

OBITUARY

✠ Brother John Phillips, O. P. ✠

At midnight, Friday, July 20, 1923, Bro. John Phillips was called by God to his eternal reward for a long and saintly life spent as a Dominican lay-brother at St. Rose Convent, Springfield, Ky. His death came quietly and quickly, yet not unexpectedly, after a brief illness of four days. He died at the age of eighty-three, in the forty-ninth year of his religious profession. He was the oldest professed lay-brother in the Province of St. Joseph.

John Phillips was born August 14, 1840, in County Tipperary, Ireland. It was his earliest ambition to study for the priesthood, and coming to this country as a young man, he settled in Iowa and labored to earn the means sufficient to enable him to enter upon his clerical studies. He was within sight of his goal when an appeal for aid from a younger brother, Thomas, who also desired to enter the priesthood, caused John generously to sacrifice his own plans for those of another. By the time Thomas reached ordination it was too late for John still to aspire to the priestly calling. Still imbued, however, with the desire to devote his life to God, he entered the Dominican Order, at St. Rose, in the capacity of a lay-brother, and made his first profession August 22, 1874. His long and faithful career as a religious was spent entirely at this same convent.

From the outset Brother John—for he retained his baptismal name in religion—was an unflagging worker and an exemplary religious.

When the weight of years made heavy outdoor duties no longer possible, Brother John was appointed sacristan and no more devout old monk ever hovered about the altar. Unwilling ever to remain idle, he continued his labors to the end, and up to the very hour he was stricken and carried to bed he was going about at his regular round of duties.

The funeral took place Monday, July 23. The Solemn Requiem Mass was sung by the Prior, Very Rev. James S. Wilburn, O. P., assisted by Rev. James A. Mackin, O. P., as deacon, and Rev. Richard V. Walker, O. P., as sub-deacon. After the Mass the entire community, composed of lay-brothers, novices and fathers, went processionally from the church to the community plot chanting the burial office.

—Bro. Augustine Skehan, O. P.