THOMAS CLOWES

Hon. Thomas Clowes was born in Marblehead, Mass., Aug. 5, 1791. His father and uncles were seafaring men. While a boy he went to sea with his uncle, making two voyages across the Atlantic. While the vessel was lying in the harbor near Lisbon, the famous Milan and Berlin decrees were issued, closing the ports of all Europe. After several months the captain put to sea, escaped the British and French cruisers, and arrived safely at the port of Marblehead. His father, brother and one uncle were lost at sea. In the year 1806 he went to live with an uncle, who had settled in the town of Brunswick, with the promise of becoming heir to his property. He subsequently fitted for college under the instruction of Rev. Mr. Banks, of Montgomery County, and entered the sophomore class. He remained a student for two years, when, upon the death of his uncle, his personal attention was required in the settlement of the estate, and he came to Troy and entered the office of Ross & McConihie as a student of the law. While pursuing his law studies the late Gov. Wm. I. Marcy came to the city, and the two young men became warm personal and political friends.

He was a diligent student, became a good scholar, and could repeat whole pages of Homer's Iliad in the original Greek. He was a good lawyer, and was the first man in Rensselaer County who engaged in Chancery practice.

Although his father and uncles were Federalists, he became, by the teachings of his mother, and Anti-Federalist and Republican, and engaged when a boy in all the political discussions of the day. For some years he was the owner and editor of the Budget, whose columns owed all their political weight and character to his vigorous pen. When the Republican party split into two factions he sided with the Bucktails against the Clintonians, and consequently, in the contest for the Presidency after Monroe, he, with a large fraction of the Bucktails, supported Adams. He was a man of positive opinions, and always followed his convictions. He was a National Republican, and a firm adherent of Mr. Clay; and afterwards a strong member of the Anti-Masonic party, of the Whigs, Fusionists, and Republicans. In 1831, Mr. Clowes was prominent in his efforts to procure the nomination of Mr. Seward for Governor, and in 1836 his influence carried the county and decided the vote in the convention in favor of Mr. Seward. He was appointed by Gen. Taylor postmaster of Troy, and held the office about fifteen months, when he was removed by Mr. Fillmore because he would not support the compromise measures. Mr. Seward's friendship obtained from Mr. Lincoln his nomination for postmaster a second time. He was reappointed a third time by President Johnson, but did not live to enter upon the duties of the office. He was surrogate of the county from 1811 to 1827; recorder from 1823 to 1828; alderman of the Second ward from 1833 to 1839; and served one term as county treasurer in 1832. He was canal appraiser from 1840 to 1844. He was elected canal commissioner in 1856, but was jugged out of office.
by the convention of that year. He was appointed by
joint resolution of the Legislature to fill out the
unexpired term of Jones, resigned. He was appointed
State assessor, April 18, 1849, and served one term
of two years.

He was elected a trustee of the Troy Female Seminary
in 1827; was a constant and wise friend of the institution,
and for nearly forty years always watchful to pro-
mote its best interests.

In the many legislative contests over measures affect-
ing the interests of Troy he always took an efficient part.
He was a stubborn opponent of the often tried, often
defeated, project to build a bridge over the Hudson at
Albany, and the city is mainly indebted to him for the
charters of the Troy and Greenbush and Troy and Schenec-
tady Railroads. He began, as alderman, the system of
sewage and macadamized roads which has done so much
for the health and cleanliness of the city, and advocated
strongly the purchase of Ida Hill by the city for a public
park. In 1824 he set out trees in Seminary Park, of
which one in each corner now survives. He also set out
the trees in the Court House Park. He was remarkable for
his good judgment in public affairs, and for his skill
and tact in devising ways and means to obviate unforeseen
difficulties. In two instances were Mr. Clowes' suggestions
of notable import,—in the act known as the "Hold-Over Law,"
and in the "Metropolitan Police Bill." In all the relations
of life Mr. Clowes was emphatically an honest man, and
discharged public and private trusts with strict integrity.
His mind was a storehouse of political information as well
as of classical literature. He was full of anecdotes
relating to public men and public measures. Upon the
occasion of his death, April 9, 1866, the Rensselaer
County Bar passed fitting resolutions, accompanied with
appreciative addresses of the services and usefulness of
their worthy but deceased brother.

On July 6, 1818, he married Nancy Cox, of Nassau, but
at the time of her marriage of Cambridge, Washington Co.,
N. Y. Of their children only one daughter reached maturity,
Mrs. P. S. Mallory, of Troy, who has two sons and one
daughter,—Thomas Mallory, a merchant of Troy; James H.
Mallory, in the post-office service at Troy; and Mrs.
Charles C. Craft, of Pittsburgh, Pa.

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Nathaniel Bartlett Sylvester
Everts & Peck
Philadelphia
1880