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Aug 1, 1941

Francis Draper, Civil War Veteran, Succumbs At Home

Waukesha county's oldest Civil war veteran is dead.

Colonel Francis Draper, 99, was a victim of Tuesday's heat and died at 4 a. m. Wednesday. The Eagle veteran would have been 100 years old next February.

Draper's death leaves James Jones, 95, of Oconomowoc as the county's only remaining survivor of the war that split the nation. The veteran was also Eagle village's oldest citizen.

Surviving is an only child, Mrs. Edward J. (Lila) Burton, a division head in the state department of public welfare, with whom he has been living the past 25 years.

Draper's last 20 years were spent in a wheel chair. Poor heart circulation cost him the loss of both legs. One was amputated when he was 80 years old, the second when he was 86.

Mentally Keen

An invalid though he was, Draper remained cheerful and mentally keen up to his very death. He was frequently called upon, even in recent months, to make affidavits on abstracts in the county and settle old titles. Before that he was active in city and county affairs.

Draper enlisted in the First Wisconsin Heavy Artillery division of the Union army at Palmyra on Aug. 15, 1862. Four of his brothers also enlisted, and two were killed in action. He served for the duration of the war.

He was a member of G.A.R. posts in Eagle, Palmyra and Whitewater, and served one year as commander of the Whitewater post. About 50 years ago he was active in county politics, being elected to the county board of supervisors and serving as town chairman and village president at Eagle.

Draper voted for Lincoln for the United States' presidency, and cast 20 consecutive votes for republicans in presidential elections. His daughter is a prominent republican in the state.

Blessed with a sharp memory, the old Eagle resident enjoyed telling friends and relatives of life in Waukesha county in the "good old days." His life span covered the era from candle light to electricity, from oxen teams to airplanes.

Draper was born Feb. 7, 1842. He attended one of the earliest schoolhouses in this territory, an old frame building constructed in 1849. It is still used as a schoolhouse.

Son of Pioneers

His parents, Francis and Hannah Draper, were one of the pioneer families in the county, coming here in an ox-drawn covered wagon in 1837. The year before he moved here, the elder Draper walked all the way from Milwaukee to look over the site of his future home. He settled on the R. F. Sprague farm, which his son later owned.

Among the stories Draper loved

to tell was about the friendly Wisconsin Indians, who often visited the Draper family and slept before the big fireplace on cold nights. Another childhood memory centered about cooking day at the Draper household, when Mrs. Draper and her young helpers would make a barrel of mince pies, bushels of dried apples and a barrel of doughnuts. His mother did all the cooking for the family of 10 children, and spun and sewed all their clothing in the old log cabin where Draper was born.

Draper also remembered when the first railroad was built in Waukesha county in 1850. The farmers mortgaged their farms to build the line, and were never reimbursed, except for a free ride to Milwaukee, he used to tell. His father owned the first team of horses in Waukesha county.

The "doctoring" in those days, Draper used to recall, consisted largely of bleedings, corn sweats, onion poultices and prescriptions of catnip tea and goose grease.

The Draper family used to walk to Waukesha, then called Prairieville, to trade and sell their wares and take in an occasional travelling show or circus.

Funeral services will be held Friday at 2 p. m. The arrangements have not been completed.

Eagle's last Civil War Veteran and Oldest citizen dead.

Col. Francis Draper, son of Hannah and Francis Draper, early pioneer settlers in the township of Eagle, Waukesha Co., died early Wednesday morning at the advanced age of 99 years. His death occurred at the home of his son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Edward J. Burton, with whom he has lived the past 26 years.

Col. Draper, born Feb. 7th, 1842 was fifth in a family of ten children all of whom preceded him in death. He enlisted in the Civil War at Palmyra, Wis., and served nearly four years as a member of the First Wisconsin Heavy Artillery. Four other brothers enlisted at the time—two being killed in action. His wife, Almira Medway Draper died in 1914. Surviving is the only child, Lila O. Burton, a Division Head in the State Department of Public Welfare.

Funeral Services will be held at Eagle Friday afternoon at 2 P. M.