

[Wait, Solomon]

DEATHS.

In Preston, September 25th, after a short but painful illness which he bore with patience, SOLOMON WAIT, Esq., aged 78 years.

The deceased was born in Hatfield, Mass., in 1763—moved to Norwich 53 years ago, and was one of the earliest settlers of this flourishing valley. Since 1806, he has been a resident of Preston. It was then almost an unbroken wilderness. He was ever active in the organization of and the erection of suitable buildings for schools, and in promoting the general welfare of society. He was the father of a large and respectable family of children, who were trained for usefulness and happiness, and are now occupying creditable stations in life. In childhood he was educated under the influence of religious sentiments which were then almost universally believed; but as his mind expanded, they were too limited and illiberal for the generous feelings of his nature. He embraced the faith of God's impartial grace more than half a century ago, which for years was received by but one man beside, but now is quite prevalent in the town in which he lived. He was awakened to the subject by the teachings of [Rev. John] Murray. He was one of the first hearers and supporters of our venerable brother [Rev. Nathaniel] Stacy, in his earliest efforts to proclaim the Gospel throughout the region of the Chenango, and has long been an active and efficient agent for the Magazine and Advocate, which he has taken and paid for from its establishment to the time of his death. He attended the last session of our Association, and was one of the committee of discipline for the present year. For a season he stood somewhat like Elijah of old, surrounded by hundreds of the votaries of error, and almost unaided and alone; but he never despaired of the final triumph of truth. He had long reserved a beautiful site for a meeting house, hoping though at times against hope, that converts would increase until one might be erected. The prospect brightened. With apparently renewed age and vigor, he bestowed his gift to the society, knowing that without it one could not soon if ever be reared, and doubting that it would ever benefit him, but anticipating great good to the rising generation. With thrilling interest he marked its progress; and had he been spared to witness its completion and dedication, like aged Simeon, emphatically he could have departed in peace. But God otherwise ordered, and he resignedly submitted.

Few laymen were as extensively known, and both our aged and younger ministering brethren who have traversed the region of his residence, have always found his house a welcome home. Though firm and decided, yet the violence of party faction, or the madness of sectarian bigotry and intolerance, never questioned his integrity, morality or veracity.

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As a husband, father, citizen, magistrate and Christian, his character was above reproach. In every station, public or private, he so discharged his duty as to honor himself and benefit others. He was a friend to the friendless, and a father to the poor and needy, and the stranger never went hungry or naked from his door. He carried out the principles he advocated in life and death, by deeds of kindness, generosity and benevolence; and notwithstanding his advanced age, not only his family and our denomination which he liberally supported, and whose meetings he punctually attended, but community generally, have met with a loss which can not be easily repaired. He lived in peace, and died in reconciliation with God and man.

His funeral was attended on the 26th ult., and a discourse was delivered in the Baptist meeting house to a large congregation, by

J. T. G. [John Temple Goodrich]

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[a Universalist newspaper]

Transcribed on 7 Oct 2012 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY