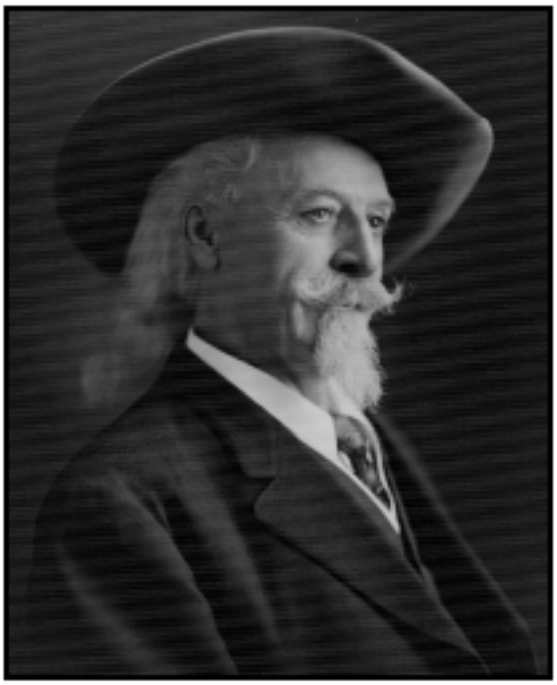
REENACTMENT OF THE
MASONIC BURIAL SERVICE FOR BUFFALO BILL CODY



UNDER THE DIRECTION OF
GOLDEN CITY LODGE NO.1

ON THE OCCASION OF
THE SESQUICENTENNIAL(150th) ANNIVERSARY

M.W. GRAND LODGE OF ANCIENT FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS OF COLORADO

Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Colorado

John V. Egan, III, Grand Master
Karl J. Hinkle, Deputy Grand Master
Dana A. Speaks, Senior Grand Warden
Daniel R. Gannon, III, Junior Grand Warden
Jerry L. Fenimore, Grand Treasurer
Ernest W. Pyle, Grand Secretary
David L. Salberg, Grand Lecturer
Michael L. McMillan, Senior Grand Deacon
Dexter D. Koons, Junior Grand Deacon
Lawrence A. Fritz, Jr., Senior Grand Steward
Robert D. Elsloo, Junior Grand Steward
Vernon R. Turner, Grand Marshal
James H. Harris, Grand Chaplain
Theodis W. "Ted" Brown, Grand Orator
Jimmy D. Marshall, Grand Tiler
John P. Trainor, Grand Musician

Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Kansas

Tracy Bloom, Grand Master

Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Nebraska

Bruce A. Baker, Grand Master

Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Wyoming

John L. Farmer, Grand Master

Program

1. **Music** by Singers and Stringers of the Colorado Masonic 1st Colorado Militia
   Under the Direction of John P. Trainor, Grand Musician;
   Scott Anderson, Ben Harrison, J. Randy Penn, James Brigman, Robin Knox, Michael Zeff
2. **Bag Piper** - Ken Geise
3. Colorado Commandry **Honor Guard**
   Sir Knight H. Jack Ward-Very Eminent Grand Commander, Sir Knight M. Scott Wilson-Very Eminent Deputy Grand Commander, Sir Knight Richard Brown-Inspector General, Sir Knight David L. Reynolds-Eminent Grand Generalissimo, Sir Knight Ashley Buss-Eminent Grand Sword Bearer, Sir Knight Jim Glasscock-Eminent Grand Sentinel
4. Colorado Commandry - **Arch of Steel**
5. **Opening Remarks and Eulogy** - John V. Egan III, Grand Master
6. **Masonic Funeral Service** - Golden City Lodge No. 1 - Dan Hayman, Worshipful Master;
   Richard M. Wentzel, P.M. As Worshipful Master, Leonard L. Walker-Senior Warden, John O'Brine-Junior Warden, Byron G. Walker, P.M.-Secretary, Christopher Westerhoff, P.M.-Senior Warden, Neil Ramsey-Junior Deacon, Frank Duff-Chaplain
7. **Tenting Tonight on the Old Camp Ground** (Refer to Page 7) Audience Encouraged to Sing Along
8. **TAPS** by Marvin Feldman, Past Grand Lodge Musician
9. **Cannon Salute**
10. Closing Comments by John V. Egan III, Grand Master and Distinguished Guests.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents 1
Eulogy At The Grave Of Buffalo Bill (edited) 2
Masonic Burial of William F. (Buffalo Bill) Cody: Background and History 3
Abbreviated History of Golden City Lodge No. 1, Golden, Colorado 4
Celebrating the Sesquicentennial(150th Anniversary) of the Grand Lodge of Masons in Colorado 5-6
Tenting Tonight on the Old Camp Ground 7
A Man With Two Funerals - By Michael D. Moore 8-16

Eulogy At The Grave Of Buffalo Bill (edited)

Delivered July 29, 1947, by Jacob V. Schaetzel

He knew no childhood. Long hours and devotion to duty were his lot.

The rising sun over the barren land told him the day had begun. Only when darkness descended, the wagons safely circled and the tired women and children fed and safely guarded for the night under the blue and starlit skies, was the day ended.

He was ambitious and learned readily. The stories he heard around the campfires and the words of wisdom gathered from the pioneers who had left banks, professions, colleges and stock exchanges to come to the land of promise, fell on willing ears.

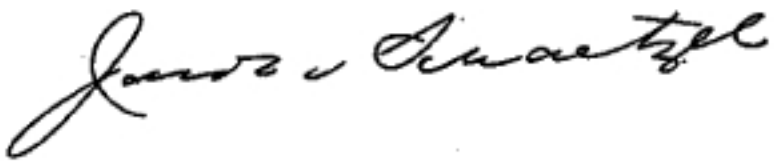
He had a natural ability to ferret out safe trails through the barren lands. All under him felt secure, and they were not disappointed. Fear was unknown to him.

Even as a young man, his organizing ability stood out. He organized and conducted the first successful bronco-busting contests, now called rodeos. He displayed the skill and daring of the western cowboys, cowgirls and Indians, and successfully toured the country with his Wild West show. He stood before kings and queens with dignity and humbleness of spirit.

It is only now that we are beginning to appreciate the tremendous uplift which the vision and courage of this one man gave to our beloved West. He saw the plains burst into fruitage, where others saw only the Great American Desert. He saw the mountains yielding their riches of minerals and wild life, where others only saw hardships, toil and failure.

His was a useful life, filled with adventure such as every boy craves, and every man secretly envies.

So, as evening falls on us, and as we stand on the pinnacle of this high peak overlooking the plains which he so loved, let us see his Spirit again rise through the granite encasing his mortal remains and nobly soar over the plains and mountains and gradually disappear into the golden west where the sunset even now is so I setting behind the snowcapped peaks in all its glory.



Masonic Burial of William F. (Buffalo Bill) Cody: Background and History

At this site, at 3:00 p.m., June 3, 1917, William F. (Buffalo Bill) Cody was laid to rest in a full Masonic burial service, in due and ancient form, by the Brethren of Golden City Lodge Number 1. The service was conducted by Brothers G. W. Parfet, Jr. as Worshipful Master, J. E. Dennis as Senior Warden, and J. C. Vivian as Junior Warden, C. Huscher as Secretary, W.G. Haldane as Senior Deacon, L. E. Marsh as Junior Deacon, E. S. Greene as Senior Stewart, L. C. Anderson as Junior Stewart, and J. H. Williams as Tiler. Brother John Treffeisen bore the Great Lights. Pall Bearers included A. B. Tripp, F. Eldridge, J. Dennis, C. Lake, J.W. Barnes, J.P. Kelly, W. G. Smith, and L. Gear. Pall bears were Brethren of the Knights Tempers.

The Masonic burial was performed by Golden City Lodge Number 1 as a courtesy to the Brethren of Platte Valley Lodge No. 32 of North Platte, Nebraska, as at the time of his death, Brother Buffalo Bill Cody was a member of Platte Valley Lodge No. 32. His body was escorted to the top of Lookout Mountain by members of Platte Valley Lodge and Knights Templars up Lariat Trail by steamers and other automobiles, with an estimated 15,000 people in attendance. At the close of the Masonic burial ceremony, taps was played by Bugler Quince Record, chief musician with the Ohio Fifty Infantry in the Spanish American War, and an 11-gun salute by member of Battery B, Colorado National Guard.

Brother Buffalo Bill Cody was also a member of Euphrates Chapter No. 15 Royal Arch Masons, and Palestine Commandery No. 13, Order of Knights Templar; North Platte, Nebraska, Tangier Temple of the Ancient Arabic Order Nobles of the Mystic Shrine of Omaha, Nebraska, and the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry for the Northern Jurisdiction of the United States of America in the Valley of New York City, New York.

Abbreviated History of Golden City Lodge No. 1, Golden, Colorado

An assemblage of Masons in the developing settlement of Golden City, located at the base of the mountains near Clear Creek, Territory of Kansas, requested a Dispensation in 1859 to form a Masonic Lodge. The Dispensation was granted in January, 1860, and in October of that year, a Charter was granted to Golden City Lodge No. 34, Kansas Territory. With the formation of the Territory of Colorado in 1861, the Lodge became Golden City Lodge No. 1, Colorado Territory. The Lodge has met, uninterrupted, since.

Other organizations of the Masonic Family in Golden today include Golden Chapter Number 5, Royal Arch Masons; Jefferson Council Number 24, Cryptic Masons; Jefferson/Highlands Number 30, Knights Templar; Mount Zion Chapter Number 133, Order of the Eastern Star; Friendship Court Number 7, Order of the Amaranth; Golden Chapter, International Order of the DeMolay for boys; and Bethel Number 43, International Order of Job's Daughters for girls. Golden is also served by nearby Jefferson Assembly, Arvada, and Columbine Assembly, Lakewood, Order of the Rainbow for Girls; Denver Consistory, Scottish Rite Masons, in Denver; and El Jebel Shrine, in Denver.

The cornerstone for Golden City Lodge #1 was laid in 1951

Celebrating the Sesquicentennial (150th) Anniversary of the Grand Lodge of Masons in Colorado

The Territory of Colorado was established, from parts of the Territories of Kansas and Nebraska, by an act of Congress on February 28, 1861. As a number of Masonic Lodges instituted under the Grand Lodges Kansas and Nebraska were now located in the Territory of Colorado, and in accordance with previous agreement, a convention was held on August 2, 1861, for the purpose of organizing a Grand Lodge for the Territory of Colorado. Lodges and representatives at the convention were:

Golden City Lodge, at Golden City, Colorado Territory. Chartered by the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Kansas, October 17, 1860; and represented as follows: Brothers Eli Carter, Worshipful Master, Brother L. E. Hardy; proxy for Senior Warden, and Brother U. A. Moore, Junior Warden.

Rocky Mountain Lodge No. 8, Gold Hill, Colorado Territory. Chartered June 5th, 1861, by the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Nebraska, and represented as follows: Brother C. F. Holly, as proxy for Worshipful Master, Senior Warden and Brother; J.M. Chivington, as proxy for Junior Warden.

Summit Lodge No. 7, Parkville, Colorado Territory. Chartered June 5th, 1861, by the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Nebraska, and represented as follows: Brother James Ewing, Worshipful Master, Brother O. A. Whittemore, proxy for Senior Warden; and Brother S. M. Robbins, proxy for Junior Warden.

The Grand Lodge was formed and the following officers were elected or appointed, and installed:

J.M. Chivington, Gold Hill, Grand Master

S.M. Robbins, Parkville, Deputy Grand Master

Jas. Ewing, Parkville, Senior Grand Warden

J. M. Hole, Gold Hill, Junior Grand Warden

Eli Carter, Golden City, Grand Treasurer

O.A. Whittemore, Parkville, Grand Secretary

C. F. Holly, Gold Hill, Grand Orator

I. E. Hardy, Golden City, Grand Lecturer

J. M. Ferrell, Golden City, Grand Marshal

Joshua Miller, Parkville, Senior Grand Deacon

D. T. Robley, Parkville, Grand Tyler

E. S. Glotfelter, Gold Hill, Grand Steward

J. A. Moore, Golden City, Grand Sword Bearer

On the next morning, August 3, 1861, at 8 a.m., the Grand Lodge reconvened. It was resolved that the several Lodges under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge, be numbered anew, according to the age of their charters, beginning with Number 1.

The several subordinate Lodges were declared to be:

Golden City Lodge No. 1, at Golden City

Summit Lodge No. 2, at Parkville.

Rocky Mountain Lodge No. 3, at Gold Hill.

Today, there are 131 Masonic Lodges located about the State of Colorado.

Tenting Tonight on the Old Camp Ground

1. We're tenting tonight on the old Camp ground – Give us a song to cheer.

Our weary hearts, a song of home – and friends we love so dear.

(Chorus) Many are the hearts that are weary tonight – Wishing for the war to cease.

Many are the hearts that are looking for the right – To see the dawn of peace.

Tenting tonight – Tenting tonight – Tenting on the old Camp ground.

2. We've been tenting tonignt on the old Camp ground – Thinking of days gone by.

Of the loved ones at home that gave us the hand – and the tear that said "Good Bye."

(Chorus) Many are the hearts that are weary tonight – Wishing for the war to cease.

Many are the hearts that are looking for the right – To see the dawn of peace.

Tenting tonight – Tenting tonight – Tenting on the old Camp ground.

3. We are tired of war on the old Camp ground – Many are the dead and gone.

Of the brave and true who've left their homes – Others been wounded long.

(Chorus) Many are the hearts that are weary tonight – Wishing for the war to cease.

Many are the hearts that are looking for the right – To see the dawn of peace.

Tenting tonight – Tenting tonight – Tenting on the old Camp ground.

4. We've been fighting today on the old Camp ground – Many are lying near.

Some are dead , and some are dying – Many are in tears.

(Chorus) Many are the hearts that are weary tonight – Wishing for the war to cease.

Many are the hearts that are looking for the right – To see the dawn of peace.

Tenting tonight – Tenting tonight – Tenting on the old Camp ground.

Photo taken just after the service on Lookout Mountain.

(Photo from archives of the Buffalo Bill Museum)

The Mason Who Had Two Funerals

It is something of an unusual occurrence to have more than one funeral, but a famous Freemason had two. Both were very well attended and open to the public, but the stories and the Masonic life of a brother are not well known. And that is a shame, for the man who was in the coffin both times was known throughout the world: William Fredrick "Buffalo Bill" Cody.

Cody's Masonic story begins with his petition to Platte Valley Lodge, at that time at Fort McPherson and under dispensation of the Grand Lodge of Nebraska, on Saturday February 12, 1870. The minutes show that the Lodge received five petitions for initiation in the first meeting they conducted, one of which was Cody's.

At their second meeting on February 26, 1870, Cody was elected to receive the degrees and the Entered Apprentice degree was conferred on March 5, 1870. The Lodge closed at midnight, after conferring four other Entered Apprentice degrees and two Fellow Craft degrees. On Saturday, April 2, 1870, Cody was found proficient and passed to the degree of Fellow Craft. He was examined on the second degree on April 23rd but failed that night's test. The next time his name appeared in the minutes was January 10, 1871 when he reballotted and was elected to receive the Master Mason degree. He remained a Mason all his life.

So why the two funerals? Surely the answer lies in Cody's extraordinary fame. Cody's exploits, real and imagined were the subject of an estimated 1700 dime novels. But Cody's real exploits were no less fantastic; his first attempt at what would become his Wild West Show occurred when he escorted visiting Russian Grand Duke Alexei Alexandrovich to a camp that included arranged buffalo hunts, a war dance done by friendly Indians and a terrifying stage coach ride in 1872. By 1883, the Wild West Show was so popular that it appeared at the Chicago World's Fair. Four years later, Cody took the show to Europe during the celebration of Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee. The performances sold out with an estimated 2 ½ million tickets sold, as well as a personal performance for Queen Victoria herself. Buffalo Bill's last performance was at Portsmouth, Virginia, where he became ill with a cold and headed for his Wyoming ranch[ix]. Cody died on January 10, 1917, at the age of 71. Although it was known that he suffered from prosthetitis and rheumatism

in his later years, the official cause of Cody's death was "uremic poisoning" or kidney failure.

The first of William's funeral services was held in Colorado's state capitol, where ten thousand people viewed his body in a bronze casket in the rotunda. His second and larger funeral occurred when he was laid to rest on Lookout Mountain, outside Golden, Colorado. Newspaper reports tell that 15,000 people came to see these *"the solemn and impressive Masonic Funeral rites."*

Cody's second funeral was almost four months after his death, on the afternoon of June 3, 1917, at the request of the family. His mother lodge, Platte Valley Lodge in North Platte, Nebraska asked Golden City Lodge No. 1, in Golden, Colorado, to confer the Masonic burial rites for their Brother.

Golden's lodge records note that North Platte Lodge offered fifty dollars toward any burial expenses, but it is believed that the brethren of Golden City Lodge performed the service without charge. The Golden Secretary's minutes comments what they did for their part:

> *The Lodge then repaired by Auto steamers to the top of Lookout Mountain where they met and took charge of the body of our late Brother and buried it in due and ancient form, according to Masonic Rites, about 150 Brethren taking part. An escort of Knights Templar and some of the Brethren from Platte Valley Lodge No. 32 of North Platte, Neb., also attended. After the burial they again repaired to the Hall in the city of Golden and closed the Lodge on the Third Degree of Masonry in due and ancient form. Peace and Harmony prevailing.*

Cody's casket lying in state at the Capital building, from Colorado State History Musuem.

During the ceremony, Cody's widow asked that the casket be opened. And a few of the Policemen's Honor Guard held umbrellas over the exposed upper half of his body to shade it from the sun. After a viewing, a song was sung and a poem was read by Jay J. Bryon about Cody (the first paragraph is given here):

Sleep, old scout and rest

On Lookout Mountain's crest

Where the rosy sun

E'er set [?] his race large

Where no unquiet dream

Disturb thy peaceful rest

In this, thy sovereign west …

The Worshipful Master of Golden City, G. W. Parfet, Jr. performed the main part of the Masonic service with eight appointed pallbearers. Cody's Masonic roll was read then:

At the age of 23, he petitioned Platt Valley Lodge No. 32, A.F. & A.M. of North Platt, Nebraska. On his 24th birthday he was elected to membership. He was initiated an Entered Apprentice March 5th, 1870, passed to the Degree of a Fellow Craft April 2nd, 1870, and "raised" to the Sublime Degree of a Master Mason on January 10th, 1871.

At the age of 40, he petitioned Euphrates Chapter No. 15, Royal Arch Masons, of North Platte, Nebraska on September 1st, 1887. He was advanced to the Degree of Mark Master, inducted into the oriental chair and received and acknowledged a Most Excellent Master on November 14th, 1888. He was exalted to the Royal Arch Degree on November 15th, 1888.

Within two months thereafter he petitioned Palestine Commandery No. 13, Order of Knights Templar, was duly elected and received the Illustrious Order of the Red Cross on April 1st, 1889 and on the following day received the Order of Malta and was dubbed a Knight Templar.

He petitioned Tangier Temple of the Ancient Arabic Order Nobles of the Mystic Shrine of Omaha, Nebraska on March 22nd, 1892, and walked the "hot sands" three days later.

Buffalo Bill was made a member of the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry for the Northern Jurisdiction of the United States of America in the Valley of New York City on April 4th, 1894 having joined the Lodge of Perfection (4th-14th Degree), the Council of Princes (15th & 16th Degrees), the Chapter of Rose Croix (17th & 18th Degrees), and the Consistory (19th - 32nd Degrees) all the same day.

Members of Golden Lodge ready to lower the casket during the funeral service.

(Colorado State History Museum photo)

The ceremonies closed with taps played by a Spanish-American War veteran, followed by an eleven-cannon salute. It was certainly one of the largest, if not the largest, Masonic burials ever. Until a few years ago, the Grand Lodge of Colorado and their funeral team did an annual recreation of the event at the burial site.

There was a lot of unrest over 'Cody's grave site, most of it after the immediate family died and nieces tried to keep their Uncle in the public eye. Reportedly, the state of Wyoming was so upset that Cody was not buried in their state that as late as 1948, some citizens of Wyoming advocated using force to disinter Cody's body and remove it to Wyoming by force. . In DATE, the *Rocky Mountain News* reported that the American Legion Post in Cody, Wyoming had passed out rifles, helmets and binoculars to the men willing to go to Denver and retrieve it. A $10,000 cash award offered to the successful body snatchers was reputedly offered by persons unknown. The American Legion Post in Denver responded by sending five armed guards out to the grave site, demonstrating every intention of keeping Cody in Colorado, perhaps because the State had lost another important Masonic brother from the early western frontier – Christopher "Kit" Carson. He was buried near his home in Taos, New Mexico.

For years after Cody's passing, the grave site had a twenty-four hour police guard until a monument was erected "to prevent curio and memento seekers from committing acts of vandalism" for individuals were always defacing the grave site. Some dug up the dirt to find the coins that were thrown on it; others like a P.T.A. group carried away the ground around him to honor another early settler.

Cody was truly a "superstar" before the word was even thought of. And such are the circumstances surrounding a Mason and his two funerals. The story of William Cody's Masonic life and his two public services are hardly ever told. And like much of his life when it is recalled, is often retold inaccurately.

Robert Gollmar, William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody, *Philalethes*, July/August, 1968, <www.tntpc.com/252/philalethes/p68aug.html>

Ibid

Ernest J. Goppert, Jr., *Buffalo Bill Cody*, Presentation to 110th Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of Wyoming, August, 1984.

Gollmar

Many of Cody's Masonic regalia, including his Scottish Rite uniform, is on display in the family section of the Buffalo Bill Historical Center in Cody, Wyoming.

Buffalo Bill's Life Story (An Autobiography), Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Chicago, 1947, 17.

John Taylor, *Buffalo Bill, the Life and Times of Brother William Cody*, no date, personal copy given by Glen Mulholland, secretary of North Platte Valley Lodge, 25.

Taylor, 27.

Goppert, Jr., 3.

Rocky Mountain News, January 15, 1917, p1.

Golden's lodge Secretary, Bryon Walker, interviewed by Mike Moore, May 26, 2009.

Minutes from Golden Lodge special communication, June 3, 1917.

Insert in Golden #1's meeting book.

Gollmar

Steve Freisen, director of Cody Grave and Museum, interviewed by Mike Moore, June 2, 2009.

Rocky Mountain News, August 2, 1948.

Gollmar

Denver Post, September 15, 1942

THIS ARTICLE AUTHORED BY:
MICHAEL D. MOORE, MASTER MASON

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

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Buffalo Bill Saddle Club

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Bethel Chapter #37

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