

The Obituary of Colonel Frederick Augustus Rohrer (1794-1882)

Son of Frederick Rohrer, Junior (1766/67-1794)
and Catharina Truby (1763/64-1806)

The Greensburg Evening Press, Friday, 13 January 1882

Col. Rohrer Death of the Oldest Odd Fellow In The State

He Closes His Eyes in Peace and His Spirit Calmly Passes Before the Presence of
the Great Unknown, and 10 O'clock This Morning—Funeral at 2 P. M. Sunday

This morning **Colonel¹ Frederick Augustus Rohrer** died at his residence in this place of old age. Being born on the 17th of July, 1794, he was in the 88th year of his age. He was a native of Greensburg, having been born in the old frame building that formerly stood on the corner where Baughman's brick block is now. Young Rohrer received a good education in the common school in this place. At about the age of twenty years he formed a co-partnership with David Cook, and they opened a general store in the frame building where Mr. Rohrer was born, now known as Baughman's corner. They continued in business for some time, and did very well. After selling out here, Mr. Rohrer then opened up a saddlery establishment, in a frame building situated next door to where Mr. Henry Welty's store now stands. This was about the year 1822. During his continuation in business there he was married to Miss **Sallie Frame**, who died about 1845, and was buried in St. Clair Cemetery, the funeral services being held in the Episcopal church, which was then situated where Mr. Blythe's store now stands on Maple Avenue. To this marriage no children were born that survived any length of time. Somewhere along the year 1826 Mr. Rohrer bought the property now known as the "Null House," for \$3,000, from John Klingensmith, at that time sheriff of this county. Mr. Rohrer built the brick L to it which extends to the west, and made other improvements, and kept the hotel for quite a number of years. This was then headquarters for the stages, they stopping there on their trips, backward and forward. Then he became proprietor of a large stage line that did business through here on the old turnpike. Afterward he kept the Kuhns House, now known as the Grant House. He continued in business here but a short time. Since then he has lived a private life.

¹ The military title "**Colonel**" is at present a mystery. To date, the earliest record of its use with Rohrer's name is his 1822 marriage notice. His half-brother, Andrew Marshall also holds this title in his marriage announcement of 07 July 1827 (*Butler Sentinel*): "Married on Tuesday the 3rd by the Rev. I. Niblock, **Col.** Andrew Marshall of this place, and Miss Barbara McQuiston, of Butler township."

He has been leading a private life for some twenty-five or thirty years. He had considerable property at that time, owning the ground on which now stand the Brunot, Clopper and Baughman and other properties, and the portion on which **Rohrertown** is built, some of which still remains in his possession. Mr. Rohrer was very comfortably situated, and will leave considerable of an estate. His second marriage took place about the year 1853, with the lady who now survives him, and has been terribly afflicted and confined to her room, for so many long years. Her maiden name was Miss **Kate Ulam**² but she was the widow of Dr. Wolf, of Pleasant Unity, when she was united in marriage to Mr. Rohrer. To this marriage one child was born, in 1854, (who survives his father). He is **F. U. Rohrer**, now a conductor of Pullman palace cars. Mr. Rohrer was the oldest citizen of Greensburg, up to the time of his death. Mr. Henry Welty is now the oldest living citizen born in Greensburg, being but five weeks Mr. Rohrer's junior. Mr. Rohrer had good health up to a few months ago, when old Time began to make its impress on him, in such a manner as to convince the old gentleman that his rapidly declining days had come, and several times he told the writer that he believed his days were short with us. The colonel had, however, always led an upright and conscientious life, and had no wrongs to atone for and, in his own words he was prepared to meet his Maker at any time. He was respected by everybody who knew him, for he was truthful and reliable. *His weather predictions for years were looked upon as about as reliable as any that could be had, and seldom was he mistaken in his calculations.* He was widely known and everywhere revered. It is but a few years since, Hon. John Caven, the Mayor of Indianapolis, asked the writer whether he knew Col. Rohrer. He responded in the affirmative, when Mr. Caven said that he had stopped at Mr. Rohrer's hotel forty years ago, but owing to his genial nature he still distinctly remembered him, and was glad to hear of his prolonged good health. He was known in this manner by all the older citizens who traveled before the days of railroads.

I.O.O.F

In conversation with Dr. Hugh Arters this morning, he stated that Col. Rohrer was the first Odd Fellow initiated in Westmoreland county. That Greensburg Lodge No. 50 was instituted on July 16, 1832, in this place. The Doctor acted as one of the Grand Lodge officers on that occasion. This was the first lodge of Odd Fellows instituted outside of what is now Pittsburg, west of the mountains, and that he believed that himself and a Pittsburg gentleman named Alex Tindall were the only two surviving actors in the ceremonies on that occasion. Mr. Rohrer died a member of Westmoreland Lodge No. 840 I.O.O.F., and will be buried by the order. All the lodges in Westmoreland county have been invited to attend the last sad rites by the lodge of which the Col. was a member.

² Note that her full name was Eliza Catherine Ulam; hence, "Kate." Her daughter to Dr. Wolf was named Kate, also, and she married David F. Leech.

There will be a special meeting of Westmoreland Lodge No. 840 I.O.O.F., held this evening in Huffman's Hall to take action on the death of Brother Rohrer. A full attendance is expected.

THE FUNERAL

The funeral will take place at 2 o'clock on Sunday afternoon, when the remains will be interred in St. Clair cemetery, under the auspices of Westmoreland Lodge No. 840, I.O.O.F. It was Mr. Rohrer's own request that he be buried by the ceremonies of the Independent Order of Odd Fellowship, of which he was so long a cherished and valuable member, and really the father of the order in this locality. The body has been embalmed and will be placed in an elegant walnut casket, furnished by Funeral Director Coshey.

This will, no doubt, be the largest funeral that has taken place here in many a day. Many members of the Odd Fellows fraternity from abroad and throughout the county (beside his very large number of friends) will be present.