

SUSAN ANNETTE RICHARDSON WILSON

June 2, 1837

August 31, 1883

In the little town of Brownington, which for near two hundred years has lain nestled among the foothills of the Green Mountain range in Orleans County, Vermont, the subject of this sketch first saw the light. Her birth in that quiet, beautiful valley, was as if heaven had designed her for some such sweet and gentle mission among mankind as she afterwards fulfilled.

She was the daughter of Noah F. Richardson and Mary Learned. Upon the paternal side she was of that family of () Richardson who for so many generations have been prominent in Vermont, and several of whose members were conspicuously identified with the early growth and development of Michigan, more especially of Oakland County.

Her uncles, Origen D. and Israel Putnam Richardson, settled in Pontiac at an early day. The former was Lieutenant Governor of Michigan for two terms – 1842 and 1844; 1844 and 1846. Her cousin, Major General Israel B. Richardson, son of Israel P. above mentioned is that famous ‘Fighting Dick’ whose brilliant career closed so gloriously upon the battle field of Antietam. The family is of the stock of General Israel Putnam, of revolutionary fame, in whose memory the name of ‘Israel’ is preserved among them.

Susan A. was the youngest of ten children, but three of whom now survive her, namely: Mrs. Henry E. Mackee of Washington, DC, Edward H. Richardson, of Truckee, California, and Mrs. James M. Smith, of Barry, Vermont.

At the age of six years she was taken into the family of Hon. Almon Mack, of Rochester, Michigan and from that day was in every sense of mutual love, duty and filial allegiance a daughter in her adopted home. She bore hence forward the name of her adopted parents and numbers of her youthful mates associated with her for years with no other thought than that she was the child of Almon, who, in her death, bemoans the loss of one who was to him a daughter in () and in love, if not in blood.

As the child grew to youth and womanhood, she received every educational and social advantage with which general means could surround her, and as she entered upon the more serious concerns of life she developed in her character, manners and disposition of all that amiability and purity of heart which the fondest parent could wish for in the one most loved.

On April 25, 1859, she was married to Jesse E. Wilson, M.D., who was then already settled in the practice of his profession at Rochester, and who now survives to deplore her. The young couple settled at once in a domestic life in the beautiful town which was the scene of their happy nuptials, and of her death. Here, too, were passed all of those twenty-four years of wedded life, which lie like an island of light and beauty between

those two events. Into her home and her married life she carried all of that earnestness of hope, that tenderness of love, and that purity of heart and purpose which were not merely characteristic of her – they *were* herself.

Although bred in somewhat of affluence, and holding from her youth a leading position in society, her charity and loving kindness went out to all. No suffering heart was so humble that her sympathy did not reach it, nor any hand so poor or hard that her own would not clasp it and fill it with any merited help. She was a faithful and earnest member of the Congregational Church, and died in that faith: but her piety was of that noble kind which dwells above creeds. She used religion as Christ used it, for the help of all mankind. There was no ostentation in her example. She served her God and served humanity for the holiness of right doing; and *because her heart was so*. It was her nature.

She leaves to her husband, as the crown of their marriage union, two daughters – May, a young lady, and Millie, a child of seven. And so, as his lonely steps shall turn from the deep grave of his hopes back into the broken home, his mourning will not be all dark, not without one sweet light. Through their souls, *her* soul will yet beam upon him; through their eyes. Her blessed being shall look, and leave him not alone. And to them, the children so bereaved, in lonely hours will come the light of a dear face, the glory of a bright example, the ineffable sweetness of an overshadowing influence blending with all the current of their lives.

The ashes of the dead were committed to the earth in Rochester Cemetery, on Sunday afternoon, September 2, 1883, and were followed to the tomb by a vast concourse of mourning friends. Upon all lips were expressions of grief, as at a personal bereavement.

The funeral ceremonies were led by Rev. J. M. Lyon, assisted by Revs. E. Cheney and J. P. Varner, of the Congregational, Baptist and Methodist Churches respectively, accompanied by a eulogy pronounced by Hon. Henry M. Look. The last was especially appropriate, as betokening that, in the death of the departed, the community sustains a secular and universal loss, no less than a religious one.

The light of her bright life will linger like a golden twilight behind her and ‘many a year be in its grave’ before the community in which she dwelt and died will cease to be the better for her having lived in it.

‘Her suffering ended with the day,
Yet lived she at its close,
And breathed the long, long night away,
In statue-like repose;
But when the sun in all his state
Illumed the eastern skies,
She passed through Glory’s morning gate,
And walked in Paradise.’

