

UNION COLLEGE
SCHENECTADY
NEW YORK

March 3, 1937

Dear Dr. Fox:

Mrs. Marie Cormack, 8 Mynderse Street, Schenectady, has presented Union College with four volumes of manuscript diaries of Thomas Palmer, ¹⁸⁰³'03 (Phi Beta Kappa), together with typescripts which can be used by researchers without harming originals.

I herewith turn over to you the manuscripts, and will keep the typed volumes until I can go through them to find a possible feature article in contents.

She says that there are possibly three volumes missing and these she may obtain for us, if a clue she is following is correct.

The present volumes of Mr. Palmer's diary Mrs. Cormack bought from a Mr. Shay of Hallenbeck's Book Store. He in turn got it from an antique collector who found them in an antique shop in Cherry Valley.

The volumes cover the following periods:

- I August 20, 1843 to September 30, 1844
- II October 1, 1844 to May 4, 1846
- III May 5, 1846 to December 21, 1847
- IV Jan 1, 1853 to December 31, 1853.

Since Mr. Thomas died in 1855, I presume the missing diaries cover December 18, 1847 to December 31, 1852, and 1854 to 1855.

As you may remember, Mr. Thomas was president of the Mohawk National Bank, County Superintendent of Schools(?), etc. He mixed himself a lot in politics, but did not run for office.

Milton M. Enzer
Milton M. Enzer

March 4, 1937

Mrs. Maria Cormack,
8 Wynderse Street,
Schenectady, N.Y.

My dear Mrs. Cormack:

Mr. Enser has just brought to my desk the highly appreciated gift that you have made to the College, the diaries of Judge Thomas Palmer, '05.

I have had time only to glance through them but perceive their rich sentimental value to the College and to Schenectady. It is clear that he was a sincere and pious man. I notice that E. S. Mann in his "Bench and Bar of Saratoga County" says: "No attorney in this county has gained the confidence of the farmers to the extent enjoyed by genial Tommy Palmer." The diaries are of great interest to anyone who desires to know Schenectady history, and I find there are many references to the College. For example, there is a good account of the semi-centennial celebration in 1845, which supplements what we have in the Pearson Diary. Judge Palmer evidently liked to try various styles of handwriting, though it is clear that they are all by the same person.

You may be assured that the diaries will be regarded as a very precious possession by the College and have adequate, indeed affectionate, care.

Thanking you again, I am,

Cordially yours,

Dixon Ryan Fox.

March 5, 1957

Mr. Helmer L. Webb,
Librarian of Union College.

My dear Mr. Webb:

Mrs. Marie Cormack, of 8 Wynderse Street, Schenectady, has given the College the diaries of Judge Thomas Palmer, Union College, 1805. I am sending herewith a letter which Mr. Eazer brought with the diaries and which has some descriptive material, and also a copy of a letter which I have written to Mrs. Cormack.

Cordially yours,

Dixon Ryan Fox.

Enc.

Dictated by President but
signed by secretary in his absence.

March 5, 1937

Mr. Milton M. Enser,
Silliman Hall,
Union College.

My dear Mr. Enser:

Thank you very much for all you have done with respect to the Palmer diaries. I am having them sent over to the Library. You might wish to say something about it in the local press and you might suggest to some bright fellow on the Concordiensis that this would make a good human interest story. There is some material about Palmer in the alumni files which such a writer could use.

Cordially yours,

Dixon Ryan Fox.

Enc.

Dictated by President but
signed by secretary in his absence.

CLASS OF 1803

THOMAS PALMER

Died:-- In this city, on the 9th inst., Thomas Palmer, Esq., attorney at law, and Recorder of this city, aged 70 years.

The friends and acquaintances are respectfully invited to attend his funeral, tomorrow (Wednesday) afternoon, at 3 o'clock, from his late residence, No. 27 Washington St.

The Schenectady Cabinet

Tuesday, April 10, 1855.

Prof. Pearson's Scrap Book p. 401

THOMAS PALMER 1803 signs himself as Secretary of the Mohawk and Hudson Railroad Company.

From: A clipping in Prof. Pearson's Scrap Book p. 5

CLASS OF 1803

THOMAS PALMER

Was the first cashier of the Schenectady Bank which was organized in 1832. He was succeeded in 1843.

History of the County of Schenectady p. 144
Howell & Munsell

THOMAS PALMER, 1803, a resident of Ballston, N.Y., was a member of the Philomathean Society. He died in 1855.

Philomathean Catalogue 1830.

Copy for Mrs. Waldron

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(signed) Milton M. Enzer.

Palmer, Thomas
From: Ballston, N.Y.
Last Residence: Schenectady, N.Y.

03

Records show one
Thomas Palmer
Sgt. in Capt. Stephen D. Powell's Co.,
1st Regt. (Van Beuren's) N.Y. Militia.

Commencement of service: Sept 15, 1812
Expiration of service: Nov. 30, 1812

Palmer, Thomas

03

Records show one

Thomas Palmer

Pvt. in Capt. Andrew A. Van Der Zee's Co.,
61st Regt. (Carver's) N.Y. Militia.

Commencement of service: Sept 7, 1814

Expiration of service: Dec. 8, 1814

—“For they shall be called the children of God.”
—MATT. V. 9.

Died, at his residence in Schenectada, on the morning of the 9th of April, THOMAS PALMER, aged 70 years.

Mr. Palmer was born in Ballston, Saratoga County, on the 2nd of February, 1785. He was the son of the Hon. Beriah Palmer, one of the first settlers of Ballston, who was afterwards member of Congress for many years, and one of the most distinguished men in Saratoga County. Mr. Thomas Palmer entered Union College at the early age of fourteen, and graduated in 1803. In 1806 he commenced the practice of the Law in his native town, and subsequently held many offices of trust and responsibility there. In those days party spirit ran high in our State, and in no part of it more than in Saratoga County. Mr. Palmer became an ardent politician. His great power and readiness as a political writer commanded him the high respect of all parties, and his name became intimately associated with those of Young, Cramer, and Taylor, and the other distinguished men of that day. In 1832 he removed with his family to Schenectada, where he has since continued to reside.

Mr. Palmer was one of the most useful and beloved members of our community, and will be long and universally regretted. When he came to our city twenty-three years ago, it was the residence of a noble circle of old-fashioned Christian gentlemen—men of leisure and of competence, of superb personal appearance and marked individuality; and as much distinguished for their intelligence and refinement as they were widely renowned for their abundant and overflowing hospitality. Who can speak even now without emotion, the revered names of Duane, of Martin, of Mumford, of Yates, of Walton, of Kane, of De Graff, and of Craig, and their cherished associates? And who can remember those lovely old men as they were, with their enthusiastic natures, their sterling virtues, their cheerful dispositions and benevolent countenances, but with a reverence too great for words, and a love almost unutterable! Among this accomplished circle, and as if born to be one of them, Mr. Palmer immediately took his place, and continued to be esteemed by them while life lasted. One by one the members of that glorious band have passed away from among us. Mr. Palmer was one of the very last; and around him, as about a crumbling, yet still remaining pillar of a once noble edifice, the affections of many a bereaved heart had clung, alas! but too closely.

But he possessed qualities which eminently entitled him to our love and regret for his own sake. He was intellectual and cultivated, amiable and affectionate, cheerful and witty, and pure and upright in heart. His eminent social qualities, and the happy facility which he possessed of making all pleased with themselves, made him always a favourite, wherever he might be. But far above all else was he distinguished for his benevolence and his disinterestedness. No one ever knew Thomas Palmer to seek anything whatever for his own personal gratification; it was the delight of his heart to sacrifice his own happiness to that of others. His benevolence was not ostentatious. He did not build churches or found hospitals, or send missionaries to distant lands; although he might have done all these things had God blessed him with the means; but he loved his race, and loved, too, to occupy himself with those little benevolences which add so much to the comfort of every hour, and make so many happy. His heart and his hand were always open to the necessities of those around him. He fed the hungry, comforted the distressed, rejoiced with the happy, sympathized with the mourner, and soothed the sensitive, as none but a refined and delicate nature like his own could have done. Of a profession whose interest it would seem to be, rather to promote the separation of friends than the reconciliation of enemies, he was yet well known in his native county as “the Peacemaker”—a name and office more honourable in the sight of God than if he had conquered kingdoms or ascended thrones. Yet with all this gentleness and tenderness of his nature, no man could more sternly rebuke error, or more keenly satirize arrogance and pretension. He wrote with equal facility both poetry and prose, had a lively sense of the ridiculous, and was particularly happy in his humorous delineations of character.

With all this, he was a devout and humble Christian. He was brought up a Presbyterian, but became attached to the Episcopal Church in early life, and had been a communicant for more than forty years. He held the office of Vestryman in St. George's Church, Schenectada, for more than twenty years; and was looked up to as a father there. He loved his Church—he loved its sublime services and its holy Sacraments. But religion was not with him an excitement of the imagination, or a form without the power. It was his ever ready friend, his comfort through a life, alas! too much overshadowed by sorrow, and his solace in long years of lingering disease.

The sufferings of his dying bed were extreme; but “the everlasting arms” were around him, and he would frequently, though with difficulty, break forth with sublime passages of Scripture, or touching lines from some of his favourite hymns. His end at the very last was peaceful, and he passed away with a smile. Who can tell, at that moment, what glories may have been revealed to him!

H. M. R.

Clifton Springs, April 18, 1855.

Alumni

U. A. M. 1803 June 1937

Mrs. Marie Cormack of Schenectady has presented to the college four volumes of the diary of THOMAS PALMER. Mr. Palmer was County Clerk of Saratoga County for many years; but removed to Schenectady to accept the office of cashier of the Schenectady Bank, organized in 1832.

2/23/1855

Palmer, Thomas U.C. 17? 1203
-remembers Pres. Edwards well...
gives much interesting material on Edward's work as a teacher.
Pearson Diaries Vol. 4-a
remembers Dr. Maxcy well

Union College

23 WASHINGTON AVENUE
SCHENECTADY, NEW YORK

Levi H Palmer, 1799 and
Thomas Palmer, 1803 were the sons
of Hon. Bariat Palmer ^{of Ballston}, one of the original
members of the College.

Levi Palmer was County Clerk of Saratoga
1813-15, but subsequently moved to
Albany where he practiced his profession
until his death in 1850.

Thomas Palmer was Surrogate of Saratoga
1812-13, 1815-6, County Clerk 1818-1833.
when he resigned to accept the office of
Cashier on the founding of the Schenectady
Bank. He moved to Schenectady and
resided there until his death
April 9, 1855-

1803 THOMAS PALMER.

DIED: In Schenectady, on Saturday evening last,
Mr. William H. Palmer, Cashier of the Schenectady
Bank, and eldest son of Thomas Palmer, aged 27 years.
Daily Albany Argus, Jan.18, 1845.

CLASS OF 1803

THOMAS PALMER

County Clerk Thomas Palmer was, also a son of Judge Beriah Palmer and a nephew of the Thomas Palmer who was one of the commissioners to survey the patent of Kayaderosseras in 1796. He was graduated from Union College in the class of 1803, studied law, and began its practice in Ballston Spa. On the death of his father, who was incumbent of the office, he was appointed surrogate, March 31, 1812, held the office one year, and was again appointed, February 17, 1815, and performed its duties until July 8, 1816. He was appointed clerk, June 16, 1818, and held the office until he resigned, January 1, 1833; having been elected under the constitution of 1821, and re-elected until that time. He was elected supervisor of Milton in 1822, and successively re-elected until and including 1832. When he was county clerk he kept the records, at first, in his office in the building now occupied as a residence by Alfred Nixon at the west end of Front street, Ballston Spa. In 1824, the legislature authorized the erection of a "suitable building for the preservation of the county records," at an expense of \$1,000, and appointed Edward Watrous, Eli Barnum and Moses Williams a committee of construction. The result was the erection of the familiar stone edifice which for forty-two years was designated as the "county clerk's office." It was first occupied by clerk Palmer in the autumn of 1824. The occasion of his resignation was his appointment by the directors of the Schenectady bank (then a new institution) to be its cashier. He accepted the offer and removed to that city, where he died in 1855. No attorney in this county ever gained the confidence of the farmers to the extent enjoyed by genial "Tommy Palmer." Whatever he told them they accepted as legal truth, and he never belied their trust.

FROM The Bench and Bar of Saratoga County
Enos R. Mann
Waterbury & Inman
Ballston, N. Y. 1876.

Thomas Palmer AB-1803

Thomas Palmer

H. B.
1803