

The Waller Mason Lodge #808 Online Newsletter



The Waller Masonic Lodge Buildings From December 30, 1897 To The Present

Worshipful Master Bart Harvey - Editor John "Corky" Daut
The March 2014 Issue

A Blast From The Past

From the January 2007 Newsletter

A Message From The East By Worshipful Master Wes Mersiovsky

I put off writing the newsletter article for the January mailing until now, simply because I was busy with holiday things, added to all the usual necessary things. I was going to devote most of my space in this newsletter to the Christmas party, but because of Kelly Cox's funeral, I feel I need to write about that. As I read that last sentence, it seems I'm saying it's Kelly's fault that I'm changing my mind.

Not so. What I really mean to infer is our loss is more important than a party, and deserves the bulk of this article.

Many of you were at the funeral, and you know Brother Bob Podvin did an excellent job of the service, both the secular and Masonic parts. He served as Pastor in the chapel, and as Master at the graveside. I've decided Bob's new description is Pastor-Master-Past-Master.

I was awed by the number of people who came to the visitation, and to the service, and by the broad range of ages. The chapel at Canon Funeral Home was filled to overflowing, and the four rows saved for masons was not enough by half. The line of cars headed to Field's Store Cemetery was among the longest I've seen. Kelly obviously meant a great deal to a lot of people. It will be a long time before we realize just how much we depended on him, like every time we are scrambling for people to participate in a degree or do the lecture, when we need someone knowledgeable to get the right word while teaching, not to mention supplying the fish and fryers for a dinner.

I'm kind of ashamed to say I feel mad at him for going away without having all the conversations we should have had. We've all missed out on a lot of good fellowship we could have had. Maybe that's the lesson in this: don't pass up the opportunity to learn from those who can teach, or teach those who can learn. Another lesson is from Kelly's age - 40.

We just don't know when we will be called, so please be prepared. We miss you already, and will for a long, long time.

(When I was rereading some of our older newsletters, this story grabbed me and I just had to reprint it. Kelly was a Mason's Mason and Wes said it for all of us. I'll be 86 this month, but as we all know, age is no indicator, however that last paragraph feels like it is hitting closer to home. Maybe for all of us. Corky.)



Brother John J. Robinson

Editor's Note; Reading Brother Robinson's books, "Born In Blood" and "A Pilgrim's Path" was my first introduction to Freemasonry and is one major reason I became a Freemason at 64 years old.

The founding visionary of the Masonic Information Center, John was a former Marine, a farmer, a business executive, and an author with a special interest in the history of Medieval Britain and the Crusades.

During his lifetime he was a member of the Medieval Academy of America, The Organization of American Historians, and the Royal Over-Seas League of London. He also headed a family trust dedicated to historical research and publication.

Robinson first began studying Freemasonry in the early 1980s and came to the attention of Masons with his book "Born in Blood: The Lost Secrets of Freemasonry" presenting a believable explanation for a connection between the Knights Templars and modern-day Masons. A second book, "Dungeon, Fire and Sword: The Knights Templar in the Crusades" soon followed. He soon found himself regularly speaking to Masonic and non-Masonic groups: the former having a profound interest in his findings while the latter often concerned about perceived secrecy and imagined wrong-doings.

In 1993, Robinson published "A Pilgrim's Path: One Man's Road to the Masonic Temple" in which he described his experiences with Masons and those against them. Masonic authors praised the work as comprehensive and profound. As a result of his interactions with Masons, he ultimately petitioned a lodge and became Brother Robinson - as explained in his book. Regretfully, not long afterwards, he became ill and passed to the celestial lodge above.

The Masonic Information Center at <http://www.msana.com/> is a lasting tribute to his interest in and acceptance of Freemasonry as a way of life.



What's Happening At Waller Lodge

For the February sick and distress it was announced that both Brother Ed Locklear and Mitch Wade had been bad sick and Brother Jimmy Hooper was in rehab after a knee replacement operation.

It was announced that the tickets were available for sale for the annual Spaghetti Dinner and Silent Auction fundraiser on March 22, 2014 and the members were urged to try and find items for the auction.

It was announced that the Grand Master's Conference would be Saturday morning February 22 at the Shrine Center and the Boots and Blue Jeans event for the Grand Master would be that evening at the Pattenon V.F.D.

A petition was read for a new member



My forgetter

My forgetter's getting better,
But my rememberer is broke
To you that may seem funny
But, to me, that is no joke
For when I'm "here" I'm wonder-
ing
If I really should be "there"
And, when I try to think it
through,

I haven't got a prayer!
Oft times I walk into a room,
Say "what am I here for?"
I wrack my brain, but all in vain!
A zero, is my score.
At times I put something away
Where it is safe, but, Gee!
The person it is safest from
Is, generally, me!

When shopping I may see some-
one,
Say "Hi" and have a chat,
Then, when the person walks
away
I ask myself, "who was that?"
Yes, my forgetter's getting better
While my rememberer is broke,
And it's driving me plumb crazy
And that isn't any joke.

Masonic Anniversaries

	<u>Years</u>
Carl Miller	53
Marshall Peterson	41
Marshall Peterson	39
Steve York	39
John Daut, Sr.	24
David Reynolds	15

Happy Birthday Brothers

	<u>Age</u>
Kenneth Healy	98
John "Corky" Daut	86
Everett F. Hoover	77
Robert F. Willie	76
Herman S. Flanagan	71
Jerry Schiel	69
Richard Ventrea	63
Eric Flanagan	56
Matt Stokes	38
Randal Dluhy	29

The Waller Lodge Electronic Newsletter

Subscriber's Extra Features

A Masonic Minute - Some Must Of Necessity Rule And Teach

During the Ceremony of Installation, the Master-elect is required to give his unqualified assent to several points read to him in a Summary of the Ancient Charges. One of them states, "to propagate the knowledge of the mystic art." Later in the Ceremony, he is charged "to communicate light and instruction to the Brethren." During the opening of every subsequent meeting over which he presides, he is reminded of his stated duty: "to employ and instruct the Brethren in Masonry." Thus, the Worshipful Master assumes a heavy responsibility.

The Lodge has always been a place of learning. The Ancient Charges make this clear: "A Lodge is a place where Freemasons assemble to work and to instruct and to improve themselves in the mysteries of their ancient science." In Operative times when the lodge was a simple hut erected on the building site, the Apprentices were indentured to Masters to learn the skills of the stonemason's trade – the trade secrets. When Freemasonry was transformed into a gentleman's philosophical society in the age of enlightenment, the object was "the cultivation and improvement of the human mind." So it remains to this day.

This has been clearly and forcefully articulated in a recently published note by W. Bro. Andrew Hammer, the author of *Observing the Craft* and eminent speaker who addressed our Annual Communication in July 2013. "The very origin of Freemasonry itself is in education. Whether it be the practical education in stone-cutting found in the operative craft of masonry, or the search for inner knowledge and science presented to us by the speculative craft, the foundation of the art is inexorably based in teaching and learning. Without it, there is simply no Freemasonry taking place in a Lodge. Therefore, every meeting of the Lodge should offer some amount of Masonic education, be it through the degrees, or through presentations on the various lessons of the Craft. Even a ten-minute talk focused on the symbolic meaning of a single working tool is far better than a meeting where nothing but donations, dinners, and dues are on the agenda. ... A Lodge without Masonic education cannot be an observant Lodge, and is arguably not any kind of Lodge at all. The search for more light is at the heart of Masonry."

Freemasonry teaches that all men are created equal – sons of Adam. However, within this concept there is, fortunately for the welfare of society, a wide variety of skill, aptitude, knowledge and experience. Everyone has something unique to contribute to the general good of humanity. However, not everyone is equipped to teach, train, or coach. A good leader knows how to identify and empower the human resources at his disposal – to delegate by aligning task with talent. It is his most valuable tool.

In our traditional history we have an instructive example. We read in the sacred writings that "Solomon's wisdom surpassed that of all the men of the east and of all Egypt. For he was wiser than any man. ... Men of all races came to listen to the wisdom of Solomon." Yet, when he began the construction of the great Temple at Jerusalem, he formed an alliance with King Hiram of the neighbouring kingdom of Tyre to supply the necessary men and materials and retained the master builder and skilled artificer, Hiram to oversee the work. In other words, he delegated.

Perhaps the Worshipful Master, as the humble representative of King Solomon, symbolically occupying the Chair of Solomon in the Lodge, should imitate his example and delegate the planning and presentation of learning opportunities to those Brethren with pedagogical training, skill, experience and knowledge. We cannot impart to others that which we do not possess ourselves. Every lodge has a vast talent pool of experienced, knowledgeable, able and willing Brethren – often just waiting to be asked to contribute.

Bro. Albert Pike issued this challenge more than a century ago, but which remains valid to this day: "He who would become an accomplished Mason must not be content to hear, or even understand, the lectures; he must, aided by them, and they having, as it were, marked out the way for him, study, interpret, and develop these symbols, for himself."

RSJD February 2014

Gonzales Masonic Lodge No. 30 A.F. & A.M.

By Blake L. Bowben
Special to the Inquirer

One cannot speak of Gonzales, without mentioning Freemasonry and its impact on our community. Freemasonry is the largest and oldest Fraternity in the world, and in Gonzales, it's no different. Gonzales Masonic Lodge No. 30 has conducted business, performed charitable acts and provided scholarships for more than 165 consecutive years. The lodge was chartered on Jan. 17, 1847, and has been located at its present location of 519½ St. Joseph Street for 115 of those years.

The city of Gonzales has a rich history with Freemasonry. For example, six of the Gonzales "Old Eighteen" were Freemasons. No other lodge of its size has furnished such a large number of noted men to the Craft. It has provided the Grand Lodge with five Grand Masters, including the late James F. Miller, Judge B.R. Abernethy, John B. McMahon, Chief Justice W.S. Fly and Hon. W.M. Fly, the last two remaining the most distinguished in Masonic circles of Texas for some time. Chief Justice Fly, the last Grand Master from Gonzales Lodge, never missed attending any of the Grand Lodge meetings for 57 consecutive years. It is said that no member in this country held more honors in the Masonic Lodge than did W.S. Fly. According to J.H. Daniel, Secretary of the Lodge in 1923, "writing a history of the Gonzales Lodge No. 30 would almost be a history of Texas." From its beginning, it played a prominent part in Masonry, having outstanding men on its membership rolls. These men in their time made history, had great vision, and aided greatly to make Texas the state she is today.

In 1889, the Masons laid the cornerstone for the Gonzales High School. The original cornerstone is now located at the Gonzales Masonic Cemetery. In 1901, Masons laid the cornerstone for the old Gonzales Cotton Mill, and in 1924, laid the cornerstone for the new Presbyterian Church building.

While Texas was a Republic, Masons served in many pivotal positions. All of the Presidents, Vice Presidents and Presidents pro tempore of the Senate were all Masons.

What did Texas heroes such as Stephen F. Austin, Sam Houston, William B. Travis, Jim Bowie, Davy Crockett, James Bonham, Ben Milam, David G. Burnet, James Fannin, Mirabeu B. Lamar, Lorenza de Zavala, Edward Burleson, Jose Navarro, Juan N. Seguin, R.E.B. Baylor and Thomas Rusk all have in common? They were all Freemasons.

Did you know that Brad Paisley, Shaquille O'Neal, Scottie Pippen, Arnold Palmer, Steve Wozniak, Richard Dreyfuss, Chief Justice David B. Sentelle are as well?

Freemasons use operative mason tools as symbols by which to teach Masonic philosophy. The terms "acting on the square" and "on the level" are Masonic terms which have filtered down into everyday language. This brings us to the most common question, "What is Freemasonry?"

It is the oldest and largest worldwide fraternity dedicated to the Brotherhood of Man under the Fatherhood of God. Freemasons do not solicit membership. In order to be a Mason, you must take the first step. If you'd like more information, email the lodge secretary at lowellt@crozierturner.com. If you're already a Mason, you are invited to attend the stated meetings held the first Monday of the month. The meal is at 6:30 p.m.; the meeting is at 7:30 p.m.

Blake L. Bowden is a past worshipful master for Gonzales Lodge A.F.&A.M. No. 30.



Little Johnny and his family were having Sunday dinner at his Grandmother's house. Everyone was seated around the table as the food was being served. When Little Johnny received his plate, he started eating right away. Johnny! Please wait until we say our prayer.'said his mother.

I don't need to,'the boy replied.

Of course, you do'his mother insisted. We always say a prayer before eating at our house."

That's at our house.'Johnny explained. But this is Grandma's house and she knows how to cook."

Waller Lodge's Annual Spaghetti Dinner And Silent Auction Fundraiser

Saturday March 22, 2014

6:00 pm to 7:30 pm

WOW, Only \$6.00 per Plate and Kids Under 12 Eat Free

Please start looking around for items you can donate for the auction at least a few days before the event date March 22, 2014 so we will have time to have everything ready in time for the sale.

Volunteer workers are always needed and will be welcomed.



King Solomon's Quarries

Source: The Israeli Freemason - From <http://www.myfreemasonry.com>

The cave opening is beneath the north wall of the Old City of Jerusalem; close to the Damascus Gate. From the entrance, the main path leads south for nearly 225 meters (~740 ft) till it reaches the main large cave called "The Freemasons Hall." From this hall, it bears east, leading to the dripping spring and the lowest place of the cave. The known area of the cave is about 900 m² (~10,000 square feet).



The cave contains a number of different kinds of rock. The main type being white massif limestone, locally called "Melekeh," meaning "Royal." This stone is beautiful for building, and although not too hard, it does not

flake off. Very large building blocks have been quarried from it. The opening of the cave consists of a denser limestone, also white, locally called "Mizzi-helou," meaning "sweet" (that is "soft"). It is very easily worked, but cannot be used in large blocks. Likewise, there is also iron-containing limestones called "Mizzi-ahmar," meaning "red," and other harder stones, too hard for cutting, called "Mizzi-Yehudi," meaning "Jewish."

One of the methods for hewing the stones was to carve broad slits along the rock face, and to drive dry wooden wedges into them. Water was then poured over the dry wedges, so causing them to swell. The resulting pressure then cracked the stone along the slits. This primitive method of quarrying was quite effective, and traces of it can still be found in the cave.

The cave-quarry is quite close to the Temple Mount, and even, large stones could have been transported to the Temple construction site. Furthermore, it is known from the first book of Kings that it was forbidden to use any iron tools in the actual 'on site' construction of the Temple, nor was the sound of such permitted to be heard. This cave would be the ideal place for quarrying and dressing the stones for the Temple, while meeting with those requirements.

Josephus Flavius, in his book "Wars of the Jews" (against the Roman conquerors), refers to the cave as the "Royal Caverns." The name originating, as mentioned previously, from the "Melekeh" or "Royal" limestone

quarried in it. This later led to their being called "King Solomon's Quarries." It should be possible to prove whether the stones used in the building of the Temple did actually come from these caves. At the moment, this is still an unproven tradition. What is known is that the stone structure in the cave is identical with that of stone remnants preserved from King Solomon's Temple. This cave may really be King Solomon's quarries, anyway being a real quarry and in the vicinity of the Temple Mount. This cave has special meaning for Freemasons in general, and for Mark Master Masons and the Royal Arch in particular. Starting in the days of the British Mandate, the cave was used for the ceremony of Mark Master Masons. This was temporarily suspended between the years 1948-1968. The impressive ceremony of the consecration of the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of the State of Israel was carried out in the caves in the spring of 1969, and ever since then, the Mark degree has been performed in the caves on the average of once a year.

The Bible, both in the second book of Kings and in Jeremiah, tells us that King Zedekiah fled from the Chaldeans by night, by the way of the gate between the two walls, by the King's garden. But eventually, the Chaldeans overtook him in the plains of Jericho. Arising from this, the medieval commentators of the Bible, Radak and Rashi, mention the following legend: "There was a cave from the palace of Zedekiah to the plain of Jericho and he fled through the cave, and G-d caused a buck to walk on the roof of the cave and the Chaldeans followed the buck. When they reached the cave opening in the plain of Jericho, Zedekiah was emerging. They saw him and captured him." This is the reason that the caves are also called "Zedekiah's Grotto." At the present time, the caves end soon after the dripping spring. A legend says that these drops of water are the "tears" of King Zedekiah, which he shed while trying to escape from the Chaldeans. No other exit than the entrance opening is known today, let alone an underground route all the way to the plains of Jericho. In the 10th century, the present Damascus Gate of the Old City of Jerusalem was called "the Gate of the Grotto." In the 15th century, the cave was used as a wool storehouse and called "the Cotton Grotto."

The cave opening was sealed by the Turks in about 1542, while rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem. The cave was accidentally rediscovered in the spring of 1854 by Bro. Dr. Barclay, an American physician, while on a walk with his sons and dog. The dog, on a fox's scent, started digging and entered the cave. Subsequently, Dr. Barclay explored the cave and later it was reopened.

During the British Mandate, large stones were quarried from the rock in the cave and sent to various countries to serve as cornerstones for newly erected Masonic Lodges.

Legends tell that when the Roman legions, under the command of Titus, placed Jerusalem under siege, the priests of the Temple hid Holy Utensils and Instruments of the Temple deep down the cave. If this is true, these treasures have yet to be discovered. Source: The Israeli Freemason

This article was originally published in forum thread: King Solomon's Quarries started by Blake Bowden
View original post



Three Myths about Lodge Attendance

A Masonic Did You Know

As I have traveled through the District, I have had the opportunity to speak with many Brothers about how the Lodge has evolved over the years. One thing is clear: it is without debate that today's Masonic Lodge is not the same as one we might have visited thirty, forty, or fifty years ago.

The Lodge is different. Society is different. That is okay as long as we remain mentally nimble enough to recognize and adapt to change. Too often we hide behind excuses like "times have changed," or "all social organizations have declining membership" to justify our unwillingness to see our Fraternity through the eyes of the next generation. In essence, these excuses have become anchors; not anchors that steady us in stormy seas, but ones which keep us from even unfurling our sails and leaving familiar shores. What follows is a list of the most common myths about Lodge attendance.

Today's man is too busy to come to Lodge. The myth of the overbooked schedule has been around for ages. In an effort to explain declining attendance, people point to the 1950s and how the wife took care of the house and kids, giving the man an opportunity to go to his social club at night.

While that may be true, it is equally true that men today still spend time together. Cigar clubs, bowling alleys, restaurants, and bars are full of men socializing on nearly any night of the week. Men regularly take time

away from their busy family schedules to watch their favorite teams compete. They even participate in sports like golf, tennis, hunting, and fishing without negatively impacting their home lives.

What we need to ask ourselves then, is why they aren't choosing Freemasonry.

One reason is that we are viewed as a sort of dinosaur that somehow survived the Ice Age. We only have ourselves to blame for that. We have held on to our customs, refusing to adapt to the change that has taken place around us. I was at a Lodge last June, and the program was . . . anyone? Anyone? You guessed it – Strawberry Night. I will resist the urge to begin a rant about how Strawberry Night is no more of a Lodge program than Freemasons at Gettysburg is a side dish for your roast beef dinner. At this meeting, there were thirteen of us – the Lodge officers, one visitor and me. Sadly, I can almost guarantee you that this year's program for June will also be Strawberry Night.

If we fail to observe what it is that young men want, choosing instead to give them what the men of the 1950s wanted, we are sure to fail.

"Fine," you say, shaking your head. "**No one is going to want to _____.**" No matter how you complete that sentence, as long as it is an activity that is within the bounds of decorum and social responsibility, it is simply untrue. In your Lodge, there is someone who would: go to an art museum, flower show, or concert. There is also someone who would volunteer at the food bank, homeless shelter, or church. There are still others who would attend yoga class, golf, ride a motorcycle, or shoot sporting clays. There is simply no way to know what people will do until you give them a chance to do it.

How do you measure the success of a first time event? Not by attendance. Every Lodge has a few intrepid souls who will brave the new adventures without fear or hesitation. Likewise, every Lodge has those who will sit by and see how the first run goes before they commit - rushing blindly into the unknown universe of ball-room dancing is reckless, after all. Quite simply, we should gauge success by the quality of the time shared, the bonds created, and the memories made.

The last, and arguably the most damaging myth is that Freemasonry has nothing to offer today's young man.

Nothing can be farther from the truth. There exists no organization that offers a man what Freemasonry does. We give men a deeply symbolic, moving initiatic experience, an illuminated path to being their best selves, and a chance to meet men they would never have had the occasion to meet anywhere else. Additionally Masonry comes with an extended family that literally spans the globe. Masons are never alone, never without help, and never far from a friend.

Don't believe the myths. Men need us, but they need to know about us. Don't assume that your young neighbor doesn't have the time to join a Lodge. Ask him. Let him know that if he gives us his time, we can teach him to be a better husband, father, and son. Don't be timid about trying new events. People will come, maybe slowly at first, but they will come. Finally, don't forget that what we offer is valuable. We take ordinary men and make them . . . Freemasons.



Did You Serve In The U. S. Armed Forces

Waller Masonic Lodge would like to honor all of our members who have served in the United States Armed Forces. Waller Lodge members will be receiving a very short questionnaire in the mail soon along with a stamped, self addressed envelope to return it in. So please check the appropriate boxes on the form and mail it back. Don't make the Lodge waste a 49 cent stamp



The preacher's 5 year-old daughter noticed that her father always paused and bowed his head for a moment before starting his sermon. One day, she asked him why.

"Well, Honey," he began, proud that his daughter was so observant of his messages. "I'm asking the Lord to help me preach a good sermon."

"How come He doesn't answer it?" she asked.

Surviving The Big Ones

By Corky

The big ones for me were that 16 year period between the Great Depression and World War II. Being born in 1928, I grew up during the hard times between the stock market crash of 1929 and the end of World War II in 1945.

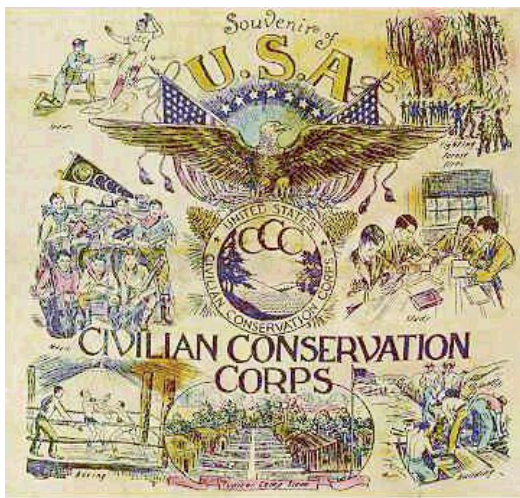
It's hard to realize now, the condition that this country had reached after the Stock Market Crash of 1929. There was rampant unemployment and economic despair throughout the whole country. People were standing in long lines everyday to get a free bowl of soup that was distributed by churches and charitable organizations.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt had promised the people a "New Deal" to solve the problems of the Great Depression if he was elected. In the early 1930's, three programs were initiated in an attempt to solve those problems.

The federal government had a fascination with initial names for programs even back in the 1930's. The three programs that meant the most for the people were the CCC, WPA and NRA.



Corky Back Then



The CCC was originally established by an act of Congress in 1933 as the Emergency Conservation Work Act to provide jobs and alleviate the nations suffering due to the lack of jobs during the Great Depression. Another act in 1937 changed the name to the Civilian Conservation Corps. When the CCC was formed they accepted young men from 18 to 25 who were physically fit, unemployed and unmarried. In 1935 the age requirement was change to from 17 to 28. The men were paid \$30.00 per month, YES per month. \$25.00 of that was sent home to the man's family and he received \$5.00 for expenses.

The first 25,000 men were enrolled in 1933 and they had increased to 507,782 men by 1939. The average number of camps open at any one time was 1,600. The War Department administered the program and despite the "Civilian" part of it's name it was a military organization. That was probably where earned their nickname, "The Tree Army". The men were grouped into companys which reported to District Headquarters which were associated with Army Corps commands. Its equipment was military in origin - one feature of the CCC was that the young men driving to and fro to projects in the backs of open bed Army trucks. Its officers too, were military men on active duty, Colonels and Captains and Lieutenants who had fought in the last war and would fight in the next.

During their time, they planted 2,356,000,000 trees. Yes, that's billions. A very large part of their projects were related to forestry and building camp grounds, hiking trails and roads in national forests and parks. Some of their more notable projects included the Skyline Drive in Virginia, the Pacific Crest Trail and the great Appalachian Trail.

Nellie's uncle Bill was in the CCC in the 30's. We still have some of the letters he wrote to his mother and father during that period. Like most men in the armed service, he was always broke and needed money for stamps if he was going to write letters.

The WPA, which was established May 6, 1935, originally stood for the Works Progress Administration. The name was changed in 1939 to the Works Projects Administration. Its original purpose was to provide economic relief for the hundreds of thousands of unemployed workers during the Great Depression. Like the CCC money earned in the WPA was sent to the family. The men were paid from \$15.00 to \$90.00 per month, depending on the job he or she had. When the job required it, housing and food were included.

In 1943, after eight years, the program was phased out. During that time they built 651,087 miles of highways, repaired 124,087 bridges, constructed 125,110 public buildings, established 8,192 parks and 853 air strips. They built things like courthouses, schools, hospitals, playgrounds and librar-



ies with many still in use. They did much more than put shovels in workers' hands and construct buildings however. The WPA provided free or inexpensive puppet shows, dance recitals, musical presentations, and dramas. They gave jobs to actors, directors, playwrights, scene designers, make-up artists, and orchestras-people who would have remained on breadlines. The WPA also provided jobs to musicians, historians, dancers, actors, cartoonists, writers, and artists.



I remember when the WPA built a community cannery in Montgomery, Texas. My grandmother used to work in the cannery during the summer while the crops were coming in.

The National Recovery Administration (NRA), sometime called the "Blue Eagle" because of the signs that businesses were required to post to show they were in compliance with the law. The NRA was supposed to establish codes for each industrial sector and, had it worked as such, would have caused a fundamental change for the role of government in business. However, the



NRA did not bring this change.

Many people were opposed to the NRA because they feared set price levels would be too high. One reason it didn't work was that large business still continued to dominate the economy because they created most of the codes. At the same time, NRA labor agreements were unpopular with both small business, who feared rising costs, and labor, who felt the agreements did not go far enough. This almost universal opposition to the program, combined with the administrative problems, made it impossible for the agency to effect any fundamental changes. These problems were all solved however, when the Supreme Court declared the NRA unconstitutional and shut it down.



Old Tyler Talks

The Country Lodge

Carl Claudy

"It was the funniest thing I ever saw!"

"What was?" asked the Old Tyler of the New Brother.

"That lodge meeting I attended in Hicksville. Listen, and I'll tell you!"

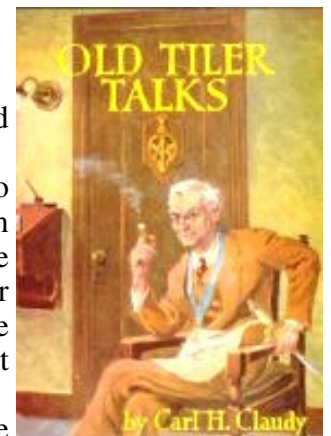
"I'm listening. Anyone who can find a lodge meeting funny deserves to be listened to!" answered the Old Tyler.

"The lodge room was funny!" began the New Brother. "Lodge rooms ought to have leather-covered furniture and electric lights, a handsome painting in the east, an organ- be dignified, like ours. This lodge room was over the post office. There were two stoves in it. And every now and then the Junior Deacon put coal on! The Lesser Lights were kerosene lamps, and the Altar looked like an overgrown soap box! The benches were just chairs, and they didn't have any lantern or slides- just an old chart to point to in the lecture.

But it wasn't so much the room, it was the way they did their work. You'd have thought they were legislating for a world, not just having a lodge meeting. Such preciseness, such slow walking, such making every move and sign as if it were a drill team. There wasn't a smile cracked the whole evening and even at refreshment, there wasn't much talking or laughing. I'm glad to belong to a lodge where people are human!"

"Yes," answered the Old Tyler, "I expect it is."

"Expect what is?"



"Impossible for a New Brother to understand the work of a country lodge," answered the Old Tiler. "What you saw wasn't funny. Listen- it is you who are funny."

"Me funny? Why, what do..."

"I said for you to listen!" sternly cut in the Old Tyler. "I have never been to Hicksville, but I have visited in many country lodges and your description is accurate. But your interpretation is damnable!"

"Masonry is beautiful, truthful, philosophical, strives to draw men closer to God, to make them love their fellow, to be better men. Is that funny? The more regard men have for outward symbols, the more apt they are to have regard for what is within. A man who won't clean his face and hands won't have a clean heart and mind. A man who is slovenly in dress is apt to be slovenly in his heart. A lodge which reveres the work probably reveres the meaning behind the work.

"You criticize the Hicksville Lodge because it is too precise. Would that our own was more so! The officers who have so deep a regard for appearances can only have learned it through a thoughtful appreciation of what the appearances stand for.

"You have been taught that it is not the externals but the internals which mark a man and Mason. What difference can it make whether a lodge seats its membership on leather benches or chairs, or the floor, or doesn't seat them at all? Our ancient brethren, so we are taught, met on hills and in valleys. Think you that they sat on leather benches, or the grass?"

"It's good to have a fine hall to meet in. It's a joy to have an organ and electric lights and a stereopticon to show handsome slides. But all of these are merely easy ways of teaching the Masonic lesson. Doubtless Lincoln would have enjoyed electric lights to study by, instead of firelight. Doubtless he would have learned a little more in the same time had he had more books and better facilities. But he learned enough to make him live forever.

"We teach in a handsome hall, with beautiful accessories. If we teach as well as the poor country lodge with its chairs for benches, its kerosene lamps for Lesser Lights, its harmonium for organ, its chart for lantern slides, we can congratulate ourselves. When we look at the little lodge with its humble equipment, thank the Great Architect that there is so grand a system of philosophy, with so universal an appeal, as to make men content to study and practice it, regardless of external conditions.

"I do not know Hicksville Lodge, but it would be an even bet that they saved up money to get better lodge furniture and spent it to send some sick brother South or West, or to provide an education for the orphans of some brother who couldn't do it for his children. In a country lodge you will get a sandwich and a cup of coffee after the meeting, in place of the elaborate banquet you may eat in the city; in the country lodge you will find few dress suits and not often a fine orator, but you will find a Masonic spirit, a feeling of genuine brotherly regard, which is too often absent in the larger, richer, city lodge.

"I find nothing 'funny' in the dignity and the seriousness of our country brethren. I find nothing of humor in poverty, nor anything but sweet Masonic service in the Junior Deacon putting coal on the fire. Would that we had a few brethren as serious to put coal upon our Masonic fires, to warm us all."

"You've put coals of fire on my head!" answered the New Brother, "I deserved a kicking and got off with a lecture. I'm going back to Hicksville Lodge next week and tell them what they taught me through you."

"If you won't expect me to laugh, I'll go with you!" answered the Old Tyler, but his eyes smiled.



"Hello, is this the Sheriff's Office?"

"Yes. What can I do for you?"

"I'm calling to report 'bout my neighbor Virgil Smith.... He's hidin' marijuana inside his firewood! Don't quite know how he gets it inside the logs, but he's hidin' it there."

"Thank you very much for the call, sir."

The next day, the Sheriff's Deputies descend on Virgil's house. They search the shed where the firewood is kept. Using axes, they bust open every piece of wood, but find no marijuana. They sneer at Virgil - and leave.

Shortly thereafter, the phone rings at Virgil's house.

"Hey, Virgil! This is Floyd.... Did the Sheriff come?"

"Yeah!"

"Did they chop your firewood?"

"Yep!"

"Happy Birthday, buddy!"