



ORIENT: LEXINGTON, MASSACHUSETTS  
OFFICE OF THE  
SOVEREIGN GRAND COMMANDER

Lexington, Massachusetts, September 21, 2018

TO ALL FREEMASONS OF THE ANCIENT ACCEPTED SCOTTISH RITE  
OF THE OBEDIENCE OF THIS SUPREME COUNCIL

PEERS AND BRETHERN:

**ILL. : ROBERT ODEL RALSTON, 33°**

Active Member and Past Sovereign Grand Commander for this Supreme Council, died on Monday, September 3, 2018.

At the annual meeting in the fall of 1993, Ill.∴ Robert O. Ralston, 33°, was elected Sovereign Grand Commander, and at age 54, he was the youngest in the position since Leon Abbott in 1921. His relative youthfulness brought a new vitality to the fraternity, but he was no newcomer to the craft. Already he had been a member for 33 years, and he served as presiding officer in many branches of Freemasonry. He took office during a time of great change, and he hit the ground running.

The Ralston years will be remembered for remarkable energy in changing the internal and external faces of the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction. Grand Commander Ralston made modifications to many facets of the Scottish Rite, such as streamlining the Annual Meeting structure; improving member retention; participating in national and international conferences; increasing the development of Scottish Rite charities; refurbishing the Grand Commander's residence, the Supreme Council headquarters, and construction of an addition to the headquarters containing badly needed office space. His chief legacy, however, was the establishment of the 32° Masonic Children's Learning Centers – now the Children's Dyslexia Centers. During the quarter century since the establishment of that charity The Scottish Rite Masons of the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction have come to be recognized as national leaders in the efforts to help children and their families overcome the painful obstacles associated with dyslexia.

Another of Ill. Brother Ralston's major accomplishments was his work toward the recognition of Prince Hall Masonry. At the Annual Meeting in Milwaukee in 1995, the Supreme Council ratified a resolution granting mutual recognition. This Grand Commander, through his vision, dedication, and energy, effected many changes at a time that brought much recognition to the status of the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction.

Ill.∴ Robert Odel Ralston, 33°, was born on October 8, 1938, in Cincinnati, OH, the son of Henry Ralston and Ethel Williams Ralston. He was educated in the Cincinnati public school system and earned degrees at the University of Cincinnati (BA) and Xavier University (MBA).

During that time, he also served in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve. Working for Cincinnati Milacron, he went on to become manufacturing manager and eventually vice president of the Service Parts Division. He was later president of the Research Design and Development Corporation, before he accepted the position of vice president in charge of manufacturing with the Mazak Corporation in 1990.

On July 27, 1963, he was united in marriage to Susann Rose Fels, who survives together with their children Stephen and Julia.

Our Illustrious Brother had a distinguished career in Freemasonry:

SYMBOLIC:                      Raised a Master Mason in Evanston-Eversull Lodge No. 695, of Norwood, Ohio on March 31, 1960. He was Worshipful Master in 1967.

- GRAND LODGE:** District Deputy Grand Master, 1983-85 and Trustee of the Ohio Masonic Home, 1988-90.
- CAPITULAR:** Exalted in Norwood Chapter No. 193 R.A.M. in Norwood, OH, on October 3, 1978.
- CRYPTIC:** Greeted in Henry A. Weeks Council No. 137 R.&S.M. , Cincinnati, Ohio on October 24, 1980.
- CHIVALRIC** Knighted in Trinity Commandery, Knight Templar, Norwood, Ohio on December 4, 1980.
- SCOTTISH RITE:** Completed the degrees of the Scottish Rite in the Valley of Cincinnati in November 1967. He was Thrice Potent Master Gibulum Lodge of Perfection, 1979-81.
- SUPREME COUNCIL:** On September 3, 1981, he was created a Sovereign Grand Inspector General, 33°, Honorary Member of the Supreme Council at Philadelphia. He was elected an Active Member for the Supreme Council on September 30, 1992, at Chicago.

Brother Ralston was elected Sovereign Grand Commander in 1993, in Boston, and he continued in that role until 2003. As Past Sovereign Grand Commander he remained an Active member of the Supreme Council until his death in 2018.

He performed various special assignments and served on the following committees:

General State of the Rite	1992
Finance	1992, 2003
Fraternal Relations	1993-2014
Special Committee for Scottish Rite Unity Council	1993-1995
Administrative Council	1993-2010
Investments	2006-2013

Other Masonic Memberships:

Syrian Temple, A.A.O.N.M.S., Cincinnati, OH.

Member of the Board of Governors of the Shriners Burns Institute

Royal Order of Jesters, Court No. 7.

Royal Order of Scotland

Masonic Honors:

Honorary Legion of Honor, International Supreme Council of DeMolay.

Gourgas Medal, 1998, Scottish Rite, Northern Masonic Jurisdiction.  
Tabernacle A, Holy Royal Arch Knight Temple Priests.  
St. Columba Conclave, Red Cross of Constantine, Puissant Sovereign, 1991.  
United Grand Imperial Council, Red Cross of Constantine, Intendant General at large.



Visitation was at Mason Christian Village Chapel, Mason, OH, followed by burial at Gate of Heaven Cemetery, Montgomery, OH.

It is hereby directed that this Balustre be communicated to each Body of the Rite, and be suitably mentioned at the first meeting after its receipt.

May our Heavenly Father have him in His Holy Keeping.

 *D. A. G. Little*, 33°  
Sovereign Grand Commander

Attest:

 *Thomas R. Gwynon*, 33°  
Grand Secretary General