

## Mary Aiken (1829-1902)

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—The Anamosa Prison Press for March 8, 1902, contains an account of the death of Dr. Mary Aiken in the hospital of the women's prison last Thursday. Her death was due to a tumor.

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### Released.

Mrs. M. H. Aiken, 4220, who was received here Apr. 6, 1899, from Poweshiek county on a five-year sentence, died in the hospital of the Women's Prison at 4:10 o'clock Thursday morning. Death was due to tumor. She had been an invalid ever since her arrival. For more than two years she occupied a large room set apart for the women's hospital, adjacent to Ward Five. Her nurse, a life prisoner (3881), remained with her constantly, alleviating in every way possible the old lady's suffering and sharing with her the privations and sorrow incidental to their cheerless, shut-in surroundings. Mrs. Aiken's attachment for her sympathetic nurse was such that she was moved to intercede for her parole and the feeble old lady's one wish was to live until her faithful attendant was released.

When the women prisoners moved to their present quarters, Mrs. Aiken and her nurse left their room for the first time since they entered it. The invalid was then so weak her transfer was made on a stretcher. She grew gradually worse. Her wasted form and nearly 71 years of age had withstood suffering to the limit. Doctor Druet was powerless to postpone what he perceived to be the inevitable; nature had refused to respond to medical treatment. Since Friday last she had been sinking and knew her end was near. To her faithful nurse she was much attached, and we see in the attachment how, amid trials and seclusion, the human heart yearns for fellowship.

Mrs. Aiken was born in England in July, 1829. Her father was a professor in St. John's college, Oxford. She came to America about 1870; visited England and France in 1871, and was in Paris during the memorable siege of that city. After the death of Dr. Aiken, her husband, about twenty-five years ago, Mrs. Aiken took up the study of medicine, and was a practitioner up to the time of her arrest.

An unusual incident relative to Mrs. Aiken's case is brought to light in her death. From the judgment of the District Court Mrs. Aiken appealed. Her case was reversed by the Supreme Court but she was too feeble to return to Poweshiek county for a new trial. Her original sentence would have expired Jan. 5, 1903.

The body of Mrs. Aiken was claimed by a friend and a brief service was held Friday afternoon, conducted by the Chaplain, in the Chapel of the Female department. The remains were then taken for burial to Riverside Cemetery, Anamosa.