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TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF CARLILE P. PATTERSON, SUPERINTENDENT OF THE COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY FROM 1849 TO 1881.

CARLILE P. PATTERSON.

IN MEMORIAM.

OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE DEATH OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF THE COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY.

The Department mourns in the sudden death of Carlile P. Patterson, Superintendent of the United States Coast and Geodetic Survey, the loss of one of its most eminent and valuable officers. Mr. Patterson's death took place at his residence, near Washington, on Monday, the 15th of August. His merits have been so earnest in the performance of the various duties which have devolved upon him, that to his unifying prosecution of them the immediate loss of his life is to be attributed. With unbounded zeal and ceaseless energy, he pressed on without taking the relaxation which nature demanded.

Carlile P. Patterson was born at Shidlerboro, Bay of St. Louis, Miss., August 24, 1816. He was appointed a midshipman in the United States Navy in 1839; served in the Mediterranean Squadron, and in 1836 returned home, and graduated from Georgetown College, Kentucky, in 1838. Having served as passed midshipman on the Coast Survey until 1841, he was again on naval sea service until 1844, and subsequently, as lieutenant, United States Navy, had charge of a hydrographic party on the Coast Survey for four years. In 1850 he took command of a Pacific mail steamer, and continued in that and other private business until 1861. He then returned to the Coast Survey as Inspector of Hydrography, and so remained until he was appointed Superintendent of that work in February, 1874.

Combining wide experience with great judgment, he was eminently successful in the conduct of the great national work under his charge, and in his hands its scope was greatly enlarged, and its character as a general geodetic survey became fully recognized. That the interests of science, which had been so carefully fostered by his predecessors, so far as compatible with the objects of the work, were not neglected by Mr. Patterson, is attested by the fact that he received the honorary degree of L.L.D., and was elected to membership in several leading scientific societies. Of the Light House Board he was an honored and useful member, bringing into its discussions not only ripe experience, but particular and intimate knowledge of the points to be decided.

Mr. Patterson was chairman of a commission appointed by Secretary Boutwell, in 1869, to examine into the condition of the Revenue Cutter Service, the report of which commission, made after some two years of patient investigation, was adopted, and resulted in a large saving of expense, and in a fourfold increase of efficiency. He was also a member of the commission, created in 1872, to examine and test life-saving apparatus. The report made by this commission was carried into effect with excellent results to the Life-Saving Service.

The personal character of the late Superintendent was such as to attract friendship and command esteem. Frank and truthful, full of generous impulse, ardent in the cause he represented,
strict in the administration of his trusts, he secured the entire confidence of this Department and of the representatives of the Nation in Congress.

As a mark of respect, the office of the Coast and Geodetic Survey will be draped in black, and will be closed on the day of the funeral.

WILLIAM WINDOM,
Secretary.

ACTION OF THE OFFICERS OF THE TREASURY DEPARTMENT.

At a meeting of the officers of the Treasury Department, held in the office of the Secretary, August 16, 1881, the following preamble and resolutions were adopted:

Whereas it has pleased an all-wise Providence to remove from our midst by death Currie P. Patterson, Superintendent of the Coast and Geodetic Survey of the United States, and a member of the Eighty-second Congress; Therefore,

Resolved, That the death of Superintendt. Patterson the whole country has sustained the loss of an honest, able, efficient, and valuable officer, who combined great judgment with large experience, firmness with courtesy; and in the performance of duty, wise in counsel, strict and faithful in the administration of his trusts. Devoted as he was to the advancement of the public interests, he ever sought to perfect the work of which he had charge.

Resolved, That the officers, in all the relations of life, he justly shared the confidence and esteem of all who knew him.

Resolved, That the confidence and sympathy of this meeting are hereby tendered to the bereaved wife and family of the deceased.

WILLIAM WINDOM,
Chairman.

JOHN ROGERS,
WILLIAM S. ALLEGREY,
J. E. HILGARD,
Commissioners.

ACTION TAKEN AT THE OFFICE OF THE COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY.

At a meeting of the Assistant and other persons employed in the Coast and Geodetic Survey, held at the Office of the Survey, on the 1st day of August, 1881, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:

The officers and members of the Coast and Geodetic Survey, assembled here to-day, desire to express the deep sense of sympathy with the work of death the loss which has met with in the death of Currie Polk Patterson, its Superintendent for the past seven years.

Mr. Patterson's appointment to the work as Superintendent was in recognition of his eminent ability and efficiency as Hydrographic Inspector, his deep and lifelong interest in all that pertained to the service, his readiness and fidelity of resource both in council and in action, and his constant effort to uphold a high standard of honourable ambition among his associates.

These qualifications were at once manifest when he assumed the great responsibilities of his position as Superintendent of Benjamine Peirce in the superintendency. He was a time of general commercial depression, when all appropriations were cut down and below the point of efficiency. This was the case with the appropriations for the Coast and Geodetic Survey, and the full powers of the new Superintendent were put forth to keep the organization of the work, knowing well that once seriously impaired it could with difficulty be restored.

This struggle the late Superintendent successfully maintained, despite every obstacle, to the close of his administration, and his death took place at a time when a brighter prospect appeared in view.

To put on record their sense of his public services, the officers and members of the Survey have adopted the following resolutions:

I. That in the death of Mr. O. P. Patterson, Superintendent of the Coast and Geodetic Survey, they deplore the loss of an upright man, an able and energetic officer, and a sincere friend.

II. That they extend to the family of the late Superintendent their profound sympathy in the great calamity that has overtaken them.

Mr. HILGARD said:

We must give expression to our deep sense of the great loss which we ourselves have sustained, no less than the public service, by the sudden death of our late chief, Currie P. Patterson, Superintendent of the Coast and Geodetic Survey. There are few among us who can feel more deeply than myself this unexpected severance of official and personal relations. My association with Mr. Patterson on this Survey began thirty-five years ago, when I sailed with him from New York to Mobile in a small schooner of which he was lieutenant commanding—both about to commence work in the Gulf of Mexico. That voyage and subsequent co-operation in the work of the Coast Survey established intimate relations of personal friendship, which were suspended only by the wide divergence of the field of our operations.

In the days of peace, that was not the event of distinction appeared open to a lieutenant in the Navy, the arduous enterprise of Patterson led him to cast his lot during the great material development of our country consequent upon the addition of California to the national domain, as a chief of the new Civilian to the shores of Columbia River and Puget Sound. After taking a prominent part in the great movement of our population to the Golden State, he was recalled to his home by family ties, and, on the outbreak of the civil war, found a worthy field for his varied professional acquirements in the direction of the hydrographic work of the Coast Survey under our former lamented chief, Professor Peirce. Those who knew him well would not doubt that, had he remained in the service, opportunities for distinction then offered would have found him at the close of the war among the foremost officers of the Navy. His experience in maintaining the Survey during these adverse circumstances, and in expanding the scope of the hydrographic work, the 'charting of new coastline, the laying down of by his predecessors, so as to embrace a general geodetic survey of the country, will ever mark his administrative ability.

During the past eighteen years I have been in almost daily association with our late chief, either as co-worker with him of the Superintendent, or during the past seven years, since he himself held that position. His abilities were of the most eminent order, and his zeal and industry were unbounded. His death, by no means delayed, and even before the publication of the new Superintendency, so as to be in a position to make an immediate report, his death was a great loss to us, and in my estimate, a loss to the Coast Survey and public service, which could not have been repaired except it was the accomplished work of his long life of service.

The deaths of Mr. Patterson and Professor Peirce are most timely and salutary lessons of the necessity of retaining the services of officers of the highest professional qualifications, and of the value of the work done for the country.

Mr. CUTTS said:

Thirty hours ago, while on duty at the far north, I received, at the same time, a letter and a telegram—the one informing me of a proposed visit on the part of the Superintendent, and the other of the death of the foremost surveyor of the country. This was a blow that cut me to the quick, and I am not surprised that it has brought tears to your eyes, and that you should feel the loss of a great man. There is no man who ever held a position of which the Survey is proud, who left it with such a responsibility as Mr. Patterson. His personal character always excited my admiration. Full of judgment and generous impulses, frank and truthful, rigorous in the performance of duty, strict in the administration of his trusts, wise in counsel, combining good judgment with wide experience, he was, truly, a great man.
Mr. Peirce said:

It is difficult to add to the words which have already been spoken, or to characterize more justly the administration of the chief whom we are all so suddenly called to mourn. One thing I feel most distinctly is this: It is that American science loses a great support and friend. Perhaps the result of this is hardly known to those who were not near him. His superintendence was marked by such great practical achievements as the production of the Coast Pilot, and by improvements in innumerable details of the organization and running of the Survey. Yet, although he was not professionally a scientific man, under none of the eminent geodesists who had preceded him, was more stress laid upon the scientific branches of the work,—their extension, and to the prosecution of their execution. No one was so earnest as he to secure to the Survey the labors of men of purely scientific, and especially mathematical, attainments and abilities.

It was not very long ago that, in speaking to me of a mathematical discovery by a young man whom he had appointed to a position on the Survey, he expressed his conviction of the importance of having such minds ready at hand in the Survey to solve my problem which might arise. He had often said that; but on this occasion he added, that nothing about the office which he held gave him such real gratification as the opportunity it afforded him to aid in the development of that kind of genius. For such reasons I feel that in Patterson's death the science of the country has lost a staunch ally.

I will not trouble you with my personal affection at the loss of him—et quae perit quae dulce decet amicum. Never can I hope to find again so true a friend and so just a chief!

Mr. Goodfellow said:

Those of us now present who knew Mr. Patterson as Hydrographic Inspector of the Coast Survey, and then as its Superintendent, can bear full witness to his zeal for the work, to his unflagging energy, and to his persistent and untiring efforts for its advancement. Trained early in the habit of command, a strict disciplinarian according to naval methods, an advocate rather of the "_usque ad mare" than of the "sewer in ais" in his ideas of government, he strived to impress his strong personality upon each branch of the service; and wherever he was, he was always a man of importance, not only as a master of the art, but as a master of the science and the art of government.

The successive steps of his career are known to nearly all of us, and we all know the high and enduring standard of personal service and devotion to duty which he upheld, and to which he himself became just as a martyr.

He did not live, as doubtless he would have desired to live, to see that day, now, as we see it, not far distant in the progress of the Survey, when the gradual extension of its work over the whole of the territory of the United States, and its steady advance to completion, shall be fostered by a hearty executive support, and sustained by a wise and liberal legislative policy. But he died, as perhaps he might have wished to die, by a swift and sudden stroke, in the very midst of his labors.

Lieutenant Commander C. H. Christensen, U. S. N., and Hydrographic Inspector Coast and Geodetic Survey, said:

Professor Hilgard has spoken of our lamented chief in his connection with the Coast and Geodetic Survey. It is, as a representative of a large number of the men of the service who are necessarily absent, desire to express their full sympathy with the feelings of this meeting in their sorrow at this great loss.

While only temporarily attached to the Survey, yet we of the Navy, being impressed with Mr. Patterson's uniform kindness, consideration, and great assistance toward us, feel his loss in a peculiar manner. Originally belonging to us, by ties of love and friendship, he has ever taken the deepest interest in our welfare, and, as I have long maintained, done more for our naval service than almost any man in it. We have lost a friend indeed.