

ROBERT PURVIS DEAD

End of a Life Devoted to the Betterment of Mankind

Robert Purvis, who has occupied a most conspicuous place in the public view for many years, died last night at his home, No. 1601 Mt. Vernon street, after an illness of three weeks.

Mr. Purvis was born in Charleston, S. C., on August 4, 1810. His father, William Purvis, was a native of Ross, Northumberland county, England. His mother was a native of Charleston. His maternal grandmother was a Moor and his grandfather an Israelite, named Baron Judah. Robert and his two brothers came to Philadelphia with their parents in 1819. He received his education in Pennsylvania and New England, finishing it at Amherst College. Since that time his home has been in Philadelphia. He made his first speech in public at an anti-slavery convention when he was only 17 years old.

The National Anti-Slavery Society was formed in 1833. Garrison, Whittier and James Mott, with many other leaders of that time, were members and of these Robert Purvis is the last survivor. He was president of the "Underground Railroad," and throughout that long period of peril his house was a well-known station. His horses and carriages and his personal attendance were ever at the service of the travelers upon that road.

He was first vice-president of the Woman's Suffrage Society when the revered Lucretia Mott was president. He was a Prohibitionist and active in the temperance cause. The Irish movement for home rule and the improving the condition of the laboring man all claimed his best service.

He was prominent in the Committee of One Hundred, composed of the best men in Philadelphia, working for better municipal government, and lived to witness the success of the great causes to which he devoted his youth and manhood; to join in the jubilee song of the American slave and the thanksgiving of the Abolitionists and to testify that the work of his life has been one "whose reward is in itself."

From 1833 to 1861 his life was an eventful one. The Northern mind was disposed to side with the South during this period and was not prepared to listen to the impassioned eloquence of Mr. Purvis, who was among the foremost orators of the Abolitionists. His life was frequently in jeopardy from mobs.