrs. Asa Montgomery of Stanwix have traveled life's pathway together, sharing its sorrows and its joys, and yet they have the appearance of being able to live on for another decade or more. Their anniversary occurred Tuesday and as quietly observed, without any assembling of guests or outward sign that the day was any different from its fellows.

Mr. Montgomery, the groom of over a half century, was born in Westmoreland, Sept. 4, 1819, a log cabin being the scene of his nativity. His father was John Montgomery and his mother, before marriage, was Lucy Jones. The father was born in the north of Ireland and came to America in 1894, locating in that part of Montgomery county which is now included in Fulton county. After several years in that section the pioneer came to Oneida county, locating in Westmoreland, whence he went back to his former location to get his bride, who was a daughter of Capt. Asa Jones of the war of 1812 and a granddaughter of a revolutionary soldier.

Little Asa was carried on his father's back from the log cabin to the newer style frame dwelling which had been erected. On the farm he spent his youth, attending the district schools as opportunity afforded. Among his playmates was little Maria E. Patterson[,] and the friendship which then developed grew into that warmer relationship which finally culminated in marriage, the honeymoon of which has not yet set.

John Montgomery died in 1811, leaving several children. One of them, Asa, left the old homestead and went to Utica where he entered the employ of Warnick and Bryan, Tobacco manufacturers and merchants. He traveled for them over central New York, going by wagon and selling the stock direct and not by sample. The prices for tobacco and its products were then lower than they are now, as there was no tax to pay and the leaf tobacco did not cost as much as now.

After some six years with this firm Mr. Montgomery went into the grocery business with his brother, William L., in Whitesboro. Those were good days for the storekeeper, especially along the [Erie] canal, through which was much passenger traffic. Of all the men whom Mr. Montgomery then knew in the village of Whitesboro, but [only] one remains, Henry Allen.

Leaving Whitesboro the subject of this sketch soon found himself at Chagres, on the Isthmus of Panama, where he acted as merchant and hotel man for about six months. There was a good demand for merchandise and the returning miners were, as the term goes today, "flush." Gambling was prevalent and the treachery of the natives made it unsafe to trust them in the least. One night while a game was in progress the table was

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piled high with gold. Suddenly some one noticed native carelessly throw a match to the floor, but a telltale flash showed that a train of powder had been laid along the bar and underneath the gaming table with its heap of wealth. A prompt movement extinguished the flashing powder and a terrible tragedy was averted, as the room was filled and a large loss of life would have resulted.

At those times the hotel safe was called into requisition to keep the gold of the returning Argonauts and Mr. Montgomery on occasions when left alone had to guard the treasure all through the nights.

When he returned north in 1852 he located in New York as traveling salesman for a large tobacco house. He resided in Brooklyn and among his close friends were the members of the family of Proprietor [Thomas] Peters of the Brooklyn Times, whose son is still editor of that paper. Mr. Montgomery traveled through the central states for the next few years and then decided to again embark for himself. He took up the work of repacking plug tobacco and later handled large quantities of leaf tobacco. His business called him to Kentucky and other states in that vicinity. While located temporarily in the Gault House in Louisville in 1863 he had as a fellow guest General Grant. In speaking about him Mr. Montgomery says: "He was of the quickest conception of any man I ever saw. From his dress and general appearance you would not take him to be a great commander, and yet there was that in him which made him able to direct the great campaigns of the war."

Continuing in the tobacco business until the winter of 1869-70 Mr. Montgomery concluded to retire and, buying the Clark farm near the present Custodial Asylum, on the Lowell road, he developed it until it was a model country home. There he lived until 1888, when he moved to Dix, remaining two years, before going to Quaker Settlement where he resided until five years ago, when he moved to Stanwix. For several years Mr. Montgomery conducted a road grocery wagon, having a large patronage. Advancing years forced him to discontinue this about two years ago.

In politics he is a Democrat, but never aspired to office. He and his wife are members of the Universalist Church. Mrs. Montgomery, who was a daughter of John and Rebecca Van Tassell Patterson, also came of revolutionary stock on her mother's side, and was born in Westmoreland Oct. 27, 1818. Among her family there have been several who have reached ninety years or more. Her marriage occurred at her home March 24, 1847, a Rev. Mr. Dunham performing the ceremony. Mr. and Mrs. Montgomery had one son who died in childhood. Mr. Montgomery has one sister, Mrs. John Wylie of this city, and his wife has a brother, Van Rensselaer Patterson of Coldwater, Mich.

*Daily Sentinel*, Rome NY, Fri. 27 Mar 1903

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DEATH OF ASA MONTGOMERY  
HE WAS BORN IN THE TOWN OF WESTMORELAND IN 1819  
Had Been a Resident of Rome and Vicinity for Many Years –  
Spent Much Time as a Commercial Traveler –  
Formerly Partner of Sugar King  
[Excerpts]<sup>1</sup>

Asa Montgomery, one of the oldest and best known residents of this section, died at the home of his niece, Miss Minnie Montgomery, at 4:30 a.m. today in his 87th year. He had suffered from heart trouble for a year past and this was the cause of his death. Mr. and Mrs. Montgomery had lived at Stanwix for a number of years, but owing to the former's failing health, they went last October to live with their niece.

Asa Montgomery was one of a family of eleven children, and was born in Westmoreland Sept. 4, 1819, a log cabin being the scene of his nativity....

Mr. and Mrs. Montgomery had one son who died in childhood. Besides his wife Mr. Montgomery leaves one sister, Mrs. John Wylie of this city.

*Daily Sentinel*, Rome NY, Sat. 31 Mar 1906

Transcribed on 19 Jun 2018 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY

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<sup>1</sup> The greatest part of this obituary repeats information from the previous article on his earlier marriage celebration, and it is not repeated here.