

[Chichester, Abner]

ABNER CHICHESTER, Esq.

We owe an apology to the readers of the *Ambassador* for so long delaying a notice of one so well known to the denomination, and endeared to us personally by a quarter of a century's friendly intercourse, and multiplied favors.

Abner Chichester was born on Long Island, at a place not far from Huntington, known as West Hills, where some members of the family still reside. At an early period in his youth he came to this city, and entered life as a clerk in a dry goods house... In course of time, Mr. Chichester grew into a merchant himself, and enjoyed a reasonable success. He retired from business a year or two prior to the monetary crisis of 1837, and thus escaped the calamities which prostrated so many of our business men throughout the country. Thenceforward he devoted himself to the care and increase of his fortune.

Early in life he became connected with the congregation of the late Rev. Edward Mitchell, and embraced the great doctrine of universal salvation, which almost alone distinguished Mr. Mitchell from the religious world around him. In this connection Mr. Chichester remained until the death of his venerable pastor and friend [in 1834]..., when he attached himself to the Orchard street society, where he continued to the close of his life. Through a long series of years, he was one of the most regular and attentive hearers of the word in that congregation. Toward the close of his life, his infirmities increased to such an extent as to prevent a constant attendance, and for two or three years immediately preceding his death, he was unable to attend at all.

He was well known to the denomination as the Treasurer of the Universalist Relief Fund, an office which he sustained from the foundation of the fund to the hour of his death. We need not speak of the manner in which this office was performed by him. Those in any manner acquainted with the proceedings of our State Convention will remember the Treasurer's reports, always clear, always scrupulously exact, and consequently satisfactory. To his intimate knowledge of business and his care, we owe in no small degree the growth of that fund from \$6,000 to more than \$16,000, while several thousand dollars have been applied according to the will of the late Col. [Jacob] Harsen, to the relief of sick or disabled clergymen, or the families of such as had been left destitute. Had the fund been his own, or belonged to his children, we do not believe he would have felt any more anxiety for it, or watched its progress with more sedulous care, or a more grateful interest.

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Mr. Chichester was a man whose moral character was above reproach. He was honest and just, and no one who knew him hesitated to repose the utmost confidence in his integrity. He acted as a private banker to a considerable number of his friends, and the only debts he owed at the time of his death were the balances, amounting to many thousand dollars in the aggregate, which were still in his possession on their account. The services he thus rendered to those who sought them were quite gratuitous, and he seemed to take areal pleasure in assisting such as were illy qualified to manage their own little pecuniary affairs. As a man of business, he was successful in life, and left a handsome fortune behind him.

His family mourns a kind husband and an indulgent father; and a very large circle of life-long friends miss his cheerful presence and the influence of his practical wisdom.

He died in this city, Sept. 22, 1862, aged 71 years.

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[a Universalist newspaper]

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