

[Walling, James]

AGED CITIZEN PASSES AWAY

James Walling Was Victor's Oldest Merchant. Had Held Man Important Offices.

In the death of James Walling, which occurred at an early hour Tuesday morning, August 2nd, 1904, Victor sustains the loss of a citizen who for almost three-score years has been a most prominent figure in the official and business life of the town and village. No man was more intensely interested in the growth and welfare of the community than he, and few have by individual effort contributed more to its advancement. Ever identified with the best citizenship of the town, Mr. Wallace was many times elected to the most important positions of honor and trust in the gift of his townsmen. These he filled with credit to himself and to the advantage of his constituency. His business career was a long and honorable ne, covering a period of fifty-two years.

Genial and kindly in his manner and possessed of a courtesy which knew no failing, Mr. Walling made many friends and held them. His was a life of patient, persistent endeavor to do what seemed to him to be his duty. That endeavor ceased only when the tired body refused longer to perform the tasks which he set for it.

James Walling was the son of Edward and Sylvina Walling and was born in Sheffield, Mass., January 4, 1825. When seven of age he came with his parents to Victor and has since resided here. In 1849 he married Miss Mary Elizabeth Murray who survives him. In 1852, he entered the clothing business, having learned the tailor's trade, and was in the business continuously to the time of his death, for the last few years as the senior partner in the firm of Walling & Brace¹. Mr. Walling's first business location was in a store just one door removed to the west from the one now occupied by this firm. In 1871 he erected for his own use the brick building now occupied by Concannon's market, and in 1881 again gave evidence of public spirited enterprise by putting up the building known as the Walling Block, the largest structure in the town.

When the village was incorporated, twenty-five years ago, Mr. Walling was one of the most influential supporters of the movement and he was the first president of the village. He served as one of the trustees of the village school for many years, the present high school building being erected during his term of office. He was a member of St. Paul's Universalist church and for many years served faithfully as chairman of the board of trustees of the church. Until advancing years made it impossible for him to attend the meetings, he was a loyal member of Milnor Lodge, F. & A. M.

¹ His partner was William Frankin Brace, his son-in-law and husband to his daughter Belle.

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In politics Mr. Walling was a Democrat of the Jeffersonian type, and at one time was very active in political work, standing high in the local councils of his party. His first public office was that of town clerk. For eight successive terms he served the town most acceptably as supervisor, and during President Cleveland's first administration, received the appointment of postmaster which office he held for a term of four years.

For the past two years Mr. Walling had been gradually failing in health, his step slowly losing its vigor and his hand its steadiness, but his brain and will were still masters, and with indomitable pluck he continued going to the store and attending to business until but a few days before his death.

His two children, Mrs. William [Belle] Brace and Fred M. Walling, both of whom reside at the family home, survive him. Funeral services were held at the residence Thursday afternoon at two o'clock, the Rev. Asa G. Saxe² of the Second Universalist church of Rochester officiating, assisted by the Rev. Frank W. Hill, of the Presbyterian church of this village. All business places of the village were closed during the funeral which was very largely attended. Interment was made in Boughton Hill cemetery.

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Transcribed on 28 Dec 2018 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY

² Rev. Saxe had previously been pastor of the first Universalist Church in Rochester from 1860 to 1895, a period of 35 years and to this day the longest pastorate in the church history.