

Monument Lodge Will Celebrate Its Centennial Year In 1958

One of Stronger Masonic Bodies in Maine, It Has Distinguished Record

Next year, in 1958, in the month of November, Monument Lodge No. 96, F & A M will also celebrate its centennial. It was just a century ago, on the 18th day of November in 1858 that this lodge in Houlton, Maine came into being by virtue of a dispensation from M.W. Hiram Chase, of Portland, Grand Master of the Masons of Maine.

Just a week later, on November 25, 1858, the first meeting was held in the office of the first Master, Dr. Ezekiel D. French on Water street and, three days after that, the first candidate, William Hemore, was initiated into the Entered Apprentice degree.

DOZEN MASONS FORM LODGE

Formation of the lodge came about, as its written history recalls, when in 1858 there were about a dozen Master Masons in Houlton who were desirous of improving themselves in Masonry. This group banded together and signed a petition to the Grand Lodge of Maine praying to be congregated into a Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons.

The petition was signed by Ezekiel D. French, George B. Page, John Leary, Zebulon Rowe, Jesse Gilman, John H. Bradford and William H. Cary.

E. D. French, who was destined to be the first Worshipful Master of Monument Lodge, was a physician who had been raised in Woodstock Lodge. He was born in Albion, Maine in 1809, was graduated from Bowdoin in 1835 and came to Houlton to act as surgeon at the garrison at Hancock Barracks the following year.

FOUNDER OF DRUG STORE

He was one of the leading doctors in this section until his death on March 20, 1887. He was the founder of what is now the O. F. French drug store, the first of the four generations that have operated this establishment here.

It is safe to assume that this handful of zealous Masons must have often made the twelve mile trek to the neighboring and friend-

ly village of Woodstock, across the International Boundary line, to pursue their interest in the Masonic order.

French served as head of the lodge for two years, being followed in 1860, by Charles P. Tenney who also served two years. Tenney, the lodge history sets forth, became one of the most influential Masons of his time and was described as a pillar of strength in the affairs of Masonry here for more than 40 years. The year that he served his first stewardship as Master of Monument Lodge, Ezekiel D. French was the first District Deputy, Grand Master, from Monument lodge. Tenney followed in the same office five years later.

THIRTEEN NOT UNLUCKY

The number of 13 was not an unlucky omen for this flourishing young lodge because, while still working under dispensation from the Grand Lodge, that number of brethren were raised to the sublime degree.

It was not until May 5, 1859 that the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Maine granted a charter to the Houlton brethren, constituting them as a regular lodge, under the title and designation of Monument Lodge No. 96. Five months later, on October 27, 1859, the first officers were elected and installed in a ceremony that was performed in the Congregational Church by no-

First Master



Ezekiel D. French

less a dignitary than Grand Master Hiram Chase himself, in person.

The first officers were: W.M. Ezekiel D. French; S.W. Charles P. Tenney; J.W. Jere Trueworthy; Treasurer, Jesse Gilman; Secretary, Charles B. Smith; S.D. Richard L. Baker; J.D. John H. Bradford; Tyler, William J. Nye.

ONE OF STRONGER LODGES

Prior to this time, however, regular meetings were held under the dispensation granted earlier by the group of seven petitioners. It is interesting to note the diverse interests of this group who banded together to found what has become one of Maine's stronger Blue Lodge bodies.

As has been said before, Ezekiel D. French was a physician. William H. Cary was a lumberman who arrived in Houlton in 1822 with his father. He was employed for many years by the Shepard Cary Lumber Company in the northern part of the county and is assumed to be a forebear of the founder of the Aroostook Times. He migrated westward later in life and died in St. Paul, Minn., March 19, 1884.

Jesse Gilman was a native of Norridgewock who made his way through the woods to Houlton when he was a little more than 30 years old. He was a farmer and cleared land on the road north of Houlton where he lived until his death.

TWO MEMBERS MERCHANTS

Both John H. Bradford and George B. Page were merchants. The former was a native of Minot, Maine while the latter owned Mt. Vernon, Maine as his birthplace.

Bradford migrated to Houlton when he was not yet 20 years old. For more than 30 years he was engaged in tanning and in the manufacture of boots and shoes. He has the distinction of having been the first treasurer and cashier of the Houlton Savings Bank when Aroostook County's oldest banking institution was founded in 1872. He was thus employed for 16 years. He was at one time in the insurance business, served as sheriff for one term and also represented this section of Maine in the legislature for two terms. He also found time to serve for awhile as deputy collector of customs in this area. He was secretary of Monument Lodge from 1860 to 1880.

Page became a Mason when he was raised by the Woodstock Lodge. He was in Houlton for a time, moved to Monticello to engage in farming in 1842 but returned to Houlton the following year to become a business man here. He was 81 years old at the time of his death in 1899.

WAS FIRST SECRETARY

John Leary, also raised in Woodstock Lodge, was a bookkeeper. It was natural that he should become the first secretary of Monument Lodge, a position he resigned when he moved to Seattle, Wash.

Zebulon Rowe came to Houlton from Fort Fairfield. He served as high sheriff of Aroostook County in 1859 and 1860 and died ten years later in Fredericton, N. B.

In this border town which had, only a few short years before, been famous for its part as the locale of Hancock Barracks, occupied by Federal troops during the "bloodless Aroostook War", it was only natural that the name taken for the newly organized lodge should have some historical association.

When the treaty which established the present international boundary between the United States and Canada was finally arranged by Daniel Webster for the United States and Lord Ashburton for England, it was stipulated that an old monument designated at the headquarters of the St. Croix River

on what is now Monument stream in Amity, 14 miles south of Houlton, should be the starting point for the northerly direction of the boundary.

LODGE GETS NAME

An iron post was put down at this point and it was from this monument that this lodge derived its name.

The first Masonic Lodge in what was then a province of Massachusetts was chartered in 1769. Before the turn into the 19th century, a total of five had been chartered. When the first settlers came to Houlton in 1805, the number had grown to 15. When Maine became a state in its own right in 1820, the number had doubled to 30 and, in 1828, had reached 58.

Monument Lodge is not the oldest Masonic organization in Aroostook County. It was preceded by

OTHER MASONIC BODIES

Other Masonic bodies were also formed in Houlton during this period of time and, ultimately St. Aldemar Commander, Royal Arch Chapter and Fidelity Chapter O.E.S. also were holding their meetings in the same quarters. And, in 1893, the Knights of Pythias and the Odd Fellows, their halls having been burned down, were permitted to hold their meetings in Monument Lodge quarters.

It was at this time that it became apparent these quarters would soon be outgrown. Accordingly, in 1893, agitation began for more commodious space. For the next four years no progress was made. But, in early 1897, a committee composed of George S. Gentle, James Archibald and A. G. Rich successfully negotiated for the Aroostook Pioneer, who served for 28 years. William F. Braden

NOTE: A debt is hereby acknowledged to the late Brothers Amos Putnam and Hazen Nev-ers. Without access to the early history of the lodge which they so faithfully compiled, this story could never have been presented so completely.—Ed.)

OUTSTANDING RITUAL WORK

lights of this period that are deserving of mention and a few sad notes.

The outstanding quality of the ritualistic work of Monument Lodge has been twice recognized, once in 1921 when the officers then presiding were invited to present the work of the Master Mason degree before the Grand Lodge of Portland, and again in 1952.

A. E. Astle, worshipful master on the first occasion, was assisted by Murdoch B. McKay as S.W., Thomas P. Packard as J.W., Edwin P. Henderson as S.D., Aaron A. Putnam as J.D., Thomas W. Huggard as S.S., Elson A. Hosford as J.S., Rev. H. Scott Smith as chaplain, T. V. Holdaway as marshal. Stanley D. McElwee was the candidate for this historic occasion.

The master of the lodge in 1925 was George W. Haskell, embarking then on his career to become one of the more distinguished members of Monument Lodge. He became D.D.G.M. in 1928 and was reappointed the following year. In 1930 he was elected Junior Grand Warden of the Grand Lodge of Maine thereby becoming the first member of this lodge to become a permanent member of the Grand Lodge of Maine. He was appointed Grand Representative of the Grand Lodge of North Carolina near the Grand Lodge of Maine and was also named a member of the Grand Lodge committee on history.

17 DISTRICT DEPUTIES

In 1949 R.W. Bro. Haskell was the recipient of the Josiah H. Drummond Medal, an honor conferred on him by the late Justice Granville C. Gray during his term as M.W.G.M. of the Grand Lodge of Maine. This is the highest honor for Masonic service within the lodge and is also regarded as one of the most exclusive and highly valued distinctions in the entire Masonic

Grand Commander



Walter Morse

Bangor to achieve this honor. Walter P. Morse became the first member of St. Aldemar Commandery to head the Grand Commandery of Maine when he was elevated to the office in 1945. Dr. Wilder D. Carr will become the second member of Monument Lodge to gain this distinction when he succeeds to the office of Eminent Grand Commander two years hence.

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE

This story would not be complete if it did not take note of the achievements of some of the members of Monument Lodge in the fields of government, law and military and public service.

Two members of Monument Lodge have sat on the bench of the Supreme Court of the State of Maine and one is now occupying a seat on the Superior Court. Two of these are former masters of the lodge. The lodge can also boast of a governor and two United States Representatives to Congress from among its membership. So, too, if it wills, can it point with pride to three of its members who have presided over the affairs of the Maine House of Representatives and three who have served as president of the Maine Senate.

Still another distinguished member who gained great military fame was Col. Frank M. Hume, valiant commander of the 103rd Regiment during World War One

Permanent Lodge Members



George W. Haskell



Philip D. Tingley

Pioneer No. 72, formed at Ashland and it was from this lodge that Bro. Joseph Pollard was summoned to instruct the local brethren to become proficient in the work of the order. This service cost the lodge \$25.

FIRST DECADE OF GROWTH

The first decade in the life of Monument Lodge saw the normal

the top floor of a brick building which a man by the name of J. M. Rice proposed to erect at the corner of Market Square and Court street.

The following year, June 5, 1898 saw the new quarters officially dedicated with the assistance of the then M.W. Joseph A. Locke, Grand Master. Gov. Powers was on hand for the occasion.

times change . . .
 fashions change . . .
 but ladies always
 love nice things . . .



We join the many in congratulating Houlton on its Sesquicentennial. Though we ourselves can look back only a short time in this community, we are happy to be a part of this celebration.

We are proud of our modern store, with its spacious displays and customer convenience. We invite you to visit us at any time.

We are even prouder of our nationally advertised lines of fine merchandise which we have been able to offer the shoppers of this community.

Ann's
 WEARING APPAREL
 HOULTON



Monument Lodge saw the normal expansion of its activities and growth of its membership. Ten years after its formation the membership numbered 96. This growth is difficult to understand when it is realized that, in many of these first years the members rejected more applications than they accepted.

The first half dozen meetings were held at the offices of Dr. French after which the first official lodge rooms were occupied at the north corner of Market and Union Squares. These quarters were taken over on December 23, 1858.

It did not take long for the expanding membership to outgrow their new quarters and, in 1866 the lodge was obliged to move again to space in a building that had recently been erected on the southeast corner of Market Square.

It cost the fledgling lodge \$866.20 to furnish their new quarters and an additional outlay of \$427.32 was made to provide for dishes and cutlery for the Masonic suppers which were apparently as popular then as they are today. Incidentally, this same building still stands on Bangor street, just west of the Ingraham Garage, being occupied by the Reid Confectionery Company.

FUTURE GOVERNOR MASTER

The year 1864 seems to have been an eventful year. It was the one during which Llewellyn Powers served as Worshipful Master who was later to become Governor of Maine and sit as a member of Congress. This year also saw the start of having the lodge duly organized under an act of incorporation which took place the following year.

The history of Monument Lodge slowed down during the next ten years. The membership had only increased to 129 in 1879. It is also noted in those early days that it must have been difficult to find candidates to fill the chairs and move up to Master.

Henry F. Collins, who first occupied the East in 1869, holds the record, he having been recalled to serve six additional terms between 1881 and 1889. S. F. Berry served for four years, from 1875 to 1878 inclusive. James Archibald also sat in the East for four terms.

Other officers served long and faithfully. The longest term as secretary was that of Charles E. F. Stetson, father of Albert K. Stetson, for many years an editor of was treasurer of the order for 31 years.

on hand for the occasion. For the next 20 years the affairs of Monument Lodge progressed steadily in these quarters.

MASONIC TEMPLE CONCEIVED

In mid-year 1916 interest began to grow in the project of providing a Masonic Temple for the local lodge. The late Supreme Court Justice Nathaniel Tompkins was in the chair at the time and the committee assigned to the task of investigating the feasibility of this considerable plan was made up of W. F. Buzzell, P. L. Rideout, Roland E. Clark and A. E. Astle and Worshipful Master Tompkins.

Two sites were selected by the committee. Recommended were the Sincok block and the Gould property, so-called, on the north side of Market Square between the Snell House and the First National Bank. It was finally voted to purchase the Gould property and also a part of the land then owned by the Snell House, extending back to the south line of the government property on which the Post Office then stood.

The crucial step was taken on June 12, 1918 when the lodge assigned to George S. Gentle the responsibility for making contracts for rents and other contractual details. Three months later the serious business of attending to the financial details was placed in the hands of Brothers James Archibald, Murdoch McKay, Fred L. Putnam, George A. Hall, Jr., J. R. Weed, Jr., A. M. Nason, H. J. Brown, O. A. Stevens, A. P. Bennett, C. A. Gove, W. G. Adams, G. H. Benn, F. H. Vail and H. F. Green.

CORNERSTONE LAID IN 1919

In the meantime, the preceding month, the ceremony of laying the cornerstone was held. On November 14, 1919, the dedication of the new three story building took place in which, for the past 38 years, the four local Masonic orders have had their homes and conducted their work.

All this work was done during the administrations of W.M.'s, Arthur O. Putnam and A. E. Astle. The building committee was made up of Bernard Archibald, W. F. Buzzell, G. A. Hall, George A. Gorham, Jr., and George S. Gentle.

In the intervening years the distinguished history of Monument Lodge has flourished and its secure place in Maine's Masonic firmament has grown steadily brighter and stronger.

There have been several high-

world.

Monument Lodge has furnished 17 District Deputy Grand Masters to the First Maine District since the term of Ezekiel D. French in 1860. The holders of this office and their terms in office, are as follows:

Charles P. Tenney, 1865; Edward N. Mayo, 1867; John Z. Swanton, 1868, 1869; Henry F. Collins, 1875, 1876; Sabine F. Berry, 1879; Albert Lovejoy, 2nd, 1883, 1884; James Archibald, 1890, 1891; J. Frank Bryson, 1897, 1898, 1899; George A. Gorham, Jr., 1900, 1901, 1902; Arthur G. Rich, 1904, 1905; Frank A. Peabody, 1911, 1912; Bernard Archibald, 1918, 1919; George W. Haskell, 1928, 1929; Norris C. Estabrook, 1940, 1941; Hazen R. Neviers, 1946, 1947; Philip D. Tingley, 1950, 1951.

AGAIN TO PORTLAND

In 1952 Monument Lodge was again singled out for a presentation at the Grand Lodge in Portland when Grand Lecturer W. Aubrey Burbank, now Grand Master, invited the officers, headed by W.M. Kenneth Young, to exemplify the entered apprentice degree at the annual sessions in May.

Those associated with W.M. Young in performing the work were the following: S.W. Allen J. McKay; J.W., C. Clinton Dill; Treasurer, George H. Beatham; Secretary, Philip Tingley; S.D., Leon Benn; J.D., James L. Ross; S.S., Lawrence Good; J.S., Millard Fairley, Sr.; Marshall, Roger B. Lincoln; Chaplain, Neil Marshall; Hartley W. Stewart of Wells, a Past Master of Monument Lodge served as lecturer and Herbert "Bud" London was the acting candidate.

SECOND PERMANENT MEMBER

Other honors have come to the lodge through achievements of its members in recent years. In 1954 Philip D. Tingley became the second member of Monument Lodge to become a permanent member of the Grand Lodge when he was elected senior grand warden. In addition to this honor he has served as Grand Representative of the Grand Lodge of Nevada and is a member of the Grand Lodge committee on Dispensations and Charters.

PWM Thomas C. Vose served Grand Master Gray as Grand Marshall during his term as head of the Grand Lodge of Maine.

Percy H. Campbell, a member of this lodge, is the present illustrious Potentate of Anah Temple, Shrine and is the first Mason north of

Justice Frederick A. Powers started the Judiciary saga of Monument Lodge when he was elevated to the Supreme Court in 1900 where he served until his resignation seven years later. He became a member of Monument Lodge in 1884 at the age of 28.

JUSTICE TOMPKINS

Justice Nathaniel Tompkins was the second member, and the first past worshipful master, of Monument Lodge to reach the Supreme bench, in addition to the other honors he achieved in public life. Before he was singled out by Gov. Sumner Sewall for appointment to the Superior Court, he had already gained a distinction in the field of politics held by only a handful of men since Maine became a state in 1820.

He was chosen by his colleagues to be Speaker of the Maine House of Representatives and was similarly honored by the upper branch by being elected President of the Senate. Gov. Horace Hildreth elevated him to the Supreme Court and he was serving on this tribunal at the time of his death.

Third member of Monument Lodge, and also one of its past worshipful masters, to be chosen for judicial service was Justice James P. Archibald, appointed to the Superior Court by Gov. Muskie in 1956 where he is now serving with distinction.

Perhaps the most distinguished of all Monument Lodge members in public life was Llewellyn Powers who was master of the lodge in 1864. Subsequently he became United States Representative to Congress, then Governor of Maine in 1897 and back to Congress for two more terms. He was also Speaker of the Maine House of Representatives in 1895.

Ira G. Hersey, who sat in the East in 1906, went to the Maine legislature from Houlton and became President of the Maine Senate in 1915. He was a member of Congress from the old Fourth Maine district for ten years, from 1917 to 1927.

J. Frederic Burns became head of the Maine State Senate in 1937 and, in 1945, George B. Barnes, who had been master of the lodge in 1938, was elected Speaker of the Maine House of Representatives.

John M. Rice is erecting a new store, 15 x 60 feet, on the west part of the Cary & Putnam lot, corner of Court street and Market Square. It is to be two stories in height. — Aroostook Times, April 10, 1879.