

## Peter Evariste John B. Bossier

(22 Mar 1797 – 24 Apr 1844)

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Representative from Louisiana; born in Natchitoches, La., March 22, 1797, of a Creole family which was among the first to settle in the French colony; received a classical education; engaged as a sugar and cotton planter; member of the State senate 1833-1843; elected as a Calhoun Democrat to the 28th Congress and served from March 4, 1843, until his death in Washington, D.C., on April 24, 1844; interment in the Congressional Cemetery, Washington, D.C.; reinterment in the Catholic Cemetery, Natchitoches, La.

*The National Intelligencer, April 26, 1844*

### Obituary

Mr. Slidell rose and addressed the House as follows: Mr. Speaker: But a few short weeks have elapsed since I was called upon to discharge the melancholy duty of announcing the death of a Senator from Louisiana. We have now to deplore the loss of one of her Representatives on this floor. My colleague and friend, Pierre Evariste Bossier, died last night at his lodgings in this city after a protracted but not painful illness. He had been gradually declining in strength, and expired without a struggle or a groan. He preserved, through his long illness, the serenity of temper and cheerfulness of disposition which had distinguished him through life. His last moments were soothed by the attentions of numerous attached and sympathizing friends, and by the presence of an affectionate wife, who had, with untiring assiduity, watched over and ministered to him as woman only can do..

Mr. Bossier was a native of Louisiana, of French descent, his family being among the earliest settlers of the colony. He was one of that ancient population which, in many parts of our State, still preserve the language, manners, and customs of their fathers, remarkable for their almost patriarchal simplicity, their unbending honesty, their chivalrous courage, their frank and manly spirit--a population unsurpassed by none, in all the wide expanse of this republic, for its patriotic devotion to our free institutions.

My colleague was the type of this class--unpretending in manner, courteous in deportment, alike inaccessible to the blandishments of flattery and the influences of intimidation, elevated above every mercenary consideration, gentle in his temper; but when his rights were invaded, or his honor assailed, ever ready to defend the one and vindicate the other; homo antiqua virtute ae fide; or in the language of his own Gallic ancestry, a "chevalier sans peur et sans reproche." He had served for ten years in the Senate of his native State, in a manner alike creditable to himself and useful to his constituents, and was still a member of that body for an unexpired term, when he yielded to an unsolicited and spontaneous nomination for Congress, and was elected, by a large majority, in a district which had been considered as opposed to him in politics. Transferred to the councils of the nation, a long vista of usefulness upon this more elevated theatre appeared to have opened before him. His attention to business, his excellent judgment, would have rendered him a most valuable representative. His modesty and diffidence might have prevented him from participating freely in the debates of the House; but, in the less brilliant but equally useful labors of the committee-room, he would have done the State good service.

He has been cut down before he had fairly started in his new career; but he had already acquired the respect and esteem of all who knew him. "Sic erat in fatis." But, while we bow in submission to the decree of Providence, let us profit by the admonition it conveys. Since the last session of Congress, seven members of this House and three of the Senate have been gathered to their fathers. We are, indeed, but "poor players, who fret and strut their hour upon the stage, and then are heard no more." If

this feeling could be more deeply impressed upon us all, it would tend to soften the asperities of debate--to check all violent ebullitions of party spirit. When, tomorrow, we shall follow to the tomb the mortal remains of him who but so recently participated in our deliberations, would it not be well for each and every one of us, standing around his yet unclosed grave, silently to make the solemn pledge that no harsh recriminations, no personal altercations, no unseemly broils, shall hereafter desecrate the sanctity of this Hall?

Mr. S. concluded by offering the following resolutions, which were adopted unanimously:

Resolved, That the House has heard with deep emotion the annunciation of the death of the Hon. Pierre E. Bossier, a member from the State of Louisiana.

Resolved, That this House tenders to the relatives of the deceased the expression of its sympathy on this afflicting event; and as a testimony of respect for the memory of the deceased, the members and officers will go into mourning, by wearing crape as the left arm for thirty days.

Resolved, That the members and officers of the House will attend the funeral of the Hon. Pierre E. Bossier, at 12 o'clock m. tomorrow.

Resolved, That a committee be appointed for superintending the funeral of the deceased.

Resolved, That when this House adjourns, it will adjourn to meet at 12 o'clock m. tomorrow.

And the house adjourned.

*The National Intelligencer, April 26, 1844*

Death of another member of Congress. The decease of another member of Congress, the Hon. Mr. Bossier of Louisiana announced in both houses and followed by the usual immediate adjournment, prevented any business being done in either House yesterday. Mr. Bossier had been ill for many weeks and for some time past not expected to survive his illness. His death occurred on Wednesday night and his funeral will take place today.

The funeral of the Hon. Mr. Bossier, late a Member of the House of Representatives took place yesterday from the Hall of Representatives. The funeral ceremonies were performed according to the rites of the Catholic Church in the faith of which Mr. Bossier lived and died. The sermon on the occasion was delivered by the Rev. Mr. Ryder.