

~~Robert Morris~~  
Robert Morris Night  
Add. #10

O. E. S. GRAND  
CHAPTER LIBRARY

BIOGRAPHY OF ROB MORRIS, LL.D.

#2  
Feder  
HALL LODGE  
LIBRARY

Masonic Poet Laureate

From official data furnished by his son, Robert Morris,  
Jr. of Franklin, Ky.

"THE MASONIC DICKENS OF AMERICA."-Allibone's Dictionary  
of American Authors

DR. ROB MORRIS was born August 31st, 1818, near Boston, Mass. His parents were teachers, and he, following in their footsteps, taught school the first ten years of his manly estate. He then wandered, like many others, from the New England shores to the cotton fields of the South, and settled down to teach at Oxford, Miss. There he met Miss Charlotte Mendenhall, whose parents resided near that place, and they were married August 26, 1841. About thirty-seven years ago Dr. Morris removed to LaGrange, Ky., where he passed his remaining years until his death in 1888.

Through the means of the great amount of labor done by him, and the excellence, and, it might be called, genius of that work, or a great portion of it, Dr. Morris' name became more familiar throughout the Masonic fraternity through distant parts of this country, and the world, than it was to those outside of that order who lived within five miles of his home. His publications, numbering seventy-three works, his contributions to and in connection with the Masonic, the religious, the sectarian and the scientific press, which extended through half a century, his unparalleled industry as a lecturer upon many themes, all unite in surrounding his name with a halo of public respect.

He was a very large contributor to many Masonic periodicals, and various newspapers and magazines. Throughout all the world the name of the Poet Laureate of Masonry is known and loved next to the ancient order itself.

Dr. Morris' chief fame came to him through his poems. They are of a very high order, and are recognized as being the productions of a healthy brain, an erudite conception, a grand appreciation of the good, and a beautiful imagination. It was a circumstance commented upon in one of Dr. Morris' lectures that while there was an abundance of poets who belonged to the Masonic ranks, notably Thomas Moore, Sir Walter Scott, James Hogg, Ferguson, George P. Morris, Percival, Robert Burns, Duganne, Shilliber, Lamartine, Cowper and others, yet altogether they have scarcely written a score of Masonic poems. Percival and George P. Morris wrote two or three each, Robert Burns one, the greatest of them all, except Rob Morris' poems, while all the others named wrote none.

Robert Burns, over one hundred years ago, was crowned with the laurel wreath, which signified his elevation to the station of Poet Laureate of Freemasonry. This was for one poem he wrote, and he was the first to be so crowned. Upon his death no one was ever deemed fit to assume the high station until Rob Morris was so selected through the expressed wish of over 500,000 Masons throughout all the world.



The coronation took place in New York City, on December 17, 1884, in the presence of several thousand Masons who attended, many of them from distant points of the compass, to merely witness the one event. It was in a double sense the crowning point of a wondrous life.

It was the prediction of the venerable and learned Salem Town, LL.D., himself a Mason of great prominence, and an expounder of its grandest themes, that "Brother Morris' fame as a poet will outlast his memory as a written in prose."

Out of more than three hundred pieces that make up his poetical collections, there are many of rarest delicacy and beauty. His poetical labors extended over every class of thought proper to the theme. Very many were written to be accompanied by music, and so have entered into Festival, Funeral and Work meetings; some to be recited with emblematic accompaniments. The greater portion were composed "upon the wing" in stage coach, railway carriage, on steamboats, on horseback and at Low XII hours after lodge-meetings.

It would seem that no man could perform the amount of labor accomplished by Rob Morris, unless he preserved all his faculties intact and attained nearly the number of years of life allotted to Methuselah. Yet that work was all done, unassisted, by Rob Morris, and the spring of inspiration which promoted it lay in the one source, "ambition."

When this ambition was gratified with his coronation as Poet Laureate he ceased his labors and dwelt nearly four years in the quiet lull before death came to claim him for its own. In speaking of him a number of Masons, among the most eminent in the land, said that he was not only the greatest Masonic poet and prose-writer, but he was the greatest Mason that had ever lived.

In fact, there have been few men who ever lived who have done more work with the pen for publication than Rob Morris. There has certainly been no writer of Masonic literature at any time in the world's history who has written half as much as he either of poetry or prose. The work he has done would seem too stupendous for any one man to perform in a lifetime, yet he has done it, and well. He has not only written all these works, songs, hymns, poems, addresses and essays, but furthermore he has done such other minor literary work as would require a couple of columns additional merely to enumerate.

It is of course chiefly as a writer that Dr. Morris is known to the Masonic world. He was not only the universally accepted Poet Laureate of Masonry, but in addition to this his prose works are of the first rank in Masonic literature. He wrote extensively on the subject of Masonic jurisprudence, produced several rituals and hand-books, many fugitive pieces, edited some Masonic journals, and published an important book of travel and research, "Freemasonry in the Holy Lan," which appeared in 1872.

The Masons of this country raised between \$9,000 and \$10,000 as a fund to enable Dr. Morris to make his journey to the original seat of Masonry. He went to the Orient in 1868, and traveled very extensively there and in Europe. His researches confirmed many traditions as to Masonry, and enabled the author to contribute much valuable evidence as to the truth of what was before then little more than conjecture. Being learned in Masonic lore, the inscriptions, coins and customs of the people among whom he journeyed often had a meaning for him which was not apparent to others. His trip to the Holy Land discovered abundant testimony as to the great age of Masonry. His book is dedicated to His Excellency Mohammed Raschid, Governor-General of Syria and Palestine, who was an eminent Mason.



A profound admiration for the Bible, as the only inspired book in Masonry, led Dr. Morris early in his career to propose an exploration of the lands of the Bible in the interests of the order. In 1854 the grand lodge of Kentucky entered into the plan, and proffered a loan sufficient for the cost, but circumstances at that time forbade the journey. It was still, however, a favorite theme in his lectures and writings, and in 1867 he visited one hundred and thirty lodges, chiefly in the northern states, and proposed to them that he would donate the necessary time and labor if they would undertake the cost. The response was a practical one, for 3,782 brethren cluffed together to supply the necessary means.

He set out February 2, 1868, addressed the lodges at Smyrna, upon the way, on February 25, and reached Beyrout, Syria, March 3. At Damascus, through the influence of Brother E.T. Rodgers, H.B.M. Consul there (and Master at the time of Lebanon lodge, at Beyrout), he made the Masonic acquaintance of the governor-general and of General Abdel Kader. He delivered addresses before the members of the Masonic fraternity in Damascus, Beyrout, Joppa and Jerusalem. In the latter city he opened a Lodge of Instruction, May 13, which five years afterward, culminated in the Royal Solomon Mother Lodge No. 293, upon the Canada Register of which he was first Master. He reached home early in August. The results of his industrious researches are seen in the large volume entitled "Freemasonry in Holy Land." At Jerusalem he made the personal acquaintance of that learned and zealous explorer, Captain Warren, himself a member of the Masonic brotherhood.

This oriental lodge has maintained a distinct and honorable existence, and has become the mother of a group of lodges in Palestine and the center of a grand lodge in Jerusalem. Dr. Morris made a second visit to Europe in 1878, at which time he was especially noticed by the Prince of Wales, who, being a Mason, departed from his habit of non-attendance so far as to attend lodge in London, and then to follow him to Oxford to attend lodge there, while Dr. Morris was at those places lecturing.

Dr. Morris was "brought to Masonic light," as the phrase is, in Oxford, Miss., March 5, 1846, when he joined Cathright Lodge No. 33. At that time he was principal of the Mount Sylvan Academy, near Oxford. He at once became deeply interested in the subject of Masonry, and his progress thereafter was notable.

He was exalted to the degree of Royal Arch in Lexington, Miss., in 1848; accepted as R. and S.M. in 1849; made a Knight Templar at Jackson, Miss., in 1850, and received the Scottish Rite degrees to the Thirty-second degree in 1854. He received the Rite of Memphis, so far as the ninetieth degree, in New York in 1864, and the encampment order of English Templary in Canada in 1857. He also received a very large number of the honorary appendages to Masonry, such as the three official orders of Royal Arch Masonry, Past Eminent Commander, Past Grand Commander, Grand High Priest, Past Grand Commander-in-chief 32°. The Masonic and Military Orders of the Knights of Rome, and the Red Cross of Constantine, were communicated to him in 1857, and afterwards in 1873.

The Order of Past Grand Master was given him at his installation as Grand Master of Kentucky, in 1858, the Hon. Henry Wingate, Past Grand Master, presiding. Among his honorary degrees and complimentary memberships, which were nearly one hundred and fifty in number, that of Past Deputy Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Canada was chiefly prized.



Dr. Morris was a member of Fortitude Lodge, No. 47, at LaGrange, Ky., and of the Eminence Royal Arch Chapter. He was also a member of the Louisville Commandery, No. 1, Knights Templar, and was Past Grand Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Consistory of Kentucky, 32°.

He was the originator of a large number of special features, among them the most superior degrees of "Ludios' Masonry." The most popular of these with the order are "The Eastern Star," composed and communicated by him in 1850. This degree is divided into five sections, named from as many historical characters, namely: "Jophthan's Daughter," "Ruth," "Esther," "Martha" and "Electa." So popular has this degree become that there are now hundreds of organizations styled "Chapters of the Eastern Star." These societies extend throughout the entire world. In addition to this degree Dr. Morris also added "The Queen of the South," "The Cross and Crown," etc.

Of Masonic rituals and hand-books, the following is a list of his works: "Free Masons' Monitor," twelve degrees; "Miniature Monitor," three degrees; "Eastern Star Manual," "Rosary of Eastern Star," "Guide to the Consecration of Masonic Cemeteries," "Discipline of Masonic Offenders." He was the first writer, according to very high authority, in Masonic belles-lettres, his "Lights and Shadows of Freemasonry" being the pioneer work in that line.

Of all these and others, it may truthfully be said, as Lyttleton, in his eulogy of Cowper:

"Not one immoral, one corrupted thought,  
One line which, dying, he would wish to blot".

His rule of life, from the commencement of labor as a Masonic journalist, was borrowed from Addison: "I promise never to draw a faulty character, which does not fit at least a thousand people, or to publish a single paper that is not written in the spirit of benevolence, and with a love of mankind."

By many Dr. Morris was considered the leading numismatist in America. In the science of historical numismatics in America he was one of the pioneers, his monograph, entitled "The Twelve Caesars, illustrated by Readings of 217 of Their Coins and Medals," being the first issue of its class west of the Atlantic. He also published the "Numismatic Pilot", devoted to the explanation of ancient coins. He was Secretary of the American Association of Numismatists; honorary member of the Numismatic and Antiquarian Society, of Montreal, Canada; also of the Boston Numismatic Society and the New London, Conn., Historical Society, and an active member of the American Numismatic and Archaeological Society, of New York.

Rob Morris gave us altogether, as from a perennial fountain, more than three hundred effusions in form of odes and poems; but none wear so well with old admirers, none secure so speedily the favor of the newly-initiate, as his conception of August, 1854, which has "gone out through all the earth" under the name of "The Level and the Square". It is the Masonic song of the age, tending to the immortal. Brother George Oliver, D.D., eminent above all others in English Masonry, and the Masonic writer for all time, said of this piece: "Brother Morris has composed many fervent, eloquent and highly-poetic compositions - sons that will not die - but in 'The Level and the Square' he has breathed out his depths of feeling,



fervency and pathos with brilliancy and vigor of language, and expressed his faith in the immortal life beyond the grave."

Periodically published in Masonic journals, quoted in a thousand orations, seen in fragments in innumerable epitaphs, musically wedded to sixteen airs, declaimed by traveling performers, and embodied in many "Gems of Reading," this effusion deserves best of all to live in his memory as one of his grandest efforts.

Of Masonic belles-lettres, he wrote "Life in the Triangle," 1853; "The Two St. Johns," 1854; "Tales of Masonic Life," 1860; "Lodge at Mystic," 1863; and "Masonic Poems" 1864 and 1876. In Masonic history and biography he wrote "Freemasons' Almanacs," 1860-'61-'62-'63-'64; "Masonic Reminiscences," 1857; "History of Freemasonry in Kentucky," 1859; "Life of Eli Bruce," 1859; "Freemasonry in the Holy Land," 1872. He also published in thirty octavo volumes, under the general title of "Universal Masonic Library," fifty-six distinct works, including writings of Oliver, Mackey, Town, Portal, Preston, Hutchinson, George Smith, Morris, Anderson, Harris, Calcott, Ashe, Lawrie, DeVertot, Gourdin, Taylor, Creigh, Brown, Morton, Arnold and Towne. In addition to these, he published the "American Freemason," 1853-'58; "Voice of Masonry," 1859-'67; "Light in Masonry," 1873, and "Kentucky Freemason," 1853.

In addition to these he has given to the Sunday-school literature of the world scores of odes, sketches, addresses and songs. In 1884 he published a new edition of his poems entitled the "Poetry of Freemasonry," which was a compilation of his best poetry. He also wrote a series of sketches for the "Courier Journal," entitled "Jesters with Whom I have Jested," published in 1886. One of his most famous songs was called "Blind Bartemus."

The beginning of official work of this zealous veteran was that of Grand Lecturer, first in the state of Tennessee; afterwards in Kentucky. On horseback, before the days of railways he visited the lodges of those jurisdictions to the number of a hundred or more, and communicated to them rituals and general instructions in Masonry. The originality and thoroughness of his teachings are best described by a gentleman who accompanied him for a week or more in the spring of 1851.

"Brother M.'s marked trait was industry. He made little pretension to genius or talent of high order, but he always made the best use of his time. I never saw him idle for a moment. In the lodge or out of it he was ever seeking or communicating Masonic light. He visited sick brethren, if there were any, at their houses, and imparted comfort. He inquired for destitute brethren and tendered them aid. He looked up the graves of departed Masons and suggested better care of them. He set the secretary to making a list of the widows and orphans of the craft, that if any were needy they might not be overlooked by the brotherhood in future. His appearance in those days was very peculiar. Lank as a rattlesnake, and as swift at a witty stroke; nervous to the last degree; frightfully dyspeptic; extremely fond of nature, and an indefatigable collector of shells, arrow-heads and eccentric stones; a glutton for reading books; fluent as the river and generous as the sea; speaking in all things from the heart; amiable and generous."

In Dr. Morris' lodge lectures a beauty, grandeur and significance were apparent that impressed even the doltish mind. At that period American lodges were at a low ebb of information. The ceremonials were often wretchedly burlesqued by ignorant pretenders, and Rob



Morris came among them as a reformer. Instead of an unmeaning tragedy the craft acquired a sublime symbol, and if the neophyte had a soul at all able to appreciate a grand thought, he received a permanent impression. On Sabbath days Dr. Morris addressed communities, wherever he might be, in their churches and school-houses, upon Freemasonry as identified with Bible truth. Once, at least, in every village, he invited a union of the ladies with their husbands, fathers and brothers in the lodge-room, and to the united assembly gave his beautiful system entitled The Eastern Star.

Though the country was wild with political and sectarian strife (the mutterings of civil war) he talked of nothing but Freemasonry, and for all this service he accepted a compensation so meagre that the poorest lawyer or physician that sat in any of his audiences would have spurned it.

The system of itinerant lecturing upon Freemasonry, begun by Dr. Morris, has been continued to the present. The venerable Mentor of Masonry raised his voice in defense of the order and its covenants in the lodges of Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin, Nebraska, Colorado, Wyoming, Utah, Nevada, California, New Jersey, Delaware, Ohio, Connecticut and New York, and other states. He once estimated that in thirty-two years of such travel and travail he climbed the stairs and entered the adyta of fifteen hundred lodges!

The growth of skepticism among American Masons has been too marked to escape the notice of any. Leading men among the craft have at one time and another publicly attacked the old principle of "faith in an inspired word as a fundamental belief in Masonry." To counteract this, the most dangerous foe that Masonry can have, Dr. Morris early made himself the champion of Biblical faith. To unsettle the minds of the craft as to the object their fathers venerated has been the first aim of the Masonic skeptic, and we see that while casting the Holy Scriptures out of the lodge-room was the first step of the French infidel, ignoring faith in God was the second and easier step. Dr. Morris said in an oration in 1853: "I repeat, with the great moralist Johnson, that there is no crime so great that a man can commit as poisoning the sources of eternal (Masonic) truth. Faith in God tends, in the only high and noble sense, to make Freemasons one."

So many of Dr. Morris' diplomas and official jewels were destroyed in the burning of his house, "The Three Cedars," at LaGrange, Ky, November, 1861, and in the terrible conflagration of Chicago, October, 1871, that no accurate list can now be given of them. It is within bounds, however, to assert that the number of honorary degrees and complimentary memberships with which his signal services were recognized in America and abroad exceeds one hundred. Dr. Morris at one time recalled a list of one hundred and forty-three regular degrees and orders in Masonry, whose covenants he has assumed. In 1856 he made this summary of them in a symbolical strain of thought:

"I have been around, under and through the temple of Masonry, searching out its foundations, its builders and its trestle board. With its builders I have handled, in turn, each of its implements; with the Entered Apprentice, trimming the rough ashler on the checkered pavement; with the Fellow Craft, moralizing upon the pillars of the porch, and the fifteen grades of the winding stairs; with the Master Mason, smoothing the indissoluble cement with silent awe; with the Mark Master I have penetrated the quarries, found my own best block, brought it up for a place in the walls, and claimed my penny with the rest; for I never have received, of salary or official emolument, to the value of one Jewish half shekel of silver. I



have shared the responsibilities of the Past Master, seated in the Oriental Chair of King Solomon. As a Most Excellent Master, my hands have aided to rear the cap-stone to its place, while my lips have sung the triumphant strain, All Hail to the Morning, of Thomas Smith Webb, and my face was bowed to the pavement in acknowledgment of the descent of fire and cloud. As a Royal Arch Mason, returning from exile in Babylon, my feet have wandered, weary and sore, over rough and rugged ways, seeking the Sacred Hill. As a Select Master, I have wrought in silence, secrecy and darkness, upon the mystic arches within the Holy Mountain. I have stood as a Knight Templar with companions loyal and brave, wielding my brand, excalibur, two-edged and cross-hilted, while guarding the SHRINE where the body of MY DEPARTED LORD was laid. In all my career as a Mason I have ever held that excellence is granted to man only in return for labor, and that nothing is worth having that is not difficult to acquire. My life has been, thus far, a contest with obstacles; but no man would be what he is, had he tamely suffered the difficulties of life to overcome him."

It has been claimed that Dr. Morris was the first to ever write a book upon the subject of Masonic Jurisprudence. The work upon that subject was published in 1855 and was entitled the "Code of Masonic Law." Doubtless there has been too much legislation among American Grand Lodges, too much of the whimsical, special and ephemeral, yet he conceived that there is a basis of legal principles to which all questions may be referred, and this is what he undertook to point out in his "Code of Masonic Law." All thoughtful Masons admit that

"Law should speak  
Seldom, and never but as wisdom prompts,  
And equity."

The spirit of his writings upon jurisprudence is suggested by Hooker: "It is easier a great deal for men to be taught by laws what they ought to do, than intrusted to judge as they should, of law; for the wisest are ready to acknowledge that soundly to judge of law is the weightiest thing a man can take upon him."

In his contributions to the periodical literature of Masonry since 1850 will be found replies to questions upon Masonic law and usage, and dissertations upon special subjects of this class. His studies in this branch gave him the facility seen in the various Constitutions drafted for Grand Bodies, Standard Forms of By-Laws, and in the Handbooks issued in great numbers for use in the workings of Masonry.

The custom of giving honors to our Masonic dead has become so intimately incorporated into our American Masonry that many continue their attachment to the order "even down to old age," that so they may not forfeit the funeral honors due the faithful departed. On the other hand, it is an attraction to a certain class of minds to unite themselves with a fraternity which follows its members lovingly to the grave's brink and lays them gently back upon the bosom of mother earth. In honoring this custom the practice of Dr. Morris was supplemented by his writings. His "Funeral Book of the Freemasons," a work of widespread celebrity, contains, in addition to copious and easy instructions, a long catalogue of epitaphs and forms of obituary notices, also of funeral songs suitable to such occasions; while no one was so often called upon to attend in person and preside over such ceremonies.



This passage was first published by Dr. Morris in 1852, and expresses his views upon the subject with much vigor:

"In all ages the bodies of the Masonic dead have been laid in graves dug due east and west, with their faces looking toward the East. This practice has been borrowed from us and adopted by others, until it has become nearly universal. It implies that when the great day shall come, and He who is death's conqueror shall give the signal, His ineffable light shall first be seen in the east; that from the east He will make His glorious approach; will stand at the eastern margin of these graves, and with His mighty power - that grasp irresistibly strong which shall prevail - will raise the bodies which are slumbering therein. We shall have been long buried, long decayed. Friends, relatives, yea, our nearest and dearest, will cease to remember where they have laid us. The broad earth will have undergone wondrous changes, mountains levelled, valleys filled. The seasons will have chased each other in many a fruitful round. Oceans lashed into fury by the gales of to-day will to-morrow have sunk like a spoiled child to their slumber. Broad trees with broader roots will have interlocked them, hard and knobbed as they are, above our ashes, as if to conceal the very fact of our having lived; and then, after centuries of life, they, too, will have followed our example of mortality, and, long struggling with decay, at last will have toppled down to join their remains with ours, thus obliterating the last poor testimony that man has ever lain here. So shall we be lost to human sight. But the eye of God, nevertheless, will mark the spot, green with the everlasting verdure of faith; and when the trumpet's blast shall shake the hills to their very bases, our astonished bodies will raise, impelled upward by an irresistible impulse, and we shall stand face to face with our Redeemer."

Dr. Rob Morris closed his earthly career at LaGrange, Ky., on July 31, 1888. He had been in bad health for a year or more, but was not seriously ill until about six weeks before his death, when he was stricken with paralysis, and after that time he steadily declined. For twenty-four hours preceding his death he was unconscious. His immediate family of six children and their mother were present during his last moments.

The surviving children were: John A. Morris; Charlotte F., married to Hon. H.J. Goodrich; Dr. Alfred W. Morris, Robert Morris, Jr., Sarah M., married to Latimer Hitt; and Ruth E., married to John Mount.

The Grand Master of Kentucky, upon receipt of the intelligence of the death of Dr. Morris, at once caused the issuance of the following circular letter:

GRAND LODGE OF KENTUCKY, F.: AND A.:M.:

Lexington, Ky., July 31, 1888

To the Free and Accepted Masons of Kentucky:

It becomes my painful duty to announce to you the death of our venerable and learned brother, P.:G.:M.: Rob Morris, which occurred at his home in LaGrange, on the 31st day of July, 1888, after an illness of short duration, following years of ill health.

The fame of our eminent brother was not confined to our continent - he was a citizen of two hemispheres; for his learning and zeal made him known to Masons everywhere as a chieftain among the clans, a master builder among the workmen. His mark is upon the most beautiful stones of our Masonic edifice, and his designs remain upon our trestle board, for he both conceived and executed.



It is my order that this announcement be read in every lodge at its next regular meeting, that proper respect may be shown to the memory of our deceased brother until the Grand Lodge of Kentucky can, in ample form, testify its appreciation of his many excellencies.

H.B. Grant,  
Grand Secretary

J. Soule Smith  
Grand Master

The funeral ceremonies took place at LaGrange, which had been his home for over thirty years, and were conducted by the Grand Lodge of Kentucky, Past Grand Master Hiram Bassett, an old and zealous Mason, and an intimate friend of Dr. Morris, acting as Grand Master.

A special train carried the brethren of Louisville up to LaGrange on August 1st, the day of the funeral.

The Knight Templars were under command of E. Sirs F.H. Johnson and John A. Stratton. The procession was in charge of Col. John B. Castleman, K.T., assisted by Capt. John H. Leathers, Grand Treasurer; Bro. W.H. Shaw.

The following officers officiated: P.G.M. Hiram Bassett, as Master, representing also the Grand Master. Bro. J.R. Adams, Master of Fortitude Lodge, assisted Bro. Bassett as Deputy; Bro. L.M. LaRue, Senior Warden; Bro. H.R. Coleman (Grand Chaplain) as Chaplain; D.T. Carson, Junior Warden; William Manby, Secretary; J.W. Russell, Treasurer; R.D. Cassiday, Senior Deacon; Henry Egert, Junior Deacon, and J.T. Davidson (Grand Tyler) as Tyler. Bro. M. Cary Peter, Grand Junior Deacon, was present, but his jewel was worn by Bro. Kinkead, W.M. of Lodge 376.

At the residence a number of Pilgrim Knights (of the Palm and Shell - organized by Bro. Morris) performed the mystic ceremonies of that order about the remains. These were Bros. H.R. Coleman, Hiram Bassett, H.B. Grant, J.H. Leathers, Chas. Sauer, J.M. Hall, J.W. Hopper, W.H. Shaw, W.E. Woodruff, Wm. Moses and Alex. Evans.

A Guard of Honor, consisting of Past Commanders, viz.: E. Sir Knights C.E. Dunn, C.L. Martin, C.C.W. Alfriend and Thos. H. Sherley (P.G.C), of Louisville Commandery, No. 1; A.H. Gardner, Chas. C. Vogt, H.R. Mitchell and John Finzer, of DeMolay, conveyed the casket to the church, where a male choir, led by Bro. Smythe, assisted by a number of brethren, with Bro. Wm. T. Boden at the organ, rendered most solemn and beautiful music.

Rev. H. Calvin Smith delivered the discourse from the text: Psalms (xviii, 13-"Though ye have lain among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver and her feathers with yellow gold."

Rev. Bro. H.R. Coleman followed with a few remarks and P.G.M. Eginton read a tribute prepared for Fortitude Lodge. P.G.M. James W. Hopper also read an original "song of lamentation." Bro. H.B. Grant, Grand Secretary, being called upon, said: "About four years ago I received from Brother Rob Morris a paper containing these words, afterwards making verbal request that they be read at the first Masonic gathering after his death:

To my dear friend, H.B. Grant:

#### A MESSAGE FROM THE GRAVE.

I have composed this poem as under the shadow of impending death. I have made a few copies and sent them to particular friends only, asking that they should not be published, or any public use made of them until I am gone.



Brothers in June or in December  
 Honoring the memory of the dear St. John,  
 Then let some kind participant remember  
 The name of him who wrote this, but is gone;  
 Let some kind brother rise, while all are silent,  
 And with deep pathos and fond friendship say:  
 He was a Mason, gentle, true, not violent,  
 And loved old things that do not pass away.

He loved his friends; in them his heart found anchor,  
 Bound in affection as with hooks of steel;  
 As for his foes, he gave few signs of rancor,  
 But bore their slanders patiently and well.  
 He loved to make in simple verse that rhyming  
 Where ancient signs and emblems smoothly lie,  
 Where deeds of brother-love and truth are chiming,  
 And Masonry is wed to poetry.

He loved the word of God; its hopes eternal  
 Grew sweeter as the end of life drew nigh;  
 A sinful man, but saved by Grace supernal,  
 Trusting in Christ, he dreaded not to die.  
 At times a cloud the promises disguising,  
 And deep humility obscured the scene,  
 But the bright Son of Righteousness uprising  
 Dispelled the gloom and warmed his soul again.

He gave the widows and the orphans duly  
 A portion of his hard-earned scanty store,  
 And though the amount might seem but trifling truly,  
 He gave so cheerfully it seemed the more.  
 His heart was in his work, to Build the Temple,  
 In fervency, he toiled through many years,  
 To "build the temple" spiritual and mental,  
 He triumphs now - is freed from toils and tears.

He's gone; the problem that so long he studied,  
 That mystery of "the world to come" profound  
 Is solved; his tree of life which only budded,  
 Bears now full harvest in Celestial Ground.  
 In the Great Presence, with the wearied resting  
 He has his wages and is well content.  
 Brothers, in silence stand: your love attesting -  
 This is the word your dying brother sent!

The Knights Templars commenced their beautiful service, which was concluded at the grave, E.: Sir Frank H. Johnson, Commander, and E.: Sir John Frank Lewis, Prelate, officiating.

The procession filed out of the church and, led by the band from Louisville, the Templars and the lodge were followed by the hearse and mourning family and friends to the village cemetery.

Bro. Bassett then took up the solemn Masonic services, which being concluded, Bros. J.H. Leathers and H.B. Grant placed upon the grave a floral design, representing a Masonic level, about three feet across the base, and a square, referring to the popular poem by Bro. Morris,

"We meet upon the Level and we part upon the Square".

This was surrounded by a laurel wreath, suggesting that the deceased had been crowned "Poet Laureate of Freemasonry." Another floral tribute, by the Commandery, was a very large Roman cross. Other very pretty designs were laid upon the grave. The attendance was very large, and represented the brain and zeal of Kentucky Masonry.