

of that year, he went into the service as Captain of a Company of Volunteers, and was on duty at Chippawa and Navy Island until the disturbances of that year and the following were quelled. On the breaking out of the rebellion again, in 1839, Captain Benson returned to duty; held a commission as Captain and Paymaster in the 3rd battalion of Incorporated Militia, and was stationed at Niagara from the enrolment of that corps until it was disbanded in 1845. This battalion was commanded at first by Col. Thorne, and afterwards by Col. Kingsmill, and Captain Benson was a great favorite not only with them, but with the regiment. He possessed the fullest confidence of the commanding officers mentioned, and both addressed him very complimentary letters, expressing their high appreciation and admiration of him as an officer and a gentleman.

Upon the disbanding of the 3rd battalion, Mr. Benson removed to Peterborough, where he was engaged in the milling business until 1853. He was the first Mayor of that town; was subsequently, for some years, a member of the Council, and always took a lively interest and a very active part in public doings of any consequence. He was especially useful in advancing all matters connected with education in the county, and was for some time Superintendent of Public Instruction for the Counties of Peterborough and Victoria. During that period, Mr. Benson contributed to the newspaper press, and aided by his powerful pen all the public, educational, and philanthropic enterprises of the neighborhood.

In 1853 he settled in Port Hope, and assumed the duties of Secretary and Treasurer of the Peterborough and Port Hope Railway Company, now the Midland Railway of Canada. In this position his services were invaluable in promoting and carrying out this important enterprise; and he was traveling on the business of this Company when he met with his untimely end. He was killed on the 12th of March, 1857, with fifty-seven other passengers, by the breaking of the bridge over the Desjardins canal, on the line of the Great Western Railway, near the City of Hamilton. So awful was the calamity, so painful to contemplate was his death, and so exalted was the esteem in which he was held in Port Hope, that few persons, that were ever buried there had a greater number of sincere and profoundly smitten mourners.

Mr. Benson was a sincere and devoted member of the Church of England, but exhibited at all times, the warmest sympathy toward all other churches. He was forward and active in religious work, and was deeply interested in the Upper Canada Bible Society, whose cause always found in him a prompt supporter and a zealous and powerful advocate. Being a ready, fluent, and eloquent speaker, with a well-stored mind, he occupied a foremost place on every platform where the claims of christianity, philanthropy, or public enterprise, were put forth.

In politics he was a Liberal Conservative, but thoroughly non-partizan. Though admirably fitted to fill a high place, and to take a prominent part in political affairs, and with the opportunity at his command of representing more than one constituency in the Parliament of the Province, he preferred the quiet retirement of private life, and never took any very active part in politics.