

Decatur Daily Democrat, Decatur, Indiana; Thursday, July 27, 1899

Washington Steele died at his home east of the city at eight o'clock last Thursday morning, after an illness continuing more than five months. In the early part of the month of February he was taken sick with stomach trouble and afterwards a complication of diseases slowly wore his life away. During part of his illness he suffered terribly, while at other times his pain racked body seemed to be feeling less to the ravages. His once manly form simply wasted to a skeleton and the body which was borne to Maplewood cemetery last Sunday seemed but a shadow of it's former self.

Mr. Steele was among the oldest members of the Masonic fraternity of this city, and the funeral services were under the auspices of that order. The funeral services were held from the Methodist church at 2:30 o'clock Sunday afternoon, Rev. W. H. Daniel officiating, with a reading of the scripture by Rev. W. H. Mygrant. During the services Rev. Daniel read the following account of the life of the deceased.

Washington Steele was born in Bedford County, Pennsylvania, April 30, 1830, died at his home, one mile east of Decatur, July 20, 1899, aged 69 years, 2 months and 20 days. He came with his parents from his native state to Ohio, thence to Adams County, Indiana, about the year 1847. During the years of his early manhood he lived on a farm with his parents near the site of the present town of Peterson. On April 3, 1853 he was united in marriage to Miss Polly Zimmerman, who is left to mourn his departure. To them were born two sons, John Dayton and Eli Willard, also two daughters, Mrs. Mary F. Swartz and Mrs. Elizabeth E. Koos. Three brothers and four sisters also survive. For a number of years the deceased has been a worthy member of the Masonic lodge of Decatur, under whose auspices the burial services were conducted. After his marriage the departed settled on a farm just east of Decatur, where he passed all the remaining years of his life and achieved success in his calling. He was unassuming, industrious and upright in all his business interests. For a great many years he had been a member of the Methodist Episcopal church of Decatur. During the years of good health he was found at his place in the services of the sanctuary. Especially during the latter part of his final and protracted illness he was very joyful in the Lord. He was ready and anxious to depart. Only a short season before his death, with a face radiant with christian triumph and eyes weeping with fond anticipations, he said: "I am only waiting for the angels to take me home."

The Masonic lodge attended in a body and performed the sacred rites of the order at the grave. The funeral was one of the largest ever held in the county.

Contributed by Karin King