



Thurston's Crypt Stone
Green Lawn Abbey

the seekers of magic, spirits and mysticism this century do not seem to congregate in as respectful a manner as when Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was on the lecture circuit 100 years ago. The Abbey is in a sad state of disrepair. Although closed to the public, break-ins are frequent and vandals have desecrated many of the crypts. Stained glass windows have been broken and bricked up. Statues that once adorned the tombs have been mostly destroyed. Suffering from years of vandalism and financial distress, the Abbey may be facing the wrecking ball causing Thurston's remains to be relocated to unknown grounds.

The Columbus Cemetery Association in cooperation with Columbus Landmarks Foundation are seeking private donations and/or fundraising opportunities for the preservation and restoration of this beautiful Abbey.



Established in 1977, Columbus Landmarks is a nonprofit membership organization dedicated to preserving and celebrating Columbus' architectural legacy. Landmarks encourages community action in historic preservation and quality design of the built environment throughout central Ohio. Our members are individuals who both cherish the past and embrace the future, and include a dynamic array of residents living in historic neighborhoods, architects, developers, land use planners, leaders in the government and business sectors, and investors.



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Images of Thurston provided by
The Rory Feldman Collection
ThurstonMasterMagician.com

Thurston's Tomb





T H U R S T O N ' S P A C T

It is well known that Howard Thurston had a keen interest in Spiritualism at the turn of the 20th century. This interest led him across the paths of others who shared his interest, namely Harry Houdini and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

Thurston, Houdini and Doyle entered into a pact that after they died they would attempt to contact the world of the living from the great beyond.



Houdini, always greatly involved in exposing mediums as charlatans, arranged with his wife a secret code that would provide the necessary proof to the group that his communication was authentic.

Houdini died on October 31, 1926, Halloween Day. No suitable communication from the grave ever came from Houdini.

Thurston died on April 13, 1936. He was interred at Green Lawn Abbey in Columbus, Ohio. As the other members of this pact had preceded him in death it fell to his dear friend Claude Noble to fulfill the pact. On the one year anniversary of Thurston's death Claude Noble returned to Thurston's tomb, extended the magician's wand and spoke to Thurston, "Howard, Claude and your brother Bill are here in accord with our pact. Manifest yourself if God is willing." Thurston failed to vibrate the extended wand.

For 25 years, until his own death, Claude would continue to visit Thurston's crypt on April 13 in hopes of witnessing a manifestation from the magician. To this day Thurston's tomb is still drawing the attention of the public.



T H U R S T O N ' S F I N A L R E S T I N G P L A C E

Green Lawn Abbey was the premier burial place of its time. Built to last an eternity with 1½' thick granite walls, Italian marble interior and Spanish tile roof, the Abbey was built to inspire awe. Marble fireplaces, stained glass windows and various religious statues adorn this beautiful final resting place of many notable figures in Ohio history. Due to poor initial funding and the 1929 stock market crash, funding for perpetual care of Green Lawn Abbey magically disappeared.

Now we turn another century and the interest in spiritualism seems greater than the last. Unfortunately