

[Ransom, Rufus Stacy]

Death of Rufus S. Ransom

BROTHER AUSTIN<sup>1</sup>—Will you allow me a small space in the columns of the *Ambassador* to record the demise of a very dear friend and relative, and one who was highly esteemed by all his numerous relatives, friends and acquaintances.

Departed this life, in Fenner, Madison co., N.Y., on the 5th inst., RUFUS S. RANSOM, in the 45th year of his age. The paternal Grandfather of the deceased, Reuben ransom, was one of the earliest members of the first Universalist Society ever organized in Central New York; and his maternal great-grandfather, Rufus Stacy, was one of the earliest disciples of the venerable [John] Murray, in New England. His long line of ancestors were numbered with the household of the faithful who, with firm faith and unclouded hope, left these mortal shores for a brighter realm; and he degenerated not from the faith and hope which sustained them. Thus educated from youth in the knowledge of the "Holy Scriptures which are able to make wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus," his whole life was guided and ruled by their divine precepts, and he passed quietly and resignedly, though through severe trials, to the goal of his mortal race.

His health had been on the decline for several months; and on the 6th of January, he was confined to his house, and put under the care of a physician; and so far recovered his health, as to be able to go out a very little. But on the morning of the 18th, his barn was discovered on fire, and his house and all his buildings exposed to the flames. His exertions to save his buildings, with the agitation and excitement, natural under such circumstances, brought on a relapse, which ended in his translation on the 5th inst. But his last moments were those of hope, peace and resignation. He had his reason to the last—took an affectionate leave of his family, and a few moments before he breathed his last, while his sorrowing wife held his hand, he addressed her, saying, "What is it?" She replied, "My dear husband, it is death!" "Well," he replied, "it is a dark valley; but I see a bright future beyond—I see a prosperous and happy future for you and your children." Shortly after, she asked him how the future now appeared; he replied, "Brighter, far brighter!" In the afternoon previous to his departure, he said to his brother, Dr. David Ransom, who stood by his bedside—"I see a picture." The Doctor asked him what it appeared like? He said, "It is our absent brother."—The Doctor asked him which brother? "Our brother Rastus."<sup>2</sup> (This was a brother who died in Illinois several years ago.) The

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<sup>1</sup> John Mather Austin, editor of the newspaper

<sup>2</sup> He died at Crow Meadow, IL on 19 Sep 1838, age 23.

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Doctor asked him where he appeared to be? "Sometimes near me, close to my bedside—sometimes more remote and somewhat obscure."

He leaves a wife [Polly Ann Hamblin Stacy] and five children [Harriet, Lucy, George, Norman, and William], the youngest under six years—five brothers and one sister, three of whom are in the far West—and also a widowed mother [Lucy Stacy Ransom], who seemed to lean on him as her last earthly stay! But they have the consolation of knowing that death had no terrors for him—that his hope strengthened and his prospects brightened as he approached the goal of immortality—that he considered the "valley of the shadow of death" as a momentary passage which would usher him into a region of immortal life and progressive felicity. And, blessed be God, they are sustained under this bereavement and temporal calamity, by the same blessed faith and hope.

Their loss by this conflagration will probably amount to \$3,000, perhaps more, with \$1,400 insurance.

May God sustain them by his sure arm of mercy, and prevent them from sinking into despondency under this two-fold calamity.

N. [Nathaniel] STACY

Columbus [Warren Co., PA], Feb. 26, 1858.

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Transcribed on 8 Feb 2013 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY