

DEATH CALLS PIONEER

AFTER YEARS OF TOIL

George Frederick Frye, Who Helped Lay Seattle's Foundation Sixty Years Ago, Goes to Final Reward.

CITY'S FIRST STORES WERE OWNED BY HIM

Also First to Construct Opera House Here, Which Was Replaced by Handsome Brick Structure Following Fire.



GEORGE FREDERICK FRYE.

—Photo by James & Bushnell.

GEORGE FREDERICK FRYE, one of the very few remaining of the fast thinning band of pioneers who at Alki Point sixty years ago laid the foundations of this city and foresaw even in that time her prestige as the metropolis of the North Pacific Coast country, died at his home last evening, in his seventy-ninth year. A week ago today Mr. Frye left his home, 1306 Madison Street, to come down town. He had been ailing for several months, but aside from conditions due to his advanced years, there was nothing to induce the belief that he would not live for several years. This was his last trip to the business district. Saturday he caught a light cold which early during the present week developed into pneumonia.

The aged pioneer, strong and steadfast to the very last, but failing day by day, passed away peacefully surrounded by his family. His death caused profound grief to the few remaining persons who, with the late Arthur A. Denny, the late Henry L. Yesler, Carson D. Boren and the late David T. Denny, were most prominent in the days when the initial chapters of the history of Seattle were written in deeds of marvelous courage and endurance, of fortitude almost beyond belief and of self-sacrifice and heroism in the face of dangers which surrounded the first settlers on Elliott Bay.

Mr. Frye was born in 1833 in the city of Drackenber, Germany, of an old and historic family. His father, Otto Frye, was for nearly a quarter of a century the burgomaster of his town. George Frederick first saw the light of day in an ancient stone house, built during the seventeenth century by the Frye family.

Came to America Early.

At 16 years of age, he emigrated to America and settled in Missouri, where he lived with a sister. He crossed the plains to Oregon with an emigrant train, arriving in Oregon in 1852. The next spring with the late Hilary Butler, he came to Puget Sound, settling first at Olympia and afterward removing to Alki Point, where the late Arthur A. Denny, "father of Seattle," had opened a small clearing in the dense wilderness and had built a cabin.

A year or so afterward, the Denny party crossed to the east shore of Elliott Bay. When Henry L. Yesler and Mr. Denny constructed the first saw mill on the bay, at what is now the foot of Yesler Way, Frye went to work for the concern as foreman. Later he became a partner in the industry.

On October 25, 1860, he married Louisa C., the daughter of Mr. Denny. He built a little cabin at what is now First Avenue and Marion Street and which property Mr. Frye owned at his death, now occupied by the Hotel Stevens. An indefatigable worker, Frye engaged in various enterprises. He built and operated the first meat market in Seattle and with A. A. Denny also opened and operated the first bakery here. Even in his young manhood, Frye's health failed him at times, because of too constant application to his work and his business.

As the little settlement on Elliott Bay grew into an embryonic metropolis, Frye grew with it. He obtained large realty holdings on Pike Street and in the White River valley. In the days before the great fire of June 6, 1889, he built and operated the first Seattle theatre, the Frye Opera House, at First Avenue and Marion. This was destroyed in the conflagration.

Immediately following the fire Mr. Frye built a substantial five-story brick structure at First and Marion, known for many years as the Hotel Stevens. Later he built a handsome home on the north side of Pike street at the corner of Sixth Avenue. There the family lived for many years. The old home was razed a few years ago when Mr. Frye built the Hotel Barker, naming the building the M. & A. Building, for his deceased sons, Marion and Arthur.

Although he was offered at many times a price which would have netted him a big profit, Mr. Frye steadfastly refused to dispose of his 120-foot corner at Third Avenue and Yesler Way and four years ago he began his last and greatest work as a builder, the new and fireproof Louisa C. Frye Building, eleven stories in height and known now as the Hotel Frye. He personally superintended the work on the building and when it was opened April 6, 1911, he came from his home to participate with old-timers and the newer generations in the festivities of that occasion.

During nearly sixty years' residence here, Mr. Frye was never known to speak ill of anyone. It was one of his most dominant traits and it is related in his own family he would not permit evil-speaking of others. This trait and his rugged honesty were most conspicuous in the man, not forgetting his unwavering faith in the city of Seattle and her people. A charter member of the Pioneers' Association, he participated in every annual gathering of that organization and was a trustee of the association.

Mr. Frye is survived by his wife and by the following children and grandchildren:

Mrs. George H. Fortson, widow of the late Captain Fortson of the First Washington, who died a hero in the Philippine war; Mrs. D. W. Bass, Mrs. Virgil N. Bogue and Mrs. P. H. Watt, all daughters; and Russell M. and Ruth Louisa Frye, grandson and granddaughter, children of the late James Marion Frye.

The funeral will be conducted from the Frye home, 1306 Madison Street, at 2:30 tomorrow afternoon, following which the body will be interred in Lake View Cemetery.