

[Van Valkenburg, W.]

W. VAN VALKENBURG DIES
Veteran Horseman Passes away at His Canton Home

W. VanValkenburg, the oldest active horse trainer in the State, rugged, grizzled, honest, known to all and admired by all, a "square man," died at his home in Canton, Friday evening August 2nd, of a complication of troubles, after several weeks' illness. The funeral was Monday, Rev. J. [James] M Payson [Universalist] preaching the sermon. The interment was in Fairview. Two years ago Mr. VanValkenburg requested Mr. Payson to preach his funeral whenever he should enter upon his last long circuit and Mr Payson agreed to do it.

"Van" would have been 74 years old in October. He was born in Philadelphia, and when fifteen years old his parents moved to Hermon, where he grew to young manhood, attending the school in Hermon and going for a time to the school in Watertown. When almost an infant he showed his horsemanship by riding a running horse in Philadelphia at a Fourth of July celebration for a Mr. Cross. When almost twenty-one he trained a colt owned in Hermon and won his race at the ice races in Ogdensburg at the memorable race when The Belle of Ogdensburg, driven by Dan Mace of Boston, was defeated in 2:22 by Ted Hinman. Bets were freely made, a crowd of Englishmen putting their money in large amounts on The Belle. One man lost a brewery.

During this time "Van" had been learning carpentry, and was soon accounted one of the best in Northern New York. He became known as a contractor.

When he was twenty-four years old he married Sarah Miles, of Hermon, and a son, William, was born to them, who died when about twenty-one years old. His first wife dying, he married, when about thirty-nine years old, Lucinda Miles, of Russell. His two wives, although bearing the same maiden name, were not at all related. No children were born to them and they adopted a boy, Joseph Smith, of Russell, and a girl, who is now Mrs. H. H. Clark, of Crary Mills.

About the time of his second marriage he formed a partnership with Orrin Partridge, of North Lawrence, in the horse training business. At the time he was training a horse for the Flanagan boys of Malone, and also a horse named Black Maria, and he was accustomed to come to Canton and trim the old time horsemen at the county seat and others who came here to race.

After about a year he closed his partnership with Mr. Partridge and moved to Canton, where he went into partnership with Col. [Seth P.] Remington at the time the latter owned the St. Lawrence Plaindealer. They bought several horses and became steadfast friends. Col. Remington, on becoming Collector

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of the Port of Ogdensburg, induced "Van" to move there, where he handled many horses. Twenty years ago he returned to Canton and bought a home near the fair ground, where he opened up stables. Six years ago he contracted to take charge of Commodore Brannigan's string of horses at Providence, but between the time he left Canton and arrived at Providence Mr. Brannigan died. After selling off the stable "Van" went to Malone where he resided for about two and a half years, returning to Canton where he has lived ever since.

[Two paragraphs about his horseman career are omitted here.]

Meeting and making friends with many of the famous trainers, "Van" was a man who was liked by all. He was outspoken and always in earnest. He was square and energetic and one of the finest with the reins. The horsemen of Northern New York have lost a veteran they were proud of.

He leaves a sister, Mrs. Philbrick, of Hermon, who was present at the funeral.

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