

[Wallace, Matthew Samuel]

THE DEATH OF MATTHEW S. WALLACE
BODY BROUGHT FROM MALONE FOR BURIAL AT CRARY MILLS
Was Well Known Descendant of Early and Influential Family

Matthew S. Wallace, that fine rugged individualistic American of the old school, who with his father and grandfather before him had figured so conspicuously in the life of the southern section of this town, died at the home of his son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. J. Henry Gamble, at Malone, Thursday evening. His many friends learned with regret that he had suffered a stroke during the winter, rejoiced when he had made a remarkable recovery for a man of 81 years and was able to be up and about again. Then, four weeks ago a second attack occurred and his strength gradually waned. The end came peacefully and his body was brought to Crary Mills Saturday where at the Presbyterian church in which he had worshipped in late years, though a Universalist by faith, services were held at three, and he was laid to rest in the cemetery nearby where three generations of his family are now buried. Friends and neighbors in large numbers were present at these last rites.

Matthew Wallace was an interesting, intelligent, industrious man. Through his veins flowed the blood of our county pioneers. They were a hardy people who lived in hard times. Strict and careful living, integrity, industry, uprightness and a respect for the Christian faith were the foundations for their success. For them the family hearthstone was the heart of the community. It was from such teachings that Matthew Wallace came. In the evening of his life he looked out upon the present world and its ways with grave concern and harked back to the old customs in which he was so staunch a believer.

Matthew began life up on the old Wallace farm whose original sixty acres his grandfather, Matthew I, had purchased in 1821 and in the same house where Mrs. Frank Judd and her son, Lester, now live. The grandfather, native to Connecticut, and a millwright by trade, had moved to Vermont and had come from there to Parishville in 1812. He settled in Brick Chapel about 1821 and soon made his first land purchase of sixty acres. Through succeeding generations and family branches the Wallaces came to own hundreds of acres of fine farm property and many farms. They were the big land owners of South Canton.

Of the two sons, Edwin and Orson, of Matthew I, Dr. J. M. Payson writes in his memoirs of early Canton families: "these two brothers were capable, industrious, and thrifty and made a large fortune for that place and time. It has been said that Orson Wallace had the business ability of a Vanderbilt"

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and Orson, who was born in Vermont in 1810, became the father of Matthew who has just died.

In commenting on this family Dr. Payson goes on to write:

"While these two brothers, Edwin and Orson, made and saved money, like most of the pioneers of the region, they were men of absolute honesty, who paid their debts and whose word was as good as their bond. There is one circumstance known to the writer, that illumined like a flashlight the real character of Orson Wallace. When the present Universalist church building was finished there was a debt of \$6,000. This was divided into two equal parts. The parsonage was mortgaged for \$3,000 and the church for the same amount. Mr. George Wallace, son of Orson, and brother of Matthew, took the mortgage on the church. The writer was present in Attorney D. M. Robertson's office when the business was arranged. Somewhat jocosely he remarked to Mr. Wallace, "I suppose if you should pass out you would leave that money to the church." With great seriousness he said, "In such a case I would as soon the church would have it as anyone." It so happened that in a short time Mr. Wallace was stricken with a fatal illness. The writer stood by his bedside when the will was made that bequeathed this money to the church. He survived but a few hours. Not unnaturally the question arose as to the validity of the will. Of course if the will were broken all the property would go to Orson, the father. When the matter was mentioned to him he said with much emphasis, 'The will must not be disturbed. George's wish must be respected.' And it was. In the Universalist church there is a pew marked with a bronze plate in memory of George Wallace.

"Mr. Orson Wallace married Elizabeth Webster and they had three sons and three daughters. One of the daughters married the Rev. Augustus Leighton, a Universalist clergyman, and brother of the wife of Dr. Ebenezer Fisher, first president of the Theological School. Another daughter married a brother of Augustus, Wilmot Leighton, who lived in the Brick Chapel neighborhood some years. The other daughter married a Mr. Ewens. The three sons were George, Matthew and Leslie."

Matthew, as a young man, entered St. Lawrence University with the class of 1880 with Herbert Gunnison, John L. Heaton, Joseph Witherbee and others. Ill health forced him to withdraw and spend a year in Colorado.

Returning home he entered upon farming and on October 4, 1887, married Miss Gertrude Claflin, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Marble Claflin, life-long neighbors to the Wallaces. This proved a delightful and happy union which continued until her death four years ago. They had made their home in what had been her parents' place, a home which they improved. Standing back from the road, with the large grove of sugar maples in front of it, this is one of the most attractive farm homes of this section.

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Mr. Wallace was a man of wide influence. His business dealings were extensive, and for years scores of people had looked to him for their spring supply of choice maple sugar and maple syrup, for the manufacture of which he was noted. He was deeply interested and active in Crary Mills Grange, served in its various chairs, and became a Master of St. Lawrence Pomona Grange. In later years he found time for writing and many were the articles, harking back to his youth, which he contributed to this and other papers.

Surviving are the daughter, Mr. P. Henry Gamble, of Malone, and one son, Clarence Wallace, of Los Angeles, California, and the six following grandchildren:

Gertrude Wallace Washburn, Gouverneur; Henriette Jane Gamble, Ithaca; Helen Mary Gamble, Marblehead, Mass.; William Tyler Wallace, Clarence Wallace Jr., Los Angeles, Calif., and James Henry Gamble, Jr., Malone.

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[Wallace, Matthew Samuel]

MATTHEW S. WALLACE PASSES AT MALONE CAME OF PIONEER ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY FAMILY SETTLING NEAR BRICK CHAPEL IN 1821

Story of the Last Member of a Family That Pioneered from Vermont, Arrived in Parishville in 1812, and Moved on to Canton Over the Old St. Lawrence Turnpike in 1821 to Settle Near Brick Chapel and There Accumulate a Considerable Patrimony—
Orson Wallace and Other Wallaces and Finally the Last of the Seven Children
of Orson and Betsey Webster Wallace, Matthew Samuel Wallace

Matthew Samuel Wallace, a member of the early Wallace family of Canton, and a resident of this town where he was born practically his entire life, passed away at the home of his daughter, Mrs. J. Henry Gamble, Malone, on Thursday evening, following an illness from pneumonia. He had apparently recovered and out of danger the Saturday preceding his death, but a recurrent attack was followed by rapid decline to the end, Thursday. The body was brought to Canton and the funeral was held at Crary Mills Church Saturday afternoon at 3:30, the Rev. Charles H. MacVey officiating. Burial was made at Crary Mills Cemetery.

The death of Mr. Wallace removed the last of the family of seven children born on the Wallace-Mead road near Brick Chapel. The Wallace family came into the town of Canton from Parishville in 1821. They first stopped for a time, pioneering, from Vermont, at Parishville in 1812. When coming in, the first Matthew Wallace, grandfather of Matthew S., saw troops being moved over the old St. Lawrence Turnpike and every indication of warlike preparations. It is interesting [that] they followed the old Turnpike toward Russell and settled finally in the Brick Chapel neighborhood. The Clarks and the Barneses and Smiths had already come in and were clearing up the land and opening the beautiful valley down to Little River.

The Wallaces settled at a farm on the Wallace-Mead road. Later they took up their abode in the present Wallace place on that road. Of the family of the first Matthew Wallace there were three sons that will be remembered: Orson, father of Matthew S., and Leslie O. and George; Solomon, father of Wilber O., and Edwin, father of Henry, Alvin and Charles. In those years that followed, the Wallaces attained prominence throughout the Brick Chapel section of the town of Canton. Orson, father of Matthew, married in 1842 and went to live a year later in the old homestead on the Wallace-Mead road which runs from the vicinity of the Chapel to Langdon's Corners.

The Wallaces were of the acquisitive kind. From the name one can feel that the Wallaces came from Scotland and were of the ancient Wallace clan, of which was Sir William Wallace, Scottish hero and patriot of the thirteenth century. The Wallaces came to St. Lawrence County from Vermont. Matthew S. Wallace used to describe his father's holdings as a mile square of land, some of the best land in St. Lawrence County.

The older Wallace, Orson, was progressive. When the mowing machine was invented he was one of the first to have a machine in the town of Canton; he operated one of the first cheese factories; down on the brook nearby, the Wallaces had a carding

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mill where the wool of the flocks of the farm and the neighborhood was taken. Matthew S. used to describe his mother making for him a suit of clothes when he was twenty, that was entirely made from the product of the farm, on the farm, by carding, spinning, dyeing and weaving.

He often spoke very affectionately of his mother whom he described as a wonderful woman. She had a remarkable persistence in keeping at her household tasks even when age came. He would get up in the night as a very small boy and find his mother at 2 and 3 o'clock in the morning busily engaged, by light of a tallow dip, making clothes for the children.

The older Wallace, Orson, father of Matthew S., was possessed of a very strong character. He was an ardent Republican. The New York Tribune, published by Horace Greeley, was taken always and the father would sit up at night and read it to the whole family. The Wallace home was a busy place, always. The old house had all the conveniences of those early days. The big oven, built in, a mammoth thing. This was taken out in later years while occupied by another member of the Wallace family. Matthew S. always regretted this.

Matthew S. attended the Brick Chapel school, where at times Percy I. Bugbee, later principal of Oneonta State Normal School, Walter B. Gunnison, Herbert S. Gunnison and others taught. He attended the old Canton Academy in the seventies, a shy, earnest boy, boarding at the home of his uncle, John Farwell. He has described in stories written for this paper how he feared to go to school in the Academy and how he dreaded the requirement to get up and speak a piece, and his first and last experience in appearing on the platform, and his determination to leave school if he had to speak again. After leaving the Academy he entered the class of 1880 of St. Lawrence University and went to college for a time.

Matthew Wallace, who was born eighty-two years ago the coming summer, in 1857, after leaving school went to Denver, Colo., there working in a large flour mill for a time. He had odd experiences while in the West. Later on he spent a winter in Michigan, but he finally returned to Canton where on Oct. 5, 1887, he was married to Miss Gertrude Cleflen of the Langdon's Corners neighborhood. Gertrude Cleflen came of a family that were pioneers of the town of Canton. The Cleflens who were New England people came in the very early days of the town. She was the daughter of Marble Cleflen. The Cleflen farms are still up the Pierrepont road, but the name of Cleflen has become almost only a memory, though members of the family come back from time to time to the old nest.

When Matthew Wallace married a wife he came to make his home at the Cleflen farm, the Marble Cleflen farm, that has long in later years been known as the Matthew Wallace farm on the Pierrepont road. This farm during the vigorous, active years of Matthew Wallace was brought into a remarkably advanced and modern condition. Those who have visited the home in later years have found there all the conveniences and comforts of the village home: electricity, hot and cold water and the bathroom and bath tub, in fact, everything that the village home dweller covets. He married a most

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excellent homekeeper and companion. Here a son and daughter were born and grew up and later went out into the world, married and had homes of their own.

Matthew Wallace liked fine things about the home. He always kept the sugar orchard or bush that stands in front of the house on the road in fine condition, and each spring from the sugar shanty or camp rose the smoke of the arch and the sweet steam of boiling sap. He prided himself on the fine syrup he made and for years had a choice shipping market, receiving letters from patrons in distant cities who wrote, "Friend, Matthew, make the usual number of gallons of syrup, it's your kind of syrup we want, and the price is o.k., whatever you like."

One in passing up the Pierrepont road cannot miss the farm—You pass through a grove on the road—The entrance to the place is marked by stone columns with large spheres at the top. Matthew used to tell how he and John Richardson contrived to make these spheres which set so sturdily on the columns. There was always a strain of the mechanic in the Wallaces—the first Matthew Wallace, the pioneer to come to Canton, was a millwright. These were days when the mechanic, the millwright was a prime necessity to the community, coming up from its beginnings. The sons of Matthew, the pioneer, inherited the ability to be handy with tools. It is interesting that Clarence S. Wallace, son of Matthew S., is a remarkably fine watchmaker. There isn't any part of the works of a watch that he can't make. If the watch lacks a pinion or wheel or any part that can't be secured at the makers, Clarence Wallace, it is said, can make it, and has so made for Canton customers.

Matthew Wallace always stood out in his section of the town and Crary Mills as one of the first citizens. When Crary Mills Grange thought of building a hall, Matthew Wallace was made chairman of the committee and the work was well done and the committee had money left. During these days he took a large interest in the Grange and was one of the prime movers in the activities of Crary Mills Grange. He was a member of Crary Mills Grange, the County Pomona Grange and the Universalist church.

Of course age came apace and Matthew Wallace had to relinquish more or less in time the farm. His wife, Gertrude Cleflen Wallace, passed about four years ago at the age of sixty-five, and that was a heavy blow to him. He was a home man, a home lover and enjoyed the comforts of home—His wife gone, he lived a portion of the time at the home of his son and his daughter, in Gouverneur and at Malone. About two years ago the son removed to Los Angeles, Calif., where he is now engaged in business. In the succeeding days most of the time has been spent in Malone with the Gambles.

But Matthew Wallace couldn't stay away from Canton. He rarely, if ever came to Canton without calling at the Commercial Advertiser office. He would sit by the hour and talk of the old days in the Wallace neighborhood, his experiences in school or on his westward trips. He had a remarkably retentive memory. He could describe minutely things that occurred as far back as the time he was three years of age.

He could remember the wedding of his sister, Mary, when he was eight years old. Mary Wallace married August Leighton, a young man who came from Maine and

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studied for the ministry in Canton Theological School, graduating in 1863. Dr. John Stebbins Lee, then acting president of the College, performed the ceremony. Dr. and Mrs. Ebenezer Fisher were also of the company. Mary Wallace had been a student in the College Preparatory School as had other older members of the Wallace family. The Rev. Mr. Leighton was a brother of Mrs. Ebenezer Fisher. Ebenezer Fisher was president of Canton Theological School. Dr. Fisher lived in and owned the old Dr. Clark home on Judson street, now the Joseph F. Brown home, when he died suddenly in the late seventies and the place was bought by James D. Tracey, publisher of the Commercial Advertiser, just coming to Canton.

Matthew Wallace is the last of the old Wallace stock in the vicinity of Brick Chapel. Frank Wallace, another branch of the family, lives over at North Russell. Frank and Harry Wallace were the sons of Henry Wallace, a son of Edwin Wallace, a brother of Orson Wallace, and a cousin of Matthew S.

Those who drive down the Wallace-Mead road from Brick Chapel to Langdon's Corners will see the old Wallace farm at the left of the road; further on is the big mansion-like farm home, built by George Wallace, who died many years ago. George Wallace never married, but it is understood that the home was built with marriage in view, a marriage that never transpired. Leslie O. Wallace, engaged many years in the drug business, in New England and New York, passed away many years ago, dying tragically in a fit of despondency. Other members passed until only Matthew and Emma Wallace Ewings of Potsdam remained of the seven children of Orson and Elizabeth Webster Wallace—It would be well to fill the omission made at the opening of this story—Matthew Wallace's mother was before marriage Elizabeth Webster, and the marriage of Orson and Elizabeth Webster Wallace took place in 1842. Emma Wallace Ewings passed away in 1936, leaving Matthew S. the last leaf on this branch of the Wallace tree.

Matthew S. Wallace leaves a son, Clarence L. of Los Angeles, Calif., and a daughter, Mrs. J. Henry Gamble of Malone. There are six grandchildren, two sons and a daughter of Clarence L. Wallace and two daughters and a son of Mr. and Mrs. J. Henry Gamble, as follows: Mrs. Gertrude Wallace Washburn, Barnes Street, Gouverneur; Henrietta Jane Gamble, Ithaca; Helen Mary Gamble, Marblehead, Mass.; William Tyler Wallace, Los Angeles, Calif.; James Henry Gamble, Jr., Malone; Clarence Wallace, Jr., Los Angeles, Calif.

The Wallace family record is taken from the family Bible and runs as follows:

Marriages

Orson Wallace to Betsey Webster, Jan. 31, 1842.

Augustus A. Leighton and Mary M. Wallace, Jan. 16, 1866.

Wilmot A. Leighton and Isadore B. Wallace, Dec. 24, 1884.

Matthew S. Wallace and Gertrude N. Cleflin, Oct. 5, 1887.

Hiram H. Ewings and Emma E. Wallace, Oct. 28, 1890.

Leslie O. Wallace and Emma G. Mix, Jan. 15, 1896.

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Births

Orson Wallace, Nov. 11, 1810.
Betsey Webster, Jan. 22, 1818.
Mary M. Wallace, Dec. 29, 1842.
George Wallace, March 22, 1845.
Emma E. Wallace, Oct. 25, 1847.
Herbert Wallace, Oct. 22, 1850.
Matthew Wallace, June 15, 1857.
Isadore B. Wallace, April 7, 1860.
Leslie Wallace, Aug. 30, 1865.

Deaths

Mary M. Leighton, Feb. 20, 1869.
Herbert Wallace, Nov. 3, 1872.
Mrs. Betsey Wallace, Feb. 27, 1895.
George Wallace, Dec. 15, 1898.
Orson Wallace, Dec. 24, 1901.
Isadore B. Leighton, Sept. 17, 1928.
Gertrude Cleflen Wallace, Feb. 9, 1935.
Emma E. Ewings, Sept. 2, 1936.

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