

6-28-1895
THE LATE W. S. FOSTER.

Mr. W. S. Foster died on Tuesday evening at seven o'clock after an illness which extended over a number of years but took dangerous form only a few weeks ago. The funeral took place yesterday at 2 p. m., Rev. E. M. Vittum and Prof. L. F. Parker officiating. A large number of the members of Gordon Granger Post, G. A. R., attended in a body, under Commander J. P. Lyman, and the large house overflowed with friends of the family. The singing was by a quartet consisting of Mrs. Geo. M. Christian, Miss Mary Mack, and Messrs. E. B. Brande and L. B. Westbrook. Rev. Mr. Vittum read passages of scripture and Prof. Parker spoke of the family and history of Mr. Foster. He said in part:

The family of William S. Foster has not been unknown in American history. Their name has been borne by such men as General Foster of the Civil War and Governor Charles Foster of Ohio, while George Bancroft was a cousin of our friend's grandmother. He himself was born in Muscatine, Iowa, removed to Winona, Minnesota, with his parents at the age of ten, then to LaCrosse, Wisconsin. When the war broke out he was the third to enlist in the Wisconsin cavalry, and at the age of seventeen. His regiment was under Gen. Steele in Missouri and Arkansas, until it was transferred in 1863 to the Army of the Cumberland. It shared the toils and perils of Rosecrans' army at Chickamauga and Chattanooga and aided in driving Longstreet from Tennessee. A winter of the greatest suffering from cold followed. In 1864 he was in Sherman's siege of Atlanta where his division was cut to pieces and captured. Mr. Foster concealed himself for a few days but was soon seized and taken to Andersonville, thence to Charleston, and on to Florence, North Carolina, as Sherman was approaching those points. Worn out by prison life, he was exchanged in 1864 and

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mustered out. A year was devoted to recovery, a few months to study, years of farm life and mercantile business in Wisconsin, Missouri and in Iowa followed until he came here in 1890. His business here, we venture to say, was conducted on christian principles, for we are sure he treated each of us as he would himself be treated if circumstances were exchanged. Of his marriage in 1867 to Miss Sarah A. Huson in Wisconsin we need not speak, or of his family whom we know so well and for whom our honor and our sympathy will always be profound.

Many an old soldier suffers daily because of army exposure or of his experience in the hell of Andersonville. I have seen murky caverns which men called the entrance to the lower world but have never seen the real opening to the Inferno for I have not seen the place where Wirz was supreme. Andersonville was evidently the origin of our friend's broken health during all later years. He entered that prison weighing 160 pounds and came out of it, about three months later with a weight of only 90. His lifelong rheumatism, shattered nerves, impaired digestion and occasional partial paralysis, all reminded him of the life where rebels and an occasional Union soldier seemed to be the very sons of demons. William S. Foster lived for his country and for us, and now he has died for us. His life was a real sacrifice, a willing sacrifice, an unostentatious gift in our behalf. He was aware of the fact but never made a display of it. A friend of the unfortunate, and especially of the unfortunate soldier, his sympathy was rich in deeds and not in words.

Rev. Mr. Vittum spoke of Mr. Foster's life here, of his religious aspirations and his hopes and wishes for his family, that they might become good, strong and brave. At the close the body was borne to the hearse by Messrs. H. I. Davis, C. H. Verbeck, Wm. Hays, J. M. Dawson, P. D. Burton and J. M. Campbell, members of the G. A. R. post, of which Mr. Foster also was a member. Of the family, there were present Mrs. Foster and the six daughters, (the son Will being absent in the west) and a brother, Mr. Ed. Foster of Winona, Minnesota. A long procession of carriages followed the remains to the cemetery.