

L. G. M. FLETCHER PASSES AWAY; WAS A LANDMARK IN MANKATO

**Helped to Blaze the Way for the
Coming of the People to
This Section**

**He Assisted in Laying the Foun-
dation and Erecting Super-
structure of This City**

**Known as the Father of Educa-
tion Here; He Taught the
First Public School**

**His Life Was an Example For
Young Men to Follow; Man
of Sterling Worth**

From Friday's Daily.

Lafayette G. M. Fletcher passed away peacefully at his home just north of the city at 6:45 o'clock this morning, of pneumonia. Reports that his death had occurred were in circu-

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✦ WAS ONE OF THE PIONEERS ✦
✦ OF MANKATO. ✦
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L. G. M. FLETCHER.

From Friday's Daily.

Lafayette G. M. Fletcher passed away peacefully at his home just north of the city at 6:45 o'clock this morning, of pneumonia. Reports that his death had occurred were in circulation Wednesday evening and yesterday, and the public was prepared to receive the verified report this morning. In fact, his family and physicians have entertained few hopes of his recovery since pneumonia developed Monday morning. Three years ago, Mr. Fletcher suffered his first attack of this disease, and it left him in a greatly weakened condition, which he never fully recovered from, and when the second attack came this week he had not the vitality and reserve power to combat it that he possessed before.

Taken With a Severe Cold.

Mr. Fletcher was taken with a severe cold early last week, and by the close of the week became so hoarse that he could scarcely speak. Sunday he was taken ill, and Monday morning pneumonia developed. He had the best of medical care, but the fight was a hopeless one from the start. Mr. Fletcher continued to sink, with an occasional rallying spell, until last evening he passed into an unconscious condition, from which he did not recover.

Although not unexpected, Mr. Fletcher's death cast a shadow over the community, where he had lived and labored so long, and where he was so well known. He was one of the very earliest, as well as oldest, settlers in Mankato, and had lived here ever since the early days, when the state was a territory and Mankato a mere speck in the wilderness, with little more than a steamboat landing and a few shacks. But even then he had the foresight to know that a great future awaited this section, for he saw the undeveloped resources lying in the rich soil and the abundant timber and the

undeveloped resources lying in the rich soil and the abundant timber and the solid rock and the clay deposits, and lost no time in taking a claim, and upon that he lived ever since.

Evidence of Public Spirit.

By careful attention to details, incessant labor, and prudent investments, well handled, Mr. Fletcher succeeded in accumulating considerable means, and in recent enterprises calling for the exercise of public spirit and liberal donations, such as the building of the Y. M. C. A. building and the securing of the Lutheran ladies' seminary, and other things, he was one of the heaviest subscribers. He was liberal with his means where he thought it justified by the results sought, and was a free spender in the interests of the public schools, assisting with his own pocket-book in many things in which teachers and pupils were interested. While liberal with his private purse, he felt that in public office he had a public trust and carefully scrutinized all expenditures. He did not believe in the municipality spending money recklessly, and wanted something to show for what was expended.

His Interest in the Schools.

Perhaps Mr. Fletcher took more interest in the school affairs of the city than in any other one thing. He was one of the first teachers in the city, and served on the school board some thirty years, or longer than any other member. He has been called the father of the Mankato schools, and certainly no father ever took a deeper interest in the schooling of his own children than Mr. Fletcher did in seeing that the interests of all of the public school pupils were cared for rightly. Sometimes he did not agree with other members of the board or with superintendents, but his convictions were honest. He was a teacher of the old school, and believed that methods that had long been approved were

safe and reliable for the future, but when convinced that improved methods were not fads he was willing to adopt them. In his death, the schools lose a true friend.

Mr. Fletcher was proud of the fact that throughout his life he had assisted poor but worthy lads to strive for themselves, and he always watched their careers with interest. He helped many a struggling young man, by his good advice, to enter the upward paths of success.

Mr. Fletcher, in politics, was a consistent republican. He believed in certain principles of government and stuck to them when lighter minds were wavering in their faith or had forsaken their long cherished principles for some new fad. When they returned to the party fold they found him still there, unchanged, and unchangeable so long as he believed that he was upholding the right.

Good Example For Young Men.

Mr. Fletcher did not belong to a

church or to a fraternal order, yet there was paternalism in his handshake and christianity in his life and natives. He was a good example for young men possessing those sterling qualities that make for manliness and slaying the vices that prove to be pitfalls for too many. Studious, industrious, prudent in his financial affairs, yet liberal when his reason was appealed to, standing steadily for his principles, he made a success of life. He might have plucked more of the lighter joys as he trod life's pathway, but home to him contained sufficient of happiness, and it was not necessary for him to stray further away. He took a deep interest in his home, and his farm was to him a perpetual joy. It was a delight to mingle with his old time friends and neighbors and discuss subjects of interest, and he was a close student of the progress of events in the outside world.

Death Will Be Lamented.

Mr. Fletcher's death will be lamented, and his family will have the sincere sympathy of all in their bereavement. His was a rugged character, coming down from colonial and revolutionary stock, and he was such as made the successful pioneer. Their places are being taken by others, but the west will always poise to drop a tear at their graves. Mr. Fletcher's children have the priceless inheritance of good education and an unsullied family name.

The members of the family were all gathered around the death bed, including Mr. and Mrs. C. J. Rockwood of Minneapolis.

The following biography of Mr. Fletcher was taken from "Mankato—Its First Fifty Years," issued by the committee that had charge of the semi-centennial celebration in 1902.

Father of Education in Mankato.

L. G. M. Fletcher was known as the father of education in this city. He was born in Stockholm, St. Lawrence county, New York, February 13, 1830. His parents were Adolphus and Sarah (Wellington) Fletcher. Both his parents were of English descent through colonial families noted in the yearly history of New England. His father was a native of Walpole, New Hampshire, born in 1795, and served as a private soldier in the War of 1812. His grandfather, Luke Fletcher, served through the War of the Revolution, fought at Newton, and, wintering at Valley Forge, was present at the surrender of Yorktown. The Fletcher family came from England in 1630, and settled in Lowell, Massachusetts. He spent his younger days on his father's farm, attended the common school and later the St. Lawrence academy, at Potsdam, and the Ogdensburg Academy, and taught school winters from the age of nineteen to twenty-four. His father died at the old

homestead in 1851, and his mother in 1873. In May, 1854, he started out to see the world. He stopped at Dubuque, Iowa, and while there met a party of government surveyors, and engaged to go with them. Being active, energetic, and quick to learn, he soon acquired a fair understanding of surveying. They started the survey July 6, 1854, at the southeast corner of Blue Earth county, and ran west on the first standard parallel, reaching Mankato about August 15, of the same year. He was so much pleased with the country that he concluded to locate there permanently, and he was the only one out of a party of forty men that remained. He immediately made a claim, north of the present town site, where he built a homestead, and where he resided for more than fifty years. He spent much of his time in those early years in locating new corners, surveying claims and making out papers. He located the Maple River colony and surveyed the land; he also surveyed and laid out several additions to the city of Mankato. He engaged in farming, grain storing, and in the real estate business and banking and has built many substantial business blocks in Mankato.

Identified With Savings Bank.

He was of the original incorporators of the Mankato Savings Bank, and has been its president since its organization. He was also one of the directors of the Mankato Manufacturing company, and has been interested in various business institutions. He was one of the original five who organized the republican party in Mankato, in 1856. He was a member of the school

board nearly all the time since 1869, and served the people with zeal and marked capacity. He helped to build the first school house in Mankato, in the summer of 1855, and he taught the first school in it in the winter of 1855-1856, and also in the winter of 1857-1858. He was elected to the state senate in 1883 and served for one term. In fact he has always been a prominent figure in the history and growth of Mankato.

Success Attended His Efforts.

Success attended his efforts, as a reward for well-directed industry, and with it all he secured the confidence and respect of his fellow citizens. Mr. Fletcher was a gentleman of correct habits, positive convictions, and strong friendships. He has ever been a firm and unswerving friend of the cause of popular education, and from his earliest citizenship at Mankato earnestly and unselfishly labored to promote its success. For over forty years he was identified with the school interests of this city, and while he did, in the positive declaration of his views, incur opposition, the earnestness and unmistakable honesty of his purpose, commanded the confidence and support of his constituency, enabling him to wield a large influence in shaping and directing the policy of the public schools. He was always on the side of good government, and for simplicity and economy in all public affairs. Mr. Fletcher's noblest monument will be his unswerving devotion to the school interests of this city. For this alone, he deserves, and will receive the lasting remembrance of all good citizens.

Mr. Fletcher was married to Miss Lucina Bacon, at Canton, New York, December 30, 1858. To this marriage four children were born, George Henry Carrie D., now the wife of Chelsie J. Rockwood; Emma A., the wife of W. W. Davis; Harry E., born June 12, 1870; this child dying August 17, 1870. Mrs. Lucina Bacon Fletcher died September 17, 1870. She was a true and noble woman, and died unusually beloved.

Mr. Fletcher was again married, May 15, 1872, to Susie M. Dyer, a teacher in the normal school of Mankato, at New Sharon, Maine. To this marriage seven children were born, viz: Lucina E., born April 7, 1873, who died June 12, 1891; Ella May, Jennie D., Nellie, who died September 10, 1884; Mildred R., L. G. M. Jr., and Edith A.

The funeral will be held from the house at 1:30 and from the Presbyterian church at 2:30 Sunday afternoon.

**Funeral of the Late L. G. M. Fletcher
at the Presbyterian Church.**

From Monday's Daily.

The funeral of the late L. G. M. Fletcher, yesterday afternoon, was one of the largest attended in years. People from the country as well as city attended it, and the Presbyterian church was filled. After brief services at the house at 1:30 o'clock, the remains were taken to the church at 2:30 o'clock, where Rev. T. Ross Paden preached a most excellent sermon. The services were impressive, and the music, which was furnished by the church choir, was excellent.

The Territorial Historical society and other old settlers had reserved seats. The floral offerings have seldom been surpassed in the city for number and beauty. One huge spray of roses, brought in during the services, covered the casket completely.

The line of hacks, sleighs and carriages to Glenwood cemetery was an unusually long one, and many eyes were moistened as the remains were consigned to their final resting place.

The general esteem in which Mr. Fletcher was held has been given expression to by many people since his death. His cleanness of character and speech has been particularly referred to. His thoughts were always pure, and his expressions were such as befitted any presence.