

CLASS OF 1823

LUCIEN SPENCER

Sometime about 1840 Doctor Lucien Spencer became a resident of Bethany (Conn) coming from Naugatuck, where he had previously practiced. He was a son-in-law of John Thomas, Esq., and lived on his old homestead, where is now the farm residence of George Woodward, a mile north of the center. One cold night in February, 1844, the house was destroyed by fire. In it were asleep two sons of Doctor Spencer, John and Henry, aged 12 and 14 years, whom it was vainly endeavored to arouse. In his efforts to save them Doctor Spencer entered a room, where he was caught by the flames, and all three lost their lives. The event cast a sad gloom over the entire surrounding country, as Doctor Spencer was well known and much esteemed.

History of New Haven Co., Conn. Vol. 2 p. 314  
J. L. Rocky & Co.  
New York  
1892.

LUCIAN SPENCER, 1823, of Waterbury, Conn., was a member of the Adelpic Society.  
Adelpic Catalogue 1830 (Died: 1844)

DESTRUCTION OF A DWELLING HOUSE--AWFUL DEATH OF A  
FATHER AND TWO CHILDREN.

(From the New Haven Courier)

Mr. Atwill--The following are the particulars connected with the shocking death of Dr. Lucien Spencer, of Bethany, and two of his children, which I learned to-day on the spot.

A few minutes after midnight last night some of the family discovered the house to be on fire. At this time the kitchen was nearly consumed, and Dr. Spencer and his wife had barely time to escape, not being even able to save a particle of clothing except such as was on them. Mrs. Spencer seized the two youngest children and brought them from the burning house. The doctor, however, appeared to lose all presence of mind from the very moment when he discovered the fire, and even rushed so near the flames and stood there, that the little clothing which he had on actually took fire. His wife drew him away, and endeavored to recall him to a sense of their situation, when he commenced throwing snow upon the fire. About this time, a girl, who lived in the family (and who expected that all the members of the family were out of the house) heard the children screaming, "Oh dear!" she exclaimed, "the children will be burnt to death," whereupon Mrs. Spencer (who had been so much concerned at the frantic and excited condition of her husband that she appeared to have forgotten everything else) rushed into the house to save her other two children. But the attempt was unavailing as the house was then all wrapt in flames. She returned and told her husband that they were doubtless dead before that time, (which was unquestionably the fact) but before she was aware of it, he had escaped from her sight. At first she supposed that he had started off down the street in his frenzy, and even for some minutes, she was not informed to the contrary. But he had been seen to rush into the house by a young man who was near. In fifteen minutes after he had entered, the roof fell in, and was entirely consumed. Nothing was saved, as some time occurred before the neighbors rallied, and water was obtained with difficulty.

A portion of the remains of Dr. Spencer and one of the children have been dug out of the burning ruins. There is nothing of each except the trunk, the head and limbs being wholly consumed. The children who ~~perished~~ perished in the flames were of the ages of ten and eight years respectively. The two saved were younger.

Dr. Spencer was a native of Naugtuck, at which place he has resided since he graduated at Yale College until within two years. He was in comfortable circumstances, aged about forty years and for some years has been celebrated as one of the most skilful physicians in New Haven county.

Wednesday, February 21st.

The children burnt were sleeping in the room in the second story, with a young man named Stevens, who saved himself by leaping from the window. The fire is supposed to have originated from hot ashes. Mrs. Spencer is in a state bordering on distraction.

Albany Argus  
February 26, 1844.