

Isaac McKim

(21 Jul 1775 – 1 Apr 1838)

Biographical Directory of the United States Congress 1774-1989

A Representative from Maryland born in Baltimore, Maryland, July 21, 1775; attended the public schools; engaged in mercantile pursuits; served in the War of 1812 as aide-de-camp to General Samuel Smith; member of the State senate from December 4, 1821 until January 8, 1823, when he resigned; elected as a Democrat to the 17th and 18th Congress to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Samuel Smith (who had been elected to the U.S. Senate); served from January 4, 1823 to March 3, 1825; a director of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company from 1827 until 1831; again elected to the 23rd, 24th, and 25th Congresses and served from March 4, 1833 until his death in Baltimore, Maryland on April 1, 1838; interment in the burying ground of St. Paul's Church.

The National Intelligencer, April 5, 1838

The Late Isaac McKim

It is doing no more than justice to the memory of Mr. McKim to copy the following notices of his character from the pens of those who knew him well:

From the Maryland Republican

The death of Mr. McKim will occasion a deep sensation. He was one of the most spirited, enterprising, and wealthy of the citizens of Baltimore, foremost of ship owners and ship-builders, and had a patriotic pride in sustaining the unrivaled reputation which Baltimore has obtained in that important department of trade. With ample means, his vast wealth was actively and profitably employed both for himself and for the community in various and extensive manufactories, as well as in foreign trade. He was by far the largest manufacturer as well as importer of cooper, in the United States, and maintained a constant trade with ports of the Pacific in his own vessels, bringing the copper of their mines. This was but one department of his vast concerns. The sudden withdrawal of so large a capital from active employment will be sensibly felt by the Baltimore community at this trying time, and the deprivation of the public spirit, for which Mr. McKim has long been distinguished, will add to the gloom which his death must throw over those who were within the sphere of his usefulness. Whatever difference of opinion we may have entertained from Mr. McKim as a politician, we have always appreciated him as a man and as a citizen, as one who meant well, and was zealous for whatever cause he believed to be right.

From the Baltimore American

The Hon. Isaac McKim—In referring to the demise of this valued citizen and estimable man, we feel that something far beyond the ordinary expression of regret is due to the memory of one who, while living, discharged the duties devolving upon him with a propriety and correctness that must long be remembered. Whether we regard him in the relations of social life, or observe his course throughout his business transactions as one of the most enterprising and wealthy merchants of our city, we find him alike distinguished for kindness and urbanity of deportment and liberality of spirit. Unlike many men who after having acquired riches by perseverance and activity, withdraw themselves from the busy pursuit of the world and are contented to spend the residue of their lives in ease and quiet, Mr. McKim continued to make his immense fortune the means of affording support, in an extended degree, to honest industry. When, so far as he was personally concerned all motive for active exertion must have

been taken away, this valuable citizen persevered in his praiseworthy course of furnishing employment to hundreds of his townsmen through the various operations of manufactures and commerce kept in steady motion by his capital. As a ship-owner, the commercial marine of Baltimore is particularly indebted to him for the liberality displayed in engaging the services of those among her naval architects who were conspicuous for talent, and by suggesting to them such judicious improvements as were the results of his own experience, enabling them to produce some of the most perfect models in shipbuilding of which our city can boast. As a manufacturer his services have not been less important, through the facilities afforded by his ample means in introducing the preparation of articles for which we otherwise would have remained tributary to other places.

In point of active beneficence and open-handed charity, few persons have surpassed Mr. McKim. As an instance of his well-directed munificence, we would point to the beautifully classic building for a free school, erected on East Baltimore street, at his own expense, and, it is believed, liberally endowed by him. It is by this and similar acts that Mr. McKim has left behind him a fond and lasting estimation among his fellow-citizens, many of whom at present young, will when their heads shall have been silvered over by the frosts of age, remember, with heartfelt gratitude, the philanthropist whose kindness bestowed upon them the lights of education.

For many years past, Mr. McKim represented the city of Baltimore in Congress, and to the extent of his ability exerted himself in the promotion of what he conceived to be the best interests of this metropolis. Whatever feelings may have been produced by party asperity in reference to his view of national measures, those sentiments were never permitted to invade the sanctity of the private relations in which, to the end of his life, he continued to possess the warm affection and unlimited confidence of all who enjoyed his friendship.

As a token of respect and indication of the regret of his fellow-citizens generally and particularly the commercial portion of them, the flags of the shipping in port and all the public places were, during yesterday, displayed at half mast, and will, it is understood, continue to be so throughout this day.

Baltimore, April 4

The melancholy office of depositing in the grave the remains of our late representative in Congress, the Hon. Isaac McKim, was performed yesterday afternoon, in the presence of several thousands of attending citizens. The corpse was brought by the railroad from Washington, accompanied by the male relatives of the deceased, and a large number of the members of the Senate and House of Representatives.

In anticipation of the arrival of the corpse and its attendants at the outer depot, on Pratt street, the City Authorities, Reverend Clergy, and others had proceeded there in procession.

On reaching the depot the procession halted, forming a line on each side of the track, and facing inwards. When the train from Washington arrived, which was about three o'clock p.m., the corpse was deposited in the hearse and conveyed through the double line of citizens, followed by the relatives and attending Members of Congress. The City Authorities and Citizens then fell into the line of procession, and, in reversed order, followed the body to St. Paul's church grave-yard. On entering the yard, the procession resumed its original order, and the corpse was consigned to the tomb with all the affecting solemnities of the Episcopal burial service.

At the conclusion of the ceremonies, an invitation was given from the Mayor to the Members of Congress to remain and partake of some refreshment, which was declined by Mr. Adams, on behalf of the Committee of Arrangement, in consequence of their desire to return immediately to Washington. In his remarks, Mr. Adams took occasion to pass a strong eulogy on the character of the deceased.