

[Usher, Robert Melville]

ROBERT MELVILLE USHER

In the death of Robert Melville Usher, Waterville has lost one of her substantial citizens. His immediate family, consisting only of his widow and sister, mourn him as a devoted husband and brother. After a severe illness of several weeks' duration, which was borne with characteristic fortitude, Mr. Usher passed away peacefully at his house on Putnam avenue early Wednesday morning, Feb. 14, 1912, at the age of 65 years.

Up to last April he had been in fair health, when he was suddenly stricken with an uremic attack. He, however, soon rallied and in a short time was able to attend to his business affairs again. In August last he had a second attack which alarmed his family and caused them to realize that his health was breaking down. His strong constitution enabled him to overcome again the disease that had fastened itself upon his system, and to the relief of his family and friends he appeared to show improvement. He kept around, superintending his farm work during most of the busy season until October, when another attack confined him to the house for some time; in fact, just about as he was recovering from this one [in] the early part of January, he was stricken for the last time with an uremic seizure. A cerebral embolism followed resulting in a partial paralysis. It was then realized that the end was near. Physician and nurses labored to keep him as comfortable as possible and every care that a loving wife could bestow was provided.

From the time he made Waterville his home Mr. Usher took an interest in the affairs of the village. His residence was located on the upper end of Putnam avenue just east of the D. L. & W. railroad station and adjoined his farm of some 50 acres, which it was his special pride to keep in the highest state of cultivation, and in the management of his farming interests he was especially successful. While not aggressive in character, his judgment was sound. He was a Republican in politics, not as a politician or office seeker, but his quiet and dignified influence as a citizen was always on the side of clean politics.

Robert Melville Usher was born at East Hamilton, near Hubbardsville, N.Y., Sept. 8th, 1846. His grandparents were pioneers. Robert Usher, his father's father, and Ezra Brainard, his mother's father, moved to East Hamilton, N.Y., in the year 1800, from near Westchester, Conn. Their ancestors were sturdy and prosperous New Englanders, who came to this country from England in the latter part of the seventeenth century. Mr. Usher's parents were Horace Usher and Olive (Brainard) Usher. Five children were born to this union, Lucyne Usher, who died in early childhood; Miss Marietta Usher, now living at Waterville; E. C. Usher, formerly of Fremont, Neb.; G. G. Usher, formerly of Corry, Pa., and Robert Melville

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Usher, just deceased. Miss Marietta Usher is the only one of these five now living, and she makes her home with the widow, Mrs. R. M. Usher.

As a young man Mr. Usher attended school at Clinton Liberal Institute [a Universalist establishment]. He married, on Jan. 21, 1880 at Hubbardsville, Miss Nellie Blanding, the daughter of Oscar and Lucinda (Williams) Blanding, the ceremony being performed by the Rev. A. H. Marshall [a Universalist clergyman]. While living in Hubbardsville, Mr. Usher's business interests were principally along agricultural lines. He handled a large business in buying and selling butter and was well known as an expert in this commodity. He owned and was interested from time to time in several large creameries.

After moving with his family to Waterville in April, 1886, he gradually retired from the butter business and devoted his time largely to farming and the hop brokerage business. He was an exceptionally good judge of hops and a skillful hop grower. He was an active member of the Waterville Grange for many years and had many warm and dear friends, not only in this organization, but throughout the entire community.

Mr. Usher was a member and consistent supporter of the Universalist Church of Hubbardsville, N.Y. His church affiliations during his life in Waterville were with the Presbyterian Church, where his family attended.

The funeral will be held from his late residence on Saturday afternoon at 3 o'clock. The Rev. Geo. Cross Banner, pastor of the [Universalist] Church of the Reconciliation in Utica, assisted by Rev. J. C. Van Doren of the Presbyterian Church of this village, will conduct the services. The committal service will be held in the chapel at the Waterville cemetery and the final interment made in the family plot at Hubbardsville.

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Transcribed on 31 Dec 2010 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY