

Mrs. Mary Caroline Coudy

Born, January 17 – 1827

Died, October 26 – 1923

**A Booklet Published By Upton Seward Coudy
To Honor His Mother At The Time Of Her Passing**

Compiled by Ted Hine – April 2004

The following pages contain the scanned pages of a small booklet (32 pages) written and published by my great-great-uncle, Upton Seward Coudy, as a tribute to his mother, Mary Margaret Caroline Seward-Coudy (my great-great grandmother), around 1923. The booklet was recently discovered among the papers, photos, and other memorabilia kept and stored by my mother, Betty Hulburd-Hine-Alderson relating to her Coudy relatives and ancestors.

The booklet contains priceless information about the life of Mary Coudy starting with her birth and childhood in Hillsboro, Illinois, as the daughter of Israel and Margaret Seward, her marriage to Matthew Coudy, and her long life in St. Louis. It includes a poem written by Mary Coudy on the occasion of her 90th birthday which serves to show how mentally alert she remained even in her old age.

1827

"Mother"

1923



Mother, taken on her Ninetieth Birthday.

Mrs. Mary Caroline Condy

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To my sister, Mrs. A. H. Ellers; my brothers, Horace R. and Lee M. Coudy; relatives, and many friends of Mother, this book is respectfully dedicated by Upton Seward Coudy.

"Gone, but not forgotten."

Mary Caroline Seward was born in Blooming Grove, now Butler, Illinois, January 17, 1827. Her father was Israel Seward, a direct descendent of Col. John Seward of Revolutionary fame, and William H. Seward, Secretary of State under President Lincoln.

Her mother was Margaret Slayback, of the Kenutcky family of that name and closely related to Alonzo Slayback, a prominent St. Louis lawyer of the early days.

Mrs. Coudy was one of a family of two girls and eight boys, her only sister, Mrs. Cornelia McGowan, of Pana, Illinois, and her brothers, Henry Seward, of Los Angeles, Calif.; Clarence Seward, of Hoopston, Ill.; Frank Seward, of Denver, Colo.; Charles Seward, of Farmington, Minn.; William Seward, of Butler, Ill.; Edward Seward, of St. Louis, Mo.; James Seward, of Butler, Ill.; George Seward, of Butler, Ill. Mrs. Coudy was the last of the family to pass to the great beyond.

Mary Caroline Seward was married in Butler, Illinois, to Matthew Coudy on September 25th, 1848, and came to St. Louis in a schooner wagon, crossing the Mississippi River at St. Louis

Their first home was on Seventeenth street, near Washington avenue. Later they built a home on the block of ground bounded by Sixteenth street, Wash and Franklin avenue, and here their family was born and reared. The family consisted of three girls and four boys: Lillian (deceased); Agnes (Mrs. A. H. Eilers); Margaret (Mrs. Ben P. Corneli), deceased; James, deceased; Horace, Upton, and Lee.

Mrs. Coudy had eleven grandchildren: Roy and Ralph Eilers; Clifford Corneli; Elmer, Norman, Harold, and Hazel (Mrs. Earl Hulburd) Coudy; Upton Seward, Jr., Culver, and Virgil Coudy; Mildred Coudy (Mrs. Eugene Coleman.

There are nine great-grandchildren: Agnes, Roy, Fern, and Ray Eilers; Florence Eilers; Harriett Nan, and Betty Seward Hulburd; Dorothy Jane Coudy; Edith Coleman.

TO MY MOTHER!

There is just one, and only one,
Whose love shall fail me never;
Just one who lives from sun to sun,
With constant fond endeavor;
There is just one, and only one,
On Earth there is no other,
In Heaven, a noble work was done,
When God gave man a MOTHER.

—Upton S. Coudy.

The writer can recall many an evening spent in the old home, around the open fire place, listening to Mother entertaining all the children with weird stories of the Indians, who were camped within a block of home.

The Indians were quite friendly in those days, making neighborly calls to sample Mother's cooking and, finding sample satisfactory, taking a goodly portion back to the wigwam.

The old-fashioned peacock feather duster was their special delight, and many a brave buck would plant himself on the kitchen floor and, moving his fingers scissor-like, demand that Mother dismantle the same feather duster and braid the feathers in his long black, shining hair.

At times their visits were occasioned by a desire to trade—their bear and venison meals were enjoyed by all; but at one time, a proposal to swap Indian blankets for a white girl papoose for a time occasioned some uneasiness, but no attempt was made to steal the child.

Among the many pleasant memories of her happy childhood, were the frequent visits of Abraham Lincoln to her father's home at Butler, Illinois; how, as a little girl, she would run down the hill to meet father's friend. Mr. Lincoln would reach out his long arms and lift her to a seat beside him in his old well-known buggy, with holes cut in the dashboard to allow for his unusual height.

Mrs. Coudy for years made her home with her son, Upton, and passed away in his home, as the golden sun was setting on the evening of October 26, 1923.

Her birthdays and wedding anniversaries were always an occasion for the gathering of her family and friends. She had a remarkable memory, entertaining at all times with selections from her storehouse of poems. The following is a copy of an invitation sent out on her ninetieth birthday, January 17th, 1917:

I am glad to meet my friends so dear,
From near and far away;
You must not think I am growing old—
I am Ninety years old today.

Perhaps you think that I am old,
Tho my hair is streaked with grey,
But I am as young as any of you—
I am Ninety years old today.

I have two daughters near me,
My three sons close at hand.
I have all the comforts one should ask;
Now don't you think that's grand?

So please come round and see me oft;
Please do not stay away,
I love to see your smiling face—
And I am Ninety years old today.

And so each day of the fleeting years,
Please think of me, I say,
And let all pleasures banish tears,
'Cause—I am Ninety years old today.

I was raised way off in Illinois,
Away from care and harm;
I have always looked on the bright side,
Both on and off the farm.

I came here away in the Forties,
When the City was a Town,
When Grand Avenue was a wilderness,
With her fields of golden brown.

I want to live just ten years more—
To reach my hundred mark.
You know I am a young girl yet
That lovers like to spark.

And may the Lord His measure give
To each of you, I pray;
And may you always happy be,
'Cause—I am Ninety years old today.

I still can sing and recite for you,
Entertain you in my way;
So don't forget me in the days to come—
I am NINETY years old today.

Many called during the day and evening.

MOTHER'S CHRISTMAS

You may talk about your Christmas in the gay and festive town,
With its crowds of Christmas strollers promenading up and down,
With its lavish decorations, and its music sung and played,
But the Christmas, to my notion, was the kind that Mother made,
As to Mother's bread and doughnuts, I shall simply pass them by;
Not a word about her cookies or her golden pumpkin pie,
Not a line about her puddings or her jams or marmalade,
But a volume in the praises of the Christmases she made.

Oh, the presents—they were simple and devoid of tinsel bright,
And were fashioned by her fingers while we calmly slept at night;
And the stories that she told us were as true as true could be,
'Cause she'd heard her mother tell them Christmastimes the same as we.
And the place where mother fitted," leaving others in the shade,
Was the genuine, old-fashioned, bang-up Christmases she made.

Upton Seward Coudy.



"ROCK ME TO SLEEP"

Backward, turn backward, O Time in your flight;
Make me a child again, just for tonight!
Mother, come back from the echoless shore
Take me again to your heart as of yore;
Kiss from my forehead the furrows of care,
Smooth the few silver threads out of my hair;
Over my slumbers your loving watch keep—
Rock me to sleep, Mother, rock me to sleep.

Backward, flow backward, O swift tide of years!
I am weary of toil, I am weary of tears;
Toil without recompense, tears all in vain,
Take them, and give me my childhood again!
I have grown weary of dust and decay,
Weary of flinging my soul-wealth away,
Weary of sowing for others to reap—
Rock me to sleep, Mother, rock me to sleep!

Tired of the hollow, the base, the untrue,
Mother, O Mother! my heart calls for you!
Many a summer the grass has grown green,
Blossomed and faded, our faces between;
Yet with strong yearning and passionate pain,
Long I tonight for your presence again;
Come from the silence so long and so deep—
Rock me to sleep, Mother, rock me to sleep.

Over my heart, in the days that are flown,
No love like Mother-love ever has shown;
No other worship abides and endures
Faithful, unselfish and patient, like yours;
None like a Mother can charm away pain
From the sorrowing soul and the world-weary brain;
Slumber's soft calm o'er my heavy lids creep—
Rock me to sleep, Mother, rock me to sleep!

Come, let your brown hair, just lighted with gold,
Fall on your shoulders again as of old;
Let it fall over my forehead tonight,
Shielding my eyes from the flickering light;
For, oh! with its sunny-edged shadows once more
Happily will throng the sweet visions of yore;
Lovingly, softly its bright billows sweep—
Rock me to sleep, Mother, rock me to sleep!

Mother, dear Mother! the years have been long
Since last I was hushed by your lullaby song;
Sing them again—to my soul it shall seem
Womanhood's years have been only a dream;
Clasp to your arms in a loving embrace,
With your soft, light lashes just sweeping my face,
Never hereafter to wake or to weep—
Rock me to sleep, Mother, rock me to sleep.

—Elizabeth Akers Allen.

FUNERAL SERVICES OF MRS. MARY C. COUDY.

The funeral services of Mrs. Mary C. Coudy were conducted at the Third Baptist Church, Sunday, October 28, 1923, at 3:00 p. m. Dr. Samuel E. Ewing officiated.



Dr. Walter G. Tyzzer sang, "Abide With Me."

"Abide with me; fast falls the eventide;
The darkness deepens; Lord with me abide;
When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, O, abide with me!

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little days;
Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away;
Change and decay in all around I see;
O, Thou who changest not, abide with me!

I need Thy presence ev'ry passing hour:
What but Thy grace can foil the tempter's power?
Who like Thyself my guide and stay can be?
Thro' cloud and sunshine, O, abide with me!

Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes;
Shine thro' the gloom, and point me to the skies;
Heav'n's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me!"

Dr. Ewing spoke as follows:

Mrs. Mary C. Coudy was born near Butler (Montgomery County), Illinois, January 17, 1827. She lived to the unusual age of 96 years, 9 months and 9 days.

She was one of ten children; all the other members of her family have entered into rest. We have here this afternoon four children (one daughter and three sons), eleven grandchildren, and nine great-grandchildren. Four generations mourn the departure of this good woman.

Mrs. Coudy was converted at the early age of twelve and united with the Presbyterian Church. She, with the other members of her family, came to St. Louis in 1848.

In 1851 Mrs. Coudy and her husband, Matthew Coudy, were baptized into the membership of the Third Baptist Church by the pastor, Rev. Jos. Walker. At this time the Third Church was worshipping in a hall at the corner of Thirteenth and Market streets. There was no bap-

tistry in the building and it was necessary for the services to be held at the Second Baptist Church. At that time there were thirty-five members of the Third Church.

We have time to mention only a few outstanding characteristics of this noble woman.

The age to which our sister Coudy was spared was quite remarkable. Hers was not a strong, robust body, but wonderfully gifted with endurance, and during all these decades she was exceedingly active in service to her family and community.

Mrs. Coudy was especially noteworthy in the realm of the mental. God endowed her with wonderful gifts of mind, and it was her happy privilege to cultivate those gifts and store her heart and mind with the richest treasures that could be found.

From earliest years of her life she loved the Scriptures. It would be difficult to estimate how much of the Old Book, "The Bible," she had stored in her heart. She put it there for use. God gave her a good memory, and she did not

select a verse here and there, but memorized the Scriptures by paragraphs and chapters. At any time during the day or night she could recite them most fluently. Just a little while before she passed away she recited the entire 23rd Psalm.

Along with the "Word of God" she had planted in her heart and soul the very best and choicest poems. How beautiful must have been her thoughts as she recalled the "Word of God" and these poems from the storehouse of her soul.

I wish I had some word this afternoon that would adequately picture for us Mrs. Coudy herself—that is, the soul, her wonderful personality. However, when we speak of the soul we soon realize that we have no words appropriate to describe it. One might as well try to talk of Heaven, and describe Heaven as to talk of the soul, and try to describe it.

The Holy Spirit could find no words which could really describe Heaven to our mortal minds. He spoke of gold,

but, of course, there is no gold there; He spoke of emeralds, pearls and rubies, but we are well aware that there are no such things in Heaven. The Holy Spirit simply uses figures of speech and thereby tries to convey unto us something of its glory and grandeur. Thus to describe the real Mrs. Coudy is impossible.

What a remarkable blessing it was to come in contact with such a wonderful personality as that of Mrs. Coudy. My fellowship with her has gone on through nearly forty years. No one could adequately describe the sweetness and grandeur of a soul like her's. What a wonderful Mother, what a wonderful sister, what a wonderful neighbor, what a wonderful friend has gone from us.

Mrs. Coudy was possessed of a strong and living faith. Her faith was like that of a little child. She was not troubled with philosophy and science, but took Jesus as her personal friend, and walked with Him day-by-day.

Mrs. Coudy exercised unusual patience. One closely related to her said, he supposed Mrs. Coudy was as often

vexed as anyone, and yet always remained sweet and patient through it all. She lived in the days when hospitality flourished. You know we haven't much of that in these days. The door of your home and mine seldom swings open to company. Mrs. Coudy lived in the early days and her home was always open, and a cordial welcome was extended to all who cared to enter.

Thus it is that we might go through all the Christian Graces and remember how beautifully everyone was exemplified in her life.

Not many months ago I was in one of our Illinois towns and in the afternoon I was asked to visit an old lady who was quite feeble and unable to attend Church. Of course I was glad to go. In the course of our conversation she asked me whether or not I thought it was wrong to wish to die, or whether, under the circumstances, she really ought to want to die. I said that I could see no reason for such a wish—that God knows best, and I

thought we had better leave it all with Him, and so long as He gives us the privilege of living we ought to be glad to stay. "Well, she said," a friend of mine intimated strongly that it might be better for me to pass on." But she said, "I don't feel that way, I have no wish in my heart to die." Then she drew her chair a little closer to mine and said, "Well it is not my wish to die, but Oh, I'll be so glad when Jesus comes."

I think that must surely have been the thought of Sister Coudy; she had been spared many, many years.

To the very end it was her happy privilege to be with her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. Not a night passed but that her loved ones were within calling distance.

It seems to me that it would be almost wrong to ask God to let her stay with us longer. How well she deserved to enter into rest and enjoy the peace and quiet of her celestial home. With her, it was simply "to be absent from the body and at home with the Lord."

Reading the Twenty-third Psalm:

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want,
He maketh me to live down in green pastures;
He leadeth me beside still waters,
He restoreth my soul:
He guideth me in the paths of righteousness for his name sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,

I will fear no evil; for thou art near me;

Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies:

Thou has annointed my head with oil;

My cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and loving kindness shall follow me
all the days of my life;

And I shall dwell in the house of Jehovah forever."

Reading the Fourteenth Chapter of John—

"Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God, believe also in me.

In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you: for I go to prepare a place for you.

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself: that where I am, there ye may be also.

And whither I go, ye know the way.

Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; how know we the way?

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, the life; no one cometh unto the Father, but by me.

If ye had known me, ye would have known my Father also: from henceforth Ye know him, and have seen him.

Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us.

Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long with you, and dost thou not know me, Philip? He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father: How sayest thou, Show us the Father?

Believest thou not that I am the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I say unto you I speak not from myself; but the Father abiding in me doeth his works.

Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me: or else, believe me for the very works' sake.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto the Father.

And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

If ye shall ask anything in my name, that will I do.
If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments.
And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may be with you forever.
Even the spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive; for it beholdeth him not, neither knoweth him; ye know him; for he abideth with you, and shall be in you.
I will not leave you desolate: I come unto you.
Yet a little while and the world beholdeth me no more; but ye behold me; because I live, ye shall live also.
Let us go into the great beyond with the redeemed and try to catch a glimpse of the glories of that celestial home."

Reading Revelations 7:7-19—

"After these things"—the writer here has made mention of the twelve tribes and angels standing at the four corners of the earth. But this afternoon might

we make a local application and let the quotation, "After these things" refer to the struggles of life, its joys and sorrows?

"After these things I saw, and behold a great multitude which no man could number, out of every nation and of all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, arrayed in white robes, and palms in their hands:

And they cry with a great voice, saying, Salvation unto our God who sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb.

And all the angels were standing around about the throne, and about the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell and worshipped God, and saying—

Amen: Blessing and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving and honor, and might, be unto our God forever and ever, Amen.

And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, These that are arrayed in the white robes, who are they, and whence came they?

And I say unto him, My Lord, thou knowest, and he said to me, these are they that come out of the great tribulation, and they washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Therefore are they before the throne of God: and they serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall spread his tabernacle over them.

They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun strike upon them, nor any heat;

For the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them unto fountains of life; and God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes."

Dr. Walter G. Tyzzer sang at Mother's request, "Beckoning Hands."

"BEAUTIFUL BECKONING HANDS"

C. C. Luther.

Beckoning hands at the gateway tonight,
Faces all shining with radiant light;
Eyes looking down from yon heavenly home,
Beautiful hands, they are beckoning "Come."

Refrain—

Beautiful hands, beckoning hands,
Calling the dear ones to heavenly lands;
Beautiful hands, beckoning hands—
Beautiful, beautiful beckoning hands.

Beckoning hands of a Mother whose love
Sacrificed life her devotion to prove;
Hands of a Father to memory dear,
Beckon up higher the waiting ones here.

Beckoning hands of a little one, see!
Baby voice calling, O Mother, for thee;
Rosy cheeked, darling, the light of the home,
Taken so early, is beckoning "Come."

Beckoning hands of a husband or wife,
Watching and waiting the lov'd ones of life;
Hands of a brother, a sister, a friend,
Out from the gateway tonight they extend.

Brightest and best of that gloriest throng,
Center of all, and the theme of their song,
Jesus our Saviour, the pierced one stands,
Lovingly calling, with beckoning hands.

The many friends of Mrs. Coudy looked into the sweet
calm face.

The burial was in Bellefontaine Cemetery, beside her
husband.