

PATRICK CLARK.

[The following obituary was prepared for the local papers by an intimate friend of the deceased, who was in possession of the facts, and has very able put them together.—Ed.]

The citizens of Rahway were surprised and grieved to learn on Saturday morning last that Patrick Clark, one of our most highly esteemed citizens, was no more. Mr. Clark for a week previous had been suffering with a severe cold which turned into all the symptoms of typhoid pneumonia, and on Saturday morning, surrounded by his family he quietly breathed his last.

His death removes from our midst one of the oldest landmarks of Rahway, and one who for many years has been identified with its growth, prosperity and educational interests. In every sense of the word he was one of our most public spirited citizens, and a man most intensely progressive in all matters pertaining to modern thought and progress.

Patrick Clark was born in Ireland, in the little town of Roscommon, on the second of April 1818; he came to this country with his parents in 1827, he being the youngest of two brothers and two sisters. The family upon arriving in this country came to New Jersey, and settled in a part of Essex county, near what is now Bloodgood's Mills. Shortly after this settlement his father died; leaving his mother and the family entirely dependent upon their own efforts. His mother then took her family and removed to New York City, where she soon obtained employment in the family of Gouverneur Morris, at the family residence near White Plains. One by one his brothers and sisters died and lastly his mother, leaving young Clark helpless and orphaned. Had it not been for his strongly marked traits of character, an innate honesty of purpose, and strong convictions on questions of right and wrong, this situation might have proven his ruin. But with a strong sense of self-respect and a determination to succeed in the world and conquer obstacles, young Clark concluded to do something for himself, and with this purpose in view he returned to what was then the village of Rahway, and was bound an apprentice to James Vreeland, to serve as a fireman's boy at Vreeland's yarn mills. Mr. Clark remained with Mr. Vreeland until he was married in 1840.

In 1847 Mr. Clark started an iron foundry in this city in partnership with Mr. E. G. Scisco, under the firm name of Clark & Scisco. Their shop was on the corner of Church and Grand streets. He remained in this business for some time, and finally bought out his partner's interest, in the business, and continued it for some time in his own name. Seeing a better prospect of success in the manufacture of paste-board, he closed out the iron foundry and opened a factory for the manufacture of that article, with Jesse Hedden as his partner. This business prospered and grew until the death of Mr. Hedden, when it became necessary to close out the concern in order to settle the Hedden estate. This brought with it financial disaster to Mr. Clark from which he never fully recovered. Finding it necessary to do something, and being a man of resources, Mr. Clark commenced the study of land surveying and civil engineering, and having fully mastered the subject he entered successfully upon that line of business. In 1857 when the gas works of this city were projected, Mr. Clark superintended the erection of the building and the construction of the machinery, and he had been more or less connected with the works ever since. For many years Mr. Clark was the city surveyor and engineer of this city, but otherwise he never offered himself as a candidate for political office.

He and the late Hugh Bowne were the founders of the Republican party in this section of the state, and to his energy and counsels that party in this section owes many of its successes. Mr. Clark, though in politics a Republican, was always held in high esteem by his political adversaries for his honesty and integrity of purpose. He was never fanatical in politics nor unjust to his adversaries.

Mr. Clark has always been among the foremost as a friend to public education. Being himself deprived of early advantages, and appreciating the struggles of life, he keenly felt the need of extended advantages for the rising generation. His labor in this direction has always been to enlarge the domain of our public school system and to place it on a footing in advance of the older systems.

It was mainly through his indefatigable energy that the Franklin School in this city was started and equipped, and ever since that school has been an object of his especial care and attention. It has frequently been his pleasure and delight to address the pupils of the schools, and whenever invited on occasions to do so would often drop other important business for the sake of talking to the children on the importance of strict attention to their studies.

Mr. Clark was one of the best read men in this state, not only in general literature with which he was thoroughly familiar, but on all matters pertaining to scientific research and thought. His scope of learning was simply wonderful, for one who had never had the advantages of early training. In the fullest sense of the word he was a self-made man. He was an entertaining conversationalist, and to any young man seeking his advice and counsel on any given subject, he was always kind, generous and painstaking in his advice or his explanations.

Mr. Clark was the inventor of many useful mechanical appliances, among them the following: The Damper Regulator for steam boilers which is to day in universal use. For this invention Mr. Clark received at the American Institute Fair in 1852, the only gold medal issued at that fair in that year and the last gold medal issued by the American Institute. 2d, The Multiple Fan Blower; 3d, A machine for manufacturing paper; 4th, An improved packing for pistons; 5th, A dryer for drying paste board; 6th, A dryer for drying Oakum; 7th, his last invention, patented two years ago, known as the Dynamometer, an apparatus for preventing explosions in steam boilers.

For all of these inventions he received patents, and besides he has frequently been employed by inventors to argue interference cases before the Commissioner and Examiner of Patents at Washington.

His long and useful life is ended. He passes from our midst with the kindly benediction of all who knew him. The true and generous friend, the genial companion, the public spirited citizen. Let the youth of this city, who may read these lines, remember what, with perseverance, and honesty and integrity of purpose, can be achieved.

Mr. Clark leaves him surviving, his widow, three sons and two daughters.