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Brief biography of Frank A. Marshall, author of
DeMolay Ritual. For guidance in Memorial Service.

HISTORY OF DEMOLAY.

Frank A. Marshall, internationally known as the author of the ritual of the Order of DeMolay, was born in Leavenworth, Kansas, November 13, 1865. At that time Leavenworth was a frontier outpost soothing with traders, trappers, soldiers, Indians, and with settlers who were seeking new homes in the fertile but wild prairie lands to the west that then swarmed the buffalo and other game as well as with the Red man.

Although a healthy, rugged youngster who loved the boy games of his time, Frank Marshall from earliest childhood had a strong liking for study and delved deeply into everything that interested him. He graduated from the public schools of Leavenworth and then attended the University of Kansas.

While in the University the writings of Brother Marshall attracted a lot of attention and when he graduated his home town paper, the Leavenworth Times, gave him a position. For more than five years he worked on that newspaper as a reporter. His work attracted the editors of the Kansas City, Mo., Journal and September 28, 1891 he joined the staff of that paper to remain until October 1, 1928, a period of 37 years. On the Journal Frank Marshall was successively reporter, copy reader, dramatic, music and art critic, city editor and finally for more than twenty years an editorial writer. A weekly sermonette preaching the beauty and cheerfulness of religion were masterpieces of brevity and pure English and were looked forward to eagerly by thousands of Brother Marshall's readers.

Entering Masonry early in life he was an active worker in the Craft. He was a Past Master of Westport Lodge No. 340, A. F. & A. M.; Past High Priest of Westport Chapter No. 134, Royal Arch Masons; Past Illustrious Master of Westport Council No. 38, Royal and Select Masters; Past Commander Westport Commandery No. 68, Knights Templar; Past Patron Westport Chapter, Order of Eastern Star; Past Commander DeMolay Council of Knights Kadosh, Scottish Rite; member of the Missouri Association of High Priests and Past President of Missouri Past Commanders; a Noble of Ararat Temple.

It was in the course of their Masonic activities that Brother Marshall and Frank C. Land, founder and Grand Scribe of the Order of DeMolay, became close friends. Knowing the flow of beautiful but practical thoughts that were in the writings of Brother Marshall it was to him that Frank Land turned for aid in preparing a ritual for the young Order he had started. DeMolay was founded March 24, 1919. Just ~~thirteen~~ twelve years later, March 24, 1931, Frank A. Marshall passed over the final Divide. A remarkable coincidence.

He was a member of the DeMolay Grand Council from its inception in March, 1921. When he left the Journal he joined the staff of Frank C. Land at DeMolay headquarters as editor of The DeMolay News, where he continued his writings in behalf of the activities of DeMolays and their chapters.

The DeMolay ritual is an imperishable monument to Brother Marshall. It has been a powerful factor in the lives of hundreds of thousands of young men and to this vast army will be added more thousands as the years of the future come and go. Writing the ritual was a labor of love and all who have received the Initiatory and DeMolay degrees, and have been invested with the Legion of Honor and other awards of the Order, know there is inspiration and common sense in every phrase. The fortunate adults who have attended the ceremonies appreciate that Frank Marshall had a deep insight into the idealism of young men and impounded this knowledge in the DeMolay ritual.

While attending the Grand Council meeting in Washington, D. C., March 16, 17 and 18, 1931, this earnest DeMolay worker collapsed. He had been ill for several months and made the trip despite the protests of his physician. However, the thoughts of not being present with his brethren on the Council was something he refused to consider. He attended the session accompanied by Mrs. Marshall. He never rallied from that collapse and was taken back to Kansas City arriving there March 22. Two days later, on the twelfth anniversary of the birth of the Order he labored for and loved so completely, the soul of Frank A. Marshall went back to his Maker. Nature overcame the dominant spirit in his being.

Mrs. Bertha Meissner Marshall became the wife of Brother Marshall shortly after his graduation from the University of Kansas and their lives together were exceptionally happy. Two daughters added to this happiness. They are Mrs. Vera Lobeck who lives in Kansas City and Mrs. Mamie Ocker of St. Louis.

When it was arranged last summer for a tour of Europe sponsored by the Order of DeMolay, Mrs. Lobeck and Mrs. Ocker insisted upon their mother making the trip. She did so and as a climax to the tour, on August 7, 1931, she stood under an immense tree on the Isle de la Cite in the same river, Paris, beside the spot where Jacques DeMolay was executed March 18, ~~in~~ 1314, and participated in special memorial services for that great French Knight Templar whose courageous qualities have been so forcibly impressed upon the youth of today through the DeMolay ritual of Frank A. Marshall.
