

Founder Scobey

The fifth of the Seven Founder's Monuments to be erected by the Fraternity was dedicated at the Greenwood Cemetery at Hamilton, Ohio on June 27, 1930, forty two years after his death on July 22, 1888. The next day, the delegation celebrated the Diamond Jubilee of the Fraternity, 75 years since the Founding of Sigma Chi.

We attribute courtesy with his name and Founder Runkle spoke highly of Franklin Howard Scobey and wrote:

"Frank Scobey, boy and man, was one of those whom everybody wants everywhere at the same time. Of all those that I have ever been closely associated with he was the brightest, the most cheerful, the sunniest. Do not understand that he was lacking in the strong qualities of manhood because he was loving and cheery. The sunshine is the most powerful agency of nature. The world were dead without it. But this brother was never gloomy; no clouds seemed to shadow his life; *he was the same to all at all times*. The element of selfishness was as far from his nature as light from darkness. He cared nothing for money as money and yet he was the closest friend and companion of the only one of the founders (Lockwood) who exhibited much trace of the commercial instinct."

Background

Correspondence to ensure the appropriate permissions for the purchase of the grave site and the location took place: "I am in receipt of a letter this morning from Brother Wack and he advises that they had a talk with Miss Goshorn, the superintendent of the Cemetery and they see no reason for the Fraternity buying the lot for \$100. We already have the permission from Dr. Scobey and his sister for the location of the monument. The location of the monument was to be placed as close to the head of Founder Scobey's grave as possible."

"As you know, we are unable to locate Charles Scobey, the brother of our Founder. We, therefore, endeavored to communicate with two other relatives, Mrs. Cassatt and Mrs. Smith but without avail. Their letters were not returned to this office nor did they answer them. Brother Laurence communicated with Mrs. Cassatt by telephone but she gave him no information. I am leaving it up to Brother Wack and Martin to work out the best thing to do. I don't want to take any chance of a later ejection or of anybody raising a question about our right to set this monument."

Scobey lies beside his parents, with granite marker at 'the head of his grave, and at the foot the white stone, and Grand Army marker, as Sergeant, Company F, Third Ohio Volunteer Infantry.'

Monument Construction and Cost

In a letter from the Commission, it stated, "After paying for the Jordan and Caldwell Monuments and all expenses connected with their erection, there a balance in the Jordan Fund of \$46.69 and in the Caldwell Fund, \$1,171.23. These items, of course, will logically be carried over into the Scobey Fund and will be used to cover the expenses of the circular campaign which is now being launched to raise funds for the Scobey Monument."

In another change in the selection of the company to erect the monument, correspondence stated, "In view of the standing he has in the business and of the recommendations that have been given by Mr. Decay of Presbrey-Leland (designer and maker of Runkle's and Cooper's memorial), I can see no other course for the Monument Commission that to award him the contract. If we are after fraternity competition, he surely has just as strong a fraternal stand in Sigma Chi as Brother Stotzer (maker of Jordan and Caldwell's memorial). He and his three brothers have been members of Eta Eta at Dartmouth and he now states that next generation of their

family will shortly enter Dartmouth where he hopes each one will follow Sigma Chi. In addition to this, Brother Hinman has qualified as a life loyal Sig. In view of the fact that both Hinman and Stotzer are bidding on the same quality of stone Barre, both guaranteeing high class and perfect work and both Sigma Chis, the lower price of \$2,200.00 certainly call for Hinman getting the contract.”

The completed monuments are made of one solid piece of granite weighing approximately eight tons produced from an approximate fourteen ton monolith and quarried with great care in order to avoid flaws. Since the size and design were to be identical we can assume each of the monuments’ weights are similar. The monument is made from Barre granite. The cost of the Scobey Monument was \$2200.00.

Monument Symbols

In a letter dated, March 12, 1930, from Executive Secretary of the Monument Commission, Bolan Turner, to past Grand Consul Joseph Miller: “I have received a letter from H.P. Hinman, who has been awarded the contract for the Scobey Monument, he has made particular inquiry with reference to the Scobey Coat of Arms. I am not familiar with the Scobey family, but Brother Cleveland has told me that the only member of the family he knows of is possibly a nephew who resides in Florida and does not seem to be particularly interested. We would like to have your views on the question as to whether or not the monument should be carved in the same manner as the Jordan and Caldwell Monument, with the Sigma Chi badge on the front and rear of the monument and the crest on each end, rather than in the manner of the Runkle Monument, which carried the family crest on one side and a symbol of General Runkle’s military career on the other. If none of the family seems to be interested, it would be rather difficult, I imagine, to procure the coat of arms, if there is one. From my understanding of Founders Scobey’s work, I rather imagine it would also be difficult to procure any sort of emblem to reflect his profession or career. For that reason, it seems to me that we might well proceed with the monument according to the plan of the last two erected.”

The reply the next day was as follows: “I have written him today as per attached copy relative to the inscriptions, coat of arms, etc., desired by Brother Hinman for the Scobey monument. If a coat of arms cannot be located, we will probably have to use the Sigma Chi badge on one side of the large face of the monument and on the opposite face we might place a shield to indicate his service as a soldier and also his profession as an editor and writer. On the two ends of the monument we could place the fraternity crest. If we find a family coat of arms, we could place it on one end and the crest on the other.”

As a result, the Sigma Chi badge is on the front, the two sides have the Sigma Chi crest. The back indicates his profession as a soldier (infantry rifle) and an editor (pen).

In a speech from Charles Townsend at Founder Bell’s dedication: “It is fitting that his monolith should have been carved from the everlasting granite of our Sierra as a symbol not only of the lofty ideals of Sigma Chi, but of the solid permanence of the Fraternity through the ages to come; its own encircling emblems typifying the chain of friendship which links our membership around the world.”

Dedication

In a letter from Chester Cleveland, Sigma Chi Editor on July 3, 1930: “The Scobey Monument dedication went off wonderfully well as did the entire Diamond Jubilee celebration. The Monument is a beauty and fully up to the quality of the others.”

Past Grand Consul Joseph Miller stated: “The dedication of the monument went off under cloudless skies. The afternoon was warm, but pleasant and everything was all we could have

hoped for. Some three hundred fifty Sigs attended and all went home happy in the thought they had been present. It was like a regular love feast, no intention and no politics as sometimes appear at Grand Chapters.”

“The presence of the Founder’s relatives was the only feature missing from previous dedications; a niece and nephew in Florida being all that remain of this old Ohio family and they were not able to be present. An entirely new departure in our monument dedication ceremonies was the inclusion of a musical program, which added much to the occasion.”

For the first time, sound motion pictures were taken of the exercises.

Our distinguished brother of the Southland Dr. William B. Ricks, Alpha Tau (North Carolina) 1889 and Alpha Psi (Vanderbilt) 1894, pronounced the invocation.

Past Grand Consul Joseph T. Miller, Beta (Wooster) 1893, Chairman of the Sigma Chi Founders Monument Commission, then presented the memorial to the Fraternity:

“We have come together today to honor the memory of Franklin Howard Scobey, one of the Seven Founders of our organization, one of those boys of 1855 who builded better than they knew, one of those greater souls among men who believed in ideals and idealism and believing as they did, pledged their lives to the practice of this ideals. They created a brotherhood that today stretches from ocean to ocean and forever binds in ties of friendship the men of the far North undertake Union Jack with the men of the fair and sunny Southland where the Stars and Stripes float in the breezes of the Gulf.”

“It is not without the deepest significance that those boys of ’55 chose for their badge the symbol of sacrifice and service, a white cross; chose it fully realizing what that cross meant and what it stood for. Those boys and their successors chose for their patron saint, Constantine, a Christian warrior that history tells us did much to change the course of civilization. Their badge, their ideals, their patron saint, left their impress on their lives and on those who have followed in their footsteps even unto this day.”

“Today we uncover and dedicate this stone to Franklin Howard Scobey on behalf of the Founders Monument Commission of the Sigma Chi Fraternity...”

It was an impressive and significant sight as the unveiling of the monument was performed by James G. Cooper, Gamma (Ohio Wesleyan) 1902, William L. Lockwood and Donald J. Bell, sons of Founders. The huge stone had been appropriately draped with the American, Canadian, and Sigma Chi flags.

The acceptance of the monument in behalf of the Fraternity and its delivery in trusteeship to the State of Ohio brought inspiring words from Grand Consul A.P. Thomson, Alpha Upsilon (University of Southern California) 1897, of Los Angeles:

“Franklin Howard Scobey and his associates in Miami University organized as a protest to what they deemed an injustice in college life, the Sigma Chi Fraternity. The organization, started in the beautiful Miami Valley, has grown upon the principles that its men voiced and in the three great aims of the Sigma Chi Fraternity until the White Cross now gleams in the universities and colleges of this country in almost every state and through the spreading of the teaching of these men, as idealized in our lives. I have had the opportunity, upon the far western fringe of our continent where the sun sink in the Pacific to become a follower of our Founders and through that opportunity has been given to me today the great privilege of accepting on behalf of my brothers in Sigma Chi this beautiful tribute to the memory of Franklin Howard Scobey.”

“In college Brother Scobey was the inspiration to his fellows, zealous in the work of the chapter

and filled with a loving friendship that gained for him the enduring love of his fellows. He inspired them to overcome the rivals that beset them in college life and to succeed in their purpose to establish an organization found upon friendship and justice. The brothers of the State of Ohio have followed nobly in the footsteps of Brother Scobey; your zeal for Sigma Chi, your unfailing friendship show to the brothers visiting in your state, have endeared you to the whole Fraternity and to you I give this monument in loving keeping for all time on behalf of Sigma Chi, of whom you are our most loyal sons."

The acceptance for the State of Ohio was made by the oldest Past Grand Consul present, Orville S. Brumback, Beta (Wooster) 1876 and Theta Theta (Michigan) 1879. He states:

"Of all the Founders of the Sigma Chi Fraternity, Brother Scobey is the one who sleeps nearest to Miami University where the founders accomplished the work that made them famous. It is most appropriate that the great State of Ohio accept as it does a memorial to one of her sons, who, born and bred upon her soil, attended her university at Oxford and there acquired distinction by becoming one of the Seven Founders of a brotherhood that has become national in character and renown. Of all the Seven Founders, Frank Scobey has been described as the most persevering and unconquerable; when the other became discouraged and well nigh vanquished by the overwhelming obstacles they encountered, it was Scobey with his helpful assurance and encouraging words who held the little coterie together and caused them to continue their effort to make the White Cross a symbol of brotherhood in the college just as it was in the heroic days of the crusades."

"We honor Sigma Chi and ourselves by dedicating a monument to such a man - for to him is largely credited the great accomplishment of the Sigma Chi Fraternity, without whom the Fraternity would have died in its infancy."

"Therefore, I say all honor to his name and may this monument stand through all the future as the granite composing it to recall to future sons of Sigma Chi a man who did his work so well on this earth that his place of burial is sacred to all who honor the White Cross."

Honorable Russell Wilson, Zeta Psi (Cincinnati) 1900, Mayor of Cincinnati, next accepted the Scobey memorial for the Cincinnati district:

"...Seventy five years ago the seven men whom we are to honor tonight gather in a small room and created a garland of friendship and fraternity which has been handed on from generation to generation. Today we meet at the grave of Brother Scobey symbolizing that garland of friendship which, as all garlands, is characterized by a memorial of calm and beauty to make that permanent which seemed effervescent because the life of man himself is effervescent."

Next, Roger H Ferger, Phi Phi (Pennsylvania) 1916 spoke for the Alumni Chapters of Ohio followed by the Consul of Alpha Chapter, James E. Rogers, 1931 for the active chapters of Ohio.

"Scobey, the Sigma Chi" was the title of a short talk by Granville M. Flenner, Gamma (Ohio Wesleyan) 1866, of Hamilton, Ohio, who knew Founder Scobey as a resident of that city:

"...I was made a prisoner and taken back to Lexington where General Smith had established his headquarters. Arriving at the picket line we were halted by a Major of Cavalry and questioned; when told that I had recently attended Ohio Wesleyan, he said he had graduated from that institution four years before and asked if I was a member of any of the fraternities. When I told him I was a Sigma Chi he gripped my hand and in an undertone said, 'I will see that you are taken care of.'"

"Instructing the guard to drive to the Phoenix Hotel he rode away. Arriving there we found him waiting at the curb and he requested me to leave the carriage and follow him into the hotel. He

took me to a room that he had been occupying and gave instructions that I should be given every possible care and attention.”

“He called to see me several times during the day and at the end of the second day he said he would have to say goodbye as his regiment had been ordered to march, but he had provided for me by securing this parole from General Smith and had arranged with Dr. Bell, a prominent Union physician of the city, to take me into his own home and care for me until I was able to travel.”

“All because I had been a Sig for a few months.”

“A year after the close of the war I entered the hardware business. About two years later I became acquainted with Brother Frank Scobey, who at that time was editor of the Hamilton Telegraph...I always knew him as a progressive citizen, intensely loyal to his friends, his home town and to his country.”

Capt. Joseph W. Meyers, a resident of Hamilton, then spoke most interestingly of “Scobey, the Youth and Soldier”:

“I became acquainted with Frank H. Scobey in the year 1852. We were chums in the public school which was located in the rear of the Scobey homestead. In those days the boys of Hamilton would hold marble tournaments every Saturday afternoon on the west side of the court house. I often played with Scobey, who was quite a champion at the game. Scobey had a good disposition and pleasing personality and was a fine young man.”

“He went to Miami University and after graduating he came back to Hamilton and started his newspaper work. At that time I had a store next door to his newspaper office.”

“On April 17, 1861, President Abraham Lincoln issued a call for seventy five thousand volunteers to serve three months. Frank H. Scobey enlisted in Company F., 3rd Ohio Volunteer Infantry. He re-enlisted in Company B, 3rd Ohio Volunteer Cavalry for three years. He was detailed to serve in the office of the provost marshal at Dayton, Ohio, and was discharged in the year of 1866. He was a member of the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Association of Hamilton, Ohio.”

“Frank H. Scobey was a patriot who stood well with his comrades. We all regretted his leaving Hamilton after his newspaper was sold.”

“It pleases me to see you boys erect this memorial in his honor.”

Charles M. Campbell, editor of the Hamilton Daily News, delighted his hearers with his many personal reference to “Scobey, the Business Man and Journalist”:

“When quite a young man I ventured into the ownership of the Hamilton Telegraph, which I found under the editorial charge of Frank Scobey, then a man 42 years of age. The Telegraph was one of the oldest papers in Ohio, having forty-five years of publication to its credit. It occupied a small two-story building two doors east of the Sutherland building at the northeast corner of Front and High streets, then occupied as a popular fruit store under the ownership of Rothenbush and Ratliff.”

“The purchase of the Telegraph was made, after considerable difficulty, owing to the desire of Edward Martin, a Hamilton man, son of John L. Martin, having developed a sudden desire to own it, after hearing of the negotiations. He was a friend of Scobey. Nevertheless, the latter sided with me because, he said, Fred Egry, the owner, had given me his word in the matter. We have here a sidelight on the character of the editor, although Martin offered all cash down whereas I was buying on installments.”

“When Frank learned of my intention to immediately issue the Hamilton Daily News on December 17, 1879, in the form of a six-column folio, a date but two weeks ahead, he was quite dubious, but had the gentlemanly instincts of not emphasizing his opinions. He agreed to become its editor and remained as such for the greater part of a year.”

In announcing the sale in the columns of the Telegraph, I remember he used the figure of speech that rotation of crops enriches the soil, although, in view of the widespread doubt of the success of the venture, I considered this as another expression of his natural kindness of heart.

“I have been requested to give an estimate of his character. It can be stated in a few words. His most pronounced characteristic was his gentility - every instinct that of a gentleman. His speech was refined, frequently sparkling with a pungent wit. For instance, when summing up his opinion that the adventure which I had taken over was not suited to Martin, that he was too fastidious, he expressed the idea with a chuckle by observing that if Ed had occasion to put a lump of coal on the fire he would first put on a kid glove.”

“Frank’s next most prominent characteristics were his unselfishness, loyalty, kindness of heart and constant desire to do more than his share of the work. With it all he lacked every phase of pride of opinion and pugnacity of expression. It was a joy to be associated with him, and to this day my dominant memory of him is one of affection.”

The impressive rites of the afternoon came to an end with the benediction by Dr. Joseph C. Nate, Alpha Iota (Illinois Wesleyan) 1890, Past Grand Consul, Grand Historian and Grand Tribune.

In preparation for the dedication, they wanted to duplicate an event at Founder Runkle’s dedication; however, correspondence received stated, “I rather doubt that General Fechet will be able to arrange for the planes. It would be a mighty fine thing if he could. I remember how impressive it was at the dedication of Runkle Monument to have the planes fly over and drop flowers.”

The College Days and beyond

Founder Runkle wrote: “Without Frank Scobey I do not believe that Sigma Chi would have succeeded and expanded and endured. We had our disappointments, our months of gloom, times when it seemed that we had no chance of success. Everyone was against us. But Frank Scobey was never discouraged. Always looking on the more hopeful side, his very smile and cheerful words of encouragement gave us new heart. Scobey did well whatever he undertook to do; stood high with the professors and was popular even with our enemies whose name was legion, and whose inimical activities were unceasing. He was never physically strong and his life ended early. Frank was a soldier in the Civil War and made an honorable record. After the war he became an editor, and a good one, founding the publication of which I believe Hon. Walter S. Tobey is the head. We may well wish that there were more Frank Scobey’s in this work-a-day world of ours.”

Sigma Chi

Founder Scobey stated that “There must be in a fraternity, the expression and bond of friendship; at the same time, each must be free in the pursuit of his chosen ideals.”

As a result, he said to the Alpha Chapter in 1855, “We shall form a fraternity on the principal that the adequacy of the fraternity lies in the opportunity for the building of a well rounded and symmetrical development of individual character.”

And he advised the Gamma chapter in 1856 “Nothing so much tends to promote friendship, as

the free mutual interchanging of our thoughts, hopes, and fears with one in who we can confide.”

...all honor to his name.