MASTERS

Block 22, Lot 9 De Smet Cemetery

Members of the Masters family – just like the Ingallses – lived in Walnut Grove, Burr Oak, and De Smet. Although they are mentioned in *Pioneer Girl*, the Masterses do not appear in the published Little House books, although Genevieve Masters inspired the composite Nellie Oleson character, based on Genevieve Masters, Nellie Owens, and Stella Gilbert.

In *Pioneer Girl*, Laura Ingalls Wilder wrote that "Uncle Sam Masters" was her teacher in Walnut Grove after the family returned from Burr Oak. She described him as being "tall and thin, with bad teeth and a bad breath and small brown eyes and a bald head." He also had the habit of fondling the hands of any girl who was close by, and when he tried it with Laura, she poked him with a pin she happened to have in her hand.

Samuel O. Masters

SAMUEL OLDFIELD MASTERS

Block 22, Lot 9 De Smet Cemetery
June 19, 1822 – August 15, 1893; died at age 71

Husband of Margaret Ann (Farrington) Masters (1827 – 1915).
Brother of William James Masters (1829-1914) from Walnut Grove.
Uncle of William A. Masters (born 1855) of Walnut Grove.
Father of George Emmett Masters (1853-1913), August Elgetha (Masters) Sherwood (1859-1928), Jesse Farrington Masters (1864-1963), and Genevieve Maud (Masters) Renwick (1867-1909).

Samuel O. Masters the oldest son of Nehemiah Masters (1792-1863) and Harriet (Mather) Masters (1797-1862); he was raised in Hornby (Steuben County) New York. He had younger brother William James Masters (info at the end of this section).

A brilliant mathematician, Masters was trained as a civil engineer and was county surveyor for both Redwood County in Minnesota and Kingsbury County in Dakota Territory (elected in 1892). In 1882, he unsuccessfully ran against George Williams for superintendent of schools. He ran again in 1888 and was again defeated.

Samuel Masters first filed on a homestead, the NW 5-110-56 (a mile due west of the cemetery) on September 19, 1883. After his death, the farm was taken over by his son, Jesse Masters. The Harvey Dunn painting titled "Masters Homestead" is of the house of Sam Masters, after his son Jesse had taken over the farm. An avid grower of strawberries, Sam Masters placed this ad in the newspaper in 1889:

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March 23, 1889.
The De Smet LEADER. The Sharpless, Downing and Crescent strawberry plants for sale at $5.00 per 1,000. S.O. Masters.

A large volume of scientific notes belonging to Mr. Masters is now in the Depot Museum, including much work on minerals in association with his work in locating water on local farms:

Saturday, December 21, 1889. The De Smet LEADER.

Farmers in this vicinity who have been unable to find water on their farms, may be interested to learn that S.O. Masters of this place is able to locate veins of water at any depth, and not only tell the exact depth, but the width of the vein, and about how much water may be looked for. The instrument used is an invention of his own upon which he has been working for years, and which he calls the electro-magnetic rotary mining compass. The principal is that like attracts like, and by using an instrument with any of the minerals, or water, the presence of that substance can be detected. The only practical use Mr. Masters has yet made of his invention is for the hunting of veins of water, but the presence of coal, gold, silver, lead, tin, iron, and in fact all the minerals can be detected. The instruments he now uses are only pocket ones, but he is at work upon a larger and more elaborate compass. Farmers who contemplate boring for water will save money by seeing Mr. Masters before they begin work, and get him to locate the veins for them, as a few dollars expended in this way may save many dollars in the end.

August 7, 1891.Lake Preston TIMES.

S.O. Masters was a pleasant Times caller on Wednesday. He has an instrument for locating veins of water at any depth and was down to locate one on Chris Foss's place. He is enthusiastic over his invention and as water is very scarce on the Foss place the finding of an abundance will be quite a point for Mr. Masters. [and on the 28th]: S.O. Masters was down from De Smet the first of the week to locate a few wells in this locality. If successful his service will be in considerable demand.

September 18, 1892. De Smet NEWS AND LEADER.

S.O. Masters was over Erwin way, Monday, doing the "witch-hazel" act with his electro-magnetic indicator. He found the well-diggers had gone a hundred feet below a good supply, told the people to fill it up to a certain depth, put in a pump and wind-mill and they would have plenty of water. They will follow instructions. --- S.O. Masters was in Erwin Monday; he had been out east of town to locate wells for Thos. Sorenson and Anthon Pederson. The drillers are down 550 feet with the drill at Sorenson's and Mr. Masters says they must go fifty feet deeper to strike the artesian water.

His ad in the December 4, 1891 De Smet NEWS AND LEADER read: --- Has Your Well Gone Dry? I will locate you another to a certainty, giving extent of vein, and depth to water. Terms for each location $5.00 and 10 cents per mils from De Smet, one way. S.O. Masters, Expert. De Smet, S.D.

Samuel Masters died at his home on August 15, 1895, of cancer.

August 18, 1893. Lake Preston TIMES.

S.O. Masters, county surveyor, died at his home in De Smet last Tuesday. He was over 70 years old. He was an early settler in Kingsbury County and has always been a respected citizen. He leaves a wife and 4 grown up children.

Samuel O. Masters / 1822 - 1893

August 18, 1893. Kingsbury County INDEPENDENT. Died. Masters.—At his home in De Smet, S.D., of cancer, Samuel O. Masters, aged 71 years, 1 month and 26 days.

Samuel O. Masters was born in Sussex County, New Jersey, June 19, 1822. He was one of seven children, of whom three are still living. When he was six years old his parents moved to Hornby, Steuben county, New York. His schooling was completed at the Ithaca academy. He was a hard student and mastered by himself many branches of education. He was a fine mathematician and became master of civil engineering, and for over fifty years followed surveying. After completing his college course, he taught school several years and was for several terms town superintendent of schools. For four or five years he was in the mercantile business at Hornby. In 1852 Mr. Masters married Miss Margaret A. Farrington, with whom he has lived for nearly fifty years, and who survives him. Four children were born to them, George E., Elgetha, now Mrs. C.P. Sherwood, Jessie, and Genevieve, now Mrs. G. Vincent Renwick, who resides at Spokane, Washington. The former three live here. In 1869, in order to give his children better school advantages, Mr. Masters moved to Corning, in the same county, where they lived for several years. In 1878 they came west to Walnut Grove, Minn., where they lived three years, when they came to De Smet, where they have since lived. He was at the time of this death serving his second term as county surveyor. He made a special study of geology, mineralogy and electricity, and was well posted in all these branches. In his research he discovered certain principles of electro-magnetism which he made use of in locating water and minerals. Failing health prevented his completion of this line of work. Mr. Masters was converted at the age of 18 and joined the Baptist church of which he has since been a constant member. About a year ago a cancer began to develop on his lip and it soon became troublesome. Last winter he was confined to the house most of the time and for the past three or four months has scarcely left his bed. He suffered much pain but bore it without a word of complaint. He was conscious to the last and recognized all who visited him. Death was peaceful—he merely went to sleep to awake on the other shore. The funeral services were held on Wednesday afternoon at two o'clock conducted by Rev. S.A. Atteberry, attended by a large concourse of sympathizing friends.

Pioneer

Margaret Masters

MARGARET ANN (FARRINGTON) MASTERS

Block 22, Lot 9 De Smet Cemetery
September 10, 1827 – March 23, 1915; died at age 87

Wife of Samuel Oldfield Masters (1822-1893)
Mother of George Emmett Masters (1853-1913), August Elgetha (Masters) Sherwood (1859-1928), Jesse Farrington Masters (1864-1963), and Genevieve Maud (Masters) Renwick (1867-1909).

After the death of her husband, Mrs. Masters made her home with her daughter, Elgetha Sherwood. Note that her headstone says she was born in 1828. She was actually born in 1827.

Friday, March 26, 1915. The De Smet NEWS.
AT REST.

Mrs. Margaret A. Masters passed away at five o'clock Monday morning, March 23, 1915, at the age of 87 years, 6 months and 12 days. Mrs. Masters had been in good health all winter, considering her age, but on Monday the 15th, took to her bed with a severe attack of grip and her strength was not sufficient to combat it. The end was very quiet and peaceful.

Margaret A. Farrington was born in Liberty, New York, September 10, 1827. Her early life was spent in Chemung County, N.Y., then looked upon as 'way out west.'

March 25, 1852 she was married to Samuel O. Masters, who died twenty-two years ago.

The family moved to Minnesota in 1878, locating in Redwood county. They came to De Smet in the fall of 1881 and located on a claim two and one half miles from town where they lived for twelve years, then moving to De Smet.

Margaret Masters / 1828 [sic] - 1915

There were born to them four children, Geo. E., Elgetha, Jesse F.B., and Genevieve, two of whom, Elgetha now Mrs. C.P. Sherwood, and Jesse are still living. Mrs. Masters spent a very busy life, and retained her faculties to the end. She early became a Christian and united with the Baptist church and her faith remained steadfast through life.

The past twenty-two years her home had been with her daughter, Mrs. Sherwood, with the exception of an occasional visit of several months with her daughter Mrs. Renwick in Chicago.

The funeral was held from the Congregational church Wednesday afternoon conducted by Rev. G.P. Netherly and the interment was in the De Smet cemetery.

JESSE FARRINGTON BARTINE MASTERS

Block 22, Lot 10 De Smet Cemetery
May 15, 1864 – June 10, 1963; died at age 99

Jesse F.B. Masters farm west of De Smet Cemetery, early 1900s; Masters in suspenders at head of team at left

Jesse F.B. Masters was the third of four children of Samuel and Margaret Masters. Jesse was the last surviving member of the Kingsbury County Homesteader's Club, started in 1937. Too young to homestead when his parents came to Dakota Territory, Jesse worked hauling lumber with which homesteaders built their shanties; his brother George was later agent for the Empire Lumber Company in De Smet. Jesse once drove a team of young mules from Walnut Grove to De Smet in one day. According to Aubrey Sherwood (reported in August 18, 1966 De Smet NEWS), what was likely this instance was told by Rose Wilder Lane in her book, *Free Land*, and she received many deriding letters from her readers as to its even being possible, so she at once wrote the NEWS editor (Carter Sherwood) to ask about the trip. Mr. Masters started in the early morning and did not reach the homestead of his father until after midnight, it seems, but made the trip without any stops other than for food and water.

George Masters filed on a tree claim near Badger, the SE 6-112-53, on June 12, 1879. May 21, 1885, George relinquished the claim, and Jesse – who had celebrated his 21st birthday that year – filed on the land immediately as a preemption, making final proof on December 17, 1885. He later moved to his father's homestead west of the De Smet cemetery.

> *May 10, 1890. The De Smet LEADER.*
> *Peirson & Cooley have purchased of Wilder and Ingalls their flock of two hundred and twenty sheep. They will take the wool from them and during June sell the sheep.*
>
> *July 6, 1890. The De Smet LEADER.*
> *George and Jesse Masters bought 100 sheep from Peirson & Cooley.*
>
> *October 27, 1893. Kingsbury County INDEPENDENT.*
> *Quite a prairie fire was in operation south of De Smet last Saturday evening. It burned over a large scope of country. Fred Gehm's fine tree claim was ruined.* ***Jesse Masters lost his shanty in the flames****. Several are heavy losers by having their hay burned. G.W. Troupe is the heaviest loser, 30 tons being lost.*

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June 13, 1963. The De Smet NEWS.
J.F.B. Masters Dies At 99;
Homesteader, Farmer, Sheep Raiser.

Death came Monday for J.F.B. Masters, early day resident of De Smet, at Falconer Home. He was 99 years of age last month.

Mr. Masters had hauled lumber for many of the claim shanties of the west half of the county, for years been a farmer and sheep raiser.

A member of De Smet Lodge No. 55, Masons, for more than 75 years, he was a charter member of Bethlehem Chapter, Order of the Eastern Star and had been a Grand Chapter officer.

Funeral services are to be held this (Thursday) afternoon at Ketelsen Funeral Chapel, the Rev. Robert Tucker, pastor of First Congregational church, officiating, with Masonic and Eastern Star rites at the graveside in De Smet cemetery.

Mr. Masters had been a bed patient in recent years after falling down stairs at the Home.

He is survived by nephews and nieces, Aubrey Sherwood being the only local relative.

June 13, 1963. The De Smet NEWS.
At 99, J.F.B. Masters, Early Resident, Had Seen Claim Shanties Sprout on Prairie

He wanted to live to be 100, but when death took him at 99-plus, J.F.B. Masters of this vicinity was at least the oldest person living in the county, as far as known here.

His life span of 1864 to 1963 covered a number of wars, in which he was not called upon to participate, extended from ox teams and steam engines to jets and space travel, from before the telephone was patented to television by telstar.

Not a pioneer of Kingsbury County, he came here in the early 1880s as a young man under age. He had a particular part in settlement in hauling lumber to claim shanty sites over the area. He was later to find a homestead on which to file, this in Badger vicinity, but to engage in farming on his parents' homestead southwest of De Smet

Born May 16, 1864, to Samuel and Margaret Masters, at Hornby Forks, N.Y., Jesse Farrington Bartine Masters, he came west to Minnesota with his parents in the 1870s and followed his brother, George E. Masters, to De Smet, after the latter had been a storekeeper with the railway crew through De Smet and to Blunt, becoming homesteader, lumber agent and post master there.

Jesse Masters was married to Anna Wood of Sheboygan, Wis. They spent most of their married life on the farm wests of De Smet cemetery. No children were born to them, but a niece of Mrs. Masters, May Smith, made her home with them and after her marriage to John Hollowell and death some years later her two children, Vivian and Sidney Hollowell, lived with them. In later years the Masters made their home with the Sidney Hallowell family. She died July 20, 1940 and Mr. Masters resided in De Smet for some years, since that at Falconer Home northwest of town. Blind and deaf in the last years, he had been confined to bed for some years after a fall there.

Mr. Masters was a member of De Smet Lodge No. 55, Masons, for more than 75 years, a member of the South Dakota Masonic Veteran's Association. He was a charter member of

Bethlehem Chapter, Order of the Eastern Star, From June 1, 1891, its last surviving member. He was Sentinel of the Grand Chapter of South Dakota in 1894.

Funeral services for the aged man were held Thursday afternoon at Ketelsen Funeral Chapel, the Rev. Robert Tucker, pastor of First Congregational church, conducting them, with Masonic and Eastern Star services at the graveside in the family plot at De Smet cemetery.

Pallbearers were Fred Gehm, Alfred Ryland, Henry Hinz, Hollis Hill, Arthur Poppen and Roy Campbell.

Mrs. Robert Bell sang, the organist and accompanist Mrs. Geo. Muser.

Relatives attending from out of town were a niece, Mrs. Walter Shoop, and husband, and John Cleffisch, whose wife had been a niece, these from Spencer, and Mrs. Raynor Birdsall, the former Vivian Hallowell, of Sioux City. Aubrey Sherwood, a nephew, is the only surviving relative living here. There are several other nephews and nieces, including Mrs. Leonard Thune, the former Margaret Renwick, Green Bay, Wis., who made her home here for some years.

Preceding Mr. Masters in death were his parents, his sister, Mrs. Carter P. (Elgetha) Sherwood of De Smet; and Mrs. Graham (Genevieve) Renwick of Chicago, and brother, George E. of Spencer.

GEORGE EMMETT MASTERS

Buried in Spencer, South Dakota
February 28, 1853 – June 25, 1913; died at age 60
Buried Lakeside Cemetery, Hanson Co., SD

In her *Pioneer Girl* memoir, LIW wrote: *George Masters, the eldest son of Uncle Sam Masters of Walnut Grove, going through De Smet on his way to work farther west, stopped to see us and begged Ma to let his wife Maggie stay with us to be nearer him. Maggie came the next week, a large cheerful Scotch girl. We liked her but we did not care for George who was much like his father.*

Laura placed the event after the October 1880 blizzard, after the family had moved to Pa's building in town, but in reality, the Masters family – including son Arthur, born in April 1880 (his correct birthdate is May 23, 1880), are enumerated in the same household as the Ingalls family in town. The census, dated June 7th, records place of residence as of June 1. Likely, the Masterses lived with the Ingallses prior to the move to their respective claims – delayed by the birth of Maggie's child – then again after the October blizzard and through the Hard Winter.

June 2, 1880. Daily Press and Dakotaian, Yankton.
The first native born citizen of De Smet is a son of Mr. and Mrs. George E. Masters, who arrived Sunday, May 23d.

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Biography of George Masters from Doane Robinson's *History of South Dakota*, Volume II (1904), pages 1097-1099:

GEORGE E. MASTERS, one of the prominent business men and honored citizens of Spencer, McCook County, was born in Steuben County, New York, February 26, 1853, a son of Samuel and Margaret (Farrington) Masters, of whose four children we incorporate the following brief data: Augusta A. is the wife of C. P. Sherwood, state dairy commissioner of South Dakota, and they reside in DeSmet; Jesse F. B. is likewise a resident of that place; Genevieve is the wife of W. G. Renwick, auditor for the zinc syndicate and a resident of the city of Chicago; and George E. is the subject of this review. Samuel Masters was born in New Jersey, in 1822, and when a child accompanied his parents on their removal to Steuben County, New York, where he was reared to the sturdy discipline of the farm, being given the advantages of an academical education, in Ithaca, New York. There he completed a course in civil engineering, and in later years he found his services as a surveyor in much requisition in connection with his agricultural operations. in 1878 he removed with his family to Minnesota, and three years later came to South Dakota, locating in Kingsbury County, where he took up a quarter section of government land. He rendered efficient service as county surveyor for a number of years and was one of the influential citizens of his section. He was a Democrat in politics and was a man of impregnable integrity and marked mentality. While a resident of Steuben County, New York, he held the office of superintendent of schools for several years, having also been a successful teacher and prominent in educational work. He died in 1893, having passed the psalmist's span of three score years and ten. His widow is still living and resides in the home of her daughter, Mrs. Sherwood, in DeSmet, being seventy-six years of age at the time of this writing, in 1903.

George E. Masters was reared under the gracious influences of a cultured and refined home, and after completing the curriculum of the public schools continued his studies for two years in Corning Academy, at Corning, New York. At the age of twenty-one he took a position as clerk in a drug store in that place, where he was employed for three years. In 1876 he set forth to carve out his career in the west, and for two years was employed in the city of Chicago. In 1878 he located in Walnut Grove, Minnesota, in which locality he was employed at farm work, and there, in 1879, he was married to Miss Margaret Gilmore. In the spring of the following year, he came with his bride to South Dakota, and during the ensuing summer he was employed in the company store of Walls, Harrison & Shute, railroad contractors, who were then engaged in the construction of the line between Tracy and Pierre. In the fall of that year Mr. Masters took a position as brakeman on this road, and in December went to DeSmet, Kingsbury County, in which locality he has filed entry on a tree claim in 1879 and on a homestead in the spring of 1880, his eldest son having been the first white child born in what is now the thriving little city of De Smet. He continued to reside on his homestead until 1886, duly proving on the property under the homestead laws. Within this interval, in 1881, he accepted a position with the Empire Lumber Company, at DeSmet, and continued in the employ of this concern for ten and one-half years, while for one year he was an employe of the firm of Hanson & Lambert, engaged in the same line of enterprise in DeSmet. In 1893 he associated himself with his brother Jesse in the sheep business, in which he continued a short time. In 1892 he was candidate on the Democratic ticket for the office of state senator, there being three tickets in the field during that campaign. He succeeded in winning sufficient Republican votes to compass the election of the Populist candidate, and though he was himself defeated he gained no little influence in the ranks of his party, and this led to his securing the appointment of postmaster at De Smet, an office which he held for four years under the administration of President Cleveland. In the winter of 1884, there

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was organized in De Smet Company E of the National Guard of the Territory of Dakota, and our subject was made third sergeant of the same, from which position he finally rose to the office of captain. At the outbreak of the war Mr. Masters was senior captain of his regiment, which in 1898 tendered its services to the government, enlisting for service in the Philippines, where it made a brilliant record. Mr. Masters accompanied the regiment to Sioux Falls and there was rejected for service on account of his physical proportions. This was the reason given but he has ever been certain that the real cause of his rejection was one of political nature. He was, however, given the privilege of naming the lieutenants of the company over which he had so long been in command, and his choice fell upon Harry Hubbard and Sidney Morrison for first and second lieutenants, respectively. On bidding the boys farewell the last to grasp his hand were Lieutenant Morrison and Lewis Chase, both of whom met their death in the Philippines while in discharge of their patriotic duties.

In March, 1899, Mr. Masters accepted a position with the John W. Tuttle Lumber Company, as manager of their yards at Spencer, where he has since been located, being one of the honored and popular citizens of the place. He is a staunch advocate of the principles of the Democratic party and has long been an active worker in its cause. While a resident of De Smet he served for a number of years as a member of the village council and also as a member of the board of education, while at the time of this writing he is president of the board of education in Spencer. He is affiliated with Spencer Lodge, No. 126, Free and Accepted Masons, to which he transferred his membership from DeSmet Lodge, of which latter he is past master, as is he also of the lodge of the Ancient Order of United Workmen in that place. He and his wife are valued members of the Baptist church.

Mention has been made of the fact that Mr. Masters was married in 1879, his nuptials having been solemnized, in July of that year, to Miss Margaret Gilmore, a resident of St. Charles, Minnesota, and a native of that state. They are the parents of nine children. Arthur, who is a resident of Dayton, Washington; Alexander also resides in that place; Vere H. is manager of the State Bank of Farmer; Claude is employed in a printing establishment here; and Juniata, Hazel, Genevieve, Ronald and George, Jr., remain at the parental home.

In *The First Four Years* (see "The Third Year" chapter), LIW wrote that she used her last month's salary from teaching the Wilkin School to purchase a colt, which was sold the following year in order to purchase 100 purebred Shropshires from David Whitehead, with Laura's cousin Peter Ingalls paying half the cost. Peter lived with the Wilders, looked after the sheep, and did chores to pay for his living expenses. The following newspaper bits record that John Peirson and Herbert Cooley purchased the sheep, which they then sold to brothers George and Jesse Masters.

May 10, 1890. The De Smet LEADER.
Peirson & Cooley have purchased of Wilder and Ingalls their flock of two hundred and twenty sheep. They will take the wool from them and during June sell the sheep.

July 6, 1890. The De Smet LEADER.
George and Jesse Masters bought 100 sheep from Peirson & Cooley.

September 25, 1891. The De Smet NEWS AND LEADER.

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Geo. E. & J.F.B. Masters have order from Minot, N.D., for one of their fine Shropshire buck lambs. --- In November: Shropshire Buck Lambs! We have a number of fine buck lambs for sale, bred from the first premium Shropshire Buck, D. Roberts, 55. Prices reasonable. Address. Geo. E. & J.F.B. Masters, De Smet, S.D.

July 29, 1892. Lake Preston TIMES.

Kingsbury County sheep breeders and wool growers association officers include George E. Masters, president (from De Smet), E. Wheeler, vice president (Iroquois) and John B. Wendell, assistant vice president.

March 21, 1913. The De Smet NEWS.

De Smet relatives and friends will be sorry to learn of the illness of Geo. E. Masters of Spencer. Grip and complications seem to be the cause. Geo. has been given a three weeks' vacation by his company, and we trust this may be a sufficient time to effect a complete cure.

May 23, 1913. The De Smet NEWS.

J.F.B. Masters and his mother, Mrs. Margaret Masters, went to Spencer Saturday to see Geo. E. Masters, who is not at all well. Mrs. Masters will remain for several weeks.

June 13, 1913. The De Smet NEWS.

Mrs. C.P. Sherwood and J.F.B. Masters went over to Spencer Saturday night to visit their brother George, returning Tuesday morning. They found the sick man a little brighter than he had been, though he is still very sick. Alex, one of the sons, arrived Monday from Seattle, Wash.

June 27, 1913. The De Smet NEWS.

Mrs. C.P. Sherwood was called to Spencer last Friday. Her brother had a sinking spell but rallied and lingered till Wednesday morning. --- Word comes from Spencer of the death on Wednesday morning of Geo. E. Masters, J.F.B. Masters and C.P. Sherwood left Wednesday evening to attend the funeral which was held yesterday afternoon.

July 4, 1913. The De Smet NEWS.

Obituary. George E. Masters was born at Hornby Forks. Steuben County, N.Y., the eldest son of Samuel O. and Margaret F. Masters. He was educated in the public schools of Corning and the Corning Academy. At the age of twenty-one he entered a drug store and served as clerk for three years. In 1876 he started west, spent two years in Chicago and then joined his parents in Walnut Grove, Minnesota.

In 1879 Mr. Masters was united in marriage with Miss Margaret Gilmore of St. Charles, Minnesota, and the following year they moved to De Smet, South Dakota. Their eldest son was the first white child to be born in that new village. Mr. Masters filed on a tree claim and later on a homestead, and while the family held down the claim he worked for the Empire Lumber Company as agent, continuing in the employ of that company and their successor for eleven and a half years.

In 1884 Company E, Dakota National Guard, was organized and Mr. Masters was chosen third sergeant. He was advanced through the several positions to captain, and when the Spanish-American war began, he was the ranking captain of his regiment. For physical reasons he was not allowed to go with his company to the Philippines. In 1894 he was appointed by President Cleveland as postmaster at De Smet and served four years.
In March, 1899, he accepted the local management of the John W. Tuthill Lumber company yard at Spencer, and for fourteen years and three months and until death relieved him, he was their trusted representative there, and the second oldest agent in their employ.

Mr. Masters was a member of the A.F.&A.M., the A.O.U.W., and for many years and active member of the Baptist church. Surviving are his aged mother (his father having died in 1893) one sister, Mrs. C.P. Sherwood of De Smet, and one brother, J.F.B. Masters, also of De Smet; his younger sister, Mrs. W.G. Renwick, died at her home in Chicago in 1909; his wife, and nine children-Arthur, Alexander, Vere, Claude, [Juanita] Mrs. John G. Clefisch, Hazel, Genevieve, Ronald, and George, all residents of Spencer excepting Alexander, whose home is in Seattle, Wash., and Claude of Humboldt, this state. All were with him at the last.

Mr. Masters became ill from bladder trouble and early in the spring was obliged to give up his work except as director, and about the first of May discontinued his trips to the office. Physicians were unable to help him and death came Wednesday morning, June 25.

The funeral was held from the home Thursday afternoon, conducted by Rev. Mr. Bailey, pastor of the Baptist church, and the interment was in the Spencer cemetery. As an expression of their high regard for their late agent the Tuthill Lumber company called in for the funeral all the nearby agents, and the home office was represented by Mr. George Tuthill, a member of the company.

pioneer