

Frederick Wooster Owen

Frederick Wooster Owen was born on Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts, October 6, 1840 to the Sea Captain William Wilson Owen and his wife, Adeline Wooster Owen. According to his unfinished autobiography, his family moved to New York when he was 1 year old. He attended Public School No. 1 in Manhattan, from 1848-1849. While his mother ran a boarding school in Brooklyn, NY, he attended St. Mark's School in Orange, New Jersey before going abroad at the age of 15 to attend schools in Neuchatel, Switzerland and Leipzig, Germany.

By 1861, having returned home after his studies and living with his mother in Brooklyn, Frederick Wooster Owen worked at a mercantile business in Manhattan. On February 19 of that year, he was one of the many people to watch President-elect Abraham Lincoln travel down Broadway on his way to his Inauguration in Washington, D.C. That same month, several southern states seceded from the Union and on April 12, 1861, Fort Sumter was fired upon. The Civil War had begun. Soon after, Frederick W. Owen joined a Drill Company in Brooklyn and by October of 1861 he was mustered with Company I 38th NY Volunteers as a 2nd Lieutenant. He served in the Signal Corps at the battles of Antietam and Fredericksburg, and at the siege of Yorktown. He became ill in the Chickahominy Swamp, convalesced at Post Hospital, Fortress Monroe, and was honorably discharged from service. In 1864, at the end of the Civil War, President Lincoln brevetted him Major, "for gallant and meritorious services in the War for the Union". Frederick W. Owen received a clerkship in the Freedman's Bureau, advancing quickly to chief clerkship, then took up the study of medicine at Georgetown College, Washington, D.C. On November 10, 1867 Frederick Wooster Owen married Louisa Graves, daughter of a New York City cotton merchant. They set sail for Europe for their honeymoon, afterwards residing in Paris as Frederick W. Owen studied for a diploma of medicine. In 1869 the Owens' returned to New York where Frederick served on the staff of the Long Island College Hospital. In 1870 the young couple moved to Morristown, New Jersey where Dr. Owen was to practice medicine for the next 40 years.

Professionally, Frederick W. Owen was an accomplished physician: He was the attending physician at All Soul's Hospital, a consulting physician at Memorial Hospital, the first appointed city physician of Morristown, President of the Morris County Medical Society for one term and the physician and surgeon at the Morris County Jail. Within the town of Morristown, Dr. Owen became an outstanding community leader: he was a Director and Trustee of the Morristown Public Library, a charter member of the South Street Presbyterian Church and a senior elder at the Emmanuel Independent Presbyterian Church. He also belonged to the Sons of the American Revolution and the Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.).

Just as Frederick Wooster Owen was active in the local community, his wife, Louisa, was equally involved in the well being of the town and it's citizens: according to a speech given by their daughter Jennie Owen Mudge, both her mother and father were founders of the Market St. Mission, originally named the Rescue Mission. Devout Christians, they instilled their values and love of humanity within their daughters: Adeline Wooster Owen

and Jennie Graves Owen. Adeline would later become a missionary herself, traveling extensively around the world, while the younger daughter Jennie married a Presbyterian minister.

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