

Waterloo Sunday Courier

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Page 1

Last of Civil War Veterans Dies

HENRY BRAY GOES TO REST AT AGE OF 99

Was Last Man of G.A.R. in Black Hawk; Helped Grant Storm Vicksburg

Henry A. Bray, last Civil war veteran in Black Hawk county, who as a youth of 19 fought in the battle of Vicksburg, died at 4:45 p. m., Saturday at his home, 327 ½ Edwards street.

He was 99 years old.

Death was due to general senility. He had been confined to his bed since Monday.

Had he lived 22 days more, he might have ridden again in the Memorial Day parade.

Now, in Black Hawk County, the Grand Army of the Republic marches only in memory.

Served Under Grant, Sherman

Enlisting at Kankakee, Ill., Aug. 7, 1862 – when he was 19 – Bray subsequently served nearly three years in the Union army, under Generals Grant and Sherman most of the time. He was mustered out of Company F, Seventy-sixth infantry, at Galveston, Tex., July 22, 1865.

In many battles, Bray served as an ambulance driver. He saw active service at Natchez, Miss.; Memphis, Tenn.; Baton Rouge, La. And Savannah, Ga.,

and was with Grant's men when they stormed the heights at Vicksburg, Miss.

Twice a "Last Man"

Bray was last member of Robert Anderson post No. 68, Grand Army of the Republic, Waterloo, which once numbered 478, and also last member of the Whipple post at Kankakee, Ill. He was a private throughout the war.

Stephen Gilley, 96, formerly a member of Robert Anderson Post, now living in Los Angeles, has transferred to the post in that city.

The next to the last Civil war veteran in Black Hawk county was Cyrus Lachty, who died Sept. 22, 1939 in Cedar Falls at the age of 91, believed to be the youngest G. A. R. member in the United States.

The next to the last of the members of Robert Anderson Post was John Good, 93, of La Porte City, who died on Jan. 29, 1939.

Bray rode in the Memorial Day parade last year.

Former Quasqueton Resident

Born Feb. 25, 1844, at Bourbonnais, Ill., Henry Augustus Bray was son of Henry and Elmira Bray and one of a family of nine children.

After the Civil war, he married Jennie Hutchinson and the couple then farmed near Lancaster, Wis. until Mrs.

Bray died about 62 years ago. Bray then came to Iowa, settling in Quasqueton, where he married Ella Lewis on Oct. 24, 1878. For a number of years he operated a tavern in Quasqueton before coming to Waterloo in the early '90's.

Ran Hack Service

For a long period just before and after the turn of the century, Bray ran what was then termed a "hack" service, transporting patrons about the city in his carriage. His headquarters were at the former Logan house, located at Fourth and Sycamore streets on the corner where the James Black Dry Goods company building now stands.

His hobby during this period – which he also turned to business advantage – was raising of bloodhounds and other types of dogs. Bray had kennels at that time at his home on Polk Street.

Returned Here in 1928

In 1914 Bray, who was then separated from his wife, moved back to his birthplace near Kankakee, Ill. And returned to Waterloo in 1928 to live with his daughter, Mrs. Alice Lewis, 327 ½ Edwards street. Mrs. Bray died in November 1941 in St. Paul, Minn.

He was a member of the Methodist Episcopal church at Quasqueton.

Surviving are three daughters, Mrs. Nellie Pettit, Kalispell, Mont., Mrs. Lew Christiansen, St. Paul, Minn. and Mrs. Alice Lewis, Waterloo, 22 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Two sons by his first marriage, Girden and Wern, died in 1918 and 1925 respectively; another son, Frank, died in June in St. Paul and a fourth son, Buryl, died in Omaha, Neb. in 1938.

The body was taken to the O'Keefe & Towne funeral home. No funeral arrangements have been made.