

[Devendorf, Henry]

DIED. In Cedarville, Herkimer county, N.Y., April 24th, 1865, HENRY DEVENDORF, aged 87 years, 1 month and 10 days. His grandfather Jacob, with two brothers, John and George, emigrated from Switzerland at an early day; and from these three have descended the numerous representatives of that name in America. Jacob settled in Minden, Montgomery county, and had seven sons and four daughters. The sons were John, George, Jacob, Randolph, Henry, Daniel and David. The last named and youngest only, survives and resides in the village of Mohawk. Henry was born at the family residence in Mohawk Valley a few miles above Fort Plain, March 19th, 1778. During the revolutionary war, the house was surrounded by a stockade, inside of which was a block house as a protection against the unfriendly Indians. One night, when the deceased was about three years old, the chieftain, Brandt, with five hundred of his savage warriors, lay in ambush but [only] a few rods distant from the Devendorf residence. The men of the neighborhood who sheltered their families by night in this fort, were at this time nearly all absent on an expedition, and few but women and children were left within the fort. The inmates were ignorant of the nearness of the enemy. Bt the boys, taking liberties in the absence of the men, and being furnished with fifes and drums, kept up a lively marching and countermarching within the area, with such music as boys can make with such instruments, for a great portion of the night. This led Brant to suppose that the fort was filled with men, and the Indians dared not attack. Otherwise the feminine and juvenile [sic] garrison would doubtless have shared the fate of the victims of Cherry Valley and Wyoming. Towards morning the men returned, and the Indians supposing it the arrival of a reinforcement, decamped.

The deceased was married to Christina Smith A. D. 1803, by whom he had four sons and four daughters. Six of these children are still living, the youngest, Br. Almon Devendorf, Treasurer of Lombard University, Galesburgh, Ill. Mrs. H. died in 1834. Father Devendorf came to Cedarville over sixty years ago, when that region was a wilderness, and originally owned all the territory which is now occupied by the little hamlet called Cedarville. He gave the land for the location of the Methodist church; and when Universalist preaching was excluded from that edifice, in violation of verbal pledges, he gave land for the erection of the Universalist church. He was an early convert to the views of Universalists, and listened with great interest to such fathers in our ministry as Horace [Hosea] Ballou, [William] Underwood, S.[Stephen] R. Smith, D.[Dolphus] Skinner, and N.[Nathaniel] Stacy. Fathers Stacy and Devendorf were nearly of an age... He cherished a lively interest in the cause of the government and the Union, through all our late protracted struggle, and rejoiced amid the pains of death in the

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recent closing triumph of the national arms. During the last ten years he had been brought several times apparently very near the grave. On removing from Cedarville, in the early part of 1863, I promised, at his solicitation, should I survive him, to officiate at his funeral, at whatever distance I might reside, on whatever day of the week, or at whatever season of the year the burial might be. In the summer of 1863, being again in very low health, he selected a text as the foundation of the funeral discourse, and through his daughter, Sister Elizabeth Devendorf—a long and sorely tried and exemplary representative of our sustaining faith—communicated it to me. Having been so often with him, and his daughter and youngest son [Henry Harrison Devendorf], in seasons of sickness and pain, and ministered at the funeral of the latter in 1861, it was a sad pleasure to be able to comply with this oft-repeated request, in fulfillment of a sacred promise. The funeral services were attended at the Universalist church in Cedarville, according to the arrangements made by the deceased, and a discourse delivered by the writer to a large assemblage of relatives and acquaintances from the vicinity and the Mohawk Valley.

L. C. [Lewis Cresaba] Browne

Canton, N.Y.

*Christian Ambassador*, New York NY, Sat. 17 Jun 1865  
[a Universalist newspaper]

Transcribed on 13 Sep 2008 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY