

[Martin, Abbie Squires]

MRS. ABBIE SQUIRES MARTIN, 88, DIES
A WOMAN WITH A DAUNTLESS AND UNCONQUERABLE SPIRIT
Though Nearly Blind in Her Last Years She Kept Busy and Informed

Mrs. Abbie Squires Martin, one of Canton's oldest residents and one of the three oldest alumnae of St. Lawrence University, died at her former farm on the Potsdam road Tuesday, February 25. Death resulted from a stroke.

As a woman who never grew old in mind or spirit even when physical infirmities laid a heavy hand on her, Mrs. Martin will be remembered by her friends for her cheerfulness. She came of William O. and Susan French Squires, and was born Jan. 16, 1853. As the name of her father will indicate to anyone conversant with early Canton history, her people were early settlers in the South Canton section, the grandfather coming here when Canton was still in the raw.

As a girl she went to such schools as the village had in those days and then entered St. Lawrence University. Mrs. Mary Mohan McGinnis was a member of the class and now becomes the sole survivor of the group of students of 1875...

On Nov. 29, 1882 she married Elisha J. Martin, from whose family Martyn's Corners gets its name. Lish was always a farmer, a large man of few words. The writer well recalls him driving in to town each morning with his big team, a bay and a black. The milk was carried in huge cans, one or two of them on the wagon.

He died in 1913 and a few years later Mrs. Martin bought the Gulley house on Jay street and moved to this village. She found much to enjoy here. Her neighbor was her classmate, Mrs. McGinnis. Not far from her home was the University and she never lost interest in it. She had seen it grow from nothing to what it is, for she was three when Levi Storrs, Barzillai Hodskin and Martin Thatcher set about raising the funds to have the University established here. The Lincoln campaigns and Civil War days came within her life span and during her life there had been over 22 presidential elections. She was a life-long Republican. One of her chief interests was her work in the Universalist church.

Several years ago her eyesight began failing her and she went to live with Mr. and Mrs. Elmeron Thompson who were running her old farm. They made her remaining days days of comfort and happiness. Unwilling to become a complete invalid she kept busy by knitting. This did not require the use of her eyes. As a lover of literature and an avid reader she learned the Brail [Braille] system, so she could read by touch. Her reading gave her entertainment and kept her in touch with the news of the day. She was a woman who had resources within herself which surmounted her infirmities. She knitted 200 mittens for the Red Cross the last year of her life.

When she had Mrs. McGinnis celebrated the 60th anniversary of the college class at the 1935 commencement they rode in an old-fashioned one-horse shay, and wore old-fashioned dresses and carried ancient parasols. They had their pictures taken while Owen D. Young stood with them.

St. Lawrence Plaindealer, Canton NY, Tue. 4 Mar 1941