

[Stevens, Elbert E.]

DEATH SUMMONS ELBERT E. STEVENS
Long Prominent in Business Affairs in Canton

Elbert E. Stevens, for many years actively identified with the business and civic life of Canton, died at his home on Park street, Saturday morning, Feb. 25, shortly before 11 o'clock. Mr. Stevens had been confined to his home for several weeks suffering from a painful malady from which there was no hope of recovery, and death came as a relief to days of suffering.

Funeral services were conducted from the First Universalist church Monday afternoon at 2 o'clock, Dr. James M. Payson officiating. The body will rest in the vault at Fairview where burial will be made in the spring.

Elbert E. Stevens was born at Smithville, Jefferson county in July 1854, the son of Lewis E. and Mary Smith Stevens. The family removed to Canton when he was a boy and for a considerable time the father was engaged as an innkeeper. He conducted the old Commercial House on Court street which was then called the Stevens House—the present Hotel R. The son of whom this sketch is written attended the village district school on Main street and later the old academy.

When the elder Stevens engaged in the insurance business the son became associated with him and for a long period of years the latter handled fire insurance as a side line with his other business. In the eighties he opened a five and ten cent store in the building on Court street near the Fire Department building, and about 1890 purchased the Bonney book and stationery store on Main street. This business has remained in the family for over thirty years though during several years past it has been conducted by the son, Bing S. Stevens.

In the nineties Mr. Stevens became interested in the marble quarries south of this village which were then known as the W. E. Woodruff quarries. Considerable valuable building stone had been taken from these quarries. In the early eighties the stone for Fisher Memorial Hall was there quarried. Mr. Stevens in this venture was associated with the late Supreme Court Justice L. W. Russell. Stevens was the active figure in the business, devoting time and energies to making the quarries pay. When the County Court House was built this stone was favorably considered but a switch was made by the committee and Gouverneur marble adopted. For several years stone was quarried for building purposes, and out of the Stevens quarries came the stone for the Universalist church and Grace church, and several out of town buildings were built with this material. But finally the quarries petered out and the business was abandoned, the machinery and quarrying equipment being disposed of.

[Stevens, Elbert E.]

During the past twenty years Mr. Stevens has been actively engaged in the lumber and milling business. He established a mill on Lincoln street where custom sawing was done, as well as the cutting of lumber from timber lands that he himself purchased. During the few recent years past he has been engaged on extensive tracts in the vicinity of Harrisville and it is understood that he had a very valuable proposition and a good business outlook.

Stevens was a lover of fine horses, and enjoyed not only racing but every kind of athletic sports. He was a fan at the games of baseball and football for years and for many years he was race secretary of St. Lawrence County Agricultural Society, and was a well known figure on the track through the Northern New York fairs and racing associations.

On December 27, 1876 he was joined in marriage with Miss Mary Sykes of Canton, who with one son, Bing S. remain. Mr. Stevens leaves also three sisters, Mrs. Martha Hardy of DeKalb Junction, Mrs. Mial Bullis of Canton and Mrs. John Juppe of New York City.

Mr. Stevens was during his entire life from the time he grew to young manhood interested in the welfare of the community and at all times gave his assistance and encouragement to solving civic problems. He was a member of the Masonic order, of The Club and was long identified with the Universalist Church which he served long as a member of its board of trustees. He was one of those men who so identified himself with the community that he will be long missed.

Commercial Advertiser, Canton NY, Tue. 28 Feb 1922

Transcribed on 15 Jun 2009 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY