

William C. Mowry Obituary

Colonel WILLIAM C. MOWRY: The family is one of long and honorable standing in Rhode Island and Eastern Connecticut. For hundreds of years, several successive generations have been prominent in the industries in and about Connecticut, among them in turn, Havilah Samuel James D. and the late Col. William C. Mowry, whose name introduces this article and was prominent too in public affairs and in Masonry, having represented his town several times in the General Assembly of Connecticut and served in the Commonwealth.

Born June 26, 1850, in Norwich, William was the son of the late James Dixon and E. Smith Mowry, and a descendant in the ninth from Nathaniel Mowry, the first ancestor of this branch of the family, from whom lineage is through Capt. Joseph, Capt. Daniel, Capt. Joseph 2, Thomas, Havilah, Deacon Samuel, James Dixon Mowry.

The details of these generations, in the order given, follow.

February 22, 1895, William C Mowry, the subject proper of this article, received his education in the Broadway Grammar School and the Norwich Free Academy, being graduated from the latter institution in 1868.

He had prepared himself for a course in the Sheffield Scientific School of Yale but was prevented from entering that institution on account of an affliction of his eyes.

Later, having recovered the use of his eyes, he accepted a position in the Mowry Axle and Machine Company in Greeneville for the purpose of obtaining a practical knowledge of the business.

After two years in the mechanical department, he was promoted to the company's business department, a position he held until 1876.

A short time afterward, the Page Steam Heating Company was organized to manufacture steam heaters, and Mr. Mowry was treasurer and business manager for a long time.

Later he was the managing director of the Hopkins & Allen Manufacturing Company. He was identified with a number of the business enterprises and institutions of Norwich.

He was a director in the Norwich Savings Society, First National Bank, Norwich Water Power Company, and Norwich Gas and Electric Company.

He was one of the organizers of the Norwich Club and was a member of the Arcanum Club and Board of Trade. In all these organizations he took an active interest.

Col. Mowry was a Republican and took an active interest in the advancement of the party and was always ready to aid with his time and means. In company with W.T. Lane, he represented Norwich in the Legislature in 1889, and in 1893 he was again a member from this town in company with W.H. Palmer Jr.

Mr Mowry filled positions on important committees, one of which investigated affairs in the state prison. He was an aide on the staff of Governor Harrison in 1886. He was elected Secretary of State in 1894 and received the largest vote of any candidate on the ticket.

He proved to be a capable official and was popular. His religious connections were with the Park Congregational Church in Norwich, of which he was a member of the Society Committee.

Col. Mowry was prominently connected with Masonry in Norwich. He was made a member of Somerset Lodge No. 34 F & AM in 1882 and took the thirty-second degree in Connecticut Sovereign Consistory April 21, 1890.

He belonged to Franklin Chapter, Franklin Council, and Columbian Commandery in the York Rite and to all the bodies of the A and A Scottish Rite in Norwich.

In the building of the Masonic Temple in 1893 and 1894, Mr. Mowry was closely connected with the work. He represented Columbian Commandery in the Masonic Temple Corporation and, during the erection of the temple, was a member of the building committee, serving faithfully as far as his health would allow, which at that time was poor.

He was vice president of the corporation at the time of his death and was also on the board of directors. He held next to the highest office in Connecticut Sovereign Consistory, the thirty-second degree, that of illustrious first lieutenant commander.

Among his Masonic brethren, he was most popular, and his genial presence was always desired. Col. Mowry had positive convictions on all matters in which he was interested, and he had the courage of his convictions, but he was willing to give his opponents all due consideration. He was always cheerful and regarded highly by all who knew him.

He was well known throughout this state. His death occurred July 2, 1898, at Watkins, NY, where he had gone for the benefit of his health



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(I) Nathaniel Mowry, born in 1644, appears among the early settlers of Providence, R. I. He married in the fall of 1666 Johannah Inman, daughter of Edward Inman. Mr. Mowry was admitted a freeman in Providence, May 1, 1672. He died March 24, 1717-18, aged seventy-three years. His children were: Nathaniel, John, Henry, Joseph, Martha, Sarah, Mary, Johannah, Patience, Marcy and Experience.

(II) Capt. Joseph Mowry was married on June 3, 1695, to Alice Whipple. In 1708 Capt. Mowry built a fine large house, one of the largest in the Colony, which was still standing in 1878 and located probably one mile northwesterly from the village of Stillwater. Here Capt. Joseph lived and died, and was buried in the family burial lot upon the farm, where many of his descendants from the several generations since his time now sleep. But little is known of his character more than a few meagre facts, which, however, are sufficient to show