

### The Death of Frank S. Land

The headline in the December-January 1960 issue of The International DeMolay Cordon said it best: "Dad Land's Death Is Shock To All." Nobody expected it. His absence left a huge hole in an international fraternal organization where every major idea passed through him for acceptance, modification, rejection or implementation. He was 69 years old, but healthy and hearty, troubled only by progressive arthritis in his limbs that made it very difficult for him to travel, or even walk the few blocks from his apartment to the office at 201 East Armour Boulevard. On November 3<sup>rd</sup> he awakened after midnight in great pain and by 2:30 AM an ambulance had delivered him to the emergency room at St. Luke's Hospital. He was admitted, suffering from pulmonary edema, a condition of fluid in the lungs that is much easier diagnosed and treated today, but most likely was brought on by congestive heart failure. His condition improved but then worsened, and on November 8<sup>th</sup> at 10:22 PM, as he passed to his eternal reward, his wife and sister reportedly heard him whisper, "It is the beginning."



On November 9<sup>th</sup> all Chapters were ordered to drape their altars in black, in accordance with the Masonic customs of their home jurisdiction. Funeral services were held on Thursday, November 12<sup>th</sup> at the Country Club Christian Church with over 1000 people present. Harry Truman was one of the Honorary Pall Bearers. A special session of the Supreme Council was held in Kansas City on the day after the funeral, just to get some basic direction established. Five and a half months later, Land's wife of 47-years, Nell, died on April 23, 1960. You can read many of the stories and accolades given to Dad Land at his death in the December-January 1960 issue of The International DeMolay Cordon, and that full edition is shared here for you.

[December-January 1960 issue of The International DeMolay Cordon](#)

During his life, beginning early in the history of the Order, rumors circulated that Frank Land profited from DeMolay's jewelry, regalia and clothing sales, and that he grew wealthy from it. But that was a totally false accusation. The truth was that his personal wealth came as a well-paid CEO of a large membership corporation. His involvement with the Order was as essential for its growth and survival as Elon Musk is to Tesla and Mark Zuckerberg is to Facebook. He did live comfortably in large house, and later, in a well-appointed apartment with his wife. He had a driver for his car, who took him everywhere. He was a member of the private Kansas City Club, the Carriage Club of his home town, and the Chicago Club in Chicago, IL. He was always dressed impeccably in well-tailored clothing. He was able to afford the expense of campaigning for and serving as Imperial Potentate of the Shrine of North America. His Last Will and Testament was probated and after receipt of \$230,000 in life insurance, and expenses of \$72,343 were paid, his net estate was \$195,060, equivalent to about \$1.7 million today. The money was placed in a trust to care for his mother, his wife, his sister, and his half-sister, and after all had passed away, it established the Frank S. Land Foundation to benefit the Order of DeMolay.

<b>FRANK S. LAND</b>			
<b>Founder of Order of De Molay, Kansas City, Missouri</b>			
Died November 8, 1959, Age 69		<b>SETTLEMENT COSTS</b>	
Gross Estate .....	\$267,403.	Debts .....	\$ 48,692.
Total Costs .....	72,343.	Administration Expense .....	1,495.
Net Estate .....	\$195,060.	Attorney's Fee .....	8,188.
		Executor's Fee .....	8,188.
		Missouri Inheritance Tax .....	265.
		* Federal Estate Tax .....	5,515.
		<b>TOTAL COSTS .....</b>	<b>\$ 72,343.</b>
		* \$105,188 marital deduction.	
		\$51,263 Charitable Bequests.	
Cash in Estate, \$2,475.			
Included in the gross estate is \$230,000 of life insurance.			

Frank S. Land was esteemed and loved by everyone who knew him, and respected by everyone who knew OF him. This is best shown by these words from an editorial in the Kansas City Star following his death:

“Seldom has a man and, certainly, no other Kansas Citian, had a role of such far-flung association with his fellowmen... Frank Land exercised this influence with a manner that in no

way fits the usual impression of a leader of millions. Quiet, completely unassuming... Yet from this quiet manner came the spark capable of inspiring the finest ambitions of youth and adults. It was combined with a practical executive ability that translated the aspirations of youth into a world organization, the first big new development to come out of Masonry in 200 years.”

1. What do you think Dad Land meant by his final words?
2. Do you think these were his actual final words, or merely a nice story to give us one last legend about the Founder of the Order?
3. Was the Order of DeMolay prepared for the death of Dad Land?
4. What could they have done to make the loss of the Founder of the Order less traumatic to the organization?