

Subj. DeMolay



GRAND LODGE
FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS
OF THE
STATE OF NEW YORK

New York, May 27, 1994

To the Craft:

Down through the ages, the question has been asked: "when a mighty oak falls in the forest, and no one is around, does it make a sound?" We know not the answer, but we do know that when a mighty oak in Freemasonry, Most Worshipful Harry Ostrov, passed on May 23, 1994, the reverberations both within and without the Fraternity were loud and clear.

A prominent Freemason for over 67 years, the first New York DeMolay to become Grand Master, an inspiring leader, a distinguished attorney-at-law, a strong supporter of education in the field of law, a gentle-hearted man with untold numbers of friends, a wise counselor, a devoted husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather — yes, this mighty oak left an indelible impression on his family, society and the Craft he loved so well. He will be missed by all.

At his funeral, which followed a Masonic memorial service, on May 25th in Rockville Centre, N.Y., the Rabbi spoke eloquently about this kind and intelligent man. But it was his eldest son, Daniel, who let his heart bear witness of his father's "high standards," and who told of the "quiet decisiveness and extreme civility" of this patriarch of the Ostrov family in the latter half of the 20th century. Another word frequently mentioned was "character," of which the elder Ostrov was the epitome of the very best that word implies. Yes, Harry Ostrov was a role model for his offspring, and for his grandchildren and great-grandchildren. His wife, Juliette (known as Bobbie to one and all), and with whom, Daniel noted, his father had a "love affair" for their nearly-60 years together, was a rock of strength throughout this entire period.

Harry Ostrov was born in Vicksburg, Mississippi on December 1, 1904, so he was in his ninetieth year at the time of his passing. He graduated from the Joseph Rodman Drake School in 1919, was Salutatorian of the 1922 Class of Monticello (N.Y.) High School, received his Bachelor of Laws Degree from New York Law School, and was ad-

mitted to the New York State Bar in 1927. He practiced law for the rest of his life, even when suffering from Parkinson's Disease, total blindness, and assorted other ailments at the end. He was also a member of the Nassau County Bar Association.

His love of the law and his great service to his alma mater was recognized by the awarding of the Degree of Doctor of Laws Honors Causa in 1975, by his election in 1958 as Founding Director (later President) of the New York Law School Alumni Association, and by his receiving the Distinguished Alumnus Award at the Dean's Day in 1975. Later, he was elected a Trustee and Trustee Emeritus of the Association.

Harry Ostrov's fraternal record was remarkable. He joined New York Chapter, Order of DeMolay, in 1922, beginning a close association with that organization which remained until his passing. He was made an Honorary Legion of Honor member in 1928. His mother Lodge was Dirigo Lodge No. 30, in which he was Initiated on January 25, 1927, Passed on March 1, 1927, and Raised on April 26, 1927. (This is now Hancock-Dirigo-Adelphi Lodge No. 23, in the First Manhattan District.) In 1956, he became a dual member of the newly-constituted Guiding Light Lodge No. 1151 (now Guiding Light-Olympia Lodge No. 808) in Rockville Centre.

He served as Worshipful Master in 1939 and 1944, and was appointed District Deputy Grand Master of the First Manhattan District in 1945-46 by M.:W.:Charles W. Froessel, who was Associate Judge of the Court of Appeals, the highest Court in New York State. His colleagues quickly saw his leadership potential when they elected him President of the Metropolitan District Deputy Grand Masters Association.

He was appointed to the Board of Relief and Employment Bureau, 1946-47, the Board of General Activities (later the Committee on Masonic Education and Lodge Service), 1947-51, and the Committee on Restorations, 1954-64.

He was appointed Grand Treasurer of the Grand Lodge in October, 1957 (following the death of R.:W.:Edward J. Smith) and was then elected in 1958 for two years during the administration of M.:W.:H. Lloyd Jones. Then came his election as Deputy Grand Master in 1960-1962 under M.:W.:Carl W. Peterson, and his election, at the 181st Annual Communication, as the 77th Grand Master of Masons in New York from 1962 to 1964. He was the first person of the Jewish faith to serve in that position in New York. At the time of his election, there were 63 Districts, 1175 Lodges and 300,000 members in New York.

This term was marked by a significant milestone, his conception, promotion and establishment of the Masonic Brotherhood Center (New York Grand Lodge Pavilion) at the New York World's Fair,

1964-65. The project drew Freemasons (and non-Masons) from all over the world, and was a distinctive part of this major international event. He was considered a leader by the South American Grand Lodges in developing relationships with the United States, receiving an interfaith award in 1962 for what he was doing to bring about better feelings of brotherhood among all races throughout the world. He later served as a member of the Committee on Information for Recognition of the Conference of Grand Masters of Masons in North America, and was a member of the Committee on Foreign Relief of the Masonic Service Association of the United States. He received the Pierpont Edwards Medal of the Grand Lodge of Connecticut. During his term, he dedicated the Isaac R. Stewart Memorial Wing and Infirmary of the Masonic Home at Utica, N.Y.

M.:W.:Bro. Ostrov served for many years as the Grand Representative of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts near the Grand Lodge of New York, and was the Grand Representative of the Grand Lodge of Texas at his passing. He was an Honorary Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Israel and an Honorary Past Grand Warden of the United Grand Lodges of Germany.

M.:W.:Bro. Ostrov, a permanent member of Grand Lodge, was a long-time member of the Committee on Constitutions, serving as its Chairman for many years; was a member of the Committee on Correspondence and Relations; a member of the Committee on Publications and Public Relations; and had been President of the Masonic Brotherhood Foundation, Inc. Most recently, he had been a member of the Committee on Masonic Jurisprudence (Board of Grand Masters).

Active in the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite, Valley of New York City, he was Thrice Potent Master of the Lodge of Perfection, 1936-38, and Commander-in-Chief of the Consistory, 1954-57. He was coroneted a 33° Mason and made an Honorary Member of the Supreme Council in Boston, Massachusetts, on September 29, 1954. During his term as Commander-in-Chief, a total of 1,120 new Scottish Rite Masons were inducted into the Valley.

The Ostrovs were members of Central Synagogue of Nassau County in Rockville Centre for 53 years. He was elected a Trustee in 1943 and served as President in 1951-53. He was most active in the construction of a new edifice. At his passing, he was an Honorary Trustee.

A family-oriented man, M.:W.:Bro. Ostrov and the former Juliette (Bobbie) Marbes were married on September 8, 1935. They had two sons, Daniel and Charles, and two daughters, Enid and Irene, nine grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren.

M.:W.:Harry Ostrov believed strongly that "Brotherhood is our business," as he often was fond of saying. In 1963, he gave a memo-

rable speech at the Garden City Hotel, titled *Let Us Be Better Americans*. It so impressed then-U.S. Senator and Brother Kenneth Keating that he had it reprinted in the Congressional Record, as "worthy of the consideration of all thinking Americans." The entire speech is worthy of quotation here, but we'll just cite one paragraph:

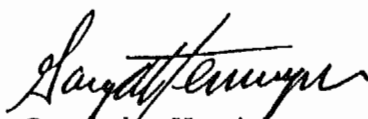
"Let us be positive. Do you believe in Masonry? Work for it. Do you believe in America? Fight for it. Do you believe that there is one Almighty Parent in heaven, which makes us all members of the human family? Brethren, if you believe in that ideal, fight for it. In no other way can these precious liberties, and these wonderful privileges, be maintained and preserved for the generations that come after us."

That's what M.:W.:Harry Ostrov, the man and Mason, believed in so strongly, and that's the challenge-legacy he left to us.

This "mighty oak" was heard!

It is my order that this letter be read at the next stated communication of every Lodge and that the Lodge Altar be draped for a period of 30 days.

Sincerely and fraternally,



Gary Arthur Henningsen
Grand Master of Masons in
the State of New York

By the Grand Master,



Robert C. Singer, PGM
Grand Secretary