

[Perry, John S.]

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At No. 76 River street at 10 o'clock this morning occurred the death of John S. Perry. His family and friends had expected the fatal summons for several days. Mr. Perry had been sinking for some time—a general breaking up of the system—and his condition was so feeble that when attacked by bronchitis a few days ago it was seen that he could not survive the shock. He sank peacefully to his last sleep at the hour stated, his three daughters being at his bedside.

EARLY HISTORY.

John S. Perry was born at New Salem, Mass., December 9, 1803. His father was Amos Perry, a cabinet maker, who gave his son such educational advantages as were afforded in the common school in his native place. At the age of eighteen years John S. Perry removed to Troy, but before he took up his permanent abode in this city he taught a district school at Sandlake. Subsequently he taught school in Washington county.

He entered the paint shop of Henry Mallery as an apprentice, and in 1826, after mastering the trade, he formed a copartnership with Charles Prescott in the painting business. This shop was on Congress street, at the corner of the alley between River and First streets. Subsequently he conducted a painters' supply store.

FOUNDED THE FREE-SCHOOL SYSTEM.

Mr. Perry was the originator of the free-school system in Troy, and held the office of school commissioner for many years, representing the first ward. He was an earnest advocate of educational advancement and wielded a large influence. He was active and zealous in the project to found a high school, and his efforts in that direction were successful. He was originally a Whig, but joined the Republican party upon its organization. He was alderman of the seventh ward in 1844 and 1845.

A PUBLIC-SPIRITED CITIZEN.

In every enterprise that had for its object the advancement of the city's interest Mr. Perry was one of Troy's citizens who could be counted on to put his shoulder to the wheel. In 1846-47 he was prominent in the movement that substituted gas for the oil lamps for street-lighting that had been in use up to that time. Mr. Perry insisted that there was light ahead for the city, and in due time the light came.

FIREMAN AND SOLDIER.

Mr. Perry was the first foreman of the Trojan hook and ladder company, organized in 1835. He held the office for four years, and remained in active service of the fire department for many years. He was an honorary member of the hooks at the time of his death, and also the oldest member of the exempt firemen's association. He was also active in military affairs at one

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time, and in 1826 he was elected captain of the Washington guards, remaining at the head of that organization for eight years. In all these positions he was noted for his zeal and the thoroughness of his drill.

IN CHURCH LIFE.

Mr. Perry joined the Universalist church, and was a trustee of that society for several years. All the gentlemen who were trustees at the time Mr. Perry held that office preceded him to the tomb. He was the leader of the choir for fifteen years, and of those who were in the choir with him when he first joined all died before Mr. Perry. He also taught singing, and led the choirs of the First Baptist church and Christ church, and he also had charge of the singing in the Reformed church in West Troy for a season. He was a trustee in the orphan asylum twenty-five years ago, and survived all his fellow-trustees who were in the board with him at that time.

A DISTINGUISHED MASONIC CAREER.

In Masonry Mr. Perry was very prominent. He was made a Mason in Apollo lodge, F. and A.M., in this city. He was subsequently master, and held other offices in that lodge. He was one of the charter members of King Solomon's primitive lodge, organized January 30, 1842, and was its first senior warden. He afterward became master of that lodge. In 1833 he was installed master of Mount Zion lodge, upon the organization of that body. Later he was master of Evening Star lodge, West Troy. He was elected treasurer of the grand commandery of the state in 1852, and held the office for twenty-nine years. When his successor, John Christiance of Ithaca, was chosen, he [Christiance] refused to accept the office unless "Uncle John" would consent to receive the salary as long as he lived, or until Grand Treasurer Christiance should retire. Mr. Perry's Masonic card includes the following offices which have been held by him:

P.M. Apollo lodge, No. 13; P.M. Evening Star lodge, No. 75; P.M. King Solomon's Primitive lodge, No. 91; P.M. Mount Zion lodge, No. 311; P.H.P. Apollo R.A. chapter, No. 48; P.G.H.P. Bloss council, No. 14, R. and S.M.; R.C. Apollo commandery, No. 15, K.T.; Delta lodge of Perfection, A.A. Rite; Delta council Princess of Jerusalem, Delta chapter Rose Croix, Albany sovereign consistory, P.G. treasurer G.C.

At all the Masonic gatherings in Troy Mr. Perry was a prominent figure. He continued to take an active part in the work of the order until recently, when disease and old age compelled him to give way. He was well known throughout the state and country by the fraternity, and he received many souvenirs and tokens of regard from the brethren.

HIS FAMILY.

Mr. Perry was married six times. His first wife was Miss Eunice M. Grant, a daughter of William Grant, who was a cousin of Jesse Grant, the father of the late Gen. and ex-President Grant. They were married December 3, 1829. They had four children: Mrs. John W. Holmes of Lansingburgh, Mrs. L. W. Miter of Croton Landing, and Mrs. Dr. D. E. Barnes and Mrs. Isaac Tyler

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of Troy. The last three named survive. His second wife was Miss Rebecca Grant, sister of the first wife. After her death he married the widow of Charles Seymour. Her maiden name was Sarah Pecal. His fourth wife was the widow of William Vanderlip, and her maiden name was Sarah Maria Hawkins. His fifth wife was Mrs. Baker, a widow. Her maiden name was Eliza Follett¹. By her he had one son, John W. Perry, who is now dying with consumption in Arizona. Mr. Perry's sixth wife was Maria Spafford, who died about three years ago. He had no children except those named.

Silas Perry, a brother of the deceased, resides at Valley Falls. Mr. Perry is also survived by his sisters, Mrs. Jesse Clough of Los Angeles, Cal., and Mrs. Phineas Holt of Grafton, in this county. Five grandchildren also survive—Dr. H. P. Holmes of Lansingburgh, Fred. G. Tyler and Perry Tyler and Mrs. M. L. Barnes, of Troy, and Mrs. James R. Reynolds of Croton Landing.

POSITIONS OF HONOR

In addition to the positions enumerated above Mr. Perry was also one of the originators and managers of the young men's association, a director in the Troy building association, organized in 1850, and one of the incorporators of the Troy Masonic hall association. He was a thirty-second degree Mason.

THE FUNERAL.

The funeral arrangements will be completed this afternoon. It was the desire of Mr. Perry that the arrangements should be made by Theodore E. Haslehurst and James Knibbs. Mr. Haslehurst is grand commander of the grand commandery of the state. The funeral will be under the auspices of the blue lodges, and the other masonic bodies, including Apollo commandery, will act as escort. Officers of the grand commandery of the state will attend, and the exempt firemen's association, Trojan hooks and other organizations of which the deceased had been a member will be represented. The funeral will take place Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock from the Universalist church.

Troy Daily Times, Troy NY, Fri. 18 May 1888

¹They were married on 21 Jul 1858, per the *Christian Ambassador* of Auburn NY, a Universalist newspaper, in the issue of 24 Jul 1858.