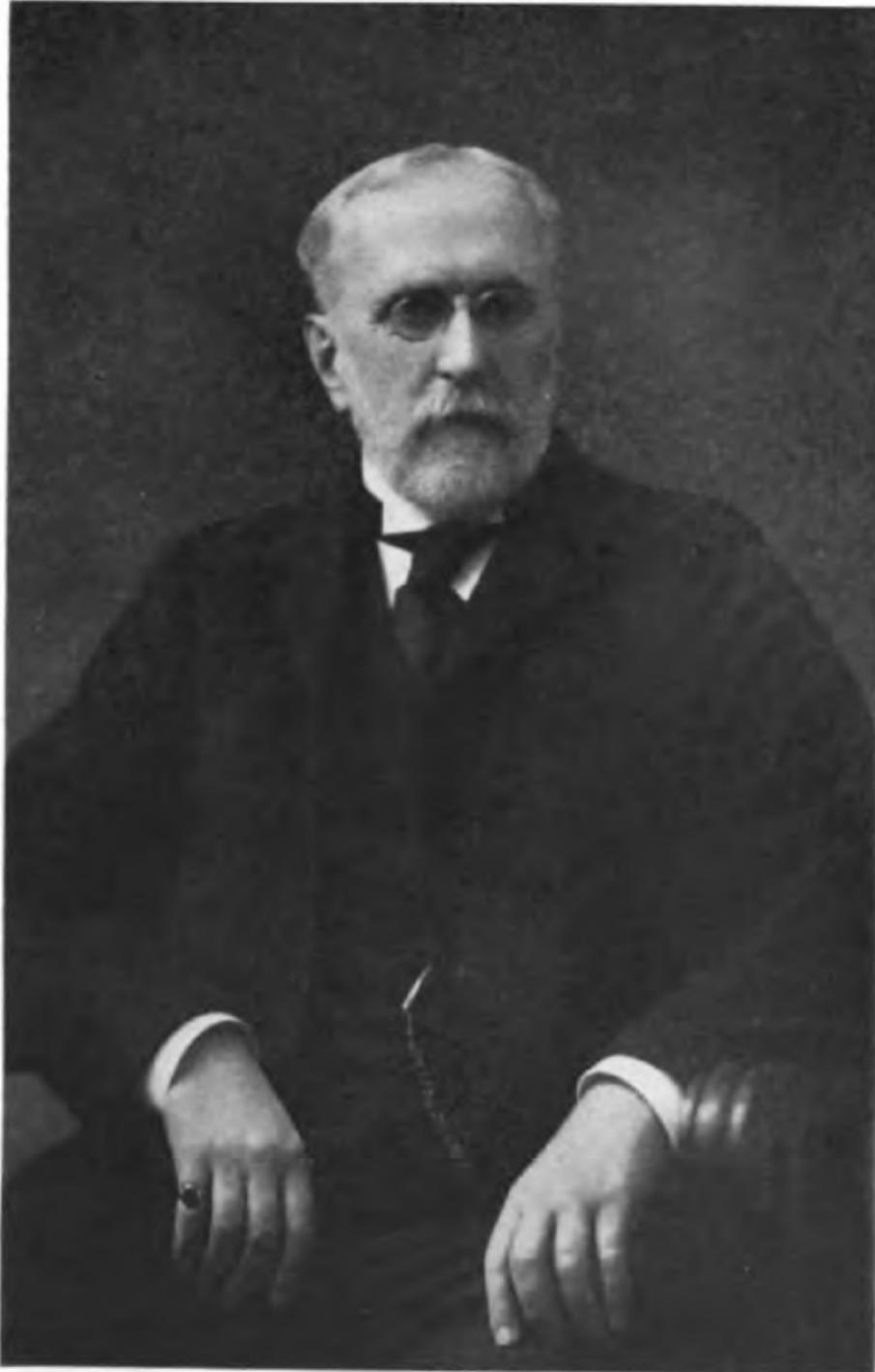


John Thompson Morris

Biographical Sketches



JOHN T. MORRIS.

JOHN THOMPSON MORRIS

Born July 12, 1748 and died August 15, 1915

John Thompson Morris was the son of Isaac Paschall Morris and Rebecca Thompson Morris of Philadelphia. He was educated at Haverford College. He became a member of the firm of I. P. Morris & Co., (of which his father was the head,) builders of steam engines, boilers and machinery. His father died in 1869 and when in 1876 the firm was incorporated as the I. P. Morris Company, John T. Morris became its president and continued in that position until its absorption by the Cramp Shipbuilding Company in 1891.

He was elected a member of the Board of Directors of the Philadelphia Contributionship for the Insurance of Houses from Loss by Fire on December 18, 1895, and was elected Chairman of the Board on September 25, 1905. He was a member of the Board of Managers of the Philadelphia Saving Fund Society, a Vice-President of the Fairmount Park Art Association, a Trustee of the Pennsylvania Museum and School of Industrial Art, a member of the Finance Committee of the American Philosophical Society, a life member and counsellor of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, a life member of the City Park Association, one of the Overseers of the William Penn Charter School, President of the Board of Trustees of the Franklin Institute, Chairman of the Committee on Wissahickon Park Extension, for a time a member of the Board of Managers of Haverford College and a member of the Union League of Philadelphia.

After his retirement from business he devoted his time and thought to these institutions and gave liberally of his means to those that needed financial aid.

Mr. Morris was elected a member of The Numismatic and Antiquarian Society of Philadelphia December 4, 1891, and its Vice-President in 1897. Having been elected to the Presidency December 7, 1899, he served in that office until December 1, 1904, when, declining re-election, he was again elected a Vice-President occupying that position until the time of his death.

His interest in this Society was pronounced. He was equally attached to its numismatic development as well as to its archeological research. His comment on ancient and modern coinage was of distinct value to the discussions.

His kindly nature endeared him to his friends and he will be missed greatly by all who had the good fortune either to know or to be associated with him.

From: Fairmount Park Art Association, Publication No. 52, p. 24.

Resolution adopted at a meeting of the Board, November 12, 1915:

Resolved, That the Board of Trustees of the Fairmount Park Art Association desires to record its profound regret at the death, on August 15, 1915, of John T. Morris,

One of the foremost citizens of Philadelphia, and always active in promoting the interests of his native city, Mr. Morris became a member of this Association at the time of its incorporation, in 1872. He was elected to the Board of Trustees in 1884 and Vice-President in 1909. As chairman of important committees, especially of that on Works of Art, under whose immediate supervision all the works of art presented to the city, by or through, this Association, have been erected, he was always as efficient in his methods as he was untiring in energy and devotion. To the financial interests of the Association he gave unlimited time and attention, and it is to his good judgment and conscientious service that the present excellent condition of its finances is largely due.

His benefactions were many, but unostentatious; a marked trait in his disposition being his desire to recognize good actions and to encourage good work, in men still living—a very proper stimulus toward the improvement of humanity, and it may truly be said that he was a noble example of Philadelphia citizenship of the highest type.

From: Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, vol. 39, issue 4, October 1915, p. 478-479

In the decease of John Thompson Morris, The Historical Society of Pennsylvania has sustained a loss of more than passing moment. It is with a deep sorrow that this Council of the Historical Society makes record of that loss, to set forth in some measure the high regard in which Mr. Morris was held by the Council and the Membership of the Society.

Mr. Morris became a member of The Historical Society of Pennsylvania February 17, 1879. He was elected to membership in this Council February 27, 1905, and served therein until his death. By birthright and inheritance, as well as personal inclination and ability, he was peculiarly fitted for the work which here fell to his hand. Born in Philadelphia and spending the years of his activity, as well as those of his leisure in this city, he was well versed in the genesis and development of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the growth of the city of his birth and residence. Whatever threw new light upon the past or enlarged the present or promised provision for possibilities of future growth was always of absorbing interest to him. He was continually holding the best of the past, while seeing better things for the future. He was a wise man, of very marked modesty, who, with all his wisdom, had understanding in a large measure.

He held high ideals, yet he subjected all his ideals to the test of his own sense of reasonableness and practicability. His reasoning was always direct. His was a naturally honest mind of vigorous habit and strong consecutive processes. His judgment was sound and never biased. We, who have had the privilege of serving in the Council of this Society with Mr. Morris, will cherish his memory in peculiar regard. He was a natural gentleman, to whose courtesy, sincerity, kindness and never-failing reliability we have long been debtors. He made our lives richer because he lived in them with no self-seeking. While bowing resignation to his loss we are moved to thanksgiving for the length of days which were vouchsafed to him. Of him also let it be said by us who knew him in many relations:

“His life was gentle

“And the elements so mixed in him

“That nature might stand and say to all the world

“This is a man.”