

[Fries, George Wolf]

DEATH OF GEO. W. FRIES  
ANOTHER AGED RESIDENT TAKEN FROM OUR MIDST  
Funeral Held Monday at His Late Home – Many Present from Away

It was with the very deepest sorrow that the people of Friendship received the news of the death of George W. Fries, which occurred at about 5 o'clock last Friday afternoon.

Deceased had been ill for about three weeks and every hope was entertained of his recovery up until the day he died. About three weeks ago he suffered a severe attack of appendicitis, and the attending physicians thought the only hope then of saving his life was to operate. The operation was very successful, but an attack of acute Bright's disease developed and he grew worse rapidly and passed away as above stated.

George Wolf Fries, the eldest of a family of thirteen children, was born of German parentage in Mifflinburg, Pa., October 17, 1836. When [he was] quite a young child his parents removed to Lewisburg, where, for many years thereafter, his father operated a tannery. His primary education was obtained in the public school. Later he received academic instruction from John Randolph, A. M., who afterward became and still is Clerk of the Court of Claims at Washington, D. C.

While only a boy he entered the office of the Democrat, published in Lewisburg, and served his apprenticeship as a printer, learning also, at odd times, how to operate the instrument of the North Branch Telegraph Co., located in the same building. This early knowledge of printing and telegraphy doubtless had much to do with shaping his future career.

The circumstances attending the inception of Lewisburg University were of intense interest to the subject of this sketch, inasmuch as he knew its first promoters, was acquainted with the plans discussed and formulated in the basement of the old Baptist church and benefited by the public spirit which made a collegiate education possible to the boys of that time and vicinity. He entered college and pursued the course of study prescribed, graduating with a degree of B. S. in 1856, before he had completed his twentieth year. Immediately after graduating he engaged on the first trial survey of the Lewisburg and Tyrone R. R., under the direction of Chief Wm. F. Shunk, whose father, a former governor of Pennsylvania, had signed the charter of Lewisburg University. But within a year, and before he was twenty-one, we find him settled over the affairs of the great Erie trunk line at Friendship, N. Y., and there he remained for thirty-two years. [On] October 21, 1871, he was married to Miss Mary Fredonia Sisson of Friendship. Of this marriage were born three children—Alice, who died at the age of six years, William, now traveling in Europe, and Bertha, who died soon after birth. Mrs. Fries died

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May 22d, 1882. On October 3d of the following year Mr. Fries married for his second wife Miss Eliza B. Crandall of Little Genesee, who, with an adopted daughter Pearl, but recently married to Mr. John D. Cogswell, of Oswego, survive him. In Nov. 1888, after thirty-two years' service as a railroad employe[e], Mr. Fries returned to the business of his boyhood's preference, bought the Friendship Register and became its editor and publisher. Since Oct. 1, 1900, when he sold the paper, his time has been mainly devoted to literary and scientific studies.

During all these busy years, of which there has been given but the briefest outline, while he met with fair business success and became prominent in every good work projected for Tillage improvement, civic reform or personal righteousness, his deepest joys sprang from family affection and intimate communion with other cultivated and gifted minds. He gave a large amount of time to local school matters and served on the Board of Trustees of Friendship Academy and High School continually for more than forty years. Early in life he became interested in the theology of Universalism, allied himself with the Universalist church as a consistent and loyal member, served on its Board of Trustees as long as he lived, and died triumphant in the faith which claims all the world of humanity for God and not one soul left out of the Father's loving embrace. He was a public spirited and useful citizen, a man of the purest morals, whose life shines white against the often too lax code of conduct chosen by a multitude of men; a student and a scholar, a faithful friend, an affectionate husband and father, an apostle of peace. He radiated an atmosphere which made its impress upon young and old. Full of enthusiasm and always ready to communicate knowledge he kindled aspirations for higher attainments and suggested and stimulated greater endeavor. Many men and women in this vicinity still point with pride to volumes in their libraries, presented by him as prizes to reward earnest effort on their part. What revelations under the microscope he has brought to youthful eyes! His influence was always wholesome and invigorating. Upon all questions of correct living he was always found upon the right side. In the warm summer time in his earlier years he was often seen upon the streets of our village clad in an immaculate suit of white linen, and none could say it was not an appropriate garb for him whose face was illumined by the white light of the spirit within. The formative influence for good, which he has left behind, will not cease but will go on adding enulative [emulative] force in its broadening effects even unto the activities of that higher life into which he has gone. Peace be to his ashes, a wealth of immortelles to his memory, consolation to the dear hearts he so tenderly loved, both absent and present, and an illimitable future to his freed soul.

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The last services of love and respect were held at his late home on Monday last, the Rev. E. Alice Bradley, his former pastor, now of East Aurora, officiating. The burial was at Maple Grove cemetery.

The floral offerings were many and beautiful.

Among those from away who were in attendance at the funeral were: Mrs. Alfred Parfrey, Richland Center, Wis.; Mr. Allan Sisson, Jamestown; Mr. and Mrs. Bert Sisson, Miss Sue Sisson, Mrs. A. O. Fisher, Mrs. Emma Smalley, Mrs. Helen Wasson, Cuba; Mrs. A. F. Colgrove, Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Bowler, Jr., Miss M. E. Bowler, Mr. and Mrs. E. R. Crandall, Mr. Geo. Case, Little Genesee; Prof. E. M. Tomlinson, Mr. F. A. Crumb, Alfred; Mr. J. H. Backus, Andover; Mrs. Mack Crandall, Independence; Mr. John Chapman, Hornell; Mrs. M. L. Willard, Belmont; Mr. and Mrs. G. Fort Slocum, Mrs. Ada Vincent, Rochester.

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Transcribed on 5 Apr 2021 by Karen E. Dau of East Rochester, NY