I found an interesting biographical sketch of Israel Ward, Class of 1799. Upon graduation he became principal of the academy at Honesdale, Pa. In 1801 he went to Orange, N.Y., to teach and while there began the study of theology. He was licensed to preach by the Presbyterian Church in May 5, 1802, and accepted a call to the First Society of Orange, Conn., March 21, 1813, and served there with great success until his death, August 3, 1816. Our Catalogue says he resided from Orange County, and died in 1824. He resided from Bloomfield, N.J.

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Israel Ward, 1799, of Orange County, was a member of the Adelphic Society. He died in 1824. Adelphic Catalogue 1895
Ward, Israel
From: Orange Co., N.Y.

Records show one
Israel Ward
Fifer in Capt. James McDonald's Co.,
23rd Regt. (Cook's) N.Y. Militia.

Commencement of service: Sept 9, 1814
Expiration of service: Sept 20, 1814
Sketch of the Life, Death, and Character of the late Israel Ward, Pastor of the First Church and Society in Danbury, in the County of Fairfield, and State of Connecticut.

It has seldom happened, that the death of an individual has made as deep or solemn an impression upon the minds of those who knew him, as that of the late Rev. Israel Ward. The excellencies of his character, indeed, seem to have been universally acknowledged by persons of all classes and denominations; and his sudden and unexpected end has called forth the expressions of lamentation and regret. On this occasion, it is due to the public sentiment respecting the deceased, as well as to the claims of friendship and affection, to give a brief account of his life, death, and character.

Mr. Ward was born on the 24th day of November, A.D. 1779, in the parish since called Bloomfield, in the town of Newark, and State of New Jersey. In early youth he is said to have possessed a fine constitution of body and to have enjoyed almost uninterrupted health.

While yet a mere child, he discovered a strong taste and inclination for study. He seldom mingled in the sports and amusements of those of his years, but was remarkable for his docility and attention to the instructions of his preceptors.

His parents being in easy circumstances, early determined to give him a liberal education. With this view, at the age of eleven, he was put to the study of the Latin and Greek languages; and in the month of September A.D. 1790, entered the class of History and Belles Lettres in Union College, in the State of New York. Here his application to study was unremitting and severe; in consequence of which his health became considerably impaired, and his constitution received a shock, from which, it is probable, it never wholly recovered. At college, he was distinguished for regularity of habits and purity of morals, and his standing as a scholar, among his contemporaries, is said to have been highly respectable. He was admitted to the degree of Bachelor of Arts at the public Commencement in May, A.D. 1799.

It is not known, that, at this time, he had made choice of any profession. Indeed, it is understood, that his views, as to the employment of his future life, were then wholly unsettled. To this circumstance it was, doubtless, owing, in
part, that in the month of October following, he consented to become the teacher of a public school. He first took charge of the academy in Hanover, in Morris County, in his native State, where he continued until the 11th day of August, A.D. 1800. Here it was that he first became acquainted with the amiable lady, whom he afterwards married, and who now lives to mourn the loss of her dearest and best earthly friend. He removed to Orange-Dale in January, A.D. 1801, and officiated as teacher of the academy in that place until the 17th day of the following April.

It must have been not far from the time when he left Hanover, that his attention was awakened to the subject of religion, for he ever attributed his first serious impressions, under God, to the death of a beloved mother; an event which happened on the 15th day of October, A.D. 1800, and which he never recollected but with the tenderest regret. Then, for the first time, he truly saw and felt that he was a sinner, and that he needed mercy and forgiveness. Then, as he has since said, the first sincere prayer to God escaped his lips. At this time, as we humbly trust, he experienced the renovation of character so strongly marked in the succeeding period of his life, being made the subject of that repentance which is unto life, and of that hope, which is an anchor to the soul. He remained no longer in doubt as to the choice of a profession; but considered, that God, by his late providences toward him, distinctly called him to enter upon the work of the ministry. Accordingly, on the 1st day of January, A.D. 1801, he regularly commenced the study of Divinity, under the care of the Rev. Dr. Griffin, now one of the professors in the Theological Institution at Andover. He returned to Hanover, however, in the following May, and continued his studies under the tuition of the Rev. Aaron Condict. He did not become a communicant in any church, until the 26th day of July, A.D. 1801, when he first entered into covenant with God and his people at Hanover. To what this delay was owing cannot now be known; probably to that humble sense of his own unworthiness, and that distrust of his own attainments, which every real Christian is sure to feel.

On the 6th day of October, A.D. 1801, he was taken under the care of the Presbytery of New York, and was licensed as a candidate for the ministry on the 5th day of the succeeding May. He did not visit Danbury until some time in the month of September after he was licensed; when passing through that place on a journey to the Eastward, he was requested to tarry and preach in the First Society, for a single Sabbath. He consented, after some hesitation, and preached accordingly.
To this seeming accident, but real Providence of God, are his people thus indebted for all the pious labours of their late beloved pastor. In November following, the First Society still continuing vacant, he received an invitation to preach there on probation. He accepted the invitation, and first preached in pursuance of it in the second Sabbath in December, A.D. 1802. On the 21st day of March, 1803, the Society, by their vote, gave him a call to settle with them in the Gospel ministry. In the meeting which was then held, and at which there was a very general attendance, when the resolution to give him a call was taken, there was but a single dissenting voice; and when the sense of the Church was afterwards expressed on the same question, their concurrence was unanimous. After due consultation with the Presbytery to which he belonged, he accepted the united call of the church and Society, and received ordination on the 25th day of May, A.D. 1803.

Here commenced the most interesting period in his valuable life. He was settled as Pastor of a numerous charge scattered over the greater part of an extensive village, to most of whom he was personally a stranger. At that time, though the Society had been vacant for a considerable period, a spirit of serious inquiry on the subject of religion prevailed pretty extensively among its members. These circumstances, though the latter of them was highly desirable, concurred to increase the weight of his labour and responsibility, nor was his local situation such as to admit the possibility of his burden's being borne in any part by others. His brethren of neighbouring societies were generally stationed at such distances as effectually to preclude frequent communication or assistance. He alone, and on all occasions, had to act the part of pastor and teacher, and to perform all the multiplied labours incident to his station. It should be added, that he was placed in a situation, which required not only continued exertion, but the utmost prudence, and this, too, at an age when that quality is rarely possessed in any considerable degree. He was to act under the eye of people of different religious denominations, who, though generally friendly, would be more likely to note his errors than those with whom he was more intimately connected.

Under these circumstances, Mr. Ward, then a youth, had to establish a character, and to perform a work. He entered upon his duties fully sensible of their magnitude, and with a solemnity corresponding to their importance. How he discharged them, during the whole of his short but well-spent life, can never be forgotten by those among whom he laboured. Of his own insufficiency for so arduous a work, he used to make frequent mention; but then he would add, "I can do all things through Christ strengthening me."
One of the earliest objects of his attention was to gain of the circumstances, views, and characters of his people in all parts of the Society. For this purpose, he instituted visits to the families of his parishioners in rotation. At the close of the exercises on the sabbath, he usually named the families to be visited in the succeeding week; and was always punctual to those appointments. This practice he continued as regularly as possible through life, considering, as he used to say, that a clergyman had many other duties to perform besides those of the sabbath and the desk. At these interviews, the conversation generally passed by an easy transition from personal and domestic concerns to the subject of religion, and he used to impart much useful instruction in a familiar and persuasive manner. At parting he gave the families his blessing, and seldom failed to leave behind him the most durable impression of friendship. How endearing an intercourse was this! How pleasing, and yet how mournful a subject of recollection to his afflicted people!

These and other avocations, however useful or necessary, were never permitted to interfere with the regular duties of his office. Never, when in health, unless his desk was supplied by others, did he fail to deliver two well-digested discourses on the sabbath; besides occasional, and, at certain seasons, stated lectures on other days. He appointed meetings to be held for prayer and religious conversation each week, at which he was a constant attendant, and for a considerable length of time, additional meetings for young people, in which he discoursed to them in a familiar way on subjects of theology. In the summer season, the intermission of the sabbath was principally spent in instructing young children in the catechism. By these means he steadily and faithfully endeavoured to render his ministry serviceable to all ranks and ages, and to make religion the inmate of every dwelling and every bosom. Over his Church especially he kept a watchful eye; maintaining that strict discipline was indispensably necessary, and that the want of it was one principal cause, or at least certain evidence, of declension in religion. Yet in performing the most painful and rigorous offices, he was ever mild and conciliatory; and his friendly admonitions rarely failed to reach the hearts of any who were not absolutely irreclaimable. To so great and so various labours, it will naturally be supposed, his enfeebled constitution was, at no time, equal. Of this he was frequently admonished by his friends; but he uniformly felt and expressed the conviction, that "his life is long that answers life's great end." In short, though he was fully sensible that his hold on life was feeble, he esteemed none too great to be attempted in the cause of his divine master; and he was so happy while living, as to see the work of the Lord apparently prospered in his hands. During the short period of his ministry, one hundred and forty-six members were added to the Church under his care.
But the time was now fast approaching, which was to terminate at once all his trials and labours in this life; the time, when he himself was to give an example of the efficacy of that religion, which he had so often preached to others. He had instructed others how to live; he was now to teach them how to die. On the 24th day of July, it being sabbath, he performed the divine service as usual, but was more than ordinarily fatigued by his exertions. These were the last public acts of his ministry. The next day, he was seized with a slight ague, which was followed by a fever, and a dry and troublesome cough. His chills, cough, and fever, continued regularly through the week; but were not so violent or alarming, as to confine him to his house. He frequently walked abroad, visited his friends, and attended to some business, until the sabbath following; when his chills left him and his fever became more regularly continued. On this day, he applied for medical aid. Every exertion was now made, which the nature and symptoms of his complaint seemed to authorize or require to arrest its progress, but without any visible effect, until Monday of the succeeding week.

Then, for a short time, there appeared signs of a favourable crisis; but it proved to be only partial and incomplete. On Tuesday afternoon, his symptoms returned; his nerves became affected, and his reason, which he had enjoyed perfectly until now, became subject to occasional, though slight, interruptions. On Wednesday, no rational hopes of a recovery could be entertained. He continued to languish under the increasing weight of his disease, which was a typhus fever, until about half past seven o'clock in the morning of the 3rd day of August, when he expired almost without a groan. His funeral was attended in the afternoon of the following day, by the clergy of the neighbouring societies, and by a numerous concourse of people. An able and impressive discourse was preached on the occasion by the Rev. Dr. Ely of Huntington.

During the distressing period of his last sickness, the deceased bore his pains of body with almost unequalled patience and resignation. His features were generally composed, and his countenance placid and serene. He was attentive to distinguish the faces of his friends as they approached his bed, and addressed them in the most tender language of consolation. On observing one of a religious character to weep, he asked, "Why do you mourn?" and added that "Saints should always be joyful." Sensible that the solemn hour of death was near, on Thursday, he called his family around him, gave them his blessing, and received their parting embraces; remarking even then, when every tender emotion rushed upon his heart, that he had long since given them up to God. For the people of his charge, he expressed, at the same time, the deepest concern, and preferred the most fervent petition to his Saviour. As his bodily
strength declined, his faith and hope apparently became more strong and animated. "Come quickly," said he, "Lord Jesus, O come quickly; why should thy servant plead in vain?"—and at another time, "I have done with the world. I have done my work. I am content, am perfectly free from all desires, except Christ and Heaven. O Jesus, do not tarry. O my God, Jehovah, Jesus, come and relieve thy servant, come and take me to thy self." When asked, why he was so anxious to depart, and whether he was in great pain of body? he replied, "No; but my work here is done." Being requested, at a particular time, to give another proof of his hope, he said, "My foundation is sure and stably fixed on Jesus, the rock of my salvation. I fear nothing, no; nothing;" and a few minutes afterwards, "I know in whom I have believed. God is a faithful covenant-keeping God, I have proved him so. My trust and confidence are firm and strong. Come, death, I fear thee not. O to be delivered from this body of sin." After a little rest, he thus addressed himself to those around him. "My friends, I am commanded from the Lord to depart. This has been communicated to me for some time past. The Lord thought it not time yet; but has reserved me according to his blessed will. Oh, do pray for me, that I may now go and leave this body of sin; that I may be with the Lord through all eternity. Your sorrows hinder my departure." He then exhorted them all to "be good soldiers, and never give up the cause of Christ." When one said to him, that now he had done with prayer, and that all his business was praise, he replied, "The body of sin will not be destroyed, but by death. As long as the body survives, sorrow for sin will continue."

These remarks, and many others of a similar nature, were made by him at intervals, as the occasion called, or his strength enabled him to speak. On the last day he lived, being much exhausted, he was supposed to be hardly capable of uttering a single sentence; but after prayers had been offered up for him, he broke out in a loud, solemn, and pathetic, but short prayer for himself, to the astonishment of everyone present.

Such was the close of his life; a close not darkened by despair or doubts, but bright with the lustre of dawning immortality. The world has witnessed, in different instances, both the agonizing fears and the stupid insensibility of infidels in their last moments; but this scene represents the faith, the hope, the consolations, that inspire the heart and animate the tongue of the dying Christian.

Of the dead it becomes us to speak with caution. No praises of man can be of avail to them, their ears are forever closed to the voice of adulation, and their doom must remain unalterable through eternity. Still, when any person of eminent piety and worth, whatever may have been his destination here, is removed by death, his example should be recorded for the benefit of
those who survive him. The character of him who is the subject
of this memoir, may with advantage be taken as a model, by those
who shall be called to act in similar stations. His faith, his
patience, his humility, his resignation to the divine will, are
indeed worthy objects of imitation to every Christian; but that
rare union of so many excellent qualities as distinguished his
character, elevate him to be a pattern to a Christian minister.
It may be affirmed with truth, that no man, who has been com-
missioned to preach the Gospel in our days, has applied to the
duties or his sacred office, with more entire devotion of soul,
than he, by these, his short life was wholly engrossed. Of
his worldly interest, under other circumstances, he might per-
haps have been thought even too unmindful. To his family, at
parting, he left only his blessing, but he expressed little or
no concern on that account.

As a preacher, he was simple, grave, affecting and evan-
gelical. The doctrines of grace, which, in his view, were the
essential doctrines of the Christian system, were the great sub-
jects on which he most frequently insisted. Those who demand of
a minister of God only sober declamations on a few fashionable
topics of morality, and dignify such exhibitions with the name
of preaching, would hardly have listened to the sermons of Mr.
Ward. His sense of duty led him to select, for the most part,
themes far different from these. He was ever more intent on
illustrating divine truth, than on displaying his own talents
or extending his own popularity. The style of his public dis-
courses was remarkable for its plainness and simplicity; and
was equally adapted to the learned and the unlearned hearer.
His manner in the desk was impressive for its solemnity. A spirit
of rational piety or of animated devotion pervaded every part
of his performances. Wherever he found sincere inquiries after
the truth, he never failed to command attention; the self-right-
eous moralist and the hardened unbeliever could alone turn with
indifference from his instructions.

As a man, he united the manners of the gentleman to the more
exalted qualities of the Christian. His talents for conversa-
tion made him the delight and ornament of the private and domes-
tic circle. He could unite dignity with familiarity, and firm-
ness and decision, with the utmost gentleness of character.
Whenever he was seen in public or private, there was a sincerity
apparent in his manner, which instantly attracted confidence,
and a modesty and humility, which insensibly won esteem. It will
naturally be supposed that a man of so mild and amiable a temper
and disposition, must have had many friends. In this respect,
he was peculiarly happy; and it is questionable whether he has
left even one personal enemy among all those who knew him while
living. At his death, nearly all who were his acquaintances were
his mourners. Even those who knew him only by report, mingled
their tears with those of his kindred and people at his inter-
ment; so extensively was his loss realized, and so justly was his
character valued.
Israel Ward & References

Vol. 3, No. 9, pp. 589-599.

Rev. Israel Ward owned the place occupied by the late Ira Dibble. He was pastor of the First Congregational Church, and lies buried in the Wooster Cemetery. He died in 1810.

Hist. of Danbury, Conn.
James Montgomery Bailey
New York, 1896. p. 160