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IN HONOR OF ROBERT MORRIS
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By Pearle Seitter, Past Matron,
Hamilton Chapter, No. 275,
Hamilton, Missouri.

Speech for Worthy Matron:

We are very happy tonight for the privilege of paying tribute to the memory of Robert Morris, the founder of our Order. As long as there is an Order of the Eastern Star, the name of Robert Morris will always stand out with distinct prominence. Although other names may be linked with it's origin, this noted character claims the honor of the portrayal of the first Eastern Star degrees, and it is so understood throughout the world wherever an Eastern Star Chapter is known.

Robert Morris was born August 31st, 1818, ^{near Boston, Mass.} in ~~New York City~~. His father died when he was a very small boy, and for a time he had a temporary home with an aunt. Although born Robert Peckham, when he later went to live with his foster father, John Morris, he took the name of Robert Morris by which he became famous. His parents were his teachers, and from them he inherited a love for reading, a keen mind, and a great memory. He was a devout Mason, and in 1850 he became interested in an Order which would include the wives of Master Masons. He talked over some of the theories which he had worked out with some of his friends, and they were heartily in favor of the five degrees, the passes, the grip, and the various ceremonies of the Order.

The first meeting of the Eastern Star was organized as Purity Constellation Chapter, No. 1, in Fulton Co., Kentucky. Mr. Morris invited all the Masons and their wives from miles around to this meeting, and with their help he organized the first unit of the Order in a most impressive manner. Dr. Morris and his wife made the trip to this meeting in an open buggy, driving the family horse over very bad roads which were in some places almost impassable. They took with them a melodian to furnish the music. With ceremonies to make the work more impressive, and with a prayer that the Heavenly Father would bless their efforts, they gave to the world the Order of the Eastern Star, which today numbers nearly 2,000,000 members. It's influence extends around the world, and it is an Order on which the sun never sets. We will always owe a debt of gratitude to the fruitful brain, the generous heart, and the untiring efforts of Robert Morris who so ably worked out the teachings of our Order.

Many years have passed since that first meeting, and all who had a part in it have long since gone to their reward, but that Star in the East still shines and sheds it's beams over the whole universe, and many have lived to see the realization of the hopes and dreams of Robert Morris. He died July 31st, 1888 in LaGrange, Ky. His death was a great loss to the Masonic Order, for he devoted his life to it's principles, and his memory will ever remain fresh in the minds of both Masons and Eastern Stars.

As soon as the Worthy Matron is through speaking, each Star point with unlighted candle of appropriate color, in turn rises and speaks:

Adah: Robert Morris had the courage of his convictions, and chose the story of Jephthah's daughter to represent fidelity and strength of purpose.

Adah was the one he chose to show the human race
That one could be brave and true when they a death must face;
And he would try sometime to show the human race just how
A daughter could have faith enough to keep her father's vow.

I light the blue candle as a tribute to the memory of Robert Morris.

(Flowers may be used by using the words "I present this flower" (or color) in place of "I light the blue candle," making the same change for each Star point.

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Ruth: Robert Morris knew how necessary it was to be meek and humble, and to be true to every station in life. He could not have found a character more to his liking than the humble gleaner Ruth.

Ruth filled his every purpose for one meek and humble too,
A widow so devoted to her loved ones all life through;
No other one could show so well how much a life could yield,
As did the one so full of love, the gleaner in the field.
I light the yellow candle as a tribute to the memory of Robert Morris.

Esther: Robert Morris knew that honor and loyalty were necessary in facing the problems of life. That is why he chose the beautiful Queen Esther to teach the lesson of loyalty to kindred and friends.

No other one could ever show such loyalty to friends,
As she who through her younger life had taken what life sends;
For Esther seemed to be the one who had without a trace
Of fear, risked crown and even life to save her captive race.
I light the white candle as a tribute to the memory of Robert Morris.

Martha: Robert Morris had faith in the words of Jesus, "I am the resurrection and the life." He wisely chose Martha to give us faith in the hour of trial, and the hope of eternal life.

Martha was the one he chose because she did believe
In all the words that Jesus said, and from her we receive
That trustful faith to look beyond these many years of strife,
And see the endless years of joy in that eternal life.
I light the green candle as a tribute to the memory of Robert Morris.

Electa: Robert Morris knew that to love one another was the greatest of all the commandments. He chose the Elect lady to represent the love of a mother for all mankind.

Electa was the one he chose to represent love
That brings to us the joy of peace, with blessings from above;
We know that love alone can face the challenge of the cross,
And suffer persecution without a fear of loss.
I light the red candle as a tribute to the memory of Robert Morris.

As soon as the Star points are through speaking, they form semicircle west of Altar. Each Star point carries her lighted colored candle. This semicircle may be formed before they speak if desired.

As soon as Star points are in position, Associate Matron with lighted white candle, takes position in semicircle to left of Electa and speaks:

In memory of Robert Morris, the founder of our Order, we place together our tributes. May this be a token of our love as we honor the name of one whose memory is cherished wherever the Order of the Eastern Star is found.

With love we bring our tributes to the founder of our Star,
For the name of Robert Morris is known both near and far;
And when we think of famous names in all the world around,
His name will always head the list where Eastern Stars are found.

(If flowers are used, Associate Conductress gathers the flowers from the Star points before speaking.)

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Conductress, with unlighted candle passes back of Star points and lights her candle from the candle of Associate Conductress. If flowers are used, she accepts the flowers from the Associate Conductress, and places them in a basket.

Conductress speaks:

In memory of Robert Morris, we accept your tribute of love. May it light the East with beautiful rays of blue, yellow, white, green, and red, telling to all the Eastern Star world that a great soul was born who gave his life to the interest of our great Order. Long may the rays of light shine from the East, illuminating the world with its radiance of charity, truth, and loving kindness.

Conductress passes to East and places her lighted candle on a pedestal, or hands it to the Worthy Matron who places it on her pedestal. Conductress then faces west and speaks:

In memory of one who formed for us our Eastern Star,
We can hear only loving praise from Chapters near and far;
He founded our great Order and won for himself much fame,
And through the years we always will give honor to his name.

Soloist sings:

Tune: "Londonderry Air." (Danny Boy)

In loving memory we bring our tribute,
To one who gave so much to our dear Star:
Forever will the name of Robert Morris,
Be known to all the Chapters near and far;
To honor him all Eastern Stars are turning,
That we may pay our tribute to his name,
And give to him the honor he was earning,
When his work gave to him undying fame.

We love our Star because it gives us courage,
To do the right and be forever true;
To be so faithful to all of life's stations,
And be loyal to friends and kindred too;
It gives us faith to look beyond the present,
To that dear home where only love can be,
And for this we will give to Robert Morris,
All honor as we praise his memory.

At close of song, officers return to stations.

Music for song may be found on page No. 145, Methodist Hymnal.

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