

DR. THOMAS RAINEY, BRIDGE FATHER, DEAD

**Lecturer Spent 25 Years and
\$600,000 Trying to Promote
Building of East River Bridge.**

GOLD MEDAL HIS REWARD

**Tablet Commemorating His Work in
Seeking to Build a Bridge Will Be
Placed on the Queensboro.**

Dr. Thomas Rainey, known as "The Father of the Bridge" because he spent twenty-five years of his life and \$600,000, his entire fortune, in an endeavor to promote the building of a bridge across the East River, between Manhattan and Long Island City, died yesterday at his home, 349 Lexington Avenue. The immediate cause of his death was pneumonia, but he had been in failing health for some time, owing to his advanced age—85 years.

Dr. Rainey was born in Yanceville, N. C., in 1824. He was the oldest of fifteen children, and lived at home until 1842, when, because of a thrashing, he ran away and wandered out West. With only the moderate education he had picked up in the local schools and with a pistol and \$3.50 in his pocket, he continued his journeyings by working his way until he had crossed West Virginia, Ohio, and Missouri. He taught school at the age of 18, and thus acquired enough money to go to St. Louis, where he studied phonography, arithmetic by cancellation, and medicine. For several years he lectured throughout Missouri and Iowa, and in 1847 published "Rainey's Improved Abacus," a treatise on arithmetic and geometry by cancellation. Afterward he lectured in Ohio and Indiana and established first The Ohio Teacher, then The Western Review, and finally in 1852 The Cincinnati Daily Republican.

It was about this time that Dr. Rainey became acquainted with such scientists as Prof. Agassiz and Prof. O. M. Mitchell and such journalists as Greeley, Dana, Raymond, Bennett, and Webb. He became actively interested in politics, and at the request of the National Whig Committee established The Cincinnati Daily Republican as their official organ. He also went to Washington, where he became acquainted with Daniel Webster, then Secretary of State. In 1853, through his scientist friends, he was appointed Consul to Bolivia. Dr. Rainey had opposed the election of Pierce, and so refused the appointment.

He did go to South America, however, the next year, where he made many explorations in the Amazon Valley, and decided to make Brazil his future home. This decision he admitted later in life was "the great mistake of his life." In 1857 Dr. Rainey went to Europe, where he studied steam navigation. Returning to Brazil he purchased a concession to operate a fleet of steam ferries in the Bay of Rio Janeiro. He built sixteen new vessels and made a considerable fortune in this business between 1860 and 1874.

He then returned to this city, settled in Ravenswood and devoted all his time and energy to furthering his project of a bridge over Blackwell's Island. He spent all his money and ruined his health in his efforts to get the men and capital to carry out his ideas, going many times to Albany and Washington to interest political leaders in his plans. These were for a cantilever bridge, primarily intended for railroad use, to cost \$6,000,000, and it was to be constructed on almost the same site as that on which the \$17,000,000 Queensboro Bridge now stands.

Dr. Rainey failed to interest capital in his project, and retired a broken, weary man, to live the last ten years of his life at the home of his youngest sister, Mrs. William P. Covington. He never gave up hope, however, that "his bridge," as he called it, would be realized, and when the Queensboro Bridge was completed last year he took as much pride in it as if he had had a part in its actual building. Last May he stole out of his home and walked across the bridge. "This is my bridge," he said when found by his anxious family. "It is the child of my thought and of long years of arduous toil and sacrifice."

At the time of the bridge celebration Dr. Rainey received a gold medal inscribed "The Father of the Bridge," and a tablet commemorating his work in seeking to build a bridge across the East River will be placed on the Queensboro Bridge.

Dr. Rainey's wife, who was Grace Priscilla Ogden, daughter of John Ogden of this city, died last August. They had no children.

JOHN STEIBLING IS DEAD.

**Deputy U. S. Marshal Expires After
Railway Accident—Roosevelt Protege.**

John Steibling, Chief Deputy United States Marshal, right-hand ~~man~~ of Marshal Henkel, and for many years one of the best-known characters on the lower east side, died suddenly last night in the Hatfield House, at 41 Ridge Street. His death is supposed to have been the result of an accident a few days ago in which he was caught in a railroad wreck in the South, whither he had taken several Federal prisoners sentenced for long terms in the Atlanta prison.

Steibling, who was 62 years old, was a protégé of ex-President Roosevelt, who appointed him Chief Deputy Marshal shortly after he became President.

Many years ago Steibling was active in the old Twelfth Assembly District. He organized what was known as the Ivy Coterie, which became a menace to the organization of Leader John Simpson. Later the Ivy Coterie consolidated with Simpson's organization.

Lawrence Scudder Mott.

Lawrence Scudder Mott, a retired newspaper man, died yesterday at his home in Newark, N. J., of Bright's disease, aged 54 years. He was a legislative correspondent at Trenton, N. J., for a quarter of a century. He was graduated from Princeton University in 1877, and after leaving college worked on The Philadelphia Times. He was one of the original owners of The Newark Evening News, and was a member of its editorial staff for a time. After Mr. Mott left The News he became affiliated for a time with The New York Tribune, Mail and Express, and Commercial Advertiser. He is survived by a widow, two daughters, and one son.