

[Rasmussen, Isaiah Irwin]

OVERDOSE OF ATROPINE
ISAIAH I. RASSMUSSEN DIED EARLY THIS MORNING
Gold Tablets Composed of Atropine and Strychnine Taken—
Dr. Hinman States Positively That Poison Caused Death—
The Deceased an Old Resident of this City.

Isaiah I. Rasmussen, of 6 Varick street, died at 12:15 this morning from the effects of an overdose of atropine, taken by himself. The deceased was at one time somewhat addicted to the use of liquor. About eight months ago he went to Dr. Russell at Fulton to take the gold cure. For two months he refrained from drinking, but the effects of the cure wore off and he indulged again the same as before he commenced doctoring. About six weeks ago he again went to Dr. Russell, but did not take a course of treatment. Instead, he was supplied with tablets to be taken at times prescribed by the doctor. [On] Monday evening Mr. Rasmussen went home and complained of failing eyesight, just as if a dark cloth had been drawn over his head. He retired. During the night and all day yesterday he continued to grow worse and Dr. Stockwell was sent for. That was between eight o'clock and nine o'clock last evening. The doctor could not be found and the messenger procured Dr. Dowd, who went to the house and who prescribed some medicine. Between 11:30 o'clock and midnight the patient took another bad turn and Dr. Hinman was called. The doctor found his patient very low and apparently suffering from heart trouble and he gave him medicine to quicken the workings of that organ. But his efforts were fruitless and at 12:15 o'clock the patient died. Dr. Hinman is positive that death was caused by atropine. When seen by a TIMES reporter this morning he said: "Everything showed me plainly that an overdose of atropine caused death and that the tablets furnished him by Dr. Russell contained poison." Of course there would have been no danger if the tablets had been taken according to the directions given by the doctor. But Mr. Rasmussen must have taken an overdose. Mrs. Rasmussen told me that she dealt the tablets out to her husband and that she found the usual dose in his pockets. There is where the mystery comes in. The only way I can account for his death is that he must have neglected a dose at some time and carried it around in his pocket and that Monday night he must have taken an overdose. These tablets contained atropine and strychnine and sometimes the liquor given in the gold cure is poisoned. I do not think that it was the strychnine which caused death, as that poison is always shown by the lower limbs becoming rigid before death and there was no such symptom in this case. The blindness which was complained of at first continued to get worse and at the time of his death the patient could not distinguish anything. Coroner Vowinkel was notified of the case and went to the house this afternoon.

When Coroner Vowinkel arrived at the house he questioned the family and was told about the tablets which the deceased had been taking. He learned that Mr. Rasmussen has for some time past been troubled with heart affection and also rheumatism, and while he had not taken as many of the tablets yesterday as the prescription called for, still, not knowing what they are composed of there might be something to have a tendency to aggravate the action of the heart. The coroner announces that an inquest is unnecessary.

Isaiah I. Rasmussen was born in the town of Sterling in the year 1828. His boyhood was spent in and about the village of Sterling. It was not until he had reached the age of manhood that he came to this city to reside permanently. After a few years of occupation here he went west where he remained until 1868 when he again returned to this city. While in the west he was employed in different occupations, principal among them being that of mail agent on the

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Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad. Upon his return he entered the employ of T. Kingsford as store keeper, which position he held for twenty-eight consecutive years. Always willing and ready to perform his duty he became a valuable man about the Kingsford plant and was always held in the highest regard by his employers and fellow workmen.

In 1869, a year after his return from the west, he was united in matrimony to Marion E. Pepper¹, who, with two children, William J. and M. Emma, survive him. The deceased was a member of Oswego Lodge No. 127 F. & A. M., Kingsford's Fire Department and has been connected with Kingsford's Band since its organization. The family of the deceased when interrogated attributed death to paralysis of the heart and state that he was confined to the house since Monday night. I. I. Rasmussen was a well known figure on the streets of our city for the past quarter of a century. He was a gentleman in every sense of the word, a kind husband and father, and his death is a serious blow to the family and will be received with feelings of regret by many friends.

The funeral will be held from the family home in Varick street Friday afternoon, Rev. O. R. Beardsley conducting the services.

Daily Times, Oswego NY, Wed. 9 Dec 1896

Funeral of I. I. Rasmussen.

The funeral of I. I. Rasmussen took place from his late residence yesterday afternoon, and was largely attended. The floral tributes were noted by Rev. O. R. Beardsley, pastor of the [Universalist] Church of Our Father. At the grave the Masonic services were performed by P. M. William Hancock. The following were the bearers: J.G. Sharpe, Chas. Kelly, F.F. Wilcox, R.A. Soule, Wm. Curran, E.L. Sampson. The interment was at Rural cemetery.

Daily Times, Oswego NY, Sat. 12 Dec 1896

Transcribed on 4 Jul 2018 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY

¹ Her birth name was Cole; Pepper was from a previous marriage. "At Mexico, N. Y. on August 27th, occurred the death of Miriam E. Cole, wife of the late Isaiah I. Rasmussen, of Oswego N.Y." *Oswego Daily Palladium*, Oswego NY, 29 Aug 1918.