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LOCAL HISTORY



The Rev. Samuel Joseph May

Rev. Samuel Joseph May worked for emancipation, women's rights

146 Years Ago: On July 1, 1871, the Rev. Samuel Joseph May died at the age of 74. He was born in Boston and attended Harvard University, where he decided to become a minister. After hearing William Llyod Garrison speak in 1830 about abolishing slavery, May decided to take up the cause of emancipation. He moved to Syracuse and became the minister of the Unitarian Church in 1845. Along with Jermain Loguen and Gerrit Smith, May became a leader in Syracuse's growing antislavery community and was actively involved in the Underground Railroad, assisting many freedom seekers who found their way to his James Street home. He also participated in the planning of the Jerry Rescue in 1851. In addition to his work as an abolitionist, May also became a leader of the women's rights movement, working closely with Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. He is buried in Oakwood Cemetery.

Dan Connors for the Onondaga Historical Association