

## HON. ALMON MACK

Died, at his home in Rochester, Mich., January 20, 1885, Almon Mack, in the eightieth year of his age. Funeral at the residence on Thursday, 22<sup>nd</sup>, at 2 o'clock pm.

Suddenly, in the brightness of sunlight, just past high noon, the Angel of the Covenant descended. At the word of Omnipotence he touched the ripe soul and said: 'Come, the Master calleth thee.' At once the heart of flesh grew still, the speaking lips closed, the curtain of mortality fell.

And yet, bitter as were the tears and poignant as was the grief of the mourners there so suddenly stricken, not one bereaved heart could look upward with other words than: 'It is well. Even so, Father, for so it hath seemed good in Thy sight.'

Almon Mack was born at Tunbridge, Vermont, April 28, 1805. He received his education chiefly at Norwich (Conn) Military Academy, and when 16 years of age accompanied his father, Col. Stephen Mack, in his removal to the Territory of Michigan. His ancestors were of good English stock, and several of the connection made honorable mark in our revolutionary history.

Col. Stephen Mack aided in the establishment of the territorial government of Michigan, being a member of the First Legislative Council, 1824-5, and holding various positions in early State and county history. He was also one of the very first to establish mercantile business north of Detroit, which he did by opening a general store at Pontiac before that now goodly city had a dozen houses.

Young Almon was his father's principal and most efficient assistant in these enterprises, and with the advantage of a thorough business and parental training he settled in what was then the little hamlet of Rochester and began business as a merchant on the first day of September 1830.

To the younger classes of the community, the figure and presence of Almon Mack have been only those of an aged, and broken man, whose work was done. They have known him only after 'the strong staff was broken, and the beautiful rod.' To his older friends, Almon Mack is in memory a man in the strength of mid-age, earnest, busy, courageous, public spirited, zealous for the right, a power and an influence in affairs. Those who have only seen him leaning upon his staff may smile at the application of the terms 'strength' and 'courage' to him, but an incident will attest their appropriateness.

When he was a young man of twenty-four, and a clerk in his father's store at Pontiac, an Indian sub-chief named 'Green-coat', of gigantic stature, and exceedingly quarrelsome and dangerous, was one day making trouble in the streets. The fellow was walking up and down with a drawn knife, terribly enraged because young Mack refused him liquor. He had driven everybody in the immediate vicinity into Col. Mack's store, fearing for their lives. While he stood brandishing his knife before the closed doors and threatening

to kill whoever should dare to come out young Almon Mack stepped out, unarmed, and quick as lightening laid the Indian prostrate with a blow of his fist; then sprang upon him, and with his heel upon his neck, wrenched the knife away, broke it and threw the fragments beyond reach. He then let the savage up and ordered him to leave the town instantly. The red warrior was so utterly cowed and thunderstruck that he obeyed like a whipped cur, and gave no trouble afterward. Other incidents of his early pioneer life might be cited to show that Mr. Mack, although strictly a peace man, and no striker, yet possessed both a physical and moral courage of no common order.

Having located at Rochester, Mr. Mack placed his stock of goods in the front room of the building in which Dr. Jesse E. Wilson now resides, and kept house in the rear rooms of the same.

His wife, to whom he was married in 1827, and who had been the ward of his parents, shared courageously and lovingly in all his efforts. Nine years ago (Jan 21<sup>st</sup>, 1876) this excellent lady, after a life of distinguished usefulness, was called from earth, leaving a record bright with every womanly and Christian virtue. The heart of her husband never recovered from this sad stroke, and his especially intimate friends have often heard him mournfully remark how changed and empty the whole world seemed to him without her. His affections were peculiarly tender and to his latest day his heart was warm, kind and gentle.

Although themselves childless, Mr. And Mrs. Mack performed the duty of parents toward three orphaned children, namely: Mrs. Wm. Palmerlee of Grand Rapids; Mrs. Jesse E. Wilson late of Rochester and Mrs. Arthur F. Newberry, who still survives them.

From the day of his settlement at Rochester, Mr. Mack was among the foremost in every effort for the welfare and improvement of the place and people. He represented Oakland County in the legislature of 1848, and during that session, solely by his individual tact and alertness, secured the passage of the bill chartering the Pontiac and Lapeer Plank Road Company, over a combination organized for its defeat. How important a thoroughfare this road became, and how vast a benefit it was to Pontiac and Oakland County during the succeeding fifteen years, every citizen of those times well knows. It was late one night when Mr. Mack became aware of the plans that were maturing for the defeat of his measure. He forthwith went to his room, drafted the bill, presented it next morning, and by night it was a law and on its way to the directors of the company at Pontiac; having been put through all the stages of presentation, reference, report of committee, first, second and third readings, engrossment, signature of the Governor and enrollment in the archives of the Secretary of State, in a little over six hours.

Mr. Mack was tendered the secretaryship of the first Legislative Council, but declined on account of ill health. He suggested to President Monroe in writing the names of nine of the eighteen members of that Council, and every person whom he recommended received the presidential appointment.

He was the personal friend and associate of Gen. Lewis Cass, and the coadjutor of that eminent statesman in much of the formative work in the organization of the new counties. He was for 20 years a magistrate in Avon, and in the discharge of his judicial duties acquired a solid reputation for sound, practical judgement, and especially for fairness, equity, and incorruptible integrity of his decisions. No one ever need fear that his opponent would 'log-roll' the court in any action before 'Esquire Mack,' as he was always respectfully addressed, alike by young and old. He also from time to time, held various other local offices and appointments, and was largely consulted, and trusted in matters appertaining to the settlement of estates, guardianship, trusts, etc.

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