

[Peck, Nancy Halsey Glover]

NANCY HALSEY PECK

Mrs. Nancy H. Peck was born in New York City, Nov. 8, 1817. She was the daughter of Thaddeus B. and Experience Glover. She was married to Israel Peck Nov. 8, 1840, and came with him to live in Southold in 1854, where she has since made her home. Since the death of Mr. Peck in 1881 she has resided with her son-in-law, H. Howard Huntting, at whose home she died Jan. 3, 1893. She left six daughters; Mrs. J. G. Huntting of Huntington; Mrs. D. Wheeler of Sag Harbor; Mrs. H. H. Huntting; Mrs. A. F. Lowerre; Mrs. W. H. Terry of Southold; Mrs. Abram Conklin, of Bath, Me. She was a devoted and life-long Universalist. At the funeral service of Friday her pastor, Rev. E. A. Horton, read appropriate scriptures and offered prayer, and Rev. Abram Conklin of Bath, Me., made in substance the following remarks.

"I deem it a privilege to speak to-day of one whom I love, whose character presented many forms of virtue, and who exhibited in a singular degree the beauty of the Christian life. It was my privilege to speak, nearly twelve years ago, concerning the honored and useful life of Israel Peck, a strong, upright, benignant man who left the enduring impress of his life and work upon the community and the world. And to-day I speak of her who shared his life, who was his fit companion, and who having survived these years of widowhood has joined him in that land unseen where tears and storms come not, and the weary are at rest. While I would rather sit to-day as a silent mourner, yet I feel it a sacred and not unwelcome duty to lift my voice in praise of her who well deserved our praise, and whose beautiful life it is well for us to contemplate and imitate. She was modest and unassuming and shrank from praise. But we know how worthy and full of goodness her life has been, and our lips cannot be altogether silent if we would.

"She was a devout woman and her daily life was nourished and sweetened by prayer. The pages of her Bible were read and re-read for the strength and guidance of her soul. Every day she lifted her heart in prayer to God, and he filled it with his grace. Almost the last words that fell from her lips were the whispered sentences of the Lord's Prayer. While her lips could move she uttered her petitions and her praise to God.

"This prayerful life naturally blossomed into patience. Marvellous [sic] was her patience in suffering—no word of complaint coming from her lips. Even in the midst of pain that was terrible to witness and more terrible to bear, she thought of others rather than herself, and would express her care for them, and her anxiety lest she should cause them any trouble. She was pure in heart and charitable to judgment. She fulfilled the apostle's

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description of love, that suffereth long and is kind, that envieth not, doth not behave itself unseemly, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth in the truth, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

"She was willing to live if God willed it so, and ready and glad to die and be at rest if God willed it so. Her trust in God enabled her to approach death without fear, and she looked forward to it in welcome as to the unfolding of the beautiful gates.

"It was the supreme desire of her life to be worthy of the Master and the faith she received through Him. Often she said, as the later years came on and the end drew near, 'If I am worthy let it be said of me that when I am gone that I have kept the faith.' Truly no human soul could have a more fitting epitaph than this which she has chosen for herself. It was a noble faith that came to her to strengthen, comfort and inspire her life. It was the vision of the Father's face lighted by a smile of love for all his children. It was the vision of an eternal home into whose everlasting glories should be gathered at last every wandering child of God. Her sympathies were so wide and universal that she strongly grasped this truth and her confidence in it never wavered.

She was one of the pioneers of a church that had to win its way through countless prejudices to the wide and honored recognition that it has to-day. Her memories ran back to the heroic days of the Universalist church. It was endeared to her not only because of the glory with which it enriched her life, but because of its noble struggles in which she and those dear to her bore a part. We may well believe that Dr. [Thomas J.] Sawyer, whom she loved as her pastor, did the work of an apostle in bringing the gospel of hope to a needy world. But he and those who were his contemporaries in establishing the Universalist Church could have done but little but for the devotion and loyalty of those who like our mother kept the faith and cherished it in their hearts and lives.

She kept the faith not only as an intellectual assent but also as a rule of life. Out of her trust in the universal goodness of God grew naturally her own goodness, patience and love. Devoutly she turned to Him for counsel and strove to be what He would have her be. So she let her lips and life express the holy gospel she professed. To her faith her deeds and character bore beautiful testimony. When we were asked, 'What is Universalism?', we felt like pointing to her, and saying, 'There in her strong and loving trust in God, blossoming into charity and righteousness—that is Universalism.' She loved the church that was the expression of her faith and was deeply interested in its charitable, educational and missionary work. Was there a home for the aged built in its name, she rejoiced in it. Was there a class of students graduated from our theological schools, she knew their names and

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followed them to the fields of labor to which they were called. Was there a missionary sent to a foreign land, she followed him with her sympathies and her prayers. So she cherished the institutions that represented her faith, and gave to them such loyal support as was in her power.

"Truly she kept the faith, and like Paul might well look forward to the crown of glory that waited beyond the gates.

" 'I have kept the faith and the faith has kept me,' said she in one of the last sweet and solemn talks she had with me, in which she spoke beautifully of the home to which she knew her footsteps were hastening. Such a faith will bear us through all the trials, dissipating the darkness and giving the storm-tossed peace. There will be no wavering when we behold across the clouds of trouble the light of God's eternal love. This is the blessed reward of the faithful. The faith she kept, and which she taught to her children, will sustain us in this hour, revealing above the scene of death and the tomb the open gates of the heavenly home, and loved and beautiful ones waiting and watching there."

*The Long Island Traveler*, Southold NY, Fri. 13 Jan 1893

Transcribed on 16 Jul 2009 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY