

Frances E. Dawson (- 20 Nov 1958)

Dawson, Frances. On Thursday, November 20, 1958, at St. Elizabeths Hospital, Miss Frances Dawson. Friends may call at the Lee Funeral Home, 4th and Massachusetts ave. ne. The solemn mass will be sung at St. James Episcopal Church, 222 8th st. ne., on Monday, November 24, at 7 a.m. Interment Congressional Cemetery.

The Washington Post, November 24, 1958, p. B2

Woman Spared Pauper Grave

By Phil Casey, Staff Reporter

A frail and lonely lady who had seen better days was saved from a pauper's grave yesterday by a small band of parishioners at St. James Episcopal Church, 222 8th st. ne.

They began raising money to bury Frances Dawson, the penniless daughter of George F. Dawson, a wealthy attorney who gave the land for the church, paid for the parish house and donated the communion rail, baptismal font and belfry bell in the late 19th Century.

Miss Dawson died in St. Elizabeths Hospital last Thursday. She was 75 and had been a patient there nearly 15 years. For most of those years, she had her sister, Marguerite, for company. But Marguerite, a patient since 1936, died two years ago. Since then, Miss Dawson had been alone, except for an occasional visitor.

\$33 to Her Name

The Rev. William Lloyd Goodrich, rector of St. James was called by the hospital to administer last rites. Hospital spokesmen told him Miss Dawson had only \$33.33 at her death.

Father Goodrich, who has been at the church less than a year, began examining church records and discovered Miss Dawson's family background. Yesterday morning, he told the parishioners and they started their collection.

Father Goodrich raised \$94.25 yesterday and has pledges of at least \$50 more, he said. He has about \$30 in his church discretionary fund. He expects there will be enough money to bury Miss Dawson in her family's plot at Congressional Cemetery.

Miss Dawson's sister was buried there by the church two years ago. The Rev. A.Q. Plank managed to provide for this with money from the discretionary fund, Father Goodrich said.

Fortune Vanished

Old acquaintances of the Dawson sisters recalled Frances, the younger, as a delicate woman with a speech defect caused by a cleft palate. She had never been able to work, they recalled, though her sister, once married, had been employed for some years as a stenographer.

One old friend, Agnes Johnson, of 524 69th pl., Seat Pleasant, said church members had helped support Miss Dawson at various times. What became of the fortune left the sisters is not known. It disappeared early, friends recalled.

At 7 a.m. today, Father Goodrich will celebrate a solemn high requiem mass for Miss Dawson. At a mass for her sister two years ago, there was just one old friend on hand.

The Washington Post, November 25, 1958, p. A16

Donations Bar Pauper's Grave

Frances Dawson, aged and penniless daughter of a wealthy Washington attorney of the late 19th century, was buried in her family plot at Congressional Cemetery yesterday.

Miss Dawson, who died at St. Elizabeths Hospital last Thursday, was saved from a pauper's grave by parishioners of St. James Episcopal Church, 222 8th st. n.e. She and her sister, Marguerite, who died at St. Elizabeths two years ago, were the daughters of George F. Dawson, who donated the land for the church and paid for the parish house.

Seven persons, including two old friends, attended a solemn requiem mass at the church yesterday. There was another pledge of a donation for the burial cost, bringing the cash and pledges to about \$154. There is \$30 in the church discretionary fund, leaving about \$70 still to be raised, the Rev. William Lloyd Goodrich said.

The Evening Star, November 24, 1958, p. B3

Faither Aided Building

Church Gives Funds For Pauper's Burial

An almost penniless old lady was buried today in Congressional Cemetery by the church her father helped to build.

A high requiem mass was offered this morning at St. James Episcopal Church, 222 Eighth street N.E., for Miss Frances Dawson, 75, who died Thursday at St. Elizabeths Hospital.

Members of the congregation, determined to provide Miss Dawson with a dignified burial in her family plot, responded yesterday to an appeal from the pulpit by the Rev. William Lloyd Goodrich, rector of St. James.

He told the parishioners he had been called by the hospital to administer last rites. Miss Dawson, he was informed, had only \$33.33 at her death.

During a check of old church records, Father Goodrich discovered it was her father, George F. Dawson, an attorney, who more than half a century ago had given the land for the church, paid for the parish house and provided the baptismal font, bell and communion rail.

Miss Dawson had been a patient at St. Elizabeths for about 15 years, authorities said. Her sister Marguerite died about two years ago, and Miss Dawson was apparently left without close relatives, Father Goodrich said.

The congregation donated nearly \$100 yesterday and pledges of about \$50 more were also made, the rector said. Another \$30 is available in the church discretionary fund.

The total should cover the costs of burial, Father Goodrich said.