

[Goff, Samuel]

Biography of Rev. S. Goff

We find in the *Gospel Banner* (Augusta, Me.) the following brief biographical sketch of Rev. S. Goff, formerly of Alexander, N.Y., now of Winthrop, Me.

Rev. S. Goff was born in Ludlow, Vt., May 5, 1811, and preached his first sermon in Fulton, Oswego Co., New York, July 2, 1837. He was first settled in Alexander, Genesee Co., N.Y., in July, 1838, and obtained the fellowship of our denomination July 20, 1839, at Gainesville, N.Y., and was ordained in Alexander, June 18, 1840. In 1841, he removed to Pembroke, N.Y., and [in] September, 1842, he took charge of the Society in Bristol, N.Y., and in one year he removed to Cuba, N.Y., where, and in Friendship and Hinsdale and in the region round about he labored until May, 1845, when he removed to Aurora, N.Y., where he remained three years, and in May, 1848, returned to Alexander, and labored two years, and then itinerated five years, during which time in addition to his Sabbath labors, he gave many week-day lectures, sometimes preaching five evenings in succession. In Sept., 1855, he came to Saco in this State, where he remained laboring with the Saco and Biddeford parish two years and two months. In April, 1858, he removed to Essex, Mass., preaching there one year, and in Oct., 1859, he returned to Maine, and settled in Winthrop, his present residence.

Br. Goff was for five or six years connected with the *Western Luminary* and *Christian Guardian*, published in Rochester, N.Y., as Corresponding Editor. During his ministry, up to Oct., 1859, he has preached 2512 discourses, attended 242 funerals, and solemnized 119 marriages, and has proved himself a diligent, faithful laborer and a good man. We trust that he may long remain in the beautiful town that is now his home.

Christian Ambassador, Auburn NY, Sat. 10 Dec 1859
[a Universalist newspaper]

Transcribed on 18 Feb 2013 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY

[Goff, Samuel]

DEATH OF REV. S. GOFF

Our readers, especially those in Western New-York, will be filled with surprise and grief on seeing the above announcement. But it is too true. Br. Goff is dead. He departed life at his residence in Farmington Falls, Me., on Tuesday, July 30, at the age of 49 years. The following statement we copy from the *Gospel Banner*, published in Augusta, Me.

Farmington Falls, July 30, 1861

Editors of the *Gospel Banner*: I write to inform you that Rev. S. Goff died at his residence in this place, last evening, of small-pox. He went to New-York some time since and returned four weeks ago. After he had been home about two weeks, he was taken sick, but was not considered dangerously ill until Sunday, when the disease assumed a more malignant form. From that time he sank rapidly until death came to his release.

In the death of Br. Goff, his family [has] lost a kind and affectionate husband and father, and our community an estimable and upright Christian man. His age was about 49 years. I have not time to write more.

Lemuel Bursley

Br. Goff was an able and devoted preacher, a good man and most sincere and exemplary Christian. His whole ministerial life has been characterized by constant, faithful labor in behalf of the gospel of impartial redemption. Wherever he has been located, he has endeared himself to the hearts of the people, and left behind him when he has removed, a good name and the priceless treasure of a worthy example to be inherited by his successor. We saw him but a few weeks since, at the meeting of the Genesee Association in LeRoy, N. Y. He was then in possession of good health and cheerful spirits. Alas! little did we foresee that it was to be our last interview on earth! But how greatly is this sadness relieved by the light of the hope of a future re-union with our departed brother, and all the loved and lost of earth, in the blissful mansions of the Father's house in Heaven.

It is an added source of regret that Br. Goff was not a resident of this State at the time of his decease. In that case his dependent family could have become participants in the generous provisions of the Harsen Relief Fund. In this respect the State of New-York holds out stronger inducements to clergymen of our denomination than any other State in the Union. From this relief Br. Goff's family is cut off. We are confident, however, that his parishioners in Maine and his old friends and brethren in his former fields of labor in this State will; not allow them to come to want.

Christian Ambassador, Auburn NY, 10 Aug 1861
[a Universalist newspaper]

[Goff, Samuel]

Rev. S. Goff

Last week we announced the death of Rev. Samuel Goff, formerly of Alexander, N. Y., but latterly of Farmington Falls, Me., where he departed life on the 30th of July. He was one of our most devoted and exemplary clergymen. In the *Gospel Banner*, published in Augusta, Me., we find a sketch of the life and character of Br. Goff, from the pen of Rev. Giles Bailey of Gardiner, Me. We copy it for the gratification of the numerous friends of the deceased.

Br. Samuel Goff is dead! So the *Banner* of to-day tells me, and so I had previously heard, though I hoped incorrectly, through his old parishioners and mine in Winthrop. So sudden and unexpectedly the sad intelligence, I cannot as yet make it seem a reality. But a few days ago we saw him at the State Convention, apparently in excellent health, and, as I thought then, more than usually cheerful. Little did we then think the angel messenger to be so near... Br. Goff was the friend of my school-boy days; let me pay a tribute to his memory, and tell of his worth to them who did not know him so well.

From a brief sketch of his life, published in the *Banner* two years ago, I learn that he was born in Ludlow, Vt., May 5th, 1811. His education, wrought out through his own unaided endeavors, was principally acquired at the Academy in Duttonsville, in the town of Cavendish, Vt. There I first met him in the autumn of 1834. A. A. Miner, now of the School St. Church, Boston, was assistant teacher at the Academy, and Samuel Goff had charge of a few classes as "assistant pupil." We separated at the close of the term, both to engage in teaching for the winter. Providence directed his steps soon after to Western New-York, and mine, in the course of a few years, to Maine. His first sermon was preached in Fulton, N. Y., July 2, 1837, and his first settlement was in Alexander, N. Y., in 1838. He received formal fellowship in 1839, and was ordained in 1840. His residence in New-York continued nearly twenty years, during which time, besides preaching regularly upon the Sabbath, he itinerated largely, preaching often five evening lectures a week, and he also performed the duties of Corresponding Editor for a Universalist paper [the *Western Luminary*] then published in Rochester, N. Y. In June, 1855 he was present at the State Convention at Saco [Maine], where we met after a separation of over twenty years, and renewed the intimacy of our earlier days. He then became the Pastor of the Society in Saco and Biddeford the following autumn, and continued till April, 1858, when he removed to Essex, Mass. He came to Winthrop in the fall of 1859, and after remaining there one year, removed to Farmington Falls. There, on the banks of the beautiful Sandy River, he had purchase a home, and was looking forward to many years of usefulness as a minister of Christ among the excellent people of Franklin Co. Two weeks after his return from a journey to his former home in New-York he was attacked with the small-pox, and died July 31, 1861. He leaves a wife and two children, one of whom is married and resides in Western New-York, to mourn the loss of one of the kindest and best of husbands and fathers.

I have seldom known a purer minded Christian than Br. Goff. At Cavendish, Vt., we occupied adjacent rooms, and were every day and almost every hour in company. In a large school of nearly two hundred young people, drawn together from different localities and various walks of life, there was not one who appeared

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uniformly so studious, thoughtful and perfectly correct in deportment as Samuel Goff. Though fond of company and keenly relishing the innocent pleasures incident to such a gathering of blithe young spirits, he was never known to utter a word, or to countenance an act, not strictly in accordance with the rules of either the school or the most exact propriety. A devout believer of the doctrines of our most holy faith, he even then, and under the circumstances with which he was surrounded, uniformly commended it to the good opinion of others, by the blameless spirit of his life. Since the renewal of that early acquaintance, I have been much in his society, at our Conventions and Associations, at his own house and at my home, and I have never been intimate with one possessed, as it seemed to me, of a finer spirit or a purer heart. Humble, truthful, conscientious, and simple in habits and tastes, he has always appeared to me to be a living exemplification of the Christian spirit. I have loved him as a brother. I have always revered him for his Christian virtues and life; and I mourn that I am no more to meet with him in this world.

Br. Goff was an excellent writer and preacher. None could listen to his sermons without feeling that they came from a heart rich in its treasures of Christian experience. There are many of his parishioners in this State who testify to the influence of his public services upon their own hearts for good. And if he was not so successful as some others as a preacher, it was not owing to any lack of zeal, or to any want of a due appreciation on his part of the importance of a minister's work. Constitutionally timid, his real abilities were not known and appreciated as they would have been had he possessed more confidence in himself. Nor was he possessed of that resolute persistence of purpose, so needful to overcome, and trample underfoot the difficulties often encountered in a pastor's life. He was accustomed too much to lay to heart the unkind words and thoughtless expressions to which the Christian minister is exposed: and oppositions that others would scarcely notice often deeply affected his sensitive spirit.

His work in life is done. I have reason to think that, so far as in his power, it has been faithfully and conscientiously done and that his blameless life will continue to preach to those who, in the past, have felt its influence. God be with and comfort his desolate companion and bereaved children. And may He sanctify his death to the ministry of this State, making us more faithful in our work, while we feel that time with us is so rapidly passing away, and that our day of labor will so soon be over.

Christian Ambassador, Auburn NY, 10 Aug 1861
[a Universalist newspaper]

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