

[Southworth, Martha Aletta]

DEATH OF "AUNT MATTIE" SOUTHWORTH
KNOWN TO MANY GENERATIONS OF ST. LAWRENCE STUDENTS
Was Grand-daughter of One of First Canton Ministers and Original Surveyor of Town

Miss Martha Aletta Southworth, "Aunt Mat" or "Mattie" to those who had known her here in Canton, died Thursday morning at the Community hospital in this village where she had been ill with a heart attack since the previous Saturday. Her funeral was from the Universalist Church Saturday afternoon at two o'clock, with her pastor, Rev. Hugh S. Tigner, officiating, the burial being in Evergreen Cemetery, just a few paces from the old Southworth home on the Pierrepont road.

Easter Sunday morning "Aunt Matt" had attended the Universalist church, and was in apparently the best of health. Though eighty-one years are eighty-one years, she was still her vivacious self. Just about one year before she had suffered a broken arm but that had healed and she had been up and about and comparatively vigorous for many months.

The Saturday morning following Easter she was taken with a heart attack at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Roy White with whom she had been living. She was taken at once to the hospital and it became apparent that the end was but a matter of time. She had suffered several heart attacks in recent years.

Though christened Martha Aletta she was known best as Mattie Southworth, or Aunt Matt, whose pies and cookies made the old Southworth farm home on the "five mile" a mecca for many college generations of St. Lawrence students... For very many of those years the Southworth home held open house and all were welcome. Aunt Matt knew them, each and every one, and all about them. She loved their company and they loved her cooking. The old brick house back among the pines and cedars was a popular place with the young people. Many a boy and girl coming to St. Lawrence were told by their parents to be sure and visit Aunt Matt. A warm welcome always awaited them.

The Southworths can rightly be termed as among Canton's first families. Mattie's parents were Egbert Henry and Sylvia Tracy Southworth. Egbert's father was Rev. Constant Southworth, an early Canton settler and preacher, pastor of the Canton Congregational Church in 1823, eight years after that society was first organized in this community.

Egbert Southworth came from Vermont early in the 19th century and purchased what became known as the Southworth farm from Asa Conkey. Mr. Conkey settled in Canton in 1802 and sold it after the War of 1812.

Sylvia Tracy, even more than her husband, traced her ancestry to early Canton days. She was the daughter of Festus Tracy who, as all Canton

[Southworth, Martha Aletta]

histories state, came into this section with the first surveying party sent here to lay out the lines, and establish the maps, all of which was preliminary to settling this county.

Egbert and Sylvia Tracy Southworth had six children: Marion, Mary, Elizabeth and Martha, and Henry and Tracy. The Misses Irene and Eva Southworth of this village are the daughters of Henry Southworth. Miss Lottie Southworth, also of Canton, is the daughter of Tracy P. Southworth. Nephews and nieces are therefore the nearest of kin surviving Miss Southworth. In addition to the above there are Stanley Southworth of Morristown and Mrs. Edward Brush of Brushton.

She was, throughout her entire life, a devoted member of the Universalist church, and a member of its Ladies Circle. Some years ago the family farm was sold to the Kennedy Brothers.

St. Lawrence Plaindealer, Canton NY, Tue. 11 May 1943

Transcribed on 28 Apr 2008 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY