[Hart, James]

Death of James Hart

Death has been frequent and sudden in its visitations in this village the past few months, and they who have been taken away were among those whose loss falls almost as heavily upon the community as upon their bereaved families. E. W. Hopkins had scarcely been laid to rest when the startling news went out that James Hart, another old and respected resident, had been stricken down and was dying. The particulars of Mr. Hart's sudden illness were given in the Saturday issue of the TIMES. When Dr. Bushnell first saw him on Saturday morning Mr. Hart's condition did not seem very critical, and the fact that he had lived a very abstemious and regular life and enjoyed vigorous health for many years was considered a strong point in his favor. The stroke of paralysis by which he had been suddenly prostrated did not appear to be so severe that a naturally strong constitution and proper medical treatment could not in time effect a cure. But a diagnosis of his case showed that not only his left side was affected by paralysis but that apoplexy was the leading cause of his prostration. After 2 p.m. Saturday he was unconscious until his death which occurred at 1 o'clock yesterday morning. Saturday afternoon Drs. Bushnell, Glidden and Barney held a consultation, at which they decided that there was no possible chance of Mr. Hart's recovery and that death was a matter of only a few hours. Mr. Hart died surrounded by his wife and children. He had been a devoted husband and a kind and indulgent father and his loss to them is beyond the power of words to express. But it must be some consolation to them to know that he was universally respected and that in their affliction they have the heartfelt sympathy of the community.

James Hart was born in Johnstown, Fulton county, Nov. 7, 1821. His parents died when he was quite young and his boyhood was passed in Kingsbury in Fulton county. When about 18 years of age he came to Herkimer county. He first attended Fairfield Seminary as a student and afterward taught school in Salisbury Center and in Manheim. In these days he made his home with Chauncey Cook, his cousin and only relative in this county on the Cook farm, about a mile from this village. He afterward studied law with Arphaxed Loomis and after being admitted to the bar, in 1851 opened a law office in Little Falls. He confined himself principally to office practice, which was quite lucrative as he was a careful and painstaking lawyer. He excelled in the preparation of legal papers and a mortgage or deed drawn by him was sure to be without flaw or error. In politics Mr. Hart was a Free Soil Democrat and a Republican when that party was formed. He was at one time Canal Collector in this village and while J. R. Stebbins was Collector of Internal Revenue, acted as chief clerk in the office, performing his duties with the fidelity and efficiency that he always displayed in any position in which he was called upon to serve.

He was elected Justice of the Peace, overcoming a large Democratic majority, and made one of the best justices the village ever had. At the last town meeting he was a candidate again for that position, but was unsuccessful, being defeated by a small majority. When the Board of Education was formed, Mr. Hart was elected a member and for several years has been Clerk of the Board.

Mr. Hart married Henrietta Churchill of Manheim, Nov. 23, 1855, and she and three children, James B., Edward S. and Nellie, of this village, survive him. He was a member of the Universalist church and a Christian in practice as well as in profession. He was a stockholder in the Little Falls National Bank and was entrusted with the management of several estates. In all things he was a worthy citizen. His disposition was kindly and friendly, and in his business and social relations he was respected for his sterling integrity. The death of such a man is always a loss to the community with which he has been identified, and the place he filled in it will not soon be supplied.

The funeral will be held from the family residence, corner of Gansevoort and Salisbury streets, on Wednesday at 3 o'clock. Rev. R. E. [Richard Eddy] Sykes will officiate.

As a tribute of respect to Mr. Hart's memory the Board of Education will close the public schools on Wednesday afternoon and at their meeting to-morrow night will pass suitable resolutions expressive of their sorrow over the loss of a member who was a faithful and zealous friend of the public schools.

Evening Times, Little Falls NY, Mon. 5 Mar 1888

Transcribed on 6 Feb 2024 by Karen E. Dau of East Rochester, NY