

[Parsons, Laura Alsestia Blanchard]

DEATH OF MRS. LAURA A. PARSONS

Almost Life-long Resident of Cortland County

A MORE THAN OCTOGENARIAN

Widow of Noah J. Parsons and Mother of Fay C. and Paul P. Parsons—

A Faithful Member of the Universalist Church and Highly Esteemed by Many

Mrs. Laura Alsestia Blanchard Parsons, aged 82 years, the widow of the late Noah J. Parsons, passed away this morning at 5:30 o'clock at her home, 88 Tompkins-st., after an illness of four weeks. Mrs. Parsons, who has enjoyed unusually good health, was stricken with a shock [stroke] on Wednesday, Nov. 26, and although the illness confined her to her bed, she was conscious until the end came in peaceful sleep this morning.

Born at the Keeney Settlement, now Keeney, in the town of Cuyler, Cortland county, on April 21, 1842, the deceased has been a resident of this county the greater share of her life. She was one of the family of five children of Jesse Mason Blanchard and Sally Harris, one brother of whom survives.

Mrs. Parsons moved with her parents to Freeville in 1854 and attended school in the Washington district. She later attended the Clinton Liberal Institute, a Universalist college at Clinton, but owing to illness in the family she was compelled to return home before graduating. After attending school at Groton, she taught at Black Creek, Allegany county, returning to Freeville during the period of the Civil war to teach school.

The family moved to Cortland in 1866 to occupy the present brick house which is located west of the Lehigh Valley railroad tracks on Tompkins-st. It was here that on Nov. 25, 1867, the ceremony was performed making Noah J. Parsons and Laura Alsestia Blanchard man and wife. The Rev. John M. Austin of Auburn, who then preached at the Universalist church of Cortland twice a month, was the officiating clergyman.

The present home of the deceased was purchased in April, 1871, Mrs. Parsons being the last surviving member of those families who resided in that section of Tompkins-st. between Main and the Lehigh Valley railroad tracks, when they moved there in 1871. Mrs. C. E. Saunders and Mrs. A. Van Bergen, intimate neighbors and friends, were the last of those families to pass away prior to the death of Mrs. Parsons.

Mrs. Parsons was a faithful and loyal member of the Universalist church of this city and never missed services unless she was ill or out of town. She was most faithful in her attendance of the meetings of the Ladies' Aid society of the church, of which society she was treasurer for over forty years, retaining this position until two or three years ago when failing health forced her to give up her duties.

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Her husband, the late Noah J. Parsons, passed away about fifteen years ago.

The death of Mrs. Parsons is the fourth in the Blanchard family, leaving one brother at Sunbury, Pa. A sister, Mrs. John W. Webster, died at Sunbury, Pa., on June 22, 1924 and was buried in Cortland two days later. Another sister, Lillie, died in girlhood, and a brother, William Trowbridge Blanchard, died on April 29, 1915.

Mrs. Parsons is survived by her two sons, Fay C. Parsons and Paul P. Parsons, both of Cortland; and one brother, James H. Blanchard of Sunbury, Pa.

The funeral service will be held at the late home, 88 Tompkins-st. on Friday morning at 11 o'clock. The Rev. Frederick W. Betts, pastor of the Universalist church of Syracuse and a longtime personal friend of Mrs. Parsons, will officiate, assisted by the Rev. Hermon L. Brockway, the pastor of the Universalist church of this city. The interment will be made in the Cortland Rural cemetery.

*Cortland Standard*, Cortland NY, Wed. 24 Dec 1924

Transcribed on 15 Oct 2013 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY