

[Osborne, Thomas Mott]

THOMAS M. OSBORNE DROPS DEAD IN STREET
STRICKEN WITH HEART ATTACK,
HE COLLAPSES ON HIS WAY FROM THEATER
Overwork of Late Thought to be Contributory Cause;
Funeral 3 p.m., Saturday

Death due to a sudden attack of heart trouble ended the career of Thomas Mott Osborne, Auburn's leading and most famous citizen, last night. His body was found in front of the Second Presbyterian Church edifice.

Mr. Osborne was evidently returning home from the Kiwanis Kapers presented at the Jefferson Theater. Heart disease was the cause of death as given after examination of the body in the undertaking rooms of Howard M. Cameron nearby, by Dr. William E. Walsh, coroner's physician for Cayuga County.

Citizens in Mourning

Citizens of Auburn generally mourned the death of Mr. Osborne, who all his life had worked with untiring energy for the advancement of his home city and for the upbuilding of his fellow man.

The fatal heart attack is believed to have been due to his unusually strenuous activities of the past few weeks. He worked night and day in [the] recent Democratic primary and over the week-end had taken a motor trip to Philadelphia and thence to New York, called there by the illness of his eldest son, David M. Osborne. Monday he left New York on receipt of news that a grandson had been born to Mr. and Mrs. Lithgow Osborne.

Conferred With Smith Tuesday

Tuesday he made a trip to Syracuse to visit Governor Alfred E. Smith and hold a conference regarding the political campaign in Cayuga County between now and Election Day. Mr. Osborne was feeling fatigued at Syracuse and returned home before Governor Smith delivered his address there Tuesday night.

Yesterday Mr. Osborne transacted business as usual at his offices in the Citizen Building, Dill St. He complained of feeling tired and returned to his South Street home. During the afternoon he rested at intervals while he sorted out correspondence and business matters to be given attention the next day.

He was in usual health during the late afternoon, apparently, and enjoyed tea with his son Lithgow Osborne and members of the family.

Walks to Theater

At that time Mr. Osborne stated that he planned to attend the Kiwanis Kapers at the Jefferson Theater. His automobile was out of commission and

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Mr. Osborne walked down to the playhouse in State Street from his home. He left a few minutes before the play was over and suffered the fatal attack while on his way home in William Street. The body was first discovered by a young girl passing by who made an attempt to secure a physician, and the police were notified. Life was extinct on the arrival of Dr. Walsh. After an examination he pronounced death due to heart attack and the body was taken in the Osborne homestead, 99 South Street.

The Survivors

Surviving are four children, David M. Osborne of New York, Charles D. Osborne of Auburn, Lithgow Osborn of Auburn, Robert K. Osborne of New York; two sisters, Mrs. J. J. Storrow of Boston, Mass., Mrs. Frederick Harris of Springfield, Mass. [and] eight grandchildren.

Funeral services will be held from the First Universalist Church at 3 o'clock Saturday afternoon. Rev. Samuel A. Eliot of Boston, president of the American Unitarian Association, a classmate of Osborne's at Harvard and son of the late President Emeritus Charles W. Eliot, will officiate. Rev. A. E. Allison, pastor of the First Universalist Church, will assist. The remains of Mr. Osborne will be cremated and interred in the Osborne burial plot in Fort Hill Cemetery.

The death of Thomas Mott Osborne removes from Auburn its most distinguished citizen. The name Osborne is linked with the prosperity of Auburn, to which the work of the deceased was not the least contributing factor. He was prominent in business, political, educational, musical, dramatical [sic], charitable, benevolent and social circles of Auburn, from a boy through the entire 67 years.

Born in Auburn

Mr. Osborne was born in Auburn back in 1859 and had resided here all his life. He was married October 27, 1888 to Miss Agnes Devens of Cambridge, Mass., who died in 1896. He is survived by four children. His life has been devoted to his children, his home city, and many and varied social reforms, giving generously of his time and finances to various projects.

The career of Thomas Mott Osborne was marked with success in college, in business, in politics and along civic lines. As a youth and at college he was better than the average athlete and he was one of the first high school wheel bicycle riders in the old days before the advent of the safety type.

In business he was connected with the final year of D. M. Osborne's success, which continued up to the time that the plant was sold to the International Harvester Company. Many of the old time employees frequently remarked that he was "a chip off the old block," referring to his father, D. M. Osborne, founder of the giant harvesting machinery concern.

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In politics he was a member of the Board of Education and mayor of the city and held important state positions. In his political campaigns he was a plain speaking man, attractive in bearing, big and good tempered, lucid in argument, going straight to the point, taking everybody into his confidence, trusting in the good sense and right purpose of the people. He hit hard in his campaign speeches but never unfairly. There was no posing but plenty of action.

During his service in politics locally his one aim was to give Auburn splendid service and in that he succeeded.

His later years was [sic] devoted to improving conditions in penal institutions, and so widespread was his renown along that line that he was invited by the king of Greece to come there and present his policies of reform, as well as almost every state in the union.

For several years he taught large class [sic] in social ethics at the First Universalist Church. He was a director in many corporations, with his greatest prominence and permanency in the hall of fame due to his success as one of the foremost penologists of the country.

Mr. Osborne was never active in fraternal organizations. The clubs with which he was affiliated at the time of his death were the Tavern Club of Boston, Harvard Club of New York, University Club of New York, University Club of Chicago, Owasco Country Club of Auburn, Century Association of New York, City Club of New York.

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