

[Blanding, Joseph Holbrook]

JOSEPH H. BLANDING

Joseph Holbrook Blanding died of acute disease of the pancreas, at his home in North Brookfield, Friday afternoon, October 9, at half-past one o'clock. He had been ill about a year. Mr. Blanding was the eldest of the family of Franklin and Nancy (Holbrook) Blanding and was born near Swansea, N.H., September 22, 1813. He lived in New Hampshire until about seven years of age, when he removed with his parents to this state, locating at Russia, Herkimer county. From Russia the family removed to Hamilton, where his youthful days were spent and where friendships were formed which lasted through life. When about twenty-one years of age Mr. Blanding removed to North Brookfield, where he has since resided continuously, with the exception of two years in Illinois soon after his second marriage. On the 15th of March, 1837 he was married to Mary J. Sweet, daughter of the late Samuel G. Sweet, who died after having been married about five years. [On] January 1, 1845 he was married to Lucy M., daughter of Cyrus Beebe, who is left to mourn the loss of the kindest of husbands and truest of heart-friends. By his first wife he leaves two surviving children, Mrs. John C. Whitmore of Mazon, Ill., and Marion J. Blanding, of Galesburg, Ill., and by his second wife, three sons, all of whom are deceased. Mr. Blanding has been a life-long democrat and has been a prominent man in town politics, being frequently a candidate on that ticket for important town offices. For about twenty years he has been a valued member of the Waterville Lodge, F. & A.M. At the time of his death he was president of the Blanding Reunion Association. He lived and died firm in the practice and belief of the Universalist faith.

Such is the brief outline of the life of this good man; the record of his inner life, his private goodness, his kindly acts, his unassuming faith in God are deeply written in the hearts of his kinsmen, neighbors and friends.....Though the snows of seventy-two winters had frosted his head and furrowed his cheek, his heart was young and he was alike pleasant society for youth and age; his genial face lighted the festivities of the young and comforted the ills of the aged. Now, after months of patient suffering....the body is dead, the soul has returned to the God that gave it....

His funeral was held with Masonic rites on Sunday afternoon, at his late residence. Rev. A. H. Marshall of Madison, made some appropriate remarks. He was interred in the North Brookfield cemetery. His funeral was the largest of any ever held in North Brookfield, the procession being about a mile in length...united in shedding a last tear and bearing a last tribute to the memory of the blessed dead.

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[abridged]