

Prentice Mellen Whitman 1838-1916

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Prof. P.M. Whitman Died Yesterday

Prominent and Highly Regarded Citizen and Business Man of Augusta

The news of the death of Prof. Prentice Mellen Whitman, which occurred yesterday afternoon at half past three o'clock, at his home, 20 Elbert St, will come as a distinct shock and surprise to his countless friends throughout the city and the state. Professor Whitman had not been in robust health for about a year and had been confined to the house for some days, but he was not considered ill. Thursday he suffered an apoplectic stroke and died Friday at 2 pm.

A funeral service was held at his residence, in the presence of a few intimate friends and close neighbors, last night at 8 o'clock, conducted by the Rev Joseph Sevier of the First Presbyterian Church, but the interment will take place today in the family section in Beaufort, SC, the funeral cortege leaving early this morning for Beaufort.

In 77th Year of His Age

Professor Whitman was in his 77th year. He was born in Bangor, Maine. The early years of his life were spent in the North and he married a northern lady, Miss Sarah Eustis, of Maine. When they first came south they made their home in Beaufort, from where they moved years ago to Augusta.

Professor Whitman was one of the first scientific opticians ever in the south. His office formerly was in the old Chronicle Building on the south side of the 700 block. Later he moved to upper Broad and then to McIntosh Street, and in all these places he conducted a successful business, having been considered one of the leading and most successful opticians of the entire South.

During the past year, as he felt the infirmities of age approaching, he sold out his business to Moorman & Sancken and has retired from all business cares ever since. Professor Whitman is survived by his devoted wife. His niece, Mrs W R Bristol of Beaufort, is his nearest relative in this section. Mr Bristol is a prominent business man there.

A Splendid Gentleman

There was probably no man of his generation in the entire community better known and more universally respected than Professor Whitman. He was a consecrated Christian and one of the most faithful and consistent members of the First Presbyterian Church. He stood high in the business world, for his perfect integrity caused his word to be as good as his bond on all and every occasion. While Professor Whitman never seemed to care much for social life, he was always gracious and pleasant to young people as well as old, but seemed to want to be always the close companion of his wife, one of them rarely ever being seen in public without the other. It was a beautiful married life, and a lesson to the younger people of the community. The sincerest sympathy of all who knew them will be extended to his bereaved wife in this hour of sorrow, and throughout Georgia and South Carolina many friends will mourn his loss.

Death and Funeral of Mr. P.M. Whitman

Mr. Prentiss Whitman, son of Alden and Betsey Whitman, was born near Bangor, ME August 9, 1838.

He came to Beaufort in 1864 and opened a jewelry store on Bay Street, continuing in business there till he sold out to Mr W.R. Bristol. He bought the pleasant estate on the corner of Green and Carteret Sts., now owned by Mr. Claghorn, and in March 1875 brought hither his bride, Miss Sarah Eustis of Auburn, ME.

Two children were born to them, Charles, a beautiful boy who died at the age of 2 years; and Herbert, an unusually interesting lad, who died at the age of fourteen, after the family had moved to Augusta.

Mr. P.M. Whitman wrote to his mother, soon after he located in Beaufort, that he had joined a Bachelor's Club whose members neither swore, not smoked, nor drank, nor gambled. His letters induced his older brother, J.A. Whitman, to come here and later bring his family and buy an estate and to spend his life here. Their parents also spent their last years in Beaufort.

During the twenty-five years of his residence here, Mr Whitman was the lifo of his large circle of friends, admired and loved not only for his clean life and sterling character but for his bright, genial and charming personality, which won all who knew him.

His health had been failing slowly for several years, altho when he came with Mrs Whitman to spend Christmas with his niece, Mrs W.R. Bristol, he seemed much improved. A clot formed on his brain and he died very quietly in his Augusta home on the 14th of this month. A funeral service was held there at eight o'clock that night.

Like many more of our native New Englanders who have come to the Sea Islands, "Beaufort" was written on his heart. And here his earthly body was laid to rest last Saturday, in the family lot in the Baptist Churchyard.

While living in Beaufort his as a member of the Episcopal Church, serving as vestryman during the pastorates of Dr. Kershaw and Dr Hay.

Rev. Boyd read the funeral services, and the group of his old friends went away sorrowing that they should see his face no more. His grave was covered with lovely flowers and floral designs, from friends in Augusta and Beaufort.