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PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

LONG ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

IN MEMORY OF

HON. JAMES CARSON BREVOORT

MRS. URANIA BATTELL HUMPHREY

HON. JOHN GREENWOOD

AND

ALFRED SMITH BARNES



BROOKLYN, N. Y.

PRINTED FOR THE SOCIETY

1888

JAMES CARSON BREVOORT.

Mr. BREVOORT was born July 10, 1818, at Bloomingdale, now a part of New-York City, and attended school first in New-York City, then at Round Hill School at Northampton, Mass., of which Joseph G. Cogswell and George Bancroft were masters; then at Paris; and afterward at Baron Fellenberg's school, at Hofwyl, in Switzerland. He then entered the *École Centrale des Arts et Manufactures*, in Paris, where, after a three years' course, he was graduated, receiving a diploma as Civil Engineer. After studying railway-construction in France and England, he returned to New-York in 1838.

He was then employed for nearly a year at the West Point foundry, in which his father was interested. In 1841, as surveyor, he accompanied Prof. James Renwick, one of the Commissioners of the North-east Boundary Survey. In 1842, he accompanied Washington Irving, United States Minister to Spain, as private secretary, and *attaché* of the Legation. In 1843, he made an extended tour through Europe, and returned to New-York in 1844.

In 1845, he married Elizabeth Dorothea Lefferts, only child of Hon. Leffert Lefferts, of Bedford, now a part of Brooklyn. Mr. Lefferts was the first Judge of Kings County, and first President of the Long Island Bank, the earliest bank incorporated in Brooklyn. After Mr. BREVOORT's marriage he made Brooklyn his home, and became actively interested in whatever concerned the welfare of that city. His only child, Henry Leffert Brevoort, survives him.

In 1847, he was appointed a member of the Charter Convention, and for several years served as a member of the Board of Education. In 1856, he was appointed on the Board of Water Commissioners, serving as secretary until 1862, when a permanent Board was appointed. In 1858, he was appointed a trustee of Greenwood Cemetery. In 1863, he took an active part in the formation of the Long Island Historical Society, was its President until 1873, Chairman of its executive committee until 1876, and Director until his death. From 1852 to 1878 he was a trustee of the Astor Library, serving as Superintendent for the last two years of that period.

He was a member of the Lyceum of Natural History, and of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. He was an honorary or corresponding member of the Archæological Society of Madrid; of the Entomological Societies of Baltimore and Philadelphia; of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia; of the National Institute, Washington; of the New England Historic Genealogical Society; of the American Antiquarian Society; of the Massachusetts, New-York, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, and other Historical Societies; of the American Geographical Society; and of the Numismatic Society of Philadelphia. He was a Regent of the University of the State of New-York; and received the degree of LL. D. from Williams College in 1873.

His contributions to historical and scientific journals were numerous. In Natural History, he was specially interested in Ichthyology, his collections were extensive, and his writings on that subject have high authority. His "Notes on some figures of Japanese fish by artists of the United States Expedition to Japan," were published in separate form. Other separate publications by him were "Early Spanish and Portuguese Coinage in America," and "Verrazzano, the Navigator; or, Notes on Giovanni da Verrazzano, and on a planisphere of 1529, illustrating his American Voyage in 1524." His thorough acquaintance with ancient and mod-

ern languages opened to him sources of information inaccessible to many, and in his special lines of study, particularly of geographical discovery, of maps, and of general bibliography, his knowledge was extensive and accurate. Students, and any one desirous of information, found him always willing to impart his knowledge and to open his library to them, his kindly manner giving added value to assistance so freely and unselfishly rendered.

At a meeting of the Long Island Historical Society, held December 15, 1887, the following Minute was adopted :

The death of Hon. JAMES CARSON BREVOORT, on the 7th inst., removes from the roll of the members and officers of this Society one of its most distinguished, honored, and beloved names.

Mr. BREVOORT had been intimately associated with this institution from its beginning, in March, 1863. He was one of those named in its original certificate of incorporation; was from that time forward one of its Directors; was its first President, and continued in that office for ten years, from 1863 to 1873. Declining a reëlection to the Presidency in the latter year, on account of the pressure of other cares, he continued for three years longer to be Chairman of the Executive Committee, and remained a member of the Board of Directors until his death.

His affectionate and intelligent interest in the Society was unailing, and he has been from the first one of the most generous and helpful of all the contributors to its rapidly increasing collection of books, pamphlets, autographs, manuscripts, and objects of art and of scientific interest. His own wide studies, and rare attainments, along the lines especially of historical and scientific research, had made him familiar with the needs of

studious men, and with the helps most sure to be of welcome service to them; and, with an unflagging liberality, he gave to our Library and Museum, from his rich inherited or acquired collections, whatever seemed likely to minister most directly to the wants of other less fortunate scholarly men. He did it all, too, with a quiet modesty as engaging and memorable as was the generosity which it accompanied. As long as the Library shall continue to be the resort of those pursuing the researches which it is established and intended to assist, they will be largely indebted to him for the breadth of its range, for its liberal hospitality to all forms of human thought, and all the records of human work, as well as for the many important works directly contributed to it by him. Even in the recent years, while failing health has detained him from our meetings and confined him closely to his own house, his interest in the Library has been undiminished, and his gifts to it have been frequent and large. He will have upon our shelves, and in our alcoves, which he has helped richly to fill, that monument of himself which we cannot but feel that he would most have desired, until human history ceases to be written.

Of the personal qualities of Mr. BREVOORT, as manifested in all his relations to this Board, and to those individually associated in it, as well as to those assisting in the Library, it is not possible for us to speak in terms surpassing the claims of the truth. Always courteous, modest, amiable, wise in counsel, kindly in spirit, graceful and conciliatory in manner, with a mind open to all suggestions, and a clear discernment of what promised to advance the highest welfare of the Society, he has had a place in our esteem peculiar to himself, and will continue to occupy such a place in our memory

while for us the years go on. It is with a keen sense of grief and loss that we recognize the fact that we are henceforth to miss from our earthly circles this cultivated gentleman, this delightful associate, this generous helper in good works, this beloved and honored personal friend.

Resolved—That this Minute be entered in full on our permanent Records, and that a copy of it, certified by the President and the Librarian, be sent to the family of Mr. BREVOORT.

MRS. URANIA BATTELL HUMPHREY.

The Board of Directors of the Long Island Historical Society has had the pleasure of receiving an official notice of the bequest of ten thousand dollars [\$10,000] made to it by the will of Mrs. Urania Battell Humphrey, for many years an honored resident of Brooklyn, who died in New-York on the 19th of November last. The husband of Mrs. Humphrey, Hon. James Humphrey, who for several years represented one of the districts of this city in Congress, and the memory of whom is still fresh among all who knew him, had been from an early date a member of this Society, and one of its Councilors. His scholarly tastes were naturally strongly attracted to it, and he entered into its plans and efforts with earnest interest. Only his early death prevented him from becoming one of its most useful and eminent Directors.

After his death Mrs. Humphrey, in fulfillment of a wish which he had expressed, gave to our Library the admirable portrait of Chief Justice Marshall, which her husband had possessed and justly prized, and which has been since among the chief ornaments of our rooms. She added, also, a large number of rare and valuable volumes which had been collected by her husband, and which were given as a memorial of him. When our present building was erected she gave two thousand

dollars to the Building Fund; to which she afterward added six hundred and fifty dollars for supplying a special alcove with biographies of women, or with books written by women, together with a choice collection of works on music.

She has now crowned the series of her gifts to the Library by the largest bequest which the institution has thus far received; and the Directors are sure that all members of the Society will feel a keen gratification at the fact that after years of absence from Brooklyn, and of the wearying pain and weakness of an invalid life, this lady, for many years brilliant and distinguished in the social life of the city, should have so generously remembered the institution in which her husband and her brother had taken deep interest, and the benefits of which her own educated intelligence and literary tastes enabled her fully to appreciate.

It is a noteworthy fact that the only two bequests which the Society has hitherto received, of which this is the larger, have come to it from ladies. It shows how near the Society stands to the best life of families, as well as to the minds of scholars; how strong is its attraction for all who feel in themselves, and who desire for others, the beauty and the blessing which come from access to a rich Library; and it furnishes an incentive, the force of which will not cease to be felt, to make the Society always more worthy of the affectionate regard and the liberal assistance of such as those whose gifts it has gratefully received and recorded.

Resolved—That this Minute be entered in full on our Records, and that a copy of it, duly certified, be sent to the executors of the will of Mrs. Humphrey.

JOHN GREENWOOD.

Our Society is called to the sad office of recording the death of the Hon. John Greenwood,— suddenly, at his home, on the afternoon of Sunday, the 11th inst. He was one of five gentlemen of this county who called the first meeting on March 3d, 1863, to organize the Society, and of those five, he is the third who has already “paid the debt to nature.” At an adjourned meeting a week afterward, as chairman of a special committee, he reported the draft of a constitution and by-laws which were at once adopted. At the next meeting, on the 30th of the same month, on his motion, a committee of seven was appointed with power to “prepare a proper certificate of incorporation, and cause the same to be filed according to the Revised Statutes,” and thus the organization was completed.

He was born in Providence, R. I., in 1798, and on the 6th of November last entered the 90th year of his age. Few men have been so long well known, respected and honored in our city and State.

He was a diligent and accomplished classical scholar, thoroughly proficient in the best English literature, and in good measure familiar with the French and German languages. He was fond of Natural Science. But his ardent love of his profession was paramount to all else, and he made all other knowledge subserve that.

Thus he became a profoundly versed lawyer and jurist. Sagacious, logical, earnest, he was always effective as an advocate before a jury, or in argument and appeal to the Bench. On the Bench himself, he was dignified, courteous, patient, conscientiously upright; learned, luminous, showing fine analytical power, and firmness in his decisions, yet always strictly impartial. Before a popular assembly, though never uttering a sentence for the mere sake of applause, he held the gratified attention of his audience by the unaffected elegance and purity of his style, and the aroused and admiring interest he was sure to attract to his subject.

Our lamented associate was public-spirited and always alive to the welfare of our beloved city. To his persistent, personal efforts, through the press, by popular appeal, and argument before the State Legislature are we in large measure indebted for the charter, originally drafted by his own hand, which made Brooklyn a city, and insured its rapid and wondrous prosperity and growth to the position of third in the Republic. At a period earlier than this he had been appointed by Governor Bouck Judge of our County Court of Common Pleas; and under the charter he was elected, in 1842, "Corporation Counsel," and in 1849, the first "City Judge." In all these offices his legal and juridical reputation was made prominent and enhanced; and when he resumed private practice, that followed him there to assured success, and in later years his known qualifications made him often Referee in very important cases. His career to the end was accompanied by a general appreciation of his influence and character; and of his readiness to serve whatever might promote the growth of true refinement, a pure and cultured taste, the love of literature, good education and philan-

thropy in our great city. Hence we find him one of the founders and long the President of the Hamilton Literary Association,—the First Vice-President of the Philharmonic Society,—a Director from the beginning and one of the Executive Committee of the Academy of Music. These last, from his indigenuous love and knowledge of music in general, while his hearty love of sacred music in especial prompted him, an accomplished amateur as he was, with a rich repertoire of his own collecting of the works of the best masters at his command, to volunteer in its early consecration several years' admirable service at the organ of his chosen church. He had also been a very useful member of the Board of Education, and an active trustee of the City Hospital. But the officers of this Society would emphasize by this Minute on its permanent Records their grateful recognition of his important services as one of its founders, and for eleven consecutive years, from its formation, its first Vice-President, and one of its Councilors to the last. They miss the urbane and attractive manner of their departed associate, and the pure and elevated tone of life and conversation which marked him as a Christian gentleman. For Judge Greenwood was a religious man, a devout Christian, an active and faithful member of his own church, but of broad and generous sympathies with all of every name who "loved the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth."

He was possessed of very warm and tender feelings, and was a faithful and constant friend. In social life, through his large intercourse with men, and many of them men of mark, his wide reach of study, his stores of anecdote, his careful, thoughtful observation of the times, and his conversational gifts,—he was a delight-

ful and instructive companion. In his domestic relations he was exemplarily faithful, affectionate, and fondly loved. Nothing, too, could be more charming or beautiful to witness than, in his immediate household, how, with no jars or disquiet, his own tolerant and gentle temper kept its various members, Romanist and Protestant as they were, and the latter of various names and forms, "in the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace"—"forbearing one another in love." The last Sabbath morning of his life on earth was spent with his fellow-worshipers in his wonted house of prayer, the Church of the Saviour, on Pierrepont Street; and with the parting benediction yet vibrating on his ears, on the very threshold of his home, the mortal stroke came; and in a few hours peacefully, gently, with the setting sun, his soul went to its God.

ALFRED S. BARNES.

At a meeting of the Society held March 8, 1888, the following Minute was adopted :

MR. ALFRED S. BARNES, who died at his residence in this city on the 17th of February, had been a member of this Society from a very early period in its history, and a Director of it for twenty-one years, since 1867. He had been also a member of its Executive Committee since 1876, and his contributions to it had been repeated and liberal; of \$500 to its early Library fund, of an equal amount toward the purchase of the lots on which its building was subsequently erected, and of \$3000 toward the building itself.

Those who have been associated with him in the Board of Directors in this institution will always remember, as will those similarly connected with him in other institutions, his wisdom in counsel, his habitual kindness of feeling and word, his attractive and spontaneous courtesy of manner, his hearty interest in the good work to which he gave, not money alone, but time and thought, with earnest care, his enlightened public spirit, and his conscientious faithfulness in the discharge of all duties committed to him. Those who enjoyed the privilege of a more intimate personal acquaintance with him will also delight to recall his exemplary purity of character and of action, his loyal affectionateness of spirit, and his sincere and energetic Christian faith.

As the head of a large publishing-house he was careful that nothing should go from its presses which did not tend, in his judgment, to the true intellectual and moral education of those before whose eyes it should come. As for many years a leading citizen of our rapidly growing community his influence was always strenuously exerted for what he deemed its highest welfare ; and while he can have left no enemies behind him, he has left multitudes of attached and honoring friends to recall with gladness the fine and strong traits and powers which bound them to him, and to mourn the event which has taken him from them.

It is a rich and beautiful inheritance which any recent and sympathetic community, rapidly increasing in numbers and power, receives from the character and life, as well as from the gifts, of those who take part with continuing enthusiasm in establishing its institutions of culture, of charity, or of Christian worship. Their gifts of moral impulse and guidance are of even higher value than their pecuniary offerings. Unconsciously, perhaps, they set the standard toward which others are lifted ; and the city itself, as well as the immediate household of one so intent on the public welfare, becomes to him a constant debtor. Its obligations to him continue while its history goes on. On the list of those who have thus made themselves permanent benefactors of the city in which we are glad to live, they who have known it during the more than forty years' of Mr. Barnes's residence in it, will heartily join in giving to his name its place of honor.

Resolved — That the foregoing Minute be entered in full on our Records, and that a copy of it, certified by the President and the Librarian, be sent to the family of Mr. Barnes.

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