

[Richardson, Harriet Dygert]

ILION LOSES A FRIEND

THE DONOR OF THE ILION CEMETERY CHAPEL HERSELF DIES
The Death of Mrs. Harriet Richardson, Ilion's Benefactress and Lifelong
Friend Mourned by All—The End of a Good Life

Ilion sincerely mourns, as well it may, the death of Mrs. Harriet D. Richardson. Our favored village has many intelligent and generous men and women, but none loved Ilion better and none have done more for the community. The gift of the beautiful receiving vault and chapel is but the last of many kindnesses; in money value it was chief, but the spirit which prompted this noble gift was the same which has made the name of Richardson synonymous with intelligent, generous interest in the welfare of this community; that the magnificent chapel at the entrance of Armory Hill cemetery has cost ten thousand of dollars is but an incident; the spirit which prompted the costly gift is no greater than that which continually moved the heart of this good woman whenever Ilion and Ilion's interest were considered.

Mrs. Richardson had been in failing health for some time but not more so than many women of her age; and her death following an asthmatic attack which induced heart trouble was a shock to all. She had a premonition that she would be the first to be carried into the new chapel and she urged its early completion; as a matter of fact she was the first to be taken there after its formal presentation to the village. She was not able to be present to hear the appreciative words with which her princely gift was received or to meet the many who would have been glad to express to her in words their appreciation of her gift; but her gift will endure forever; to the end of time "this, which she hath done will be spoken of her"; and during all the years rich and poor, high and low, good and bad, entering this chapel through the door of grief which knows no difference in conditions of life, will bless her for the gift of her love and the beautiful place where they may leave their dead.

Mrs. Harriet D. Richardson was 70 years of age; she was a daughter of Judge and Mrs. John B. [and Elizabeth Devendorf] Dygert of Frankfort, where she was born in 1835 [on 3 July]. She was united in marriage to Thomas Richardson, April 12, 1859, and came to Ilion in the spring of 1865, where the family have resided ever since. She is survived by three daughters and one son, Miss Carrie Richardson, Dr. Jennie M. Richardson, Mrs. Lillian Shepherd and Arleigh Richardson, all of this village; also one sister, Mrs. Margaret Hulser of Reading, Minn. She was originally a [birthright] member of the Universalist church and she always retained a warm affection for this branch of God's Kingdom, not forgetting it in the disposition of her property; but when the Unitarian church society was

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organized in Iliion she cast her lot with it and remained in its fellowship till death.

The funeral was held from the handsome residence on West Main street, Monday, January 15 at 2 p.m. The services were conducted by Dr. Charles E. St. John, Secretary of the American Unitarian Association of Boston, assisted by Dr. F. [Frederick] W. Betts, pastor of the First Universalist church of Syracuse. The address of Dr. St. John was a most impressive and comforting one. It rose above conventional form and reached the high plane of that sympathy and spiritual vision which is more convincing than real reason, and which begets certainty which cannot be shaken in the great truths without which human hearts cannot be satisfied, but which look in vain to human wisdom for absolute proof. Those who mourn were comforted; those who live will live better. The floral tributes were numerous and beautiful. A quartette composed of Miss Schaeffer, Mrs. Storrs, Mr. Mackin and Mr. Pelton sang "Lead, Kindly Light" and "Hark, Hark, My Soul." Committal services were held in the chapel. Interment will be made in the family plot in Armory Hill cemetery. During the services from 2 to 4 p.m., as a tribute of respect to the deceased and family, all places of business were closed. The bearers were Samuel T. Russell, Seth Heacock, Charles Harter, O. B. Rudd, John A. Giblin, James Conkling, Robert Shepard and Gilbert Peiton.

And so passes a good woman, a loved mother, an honored friend; passes, but only to a better life; passes, but only for a time.

Iliion Citizen, Iliion NY, Thu. 18 Jan 1906

Transcribed on 31 Dec 2014 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY