

When my father died in March of 1967 our Lodge not only conducted his funeral, it sent a beautiful standing flower arrangement in the shape of a square and compass. When I became a Master Mason in 1968 and started to attend the stated meetings, I remember the secretary reading the bills for funeral flowers as well as flowers that had been sent to brothers who were sick at home or in the hospital. Over time this practice was stopped due to the cost. In the early days of our Lodge, there was a different practice.

On October 31, 1927 Lodge was opened for the purpose of conducting the funeral of Bro. Jacob Franklin Niswander. The Masonic Funeral was held at a local funeral home. In the bills that were paid at the November Stated Meeting there appears: "Chas. S. Shirreff (Quartett-Niswander) \$12.00" A month later there was a similar bill because Ernest Henry Verble, a PM of Traver Lodge in Kingsburg and now member of Las Palmas Lodge as well as Inspector of the 60<sup>th</sup> Masonic District had died. By May of 1928 the cost for a quartet for the funeral of Charter Member Duncan Donald Allison PM had gone up to \$15.00. Only two months later the funeral quartet in Oakland for our organist, George Henry Taylor cost \$30.00.

At the December 1927 Stated Meeting the following appears: "Jas. R. Erskine presented many problems confronting the Masonic Fraternity of Fresno in regard to the building of the new Masonic Temple and after considerable discussion by the various members a motion was regularly made, seconded and carried that a committee be appointed to canvas the members of Las Palmas Lodge as to the amount each member would pledge to the purpose of erecting a suitable Masonic edifice in the City of Fresno, with the understanding that in case of a member's death the full amount the member had paid would be immediately refunded to the family of the deceased member." (Remember that the existing Temple was only 16 years old at this time.)

On motion a committee was to be appointed by the W. M. to distribute Christmas cheer among the poor in Fresno and the Secretary was instructed to draw a warrant for \$50.00. The W. M. appointed Bros. Meyering, Jones and Leas. That \$50.00 in 1927 would be worth over \$650.00 today.

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