

W. S. STREETER, EARLIEST OF PIONEERS, LAID TO REST SUNDAY

(Anonymous)

Wesley S. Streeter, Brown county pioneer, was buried from the Presbyterian church here Sunday afternoon. He was born January 28, 1856, in Green Lake county, Wisconsin, and died at his home in Aberdeen, May 15, 1936. His parents were Simeon and Lucy Streeter, who pioneered here with him and who lived in Groton for many years.

Stricken only two weeks with what seemed a mild case of flu, Mr. Streeter went about his gardening and other activities with his usual vigor. Feeling more than ordinarily tired, however, he went to bed a week ago Sunday and a severe heart attack set in. He rallied somewhat for a few days but pneumonia which developed soon proved fatal and death occurred at 12:20, noon, last Friday.

Thus Groton and all of Brown county lost a man who had assisted in the agricultural development of the James River Valley from the days since the first furrows were turned with breaking plows.

Mr. Streeter was one of the pioneers who personified an era—an era which has passed as surely as the men who made it. It was the period of the frontiers, when adventurous young men and women left the security of homes farther east and set out for The Great

covered with lush bluegrass, stretching away to the horizon as far as the eye could see. Not a stick or a stone on it. All you had to do was set your breaking plow in the ground and start for the other end of your quarter, a half mile away.

Since the ranks of those early pioneers are thinning so rapidly it may be of interest to record something of the typical early experience of one of these men.

Mr. Streeter first entered this part of the country in 1880 by way of Columbia—then the only settlement in the county and one of the posts of the old Yankton-Jamestown stage coach line. He had gone to Casselton, N. D., to prospect for land in the Red or Goose River Valleys and there fell in with George Perry (father of Mrs. Winnie Meyer), a neighbor from "back home" near Cambria, Wis.

At the Perry place he found E. P. West, which Uncle Sam was throwing open to those with enterprise enough and courage enough to come.

Here Since 1880

Free land for the taking! And some of the finest farm land in the world. Little wonder that the eyes of those first settlers lighted up when they first drove their wagons into the Jim River country and saw a flat, treeless prairie,

Died May 15, 1936

Wesley S. Streeter, Dakota Pioneer, Dies

Wesley S. Streeter, 80 years old, one of eastern South Dakota's earliest pioneers, died at his home, 412 South Arch street, Friday noon. The illness was pneumonia, following a heart attack.

Burial will be in the Groton cemetery, after services at 3 o'clock Sunday afternoon in the Groton Presbyterian church. The body will lie in state in the Weinreis-Johnson Funeral home this afternoon and evening after 3 p. m.

With the death of Mr. Streeter Brown county lost one of its few remaining pioneers whose life spanned practically her entire agricultural history. He homesteaded a quarter section of land two miles west of Groton, on what later became the Yellowstone Trail, in 1880, and took a tree claim, nine miles northwest of Groton in Riverside township, the same year.

Arrived in Covered Wagon

Mr. Streeter came to Brown county one year before the city of Aberdeen was laid out, and when there was but a handful of settlers in Groton.

A typical pioneer, Mr. Streeter first saw the James river valley from a covered wagon, arriving from North Dakota. He had gone there from Loyal, Wis. Next year he returned by emigrant car as far as the railroad could take him—to Ortonville, Minn.—and in company with other settlers (one of them E. J. Mather of Aberdeen) drove overland to Groton. The Indian and the Buffalo had scarcely left, and that first winter many of the settlers subsisted partly on antelope meat.

Mr. Streeter broke his land with a combination team of horses and oxen and lived in a typical claim shanty like those of most other pioneers of those times. Through the years he developed his farms into well improved and well stocked places. He was one of the early raisers of alfalfa and sweet clover.

Operated Elevator

In 1898 he moved into Groton, operated a grain elevator for a time, then went into the farm real estate business there with W. I. Erwin, in which he continued until he and Mrs. Streeter moved to Aberdeen about five years ago.

Mr. Streeter was born Jan 28, 1856, at Cambria, Wis., where he spent his boyhood on the farm. As a young man he worked in the Wisconsin lumber woods near Loyal, and came to South Dakota as soon as the government opened up the Dakotas to the homesteaders.

On Oct. 14, 1886, he married Ada L. Perry, a pioneer girl who homesteaded near Bath and taught the first school held in that village. Two children were born—Enda L. (Streeter) Rifenbark, now deceased, and Carroll P. Streeter, St. Paul, Minn.

After the death of his first wife Mr. Streeter married Mrs. Eliza J. Ottum of Pierpont and Groton, Dec. 6, 1917. Her children at the time of

her second marriage were Mrs. Wm. Martyn, 502 4th Ave. S. E., Aberdeen; Ernest Ottum, Mellette; Clarence Ottum, Los Angeles; Mrs. Rolland E. Irish, Portland, Me.; Lillian Ottum, Minneapolis; Dr. Alvin Ottum, St. Louis; and Mrs. Joseph A. Schmidt, Minneapolis.

Besides his widow and children Mr. Streeter is survived by Mrs. Eva Minagd, Gilman, Wis., a sister; Miss Carrie Streeter, Milwaukee, a sister; and H. C. Streeter, Los Angeles, a brother.

Mr. Streeter was a member of Aberdeen Lodge No. 38 AF and AM and of the Groton Presbyterian church.

