

Walter O. Hargrave

1833-1913

Soldier & Farmer

Walter O. Hargrave came to the Ripon area with his family in 1851 at age 18. His father had purchased land in the township of Ripon just northeast of the city of Ripon and farmed the land. Being born in Scotland, his father named the farm “Inverness” after a city in the Scottish Highlands.

The Civil War started in April 1861. On September 1, 1864, Hargrave enlisted as a private in the Calvary Regiment of the 1st Wisconsin Volunteers and served in Co. M. He then held the rank of sergeant major from March 1865 until his regiment was mustered out of service July 19, 1865.

On May 10, 1865, Hargrave’s regiment along with the 4th Michigan Cavalry took part in the capture of Confederate President Jefferson Davis (1808-1889) in Georgia. The two regiments shared in a \$100,000 reward, (worth about \$2 million today.) The reward was divided and the amount each soldier received depended on rank. Hargrave’s reward was equal to his one year’s pay for sergeant major rank, which was \$252.

Sometime after Hargrave was discharged from the Army in July 1865, he purchased his family farm. The 1874 Fond du Lac County plat maps shows that the farm had 160 acres. He married Antonia Meyer in 1874 and they had seven children.

The Hargraves moved into the city of Ripon in the fall of 1902 while their sons continued to farm the family land.



Left: The Hargrave family outside their stately farm home in 1885, *Ripon Commonwealth Press* 1965.