

## John N. Moulder

(May 1792 – 7 Jan 1839)

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**Moulder.** On Monday the 7th instant after an illness of several weeks, John N. Moulder, Esq., chief clerk in the office of the 2nd Comptroller of the Treasury. His friends and acquaintances are invited to attend his funeral at 12 o'clock on Thursday next, the 10th instant, from his late residence on Pennsylvania avenue near the Capitol.

*Kenton N. Harper, History of the Grand Lodge and of Freemasonry in the District of Columbia, 1911*

### **Grand Master, 1826-27, 1830, 1832, 1838**

Brother Moulder was born in Philadelphia, Pa., in May, 1792, and was a grandson of John Nicholson, an associate and friend of Robert Morris, of Revolutionary fame. He was a man of unusual intellectual attainments, a public-spirited citizen, a valued officer in the Federal and local municipal government, and as a Mason gave to this jurisdiction without stint for many years the best of his talents. In his early manhood he conducted a school in Philadelphia, but spent the greater part of his life in Washington as a resident of the old First Ward, having his home on I between 21st and 22d Streets, N.W., but later moved to the Third Ward and lived on the east side of 9th between I Street and New York Avenue.

In the government service he held for many years a responsible position in the office of the Second Comptroller, and was Comptroller of the Currency under President Andrew Jackson, who was a personal friend. In his capacity as a citizen of Washington he served as Alderman in the First Ward from 1817 to 1819, and again in 1825 and 1826, was also at one time a member of the Board of Common Council, was for a number of years a Justice of the Peace, and was President of the Union Fire Company in its early days.

Originally a member of Columbia Lodge, No. 3, of this jurisdiction, he filled the station of Master there from 1821 to 1827, inclusive, and in December, 1825, was elected to the Grand East without previous service in any of the subordinate offices of that body. During his second term in 1827, he granted a dispensation for the formation of Hiram Lodge, and in 1828 withdrew from Columbia, entered the former lodge and was immediately called to the East in that body. Subsequently, as stated above, he served for four more years as Grand Master.

During the first year of his incumbency (1826) of that office he laid the cornerstone of the first Masonic Temple ever erected in Washington in which the Grand Lodge was actively interested, the building on the southwest corner of Indiana Avenue and John Marshall Place, which is still standing, and the history of which is given in detail in other pages of this work.

On this notable occasion he delivered an address which is a model in its class and may be found in the Grand Lodge Proceedings for the year 1826.

He was a member of Washington R.A. Chapter, No. 1, and served that body for two terms as High Priest.

From a letter of condolence, written by a committee of Washington Chapter, to the widow of Brother Moulder, and dated January 18, 1839, we quote the following extract: "For upwards of twenty years our friend and Companion John N. Moulder, Esq., was connected with the Order of Free Masonry in this city, and for a considerable portion of that time was a distinguished officer and member of this Chapter (having twice been elected to the office of Most Excellent High Priest). We, Madam, knew him well, and improve this opportunity to bear cheerful testimony to his kind and courteous manner, the dignity with which he presided over the Craft, the avidity with which he voted favorably on every case of

distress, and the haste which sped his willing feet, by day or night, to relieve the wants of the suffering. These were characteristics in John N. Moulder which never can be erased from the memory of his Companions."

That his private life was above reproach is shown by a communication from Brig. Gen. John M. Wilson, U.S.A., retired, a grandson, who, while never having seen his grandfather, recalls the conversations of his mother in which she described the "superb character and lovely home-life" of her father, a beautiful and sufficient tribute to his memory.

He died in this city, January 7, 1839, and his remains were interred in Congressional but later removed to Oak Hill Cemetery.