

An address delivered by George W. Morse:

ANTHONY MORSE

and His Descendants, a Race Characteristic of the Family.

In addressing a New York audience, a Bostonian often realizes the feelings said to be felt by a heathen as he approaches his idol—he appreciates its greatness but fears its dangers.

I escape, however, for though of New England stock only, I was born in Ohio, and, moreover, am to-night with my kith and kindred.

Colton says:

"It is with antiquity as with ancestry; nations are proud of the one and individuals of the other, but if they are nothing in themselves that which is their pride ought to be their humiliation."

We come here to-day to speak of certain wise, good and valiant men—our ancestors. We will escape many of the dangers by placing ourselves and our own generation in the hands of posterity. On the other hand, no sentimental fear of satire, I trust, will interrupt the requiem of praise which is due to our fathers. We shall endeavor to state no facts of history or genealogy without citing authorities.

The original name was "de Mors" and is both German and Norman, but the family historian concludes, with strong reason, that the English settlers of the name were Normans. It historically occurs in 1358 in the reign of Edward the Third. As an embassy was about being despatched to France during a truce with that country and the captivity of her king, Edward the Third addressed a letter in Latin to Hugo de Mors, a liberal construction of which, taken with the context, is: "Hugo de Mors will conduct safely the Cardinal, his servants and other distinguished company."

The "de" by English usage was gradually dropped, but not prior to 1553, and e was added later, both in Old England and New England, to adapt it to the genius of the English language—but even in New England the second of the race, Anthony Morse, in signing his will, omits the e.

The name is known as early as 1200.

(NOTE.—Horton's "Life of Emigrants," Drake's "Founders of New England;" "Norman People;" "Morse Memorial;" Will of Rev. Thos. Morse, Foxearth, Essex County, England, probated 1590, a copy of which may be found in Morse Memorial; "Abstract of Morse Memorial," compiled by Henry Dutch Lord for private distribution. A copy may be found in the State Library, State House, Boston.)