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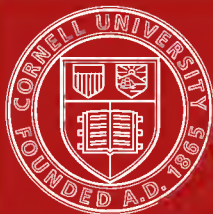
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” The  
Year of Jubilee  
has come ”



Meridian Lodge No. 77

Ancient  
Free and Accepted Masons



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1851-1901.

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FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

.... OF ....

**Meridian Lodge, No. 77,**

Ancient Free and Accepted Masons.

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MERIDEN, CONNECTICUT,

January First, Nineteen Hundred and One.

*D. Y.*

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TO THE  
**Brethren of Meridian Lodge, No. 77,**  
A. F. & A. M.  
WHO SHALL CELEBRATE THEIR  
CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY  
JANUARY 1, 1951,  
THIS BOOK  
IS FRATERNALLY DEDICATED.





# Meridian Lodge, No. 77,

A. F. & A. M.

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At a stated communication of Meridian Lodge, No. 77, A. F. & A. M., held at Masonic Hall, Palace Block, Monday evening, March 12, 1900, the following vote was passed:

“That Meridian Lodge celebrate its Fiftieth Anniversary on January 1, 1901, and that the Worshipful Master appoint a committee to have full charge of all arrangements.”

At a stated communication March 26, 1900, the Worshipful Master appointed the following Brothers as part of the committee to make arrangements for the celebration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of Meridian Lodge:

Past-Masters LEVI E. COE, WILLIAM H. WESTWOOD, GEO. E. BICKNELL, EUGENE A. HALL and WILLIAM C. COMSTOCK.

The Committee immediately organized, and at the stated communication of the Lodge, October 22, 1900, reported the following programme which was approved and adopted by the Lodge:

## Programme.

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Tuesday, January 1, 1901.

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**1 P. M.** SPECIAL COMMUNICATION OF MERIDIAN LODGE, No.  
77, A. F. & A. M., AT MASONIC HALL.

OPENING OF LODGE.

RECEPTION OF GRAND OFFICERS.

READING OF ORIGINAL RECORDS.

FORM IN GRAND PROCESSION AND MARCH TO THE  
TOWN HALL.

**2.30 P. M.** PUBLIC EXERCISES AT TOWN HALL.

PROGRAMME :

MUSIC, . . . . . Orchestra

PRAYER, . . . . .  
Reverend Brother Alexander H. Mead,  
Chaplain of Meridian Lodge.

ADDRESS OF WELCOME, . . . . .  
Worshipful Master Wilbert L. Babcock.

MUSIC—"Anniversary Ode," . . . . .  
(Sung by Audience, accompanied by Orchestra).

Hail! sacred art! by Heaven designed  
A gracious blessing for mankind;  
Peace, joy and love thou dost bestow,  
On us, thy votaries below.

Bright wisdom's footsteps here we trace  
From Solomon, the prince of peace,  
Whose righteous maxims still we hold  
More precious than rich Ophir's gold.

His heavenly proverbs to us tell,  
How we on earth should ever dwell,  
In harmony and social love,  
To emulate the blest above.

Vain, empty grandeur shall not find  
Its dwelling in a Brother's mind;  
A Mason, who is true and wise,  
Its glittering pomp will e'er despise.

Candor and friendship, joy and peace,  
Within his breast shall have a place,  
Virtue and Wisdom thus combined  
Shall decorate the Mason's mind.

HISTORICAL ADDRESS, . . . . .  
Worshipful Brother Levi E. Coe,  
Past-Master of Meridian Lodge.

POEM, . . . . . Brother Edwin B. Everitt

MUSIC, . . . . . Orchestra

ADDRESS, . . . . . U. S. Senator, Brother Orville H. Platt

MUSIC—"America," . . . . .  
(Sung by Audience, accompanied by Orchestra).

BENEDICTION, . . . . .  
Reverend Brother Warren S. Perkins,  
Past-Chaplain of Meridian Lodge.

5 P. M. RE-FORM PROCESSION AND MARCH TO LODGE ROOM.  
CLOSING OF LODGE.

6 P. M. BANQUET AT ARMORY OF COMPANY I, SECOND  
REGIMENT, C. N. G.

At the same communication the Worshipful Master announced the appointment of the whole committee to have charge of the celebration as follows:

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE :**

W. BRO. LEVI E. COE, CHAIRMAN,  
W. BRO. EUGENE A. HALL, SECRETARY,  
W. BRO. WILLIAM H. WESTWOOD,  
W. BRO. GEORGE E. BICKNELL,  
W. BRO. WILLIAM C. COMSTOCK.

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**RECEPTION :**

WORSHIPFUL MASTER, WILBERT L. BABCOCK, CHAIRMAN,  
W. B. NEWTON F. HART, BRO. G. HERRICK WILSON,  
M. W. B. WILLIAM WALLACE LEE, BRO. EDGAR J. DOOLITTLE,  
W. B. HENRY J. CHURCH, BRO. BENJAMIN PAGE,  
W. B. H. WALES LINES, BRO. AMOS IVES,  
W. B. MATTHEW BEATTY, BRO. JOHN W. COE,  
W. B. JOHN C. BOOTH, BRO. GEORGE VAN NOSTRAND,  
W. B. JOHN A. LEEDS, BRO. JOHN C. BYXBEE,  
W. B. E. ERNEST WEST, BRO. FRANCIS STEVENSON,  
W. B. JAMES P. PLATT, BRO. CHARLES S. PERKINS,  
W. B. JOHN P. WEIR, JR., BRO. FRANK D. SMITH,  
W. B. JOSEPH L. PORTER, BRO. GEORGE H. WILCOX,  
W. B. WILLIAM H. SPROUT, BRO. FRED DEPEYSTER,  
W. B. DAVID F. POWERS, BRO. WALTER S. BILLARD,  
W. B. EDWIN A. WATROUS, BRO. IRVING L. HOLT,  
W. B. FRANK A. STEVENS, BRO. JOHN S. LANE,  
W. B. ARTHUR E. MILLER, BRO. WILBUR F. PARKER,  
W. B. ROBERT L. MACKAY, BRO. ALLEN B. SQUIRE,  
BRO. ORVILLE H. PLATT, BRO. JOHN D. ROBERTS. JR.,  
BRO. CHARLES L. UPHAM, BRO. ROBERT G. CHURCH.

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**ENTERTAINMENT :**

W. BRO. LEVI E. COE, CHAIRMAN,  
W. BRO. H. WALES LINES,  
BRO. RICHARD W. MILES,  
BRO. CHARLES M. WILLIAMS.

### **BANQUET :**

W. BRO. WILLIAM H. WESTWOOD, CHAIRMAN,      BRO. CHARLES E. CHAPMAN,  
W. BRO. JOHN A. LEEDS,                              BRO. JOHN W. KERWIN,  
BRO. EDWARD J. POOLEY,                            BRO. ALBERT E. BRECKENRIDGE,  
BRO. FRED E. TUCKER,                              BRO. NORMAN E. SMITH,  
BRO. CHARLES P. CONNOLLY,                      BRO. FRED K. STORM,  
BRO. GEORGE S. CLARK,                            BRO. JOHN M. WISE.

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### **MUSIC :**

W. BRO. GEORGE E. BICKNELL, CHAIRMAN,  
  BRO. FREDERICK S. BIDWELL,  
  BRO. GEORGE G. MARBLE,  
  BRO. JAMES F. GILL.

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### **PRINTING :**

W. BRO. WILLIAM C. COMSTOCK, CHAIRMAN,  
  BRO. EDWIN B. EVERITT,  
  BRO. GEORGE A. DAVIS,  
  BRO. ELMER E. SPENCER,  
  BRO. FRANK C. YOUNG.

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### **DECORATING:**

W. BRO. EUGENE A. HALL, CHAIRMAN,  
  BRO. HENRY B. LEVI,  
  BRO. LOUIS H. PERKINS,  
  BRO. JOHN H. PARISH,

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The following members of the Lodge were appointed Marshals for the Anniversary Celebration :

  COLONEL CHARLES L. UPHAM, CHIEF,  
COLONEL SEGER S. ATWELL,                      PAST-MASTER JOHN P. WEIR, JR.,  
CAPTAIN ROGER M. FORD,                        CAPTAIN REUBEN WATERMAN,  
CAPTAIN JOHN S. LANE,                            PAST-MASTER ARTHUR E. MILLER.

The following form of invitation was adopted:

1851—1901.

Meridian Lodge, No. 77, A. F. & A. M., Meriden, Connecticut, desires your presence at the celebration of its Fiftieth Anniversary, to be held January first, nineteen hundred and one, beginning with a communication of the Lodge at Masonic Hall, Palace Block, at one o'clock, P. M., followed by Public Exercises at Town Hall. Banquet at Armory of Company I, Palace Block, at six o'clock.

Fraternally,

WILBERT L. BABCOCK,

Worshipful Master

GEORGE A. DAVIS,

Secretary.

K. S. V. P.

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#### INVITED GUESTS:

Grand Master JOHN O. ROWLAND, Wallingford.  
Deputy Grand Master FREDERICK S. STEVENS, Bridgeport.  
Grand Senior Warden ARTHUR C. WHEELER, Norwalk.  
Grand Junior Warden LEON M. WOODFORD, Naugatuck.  
Grand Treasurer MILES W. GRAVES, Hartford.  
Grand Secretary JOHN H. BARLOW, Hartford.  
Grand Senior Deacon GEORGE E. PARSONS, Norwich.  
Grand Junior Deacon ASA P. FITCH, Hartford.  
Grand Chaplain REV. CORNELIUS G. BRISTOL, Hartford.  
Grand Marshal BENJAMIN F. TURNER, Middletown.  
Grand Senior Steward ANDREW F. HALLOCK, Bethel.  
Grand Junior Steward EDWARD E. FULLER, Tolland.  
Grand Tyler JOHN MCCARTHY, New Haven.  
District Deputy WATSON G. GRANNIS, Litchfield.  
" " WILBUR F. HARD, Deep River.  
" " FRANK H. WHEELER, New Haven.  
" " FRED A. VERFLANCK, Manchester.  
" " HENRY O. CANFIELD, Bridgeport.  
" " EDWARD G. WRIGHT, Putnam.  
" " ARTHUR B. CALKINS, New London.

Past Grand Master ELI S. QUINTARD, New Haven.  
 “ “ “ ASA SMITH, New Haven.  
 “ “ “ JAMES L. GOULD, Bridgeport.  
 “ “ “ LUKE A. LOCKWOOD, Riverside.  
 “ “ “ JAMES McCORMICK, Windsor.  
 “ “ “ FRED H. WALDRON, New Haven.  
 “ “ “ JOHN W. MIX, Yalesville.  
 “ “ “ JOHN H. SWARTWOUT, Stamford.  
 “ “ “ HUGH STERLING, Bridgeport.  
 “ “ “ SAMUEL BASSETT, New Britain.  
 “ “ “ HENRY O. WARNER, New Milford.  
 “ “ “ GEORGE A. KIES, Norwich.  
 “ “ “ FRANK W. HAVENS, Hartford.  
 “ “ “ GEORGE G. McNALL, Greenwich.

Governor-Elect Brother GEORGE P. McLEAN, Simsbury.

Worshipful Brother WILLIAM A. FOSKET, New Haven, Worshipful Master  
 Meridian Lodge, 1857.

Worshipful Brother WILLIAM COCHRAN, Meriden, Worshipful Master  
 Meridian Lodge, 1858-1859.

Worshipful Brother EDWIN O. HIBBARD, Springfield, Worshipful Master  
 Meridian Lodge, 1872.

Brother CHARLES PARKER, Meriden, Treasurer Meridian Lodge, 1851.

Brother LINUS BIRDSEY, Meriden, Treasurer Meridian Lodge, 1861.

Brother ELI C. BIRDSEY, Secretary Meridian Lodge, 1865.

Reverend Brother JOSEPH J. WOOLEY, Pawtucket, R. I., Chaplain of  
 Meridian Lodge, 1870-1871.

And the Worshipful Master, Senior Warden and Junior Warden of each  
 Lodge in Connecticut.

## **Address of Welcome.**

**WORSHIPFUL MASTER WILBERT L. BABCOCK.**

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**BRETHREN AND FRIENDS:**

To-day marks a very important period in the history of Masonry in Meriden, for it was on New Year's day, 1851, that Meridian Lodge of Free Masons was instituted; it also was the first Lodge to be organized in the state for a period covering over twenty years, there being at that time a very strong feeling averse to Masonry; but since then, times and opinions have changed.

We have grown and prospered as a Lodge and to-day, New Year's day, 1901, we have assembled to celebrate our Fiftieth Anniversary.

It is my privilege at this time, in the name of Meridian Lodge, to extend to you, Most Worshipful Grand Master, your associate Officers and members of the Grand Lodge; to you, Brethren of Center Lodge, No. 97, and also of other Lodges here represented; and to you, ladies and friends, a most cordial and fraternal welcome to these Public Exercises, and we sincerely hope that you may find them not only interesting, but profitable and enjoyable.



## Historical Address.

WORSHIPFUL BROTHER LEVI E. COE,

Past-Master of Meridian Lodge.

WORSHIPFUL MASTER AND BROTHERS:

Fifty years ago to-day Meridian Lodge, No. 77, A. F. & A. M., was instituted, and we have met to commemorate the event and pay honor to the memories of its founders.

As early as 1815 a few of the faithful Free Masons of Meriden asked for a charter for a Masonic lodge in Meriden.

At a stated communication of Temple Lodge, No. 16, of Cheshire, held September 25, 1815, it was "Voted, That the petition of Joel Hull, in behalf of the brethren of the town of Meriden, praying the Grand Lodge to grant them a charter, be supported by this Lodge in their behalf."

The Grand Lodge records of October, 1815, say: "After full discussion the petition was negatived."

A few years ago Brother M. W. William Wallace Lee prepared a historical sketch of Meridian Lodge, from which I quote:

"Meriden was included in the town of Wallingford until 1806. St. John's Lodge, No. 2, was chartered at Middletown in 1754, Compass Lodge, No. 9, at Wallingford in 1769, Temple Lodge, No. 16, at Cheshire in 1790, Harmony Lodge, No. 20, at Berlin in 1791, Friendship Lodge, No. 33, at Southington in 1795. So that Meriden was surrounded by Masonic lodges when it was only a small hamlet. . .

"The records of Compass Lodge prior to 1822 are lost, but a roll of members from its organization has been kept which is probably correct, or very nearly so. From that list I have obtained the following of those who lived in Meriden, but cannot give the year prior to 1822, for the reasons stated above:

"Isaac Atwater, Asahel Curtiss, Joel Hall, Augustus Hall, Jr., John Hall, Chauncey Hall, Isaac I. Hough, Sherlock Perkins, Reuben Ives, Joel Hull, Charles Yale, Selden Yale, James S. Brooks, 1821; Hiram

Yale, 1821; Joseph A. Twiss, 1824; Charles Yale, 1826; Ira Twiss, 1827. From Temple Lodge I find these: Levi Douglass, 1795; Patrick Clark, 1797; John Plymart, W. M., 1806; Moses Rice, 1812; Damon Conner, Moses Cowles, 1815; Joseph Plymart, 1824. Very likely there may have been others."

William Olds, of Meriden, the father of Brother William B. Olds, was a member of Compass Lodge before 1822.

Brother Rev. Ashbel Baldwin should not be omitted from the list of early Masons of Meriden. In 1824 he removed to Wallingford when 67 years old, where he officiated several years, and afterwards at Meriden, North Haven and Oxford.

He was the first Chaplain of the Grand Lodge of Connecticut and the first Master of St. Paul's Lodge, No. 11, Litchfield, his native place, and the first clergyman who had sufficient courage to show himself to be closely identified with the craft. He graduated at Yale College in 1776. He received an appointment in the Continental army, which he held for some time; became rector of St. Michael's church, Litchfield, in 1785, and in 1793 rector of Christ church, Stratford, and remained there until 1824.

"During the year 1828-9-30, yes, even to 1840, the anti-Masonic storm raged with great violence in Connecticut, as well as many other states. Of the seventy-five lodges in Connecticut which had been chartered previous to 1828, all but sixteen either surrendered their charters, had them revoked, or ceased to hold their meetings during that period."

In 1850 a petition for a dispensation for a lodge in Meriden was presented to Avery C. Babcock, then Grand Master, but was refused, because, as he said, he did not think, as the law then was, that he had the power to grant a dispensation.

At the next session of the Grand Lodge the law was so amended as to give the Grand Master that power.

During the year another petition for a dispensation for a lodge was presented to the Grand Master and granted, and on the first day of January, 1851, M. W. Grand Master Benoni A. Shepard, with associate officers, instituted the Lodge and installed the following officers:

John Parker, W. M.  
Asahel Curtis, S. W.  
William Allen, Jr., J. W.  
Bertrand L. Yale, Secretary.  
Charles Parker, Treasurer.

William B. Olds, S. D.  
Luther Parmelee, J. D.

The Lodge continued work under dispensation until the annual communication of the Grand Lodge in May, 1851, when a charter to Meridian Lodge, No. 77, was granted, being the first lodge chartered in Connecticut after the anti-Masonic crusade.

The Lodge held its meetings in Odd Fellows hall, up-town, as by the charter the Lodge was located at Meriden Centre.

In 1851, September 6, occurred the death of Brother Dr. Allen, the J. W. of the Lodge.

In 1852 St. John's Lodge voted to present a Masonic carpet to Meridian Lodge as a token of friendship and fraternal regard. In that year the Centennial anniversary of the initiation of Brother George Washington was observed in Hartford with much ceremony and enthusiasm. All Masonic bodies were represented.

In 1853 H. Lyon and others presented a petition to the Grand Lodge for a new lodge in West Meriden. The Committee on Charters reported that the prayer of the petitioners ought not to be granted, and it was voted, "That the petitioners have leave to withdraw."

At the same session T. E. Doolittle moved to amend the charter of Meridian Lodge by striking out the word "Centre." The motion was laid on the table.

In 1854 the Wooster Monument, erected in Danbury, was completed and dedicated, to which Meridian Lodge contributed. General David Wooster was a graduate of Yale College, the first master of the first Free Mason's lodge in Connecticut. He became a general in the army of the Revolution. Wooster Lodge, No. 79, was named in his honor.

March 12, 1855, a committee was appointed to visit Wallingford, Southington and Berlin lodges and inform them of the death of Brother James Beach, and invite them to attend his funeral the 14th. Brother Beach was not a member of this lodge.

In 1857 appropriation was made for the benefit of Relief Lodge, No. 1, in the city of New Orleans.

In 1859 sprig of olive from Mount Moriah and sprig of cypress from the garden of Gethsemane presented to the Lodge by Brother Governor Thomas H. Seymour, Past Grand Master.

In 1861, December 23, celebrated the tenth anniversary of the institution of the Lodge, in connection with a public installation of officers by M. W. Howard B. Ensign. An address by Brother O. H. Platt.

In August, 1862, presented Brothers Lieutenant M. C. Augur, Colonel

Dexter R. Wright and Captain Julius Bassett each with sword, sash and belt, they being about to leave for the war.

On October 4, 1863, the subject of removal of lodge to a more central location was suggested and a committee was appointed "to ascertain if a suitable lot can be secured for a building in the vicinity of the Town Hall." The question of removal to vicinity of Town Hall; of buying a building lot; of building a Masonic Hall; of hiring the institute rooms in Town Hall, was discussed at various meetings in 1863-4-5, "the growth of the Lodge having been largely from West Meriden (so-called) had so changed the membership that in 1865 less than a dozen were living east of the Lodge room," and on the 8th of March, 1865, after a long discussion it was voted by quite a large majority to petition the Grand Lodge to amend the charter by striking out the word "Centre."

In Grand Lodge report of 1865 it says: Petition of Meridian Lodge for amendment of charter referred to committee on charters. The committee reported as follows: "That they have had before them the petition of Meridian Lodge, No. 77, to strike out the word "Centre" in their charter in order to locate their lodge in some more desirable location in their jurisdiction. Your committee would recommend the adoption of the following resolution:

*Resolved*, That the Grand Secretary be instructed to erase the word "Centre" from their charter.

On the 25th of June the Lodge voted to remove "to Morgan Hall and it was hired for a term of years, fitted up and dedicated November 15, 1865, and occupied for Masonic purposes until 1871, when the present premises were secured and have since been its home, being solemnly dedicated to the purposes of Free Masonry December 27, 1871.

"Some of the brethren at the Center or Up-town were very desirous of having a Lodge in that section, and after much discussion Meridian Lodge voted to recommend their petition to the Grand Lodge and a charter was accordingly granted May, 1866, to Center Lodge, No. 97."

Sept. 24, 1865. Voted, That the hall shall not be rented or re-rented to any person or persons except it be for Masonic purposes, and instructed committee to use all means in their power to banish the sale of intoxicating liquors from Lodge building. Rev. Brother Wooley made a formal presentation to the Lodge of the gavels made from wood the gift of Brother Capt. Julius Bassett.

Oct. 28, 1867. Lodge tendered sympathy to Compass Lodge, No. 9, in loss of hall by fire.

Oct 29, 1866. Committee appointed to have in charge the depositing

of papers relating to Masonry of this Lodge, in the corner stone of the new M. E. Church to be laid with proper ceremonies on Wednesday next.

In 1869, donation made for educating Masons' children.

Dec. 27, 1871. New hall dedicated by M. W. W. Lee, Grand Master.

Committee reported that the late fair netted \$1,690.67 above all expenses.

In 1873, a vote was passed prohibiting smoking in the hall.

In 1873, subscription to Memphis \$214.25.

Dec. 27, 1875, the 25th anniversary of the institution of Meridian Lodge and public installation. Address by Brother O. H. Platt.

June 27, 1877, Veteran Association welcomed and entertained as guests of Lodge; also on June 20, 1888.

July 10, 1889, Centennial celebration of Grand Lodge in New Haven, Meridian Lodge participating.

In 1893, appropriation towards operating table at Meriden hospital.

On Sept. 25, 1895, Masonic Home dedicated. Amount contributed to Masonic Charity Foundation by Meridian Lodge, \$609.12.

The first room, No. 18, fitted up in Masonic Home, was furnished by Meridian Lodge and a door plate suitably engraved was placed on the door.

Rev. Brother A. H. Mead presented the Lodge 175 volumes for Masonic Home.

At the end of five years of existence of the Lodge it had fifty enrolled as members including the thirteen charter members. At the end of ten years, 125. Meriden with a population in 1850 of 3,559 had grown to a population in 1860 of 7,426. The growth of the Lodge had been gradual, regular and healthy.

Of the total 715 members enrolled to the present time 489 have received the degree of Masonry in this Lodge and 225 in other Lodges, classified by occupation as follows: Artists 3, bakers 3, bankers 9, blacksmiths 9, bookkeepers 30, butchers 5, carpenters 20, carriage makers 3, clergymen 13, clerks 33, commercial travelers 42, dentists 4, designers 4, druggists 8, editors 3, electricians 3, engineers 19, engravers 8, farmers 15, florists 2, foremen 32, grocers 10, gunsmiths 4, hotel keepers 3, insurance 10, jewelers 4, lawyers 16, liverymen 7, machinists 40, manufacturers 71, marines 2, masons 11, mechanics 101, merchants 55, millers 2, musicians 7, painters 7, photographers 6, physicians 17, platers 4, policemen 5, publishers 4, real estate 5, silver and britannia workers 27, shoemakers 2, tailors 8, teachers 15, undertakers 4. Present membership in good standing, 306.

In the first charge to the E. A. Mason occurs this exhortation, "You are not to countenance disloyalty or rebellion, but patiently submit to legal authority and conform with cheerfulness to the government of the country in which you live."

Sixty-nine members of this Lodge enlisted in the Union Army in the civil war, of whom were 3 Colonels, 1 Lieut.-Colonel, 2 Majors, 9 Captains, 6 Lieutenants, 3 Chaplains and 1 Surgeon.

That the members of Meridian Lodge have taken an active interest in public affairs is shown by the honors which have been conferred by selecting the following officers among others from the Lodge: 2 Colonels and 7 Captains of State militia, 4 Chiefs of Police, 1 Judge of Court of Appeals, 2 Judges City Court, 5 Judges of Probate Court, 15 Mayors, 20 Representatives, 6 State Senators, 1 Secretary of State, 3 Speakers of House of Representatives, 2 Sheriffs, 3 Deputy Sheriffs, 5 City Sheriffs, 2 State's Attorneys, 4 Town Clerks, 9 Town Collectors, 4 Town Treasurers, 4 Superintendents of Reform Schools, 1 U. S. District Attorney, 3 U. S. Collectors, 5 U. S. Postmasters, 1 U. S. Senator, 2 U. S. Consuls, 1 Grand Master of Masons, 10 W. M's. of other lodges.

At the first city election after the incorporation of the City of Meriden in 1867 the offices filled by members of this Lodge were: Mayor, City Clerk, City Treasurer, both City Sheriffs, and seven councilmen.

Of the 34 years of existence of the city it has had 17 Mayors; 14 of whom have been Free Masons, and 12 members of Meridian Lodge, holding office, including the present year, 26 years of the 34.

The Lodge has responded to many calls for aid not enumerated, to relieve suffering from floods, fires, fevers, tornadoes, war and famine, not to specify aid to our own members in sickness and burial, and to widows and orphans. Of the many thousands of dollars received all has been paid out in charities, except a small amount for necessary expenses and the balance in the treasury.

Lectures have been delivered at various times before the Lodge upon the subjects of Masonry, Education, The Arts and Sciences, Travels in the Holy Land, etc.

Lodge outings, fairs and festivals have occasionally taken place.

The officers have generally been efficient and faithful; the government charitable, merciful and just.

Members committing un-Masonic acts have been admonished, reprimanded, suspended or expelled. While using the milder means of reformation for minor misdemeanors, for serious offences against the principles of Masonry and the laws, suspension has been meted out in a few

cases, and the extreme penalty of expulsion has been inflicted in three cases, *yet, in only one case has a court convicted a member of Meridian Lodge of crime.*

Harmony has prevailed to a remarkable degree: with bitter political discussions and church dissensions on every hand, nothing has been allowed within the Lodge to mar its general peace and harmony.

Again I quote from Brother Lee:

“ Within its walls have gathered mechanics, tradesmen, professionals, soldiers and citizens, worthy representatives of the varying business interests of our town. Men of all parties, sects and creeds have gathered within its tyled precincts—as members of this great fraternity. May this process continue so long as humanity shall need this great brotherhood of ours.”

The charter members of Meridian Lodge stand upon the roll in the following order: Charles Parker, John Parker, William Allen, Jr., Bertrand L. Yale, Asahel Curtis, William B. Olds, Luther Parmele, Ira Twiss, Stephen Seymour, Benjamin Twiss, Henry Stedman, Almeron Miles, Humphrey Lyon.

#### HON. CHARLES PARKER.

Brother Charles Parker, born in Cheshire, Connecticut, January 2, 1809, was the son of Stephen Parker and Rebecca (Ray). Stephen Parker served in the Revolutionary war. He was the son of Joel Parker and Susanna (Hotchkiss). He was son of Edward Parker, who was son of John Parker, who was son of John Parker, Sen., who was son of William Parker, immigrant.

At the age of nine years, after attending a district school in Cheshire, he lived five years with a farmer in Wallingford, going to school winters and working on the farm the rest of the time. At the age of eighteen years he went to work at making pewter buttons in Southington, receiving six dollars per month and his board. He came in 1825 to Meriden and was employed by Patrick Lewis in the manufacture of coffee mills. In December, 1829, he contracted with Patrick Lewis and Elias Holt to make for them a specified number of coffee mills per month. Starting with a capital of seventy dollars, he made under his contract in thirteen months a profit of eighteen hundred dollars. In 1831 he took Jared Lewis as a partner, and in 1832 sold out to him his interest in the business, built a shop and carried on alone the manufacture of coffee mills and waffle irons. In 1833 his brother Edmund and Heman

White became his partners. In 1837 the firm temporarily suspended, but afterward paid their debts in full with interest. In 1845 the firm dissolved and Charles Parker continued the business alone, adding to it the manufacture of other articles too numerous to mention.

At this time he put in steam power to take the place of the horse power previously used. From time to time he has added new buildings to the original plant, known as the Union Mills, and has built or purchased extensive manufactories in various parts of the town. Desiring to be relieved of the care of his extensive business, also to perpetuate the business which he founded, he in 1877 formed the present corporation of The Charles Parker Company. Other corporations of which he is the principal are: Parker Brothers, manufacturers of the celebrated Parker gun; The Meriden Curtain Fixture Company, the largest manufacturer of shade rollers, curtains and fringes that there is in the United States; The Parker Clock Company, with factory situated about two miles west of the railroad depot. The Charles Parker Company has manufactories at East Meriden for making cabinet locks, tea, table and basting spoons, and at Yalesville for making piano stools, coffee mills and packing boxes. These companies employ twelve hundred hands and do a business of about \$2,000,000 annually.

Brother Parker has been a liberal but unostentatious giver to every good cause. To the Methodist Episcopal church he gave the lot on Broad street and one-half of the cost of building the first church of the society. He contributed \$40,000 toward the erection of the present Methodist church.

The citizens of Meriden, in recognition of his public spirit and the esteem in which he was universally held, made him the first mayor of the city after its incorporation in 1867.

He is a man of unusual executive ability, with keen foresight, rare judgment, shrewd power of calculation and a knowledge of men not often possessed by a single man. His career has been one of marked success. In 1831 he married Abi Lewis Eddy, daughter of Thomas and Abi (Lewis) Eddy.

Brother Parker was made a Master Mason in Harmony Lodge, No. 20, New Britain, December 11, 1848. He was a charter member of Meridian Lodge and its first Treasurer. He was exalted in Keystone Chapter, No. 27, February 21, 1871, and knighted in St. Elmo Com-mandery, No. 9, May 27, 1871.

He is living at his beautiful home in Meriden, beloved of all.



## REV. JOHN PARKER.

Rev. Brother John Parker, born in Cheshire, Conn., April 30, 1805; was son of Stephen and Rebecca (Ray) Parker. Stephen Parker, of Cheshire (1759-1846) was a Revolutionary soldier and pensioner; was son of Joel Parker, who was son of Edward Parker, who was son of John Parker, who was son of John Parker, Sen., who was son of William Parker.

Brother Parker was made a Master Mason in Harmony Lodge, No. 20, New Britain, December 11, 1848. He was exalted to the degree of Royal Arch Mason in Keystone Chapter, No. 27, Meriden, in 1857 or 1858; was received and greeted a Cryptic Mason in Hamilton Council, No. 22, Meriden, April 8, 1869; a Knight Templar in St. Elmo Commandery, No. 9, May 12, 1869. He was a charter member and the first Worshipful Master of Meridian Lodge, No. 77. He also served afterwards as Senior Warden, Treasurer and Chaplain of the Lodge.

He has filled acceptably the offices of Grand Juror, Board of Relief, Selectman and Justice of the Peace, and in 1870 was elected a Representative to the State Legislature.

He received his early education in the common schools of his native town. Desiring to devote his life to preaching the gospel he studied theology at the Wesleyan University in Middletown, Conn., where he graduated in 1831. He then removed to Massachusetts and preached at Webster two years; at Newtown in 1833-4; Holliston, 1835; Lowell, 1836-7; Lynn, 1838-9; Holliston, 1840.

On account of his voice he had to give up preaching regularly, and in 1840 came to Meriden and entered into business with his brother Charles, although he occasionally preached as supply when his health would permit. His sermons were earnest, logical and convincing. His wife has remarked, that it was a great trial to them both when he had to abandon the ministry. It was largely through his exertions that the Methodist Episcopal church was established, grew and prospered in Meriden. He and his brother Charles jointly contributed between forty and fifty thousand dollars toward the erection of the present church edifice.

He married, first, Miss Emily Ward, of Ashfield, Mass.; second, Miss Grace A. Belden, of Meriden. He died June 21, 1892, and was buried in Meriden cemetery, East Main street.

## DR. WILLIAM ALLEN, JR.

Brother William Allen, Jr., was born in Hebron, Conn., in 1818. He

studied medicine with Dr. Statton, of Middletown, and afterward with Dr. Lapham, of New York. After practising in New Britain one year and in Goshen about six months, he removed to Meriden in 1840 and settled on East Main street. He built the house near the corner of East Main and Center streets. He was about five feet seven inches in height and weighed about one hundred and seventy-five pounds. He had dark hair and eyes and a very high forehead; was of a social disposition, fond of company, and well read and skillful as a physician. He was made a Master Mason in Harmony Lodge, No. 20, February 19, 1849. He was active in the formation of Meridian Lodge, being a charter member and the first Junior Warden; a zealous mason, although permitted to enjoy the privileges of Free Masonry but two and a half years, for he was cut off in the prime of life by typhoid fever, September 6, 1851, in the thirty-third year of his age. The following minutes are placed on the records of Meridian Lodge in memory of Dr. William Allen, Jr.:

"*Resolved*, That in the death of our late brother the Lodge has lost a most worthy and consistent member, and society an upright, useful and respected citizen.

"That long after his earthly tabernacle shall have decayed the memory of his many virtues will be 'evergreen' in the hearts of his surviving brethren."

He lies buried in the Meriden cemetery, East Main street.

#### BERTRAND L. YALE.

Brother Bertrand Levi Yale, born in Meriden, November 17, 1820, was son of Levi and Annie (Guy) Yale. Levi Yale served in the war of 1812; was son of Nathaniel, who was son of Abel, who was son of Nathaniel, who was son of Captain Thomas, one of the original settlers of Wallingford in 1670. He was son of Thomas, the immigrant, and signer of the Plantation Covenant, New Haven, 1639.

Brother Yale was made a Mason in Harmony Lodge, No. 20, New Britain, October 4, 1848. He was a charter member of Meridian Lodge and its first Secretary. He was S. W. in 1852 and W. M. in 1854.

He retained a keen appreciation of and interest in Masonry throughout his life. When twenty years old he commenced the manufacture of cigars in a small way, but soon began business as a merchant tailor and dealer in furnishing goods. He added fire and life insurance to his business. At this time he was appointed postmaster, which he held for eight years. He continued in the insurance business twenty-five years,

having sold out his store, and his health having become somewhat impaired through close confinement and steady application to business, he retired to his farm, where he lived for about eighteen years. He was one of the incorporators of the Meriden Savings Bank, was a director of the Meriden Bank, assessor of the town, one of the Board of Relief, an alderman and mayor, *pro tem.*, of the city. His official acts met the approval of his constituents, for he was prompt, thorough, economical and just. He was a man of high character; of modest manners; of frugal habits; of positive opinions and fixed principles.

Brother Yale was a quiet man, with marked attachment for home. He had a remarkably retentive memory, and was possessed of a wide knowledge of political, ancient and modern history. On February 4, 1861, he married Chloe Elizabeth Holcomb, daughter of Hon. Raynor Holcomb, of East Granby, Conn.

He died October 1, 1892, and was buried in Meriden cemetery, East Main street.

#### ASAHIEL CURTIS.

Brother Asahel Curtis, born in Meriden, July 2, 1786, was the son of Benjamin and Mindwell (Hough) Curtis. Benjamin Curtis served in the French and Indian War during the campaign of 1758. He was a farmer, and his farm comprised several hundred acres in the south-eastern part of Meriden. He gave the land on which the first Episcopal Church was erected. He was son of Benjamin and Miriam (Cook) Curtis. He was son of Nathaniel and Sarah (Howe) Curtis. Nathaniel Curtis was born in the town of Wallingford, and held many town offices. In the issue of the *Connecticut Gazette*, October 21, 1758, we find him advertising for a runaway negro slave. In 1730 he bought of John Prout, of New Haven, a farm in Meriden, on which now stands the Curtis Home, built and endowed by his great-great-grandson, Lemuel J. Curtis. He was son of Thomas and Mary (Merriman) Curtis. Thomas was born in Stratford, Conn., moved to Wallingford with the first planters in 1670, and signed the first planters' agreement. Was deputy to General Court, 1689, 1714, 1717. He was son of John Curtis, the immigrant, who was born at Nazing, in Essex County, England, and came to Stratford, Conn., in 1639. The Curtises have been prominently identified with the industrial, moral and religious advancement of Meriden since its incorporation.

Brother Asahel Curtis was a worthy representative of the honored name. He married, November 8, 1812, Mehitable Redfield, daughter of Augustus Redfield, of Clinton, Conn., a descendant of John Alden.

He was by occupation a farmer, although following other vocations at various times. He held various offices, among them tythingman, constable, grand juror, lister, collector, town treasurer, selectman, representative to the General Assembly. He was also commissioned ensign by Gov. Oliver Wolcott.

He was made a Freemason in Compass Lodge, No. 9, prior to 1822, was a charter member of Meridian Lodge, No. 77, and its first Senior Warden. He died December 27, 1865, and was buried in Meriden cemetery, East Main Street.

### WILLIAM B. OLDS.

Brother William Bolivar Olds was born in Indiana, May 23, 1826. He was son of William and Deborah (Griswold) Olds. His grandfather on the maternal side served in the Revolutionary War.

William Olds, senior, lived in Meriden as a young man, and was in company with John Butler in the tannery business on Liberty street. He removed West before 1821, and later to Brownsboro, Ken., where he died, February 22, 1834. After his death his widow removed back to Meriden, bringing her five children with her; the youngest child being only one year old. Owing to the inconveniences of travel at that time, she was several weeks making the passage, two weeks being by canal-boat. There were Freemasons on the boat, who, learning that Mrs. Olds's husband had been a Freemason, showed her and her children many courtesies. She ever after was a firm believer in Freemasonry. William Bolivar was then about nine years old, and lived three or four years with his uncle, Ashbel Griswold, and then with his mother. He attended the public schools till old enough to learn a trade, when he went to Middletown and learned the tailoring trade, which business he followed in Meriden and Springfield till his death, except about one year in California, to which place he went in 1849, by passage around Cape Horn. He married Jane Mildrum, of Middletown, Conn.

Brother Olds was made a Master Mason in Harmony Lodge, No. 20, December 11, 1848; was a charter member of Meridian Lodge and its first Senior Deacon, and one of the representatives to Grand Lodge, May 14, 1851.

He was exalted in Keystone Chapter, No. 27, Meriden, in 1855 or 6. His erect figure, fine form, fashionable dress and courteous manners fitted in well with his occupation of merchant tailor. He was proud, cheerful, social and witty, and was a favorite among his associates and

respected in the community. As a friend said: "He was sprightly, honest and good; he never spoke evil of any one." If by word or deed he hurt the feelings of another he was quick to apologize; if wronged, he was ready to forgive.

He died in Springfield, Mass, January 20, 1858, and was buried in the Meriden cemetery with Masonic honors.

A Masonic monument has been erected to his memory.

#### DR. LUTHER PARMELE.

Brother Luther Parmele, born in Saybrook, Ct., Oct. 18, 1806, was son of Samuel and Mollie (Graves) Parmele. Samuel Parmele was son of Capt. Samuel and Sarah (Bishop) Parmele, of Guilford, Ct. He was son of Joseph and Abigail (Kimberly) Parmele. He was son of Isaac and Hannah (Hiland) Parmele. He was son of John, who was son of John, the immigrant, one of the settlers of Guilford and original signers of the "Covenant" June 1, 1639.

Brother Luther Parmele married first April 7, 1836, Lavinia Maria Farrington, daughter of Joseph and Triphena (Perkins) Farrington, of Meriden. He married second Emily Susan Savage, daughter of William and Hepzibah (Porter) Savage, of Berlin, Ct.

He was a charter member of Meridian Lodge and its first J. D., and was secretary in 1852. He was exalted in Keystone Chapter, No. 27, Meriden, in 1855.

Dr. Luther Parmele was one of the pioneer dental practitioners of Connecticut, commencing practice as early as 1834 at Meriden, also opening offices at Berlin and Middletown. At a subsequent period he was associated with Dr. J. Smith Dodge, in Bond street, New York, and was still later for some time at Washington, D. C. About 1850 he returned to Connecticut, opened offices at Meriden, New Haven, New Britain and Middletown, but residing in Meriden. After his second marriage he resided at times at East Berlin. In 1859 he settled at Hartford and continued in practice there until his death, August 25, 1877. He was one of the charter members of the Connecticut State Dental Association. Dr. Parmele was a quiet, modest, unassuming gentleman who made many friends and few enemies. He ranked high among the dentists of his time, was a skillful operator, fine mechanic, and was eagerly sought by those desiring to become dentists, as a preceptor, and many were indebted to him for their early training.

He died at Hartford August 25, 1877, and was buried in Cedar Hill Cemetery, Hartford.

## IRA TWISS.

Brother Ira Twiss, born in Meriden April 17, 1797, was son of Joseph Twiss, a Revolutionary soldier, who was son of Joseph Twiss, who was son of Benjamin Twiss, who was son of Thomas Twiss, the immigrant.

He was one of thirteen children, all of whom were born at the Twiss Homestead (or "Twiss Place" as it was commonly called in those days) on North Colony street. The property is now known as the Bartlett estate. The house, however, was burned several years since.

Brother Twiss was made a Free Mason in Compass Lodge, No. 9, Wallingford, Jan. 8, 1827; was a charter member of Meridian Lodge and was its J. W. in 1852-3, and S. W. 1854. His occupation was manufacturer, farmer and miller.

He was an accommodating neighbor and kind and charitable to the sick and needy.

He took a deep interest in town affairs as evidenced by his regular attendance at town meetings, where he took part in the discussions advocating small taxes, but sufficient to prevent the town running in debt. He did not believe in entailing an incumbrance upon after generations. His ideas would conflict with those of the present in the matter of economy, frugality, expenditure and extravagance. He was set in his opinions and open to express them. The town records show that he was moderator, grand juror and tythingman. He died Sept. 14, 1870, and was buried in Meriden Cemetery, East Main street.

## COL. STEPHEN SEYMOUR.

Brother Stephen Seymour was born February 29, 1784. He received his early education in the country common schools, which consisted of a term of about four months in the summer and a like term in winter. Like other boys of his time, when old enough to do chores and work on the farm he was put to work till old enough to learn a trade, then he learned the shoemaker's trade. He worked for many years in the shoemaker shop of "Uncle" John Butler. He married Betsey Collins, daughter of Dan Collins of Meriden. She inherited from her father the land on the west side of Broad street (then called Market street), extending west to Harbor Brook: the north boundary was The Gulch (so called) adjoining the land of the present residence of Hon. Charles Parker. On this farm they took up their residence, the house being situated about where Mr. A. S. Thomas now lives. Since the Seymours went there to live great changes have taken place in the neighborhood; Pratt, Hobart, Yale, Montgomery and Myrtle streets have been laid out

through the farm and nearly all the building lots utilized for manufactories and dwellings. The latter part of his life he worked on the farm and at his trade. He was grand juror in 1817 and other offices he filled with credit are constable, collector, tythingman and board of relief; these show that he was held in high esteem for character and efficiency in the discharge of his various duties. He attained high honors in the military service of the State, advancing step by step till he received his commission as Colonel of the 22nd Regiment, State Militia.

He was made a Master Mason in Federal Lodge, No. 17, Watertown, Ct., October 30, 1822: was a charter member of Meridian Lodge.

He died March 16, 1860, and was buried in the Broad street Cemetery, Meriden.

### BENJAMIN TWISS.

Brother Benjamin Twiss, born in Meriden, October 31, 1798, was son of Joseph and Lois (Austin) Twiss of Cheshire and Meriden.

Joseph Twiss (1761-1842) served three years in the war of the American Revolution. He was son of Joseph Twiss of Cheshire, who was son of Benjamin Twiss of Cheshire, who was son of Thomas Twiss, the immigrant who was an early settler in Cheshire.

Brother Benjamin Twiss was given the advantages of the schools then extant, and being naturally fond of books and travel he availed himself of every opportunity to equip himself for his life work. He was for a period engaged with his brother in Montreal, Canada, in the manufacture of clocks (some of them are still in use in Canadian homes) and later, built up a large trade in his native town. Twiss Pond was built by them for the necessary water privilege to conduct the business.

They also manufactured coffee mills.

Brother Twiss was made a Master Mason in St. Andrew's Lodge, No. 64, Winsted, Ct., in 1824, and was a charter member of Meridian Lodge. He held the following offices: tythingman, constable, collector, selectman and assessor. He was appointed postmaster in 1853 but resigned.

He was interested in the development and growth of Meriden and was one of the few who labored to secure the railroad through the center of North Haven, Wallingford, Meriden and Berlin. The majority defeating them "in favor of the swamps and land fields!" He took an active interest in the establishment of the State School for Boys, and spent much time in the layout of the Air Line Railroad, as one of the committee, appointed for the purpose.

He was many years a consistent member of the First Baptist Church, being a member of the building committee, when the present edifice was erected.

His first wife was Mrs. Susan Maria Redfield Couch who died in 1831.

March 7, 1832, he married Lucy Goodrich Francis at the Old Francis Homestead in Wethersfield, Ct.

He resided continuously thereafter at his home, corner of Broad and Britannia streets, where he died January 23, 1854. His burial was in Meriden Cemetery, East Main street.

### HENRY STEDMAN.

Brother Henry Stedman was born in Berlin, September 20, 1800. He was a manufacturer of tin and japanned ware under the firm name of Stedman & Clark, and located on East Main street where now stands the Meriden National Bank, the Meriden Savings Bank and the City Mission building. His residence was where the Main street Baptist Church stands. He sold out his manufacturing business and engaged in the grocery business. In this he was unfortunate in losing his property through relatives, who should have been a help rather than an incumbrance to him. If there was any fault on his part, it was that he was too indulgent, too liberal, too charitable; otherwise no stain was ever attached to his name. The town honored him by electing him tythingman, grand juror, a member of the board of relief, and representative to the Connecticut Legislature. He was a charter member of this Lodge, and made a Royal Arch Mason in Keystone Chapter, No. 27, Meriden, in 1854 or 1855. He died in Whitesone, L. I., February 7, 1867 and was buried in the Masonic lot at Flushing, L. I.

### CAPT. ALMERON MILES.

Brother Almeron Miles, born in Cheshire, Ct., June 1, 1808, was son of John Miles and Laurinda Porter White, the daughter of Moses White, who was a soldier in the war of the American Revolution. John Miles was son of John and Abigail (Perkins) Miles; this John, 1745-1818, was captain in the Revolutionary war, a U. S. pensioner and a member of Society of Cincinnati. John was son of John and Sarah (Beebe) Miles. He was son of John and Abigail (Watrous) Miles. He was son of John and Elizabeth (Redfield) Miles. He was son of Richard and Catharine Miles who emigrated from England in 1637.

Brother Miles was made a M. M. in Harmony Lodge, No. 20, New



Britain, Dec. 11, 1848; was a charter member of Meridian Lodge, was its W. M. four terms, was also W. M. of Center Lodge.

He was proficient in the ritual, well versed in Masonic law, a strict disciplinarian, a good presiding officer and conferred the degrees with dignity and impressiveness.

He married Caroline Lawrence and has three sons, all of whom are Freemasons and Past Masters. He attended common school and worked on his father's farm as a boy, until nineteen years old, when he took up his residence in Meriden and worked in the shop till the failure of Lewis & Holt, when he formed a partnership under the name of Miles & Holt, and engaged in the manufacture of coffee mills. He sold out to Charles Parker, and Miles and Barns went into merchandizing. Barns ran away with the company money and Miles closed out the business and went to California in 1849.

A friend went with him as far as the city of Mexico, then refused to go farther and Brother Miles engaged a Spanish boy to go with him overland to the gold diggings. In 1851 he returned to Meriden and entered the office of Charles Parker. He remained with Mr. Parker till his last sickness.

He had the confidence of his associates and townsmen for his fixed principles and upright character. He held the office of postmaster of Meriden. He was captain of the Meriden Grays, a military company formed of the picked men of the town, which he brought to a high state of proficiency both in manual of arms and in military maneuvers. On field days the company was the center of attraction on account of the soldierly bearing of the men, their precision in drill and their showy uniforms. Capt. Miles was a man of commanding presence, being of good form, tall, large, stern, with white hair combed up from his forehead; he would attract attention whether at the head of his company, in the counting room, in the Lodge or on the street.

He died June 21, 1876, and was buried in Meriden Cemetery.

#### HUMPHREY LYON.

Brother Humphrey Lyon, the son of Charles and Lois (Grimes) Lyon, was born in East Haddam, Conn., December 19, 1797. At an early age he united with St. Stephen's Church, of which his father and grandfather, Robert, had both been active members, his grandfather giving the land on which the church stood.

Only a few years ago an East Haddam man said: "The older inhabitants remembered well when Humphrey Lyon sang in the choir at

St. Stephen's, and his sister was organist." In 1819 he married Harriet Canfield, of East Haddam, and they continued to live there until 1826, when they moved to New York State, remaining there until 1849, when they came to Meriden, which continued to be his home up to the time of his death, which occurred on April 13, 1887.

For the last ten years of his life he was totally blind, but was always bright and cheerful and ready to enjoy a joke. He often said in speaking of his misfortune, "It might have been worse." He was always very glad to see his friends and acquaintances, especially his Masonic friends, for he ever took a very great interest in everything pertaining to the order from the time he joined it.

Strong in conviction and uncompromising in opinion in political and religious matters, he was respected for his kindness of heart and absence of bitterness or anger towards those who differed from him.

He was an active participant in the affairs of the town, having held several offices, among them first selectman, collector, and constable.

"Even when four score years had passed and the infirmities of age had begun to tell on his vigorous constitution, he did not lose in any degree his love or interest in the institution of Masonry, with which he had united in early manhood. Masonry with him meant something more than mere form. He believed it was something to be lived for: hence he always gave it willing and loyal service. Since the formation of the Masonic Veterans, Brother Lyon had been one of their number and attended every annual until age and other infirmities prevented. Masonry has had many able exponents in our city, but to none is it more indebted for the favorable position it occupied in Meriden for nearly forty years than to Humphrey Lyon."

He was made a Master Mason in Columbia Lodge, No. 26, East Haddam, April 8, 1818, was a charter member, W. M. and Treasurer of Meridian Lodge. A charter member of Keystone Chapter, No. 27, in 1854, and H. P. in 1855-6-7. A charter member of Hamilton Council, No. 22, March 10, 1856, and T. I. M. 1857-8. He was treasurer of the Chapter and Council until failing sight compelled him to decline further service. In response to his wish the Masons accompanied his remains to their last resting place in West Cemetery, Meriden.

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To the thirteen founders of this Lodge, twelve of whom now rest in Paradise and one among the living, we acknowledge our gratitude. The honors so justly their due have not been paid them. How can Masons

better honor their memories than by living according to the grand and divine principles of our Order, as exemplified in every degree in Masonry and written upon every page of our Ritual. If our successors so live and act, may we not expect that when they meet to celebrate the *centennial* anniversary of Meridian Lodge, that they will receive from the Supreme Grand Master, the commendation: Well done! We have to do, to-day, with the *semi-centennial* and with the fifty years which have passed, and as we look back, the retrospect reminds us that "we have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and we have done those things which we ought not to have done." For our many shortcomings, God forgive us. In so far as we have been faithful in a few things, God be praised.

## Poem.

BROTHER EDWIN B. EVERITT.

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RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED TO THE WORSHIPFUL MASTER,

WARDENS AND BRETHREN OF

MERIDIAN LODGE, No. 77, A. F. & A. M.

---

1

### MERIDIAN, No. 77.

Master divine! Our fathers' God! We come with glad acclaim,  
To render homage unto Thee, and bless Thy holy name.  
We thank Thee for "Meridian," named for the noontide sun;  
For all her glorious wealth of work; her service nobly done.

We thank Thee for our fathers' faith, shining with steady ray,  
And, guided by Thine open word which on their altar lay.  
How many joys, how much of grief, what varied hopes and fears  
Cluster around "Meridian," and crown her fifty years!

The number of Meridian, how worthy of her fame!  
Of all the rest the one the best adapted to her name.  
The sacred seven, the perfect seven, these two to her are given,  
The number worthy of herself,—Meridian, "Seventy-seven."

2

### OUR FATHERS.

Divinely led, with faith in God, here did our fathers raise  
An altar, where to-day we come with gratitude and praise.  
Here, brothers of the mystic tie, these fifty precious years,  
Have shared their sorrows and their joys; partners in smiles and tears.



E. B. EVERITT, 32°

PAST-COMMANDER AND PRELATE ST. ELMO COMMANDERY, NO. 9, K. T.



In true Masonic brotherhood, which builds in many lands  
The Temple of Humanity; with reverent loving hands,  
Here labored they with patient toil, to build, as best they might,  
The noble temple of a life; illumined with heavenly light.

Pillars of strength and beauty rose, on either hand, to aid  
A symmetry adorned and strong, on sure foundation laid;  
The conduct squared by perfect rule, with right and justice crowned,  
Upon a level absolute, with sympathy profound.

Confining every wild desire, restrained on every side,  
As with a perfect circle drawn, to govern and to guide;  
True as a plumb line, and exact, each duty gladly done,  
Brotherly love, the strong cement, uniting all in one.

The glorious sun that rules the day, the moon that rules the night,  
In their unwearied course have looked on no sublimer sight;  
The stars that stud the firmament have smiled upon no view  
More fair than labors such as these, where each to each is true.

This honored craft has everywhere wrought gloriously for man,  
Guided by wise and master minds, in following heaven's plan.  
Wherever found, the world around, these faithful, loving Brothers,  
Attentive all, to Duty's call, delight in helping others.

Whoever at our altar kneels, as Washington once knelt,  
The same inspiring ardor feels which those brave patriots felt  
Who loved their country unto death, and freely gave their all,—  
Masons who, mindful of the Craft, honored their country's call.

The oldest order on the earth has proved its right to be;  
Her sons have done the noblest work, and they, the best agree;  
Have learned and taught the grandest truths, all radiant with light,—  
Truths that will make the whole round world with heavenly glory  
bright.

3

### SONS OF SUCH SIRES.

Sons of such sires, arise!  
Their good deeds emulate!  
Their path before you lies  
Under the brightening skies,  
Why hesitate?

“Look to the east,”—the sun  
Shines on each earnest face.  
The work is well begun,  
Rest not till all is done,  
Win thou the race!

See where their footsteps trod  
This upward, shining way!  
They wrought for man; and God  
Who sent the light abroad  
Hath blest their day;

Hath crowned for all mankind  
Such patient work of love;  
A love that long shall bind  
Brothers of kindred mind  
Who look above,

And, looking there, receive  
Help for each passing hour,  
While they distress relieve  
And comfort hearts that grieve,  
Who need such power.

The help so freely given  
By those who hear aright  
These words;— where shine, in  
glorious trine.  
The Wisdom, Power, and Love  
Divine,  
The words which glorified the earth  
And gave the glad some sunshine  
birth,  
“LET THERE BE LIGHT!”

All glowing with such light,  
Entered Apprentice! Youth,  
Comes into radiance bright,  
Gladdening the mental sight  
With glorious truth.

As some unfinished block,  
So is the youthful heart,  
’Till, like the flinty rock,  
Wrought by the constant shock  
Of skillful Art;

Then, polished, square, and new,  
Fit for the Temple wall,  
Its beauty brought to view,  
Symmetrical and true,  
Admired by all,

Prepared for service, when  
He comes to man’s estate,  
As “Fellow Craft” we see him then,  
Ready to take his place with men  
In labors great.

Proud now to do and dare,  
No matter what befalls;  
In weather foul or fair,  
Expect to find him where  
His duty calls.

Building with patience rare,  
From morn to dewy night,  
Using with zealous care  
The “Level, Plumb, and Square”  
To build aright;

Then, having done his best  
And honored duty’s call,  
We see him lead the rest,  
As “Master” now addressed,  
Revered by all.

The “Master Masons” stand  
Strangers to angry strife,  
A consecrated band  
To bless a favored land  
With light of life.



### FREE MASONRY.

There is a strong, a hidden force, best understood by those  
 Who come within its blessed sway, and as its influence grows  
 Its power, beneficent and mild, with ever widening sweep,  
 Brings heart to heart, and all to God, with impulse strong and deep.

Its symbolism born of heaven, full of instruction wise  
 Turns every thought to things divine and strengthens all the ties  
 Which bind the earnest soul to God, Who crowns this earthly strife  
 With victory over sin and self, and leads to endless life ;

On tessellated floor designed, in strictly perfect squares  
 (Symbol of rectitude supreme in all of life's affairs),  
 With border rich and beautiful enclosed on every side,  
 And Central Blazing Star of Hope, securely we abide.

Beneath the great, All Seeing Eye, an ever present fact,  
 Here Temperance and Fortitude with Prudence nobly act ;  
 Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth, here full expression find ;  
 Faith, Hope, and Charity abide in each contented mind.

'Twas more than man devised the plan to aid a needy brother.  
 What higher motive can there be, than "Live to help another ?"  
 To make this world a paradise, Heaven must with earth combine,  
 And human will enjoy the thrill of Charity divine.

### POINTS OF TRUE FELLOWSHIP.

The willing foot, unwearied goes to rescue or to aid ;  
 Knee bows with knee, as at the throne, a brother's wants are laid ;  
 The manly breast, strong to sustain, is ever closely near,  
 The steady hand supports ; and lips breathe counsel to the ear.

Lion of Judas' tribe — in Thee — is strength to raise the dead,  
 And Thou canst lift the fallen one, when other hope is fled.  
 In all our dire extremities, Thy mighty hand can save,  
 Thy grasp alone deliver from the darkness of the grave.

Whate'er the fainting spirit needs for comfort, hope, and light,  
 Whene'er the voice of suffering pleads—assistance cheers the sight,  
 A soothing word will end all strife, will drive away all care,  
 A mighty grasp will lift to life, and hope replace despair.

## BROTHERHOOD.

By means of recognition, in daylight or by night,  
 All Masons know each other well, blest with enlightened sight;  
 By night or day, its signals seen over the ocean wave  
 Are sure to bring, in quick response, strong hands to help and save.

By night or day, on land or sea, with signals of distress,  
 The world around are brothers found, ready with aid to bless.  
 Kindred indeed! In hours of need, each one—to each a brother,  
 Exemplifies the Royal Law of love to one another.

In silence and in mystery, to-day, as in the past,  
 The world's oldest Fraternity has wrought from first to last  
 To honor God and bless mankind, to lend a helping hand,  
 To be the sunshine and the joy of every clime and land.

A brotherhood that spans the world, strong in the God of might,  
 Conserving heaven-taught principles, and standing for the right;  
 Foremost in all good words and work, exemplifying love,  
 Led ever to the good and true, directed from above.

God's holy word the guiding light that shines upon the way  
 Which leads from darkness and despair to realms of endless day;  
 That word divine, which has the power to banish all our gloom,  
 To make this world a Paradise, and glorify the tomb.

Free and accepted Masonry! Leader of all the rest!  
 Among the various brotherhoods the oldest and the best!  
 Guided aright for centuries, thy light the sacred page,  
 Thy faithful work has ever blest the world from age to age.

With finger pointing heavenward when one is called to die,  
 Reminding all the living of unending life on high; .  
 With Hope that, as the evergreen, defies the wintry blasts,  
 Depending on the living Word, which earth and time outlasts.

Thus, with abiding faith in God, and proving heaven's plan,  
 That he doth serve his God the best who loves his fellow man,  
 This ancient brotherhood goes on, steadfast in every age,  
 Holding in sacred reverence these teachings, wise and sage.

### REMEMBER NOW THY CREATOR.

Remember thy Creator in the early days of youth;  
 Take heed to all the teachings of the Holy Word of Truth;  
 Make it thy constant Counsellor, the Light to guide thy way,  
 And to its Author dedicate the morning of life's day.

Before the evil days draw nigh, in which thou shalt complain,  
 "I have no pleasure in them"; the days and nights of pain,  
 When sun and moon are darkened, and stars shine not again—  
 When all is darkness, and the clouds return after the rain.

Tremble the keepers of the house; they bow themselves, the strong;  
 The grinders cease, because so few; still is the sweet bird's song;  
 When in the street the doors are shut, low is the grinding sound,  
 Daughters of music all brought low, and dreadful fears abound.

Alas! And he shall be afraid of all that which is high,  
 The lightest toil a burden now, and fear is ever nigh;  
 The almond tree is flourishing, desire shall all go out;  
 Man goeth to his last, long home; the mourners go about.

When the golden bowl is broken, or loosed the silver cord,  
 Or the pitcher at the fountain is broken, and the Lord  
 Shall call the spirit back again unto the One who gave,  
 The dust, to earth returned at last, lies silent in the grave.

### BRETHREN OF THE MYSTIC TIE.

Ye brethren of the Mystic Tie, keep ever well in view  
 The Supreme Lodge in Heaven above, and to yourselves be true.  
 Honor your Heaven-taught principles, whatever may betide;  
 Fulfill your Master's wise designs, and follow well your guide.

Let Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty abide together here,  
 Perfect, in due proportion, let each in turn appear;  
 Wisdom to guide, Strength to support, and Beauty to adorn;  
 So thoughtful eve and useful day, succeed the lovely morn.

Thus, planned with care and wrought with skill, Life's edifice appears,  
 Winsome with sweet attractiveness, to fill the passing years  
 With noblest use to fellow men, as well as highest worth  
 To One who bids us do His will, and live to bless the earth.

They shall not live nor work in vain, who, on foundation sure,  
Build for the better life to come. Their labor shall endure  
When yonder sun shall cease to rise, its glorious mission o'er,  
When earth and sky shall pass away, and time shall be no more.

9

### MASONIC HOMES.

When disappointment ends the work of unsuccessful years,  
The agony of hope deferred finds no relief in tears;  
When pitiless adversity obscures and clouds the life,  
And hope surrenders to despair, tired of the fruitless strife.

When all the world is unconcerned, averted every face,  
When even friends have vanished, as if to shun disgrace,  
'Tis sweet to know of one retreat, shining with glory bright,  
Where clouds and darkness disappear in heaven's own radiant light.

Such are the blest Masonic Homes, in this and other lands!  
The ministry to needy ones of willing hearts and hands,  
The night of need turned into day, thick darkness turned to light,  
The clouds that God's fair Temple hid, now with His glory bright.

How blest the hand that brings relief, that binds up broken hearts,  
Kindles anew the light of hope, and life and joy imparts!  
Just such a blessed heavenly work as the bright angels love,—  
A work that lifts the sad earth up nearer to heaven above.

10

### THE LEVEL AND SQUARE.

Ever meeting on the Level, ever parting on the Square;  
The king his crown forgetting, as the poor forgets his care;  
All children of one Father, all objects of His love;  
All one in common worship of one great God above.

All hastening to a common home, all meeting there at last  
Upon a common Level, when this checkered life is past;  
The work of each submitted to the common Judge of all,  
Before Whose throne omnipotent, each one must stand or fall.

Then walk the highest Levels, the future Life in view,  
All acts controlled, upright, and Plumb, all Level, Square, and true,  
Your rule of life the Word of God, and living in the love  
Of Truth divine, that guides the steps to brighter realms above.

Ever safe in His protection, Who notes the sparrow's fall,  
Ever trusting in His mercy, Who loves and cares for all;  
Ever full of loving kindness, scattering sunshine everywhere,  
Ever meeting on the Level, ever parting on the Square.

11

### SERVING THE SOVEREIGN MASTER.

Ever listening to the pleading of a Brother in distress,  
Ever quick to heed the summons, with a helping hand to bless;  
Ever strong to cheer the timid, ever banishing all fears;  
Ever helpful to the needy, ever drying sorrows's tears.

Ever striving to correct them, if a Brother's faults appear,  
Ever giving kindly warning, when impending danger's near;  
Ever cautious in advising, ever strong and wise to lead;  
Ever friendly to the friendless, ever thus a friend indeed.

Ever faithful unto duty, ever honest, tried, and true;  
Ever swift to aid a brother, ever with this thought in view;  
Ever kind to everybody, ever walking in the light;  
Ever trusting in your leader, ever loyal to the right.

Responding to the Book divine, which on your altar lies,  
Draw daily near the Master, as Time so swiftly flies;  
Your pathway growing brighter unto the perfect day,  
Enlightened, guided, glorified by Heaven's supernal ray.

12

### AT LAST.

At last, when work is ended and every duty done,  
With faith in coming glory we meet life's setting sun;  
Awaiting resurrection, we bid the world adieu.  
And fall asleep rejoicing, the better life in view.

The heavens that bend above the earth, by night and day proclaim  
The glorious Architect Supreme, and praise His holy name.  
With them, and all created things, we gladly sing His praise,  
Who hath preserved and blest our craft, and guarded all our days.

We bow before the heavenly throne, to worship Him with awe,  
The Sovereign Master of us all, Whose slightest wish is Law.  
We ask His blessing on the Craft: "Give us to know Thy Love,  
And grant that each at last may reach THE SUPREME LODGE above."

## Address.

U. S. SENATOR ORVILLE H. PLATT.

WORSHIPFUL MASTER AND BROTHERS:

Something in human nature which we cannot precisely define impels us to celebrate those events in personal or public life which have been productive of happy results. We do not celebrate untoward or trivial occurrences. We only commemorate the beginnings of individual or organized life when we think such life has been of value to us or our fellow men. When, therefore, we are prompted to observe with appropriate ceremonies the end of the first fifty years of the life of Meridian Lodge, it may be taken for granted that such life has been something worthy of notice and commendation. We would not if we could, and we could not if we would, perpetuate the memory of an unfortunate existence.

Institutions, like individuals, are born into the world, and their birthdays, marked by recurring years, appeal to us as strongly as anything in life. The world is better for the observance of birthdays. The family—in the narrowest sense of the word—becomes cemented more closely when the birthdays of its members are noted and kept; the human family—in the wider sense of the word—becomes more and more a brotherhood when the birthdays of its institutions are remembered and honored. The same sentiment in our nature which makes the observance of Christmas, or the birthdays of great and good men, a necessity as well as a joy, makes the celebration of the birthday of the republic, of a church, a city, a town, or a valuable social organization, also a necessity and joy.

If I wished to prove by conclusive argument that Masonic institutions are valuable and helpful and wisely adapted to social needs, I could adduce no evidence of that fact more satisfactory or convincing than that we are impelled, irresistibly impelled, to celebrate this fiftieth anniversary of the beginning of the life of Meridian Lodge. The very fact that we cannot pass this semi-centennial period without this recognition

proves that we at least believe that its life has been beneficial in the highest degree.

More than fifty years ago there was indeed much discussion of the question whether membership in the Masonic Order was consistent with the best interests of public and private life; a discussion which was fierce and bitter, and the prejudice which political and religious controversy always engenders became most intense. To be a Mason from 1825 to 1840 was to incur obloquy and reproach. Many good men and women believed that Masonic obligations antagonized patriotism and true religion, and must be destructive of both. Masonry and Masons suffered persecution which seemed for the time being to threaten the continuance of Masonic life. Very few lodges in Connecticut maintained regular meetings. Lodge rooms were deserted, Masonic furniture scattered and lost, and the curious wandered at will through the neglected halls. Masons, however, remained true to their convictions, but were forced to bend to the storm. To their honor be it said that they never denied their faith. I do not believe that those who live in this present time and only understand that persecution by reading the history of the period to which I have referred, can appreciate the intense opposition and the hostile, bitter, and unreasoning persecution to which our Masonic brethren in those days were subjected. I think we are more tolerant of opinion now than ever before in our history, but however that may be, Masonry has surely outlived its persecutions, and, unless I am greatly mistaken, has won for itself the respect and confidence of all, or nearly all, right minded people. In my estimation it has come to be justly regarded as one of the most beneficent of all social organizations.

The duty of man is threefold: to God, to his neighbor, and to himself, and yet this threefold duty is one and the same. Man cannot fully discharge his duty to his Maker without the performance of duty to himself and society, nor can he properly discharge his duty either to himself or to society without fully observing all his obligations to his Maker. Individual and associated life are so closely related that the man who fails to take his proper place in the associated life of the world utterly fails in the performance of duty as well as in his own development. Herein is the difficulty of leading the highest and noblest life. All true progress would cease the moment that men should fail in their duty to their fellows; a duty impossible of performance except through association and organization. The man who lives for himself alone, however scrupulously he may endeavor to discharge his duty, is, after all, but an isolated and selfish member of society.

"That man may last, but never lives,  
Who much receives, but nothing gives."

He might as well be a hermit and dwell in a cave: the world is little better for his living in it.

The very idea of human society is founded on the Divine command, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." But society is not one organized body: its whole is made up of a multitude of organizations. There may be organizations inimical to the best interests of social progress, but there are others which make for the highest civilization and the best social results; which, in other words, contribute to real human progress; and it is through such organizations that a man best discharges his obligations to his fellow men. He may indeed, without belonging to organizations, be interested in those with whom he comes in contact and seek to better their condition, but such individual effort alone falls far short of producing the happiest results. The true test, then, of an institution or organization is, whether it on the whole tends to elevate humanity, to make society better, and to uplift mankind from a purely material to a higher and spiritual life. Masonry, like all other organizations, must be tried by this standard, and it is therefore worth while to inquire what Masonry really is, both in its ideal purpose and in its practical results. It does not purport to be an organization which embraces all mankind, and no human organization does. The State, indeed, embraces all who live within its boundaries or the jurisdiction of its government, but there is no world government. We have nations, states, counties, towns; each is a distinct organization that has to do solely with its own membership. We have churches, great missionary, charitable and educational institutions, societies without number; but neither nation, state, church, charitable, educational or social organizations pretend primarily to embrace all mankind. It is only those who associate in the particular institution who are directly benefited, ennobled or exalted. Nevertheless, it is true that all beneficent institutions exert an influence far beyond the circle of their immediate membership, and thus tend to improve and exalt the world at large. In this respect Masonry differs from none of the other valuable institutions and organizations among men. Primarily the Masonic ideal embraces only the relations between members of the Order; but the same is true of either church or state; yet the influence of any church reaches far beyond its mere membership; a republic organizes for self-government, not for the government of others, and yet its influence extends far beyond its own people. Thus the compact in the Mayflower, and the con-



stitution of the Connecticut Colony, were the seeds which grew and ripened into a republic, and the force of that republic is felt to-day along the pathway of the sea and to the uttermost parts of the earth.

All this is true of Masonry. Its principles and the rules of conduct, which are prescribed for its members and which mark the relations which exist between them, exert their influence far beyond the particular body thus associated. I think it may be stated without qualification that any body of men and women organized upon right principles, and for a good purpose, though primarily calculated to benefit only its own members, does nevertheless, exert a potent influence far outrunning its immediate object and aim. Masonry, therefore, though established upon the idea that it is a brotherhood limited by its membership, must, and does, help toward the consummation of universal brotherhood. In this respect, and in many others, it very nearly approaches the idea of the family and the home, and as the recognition of the family tie, and the mutual interest of the members of the family, constitute the very basis of our civilization, so the recognition of Masonic ties and the sentiment of mutual helpfulness tend to uplift civilization as a whole.

What, then, is Masonry; what does it teach; what does it accomplish? A tree is known by its fruit. If its fruitage is good, then Masonry is valuable and good. I regret that Masons themselves have been disposed to exaggerate both the antiquity of its origin and the secrecy which is inevitable in all such organizations. For myself I think less of those features which surround it somewhat with mystery, less of the secrecy which is enjoined upon its formalities than of its ethical nature; less of its ritual than of its purpose. Whatever is old interests and fascinates us. Without inquiring as to the origin and beginnings of Masonry, it has admittedly an antiquity which at once challenges our attention; but its present is of far more value than its past; what it will be in the future is more important than what it has been. Its moral influence infinitely outweighs the measure of secrecy which it enjoins.

Masonry, then, may be broadly defined as an institution which seeks to inculcate among its members the threefold duty of man to which I have heretofore referred. Namely, his duty to God, to his fellow, and to himself. Could any institution have a higher or nobler purpose than this?

It is not a religious institution and yet its whole tendency is religious. Its fundamental rule of membership is that it admits no one who does not believe in a Supreme Being and the obligation of obedience to that Supreme Being. No atheist or infidel can come within the walls of the

Lodge. Think for a moment what this signifies, and how few human organizations are based upon this essential belief. This condition of membership is not a thoughtless, unmeaning, or merely formal requirement. Masonry teaches no theology; it insists upon no dogma. It tolerates the widest divergence of religious faith. All sects, all denominations, are welcome; but it has no place for a man who does not truly and earnestly and intelligently believe in a Supreme Being. I think I may say that outside the church itself, there is no other human institution which insists upon this fundamental belief. There have been sad differences among those who believe in a Supreme Being, and there have been intense longings for religious toleration and unity, but I know of no place where there is more perfect religious unity and toleration than in the Masonic Lodge. For membership therein it is enough to know that he who seeks it believes that we are all children of the self-same God. All its teachings are founded on this one basic rule. Through all its history, in all its working, in all its education, this recognition of God and our duty and obedience to Him is clearly defined and positively marked. I cannot too strongly emphasize this cardinal idea of Masonry. Whatever may be said of the church as a factor in the civilization of the world, I believe it may be truly said that next to the church the Masonic institution is the most potent human organization seeking that end. The first object which meets the eye of a Mason as he enters the Lodge is the open Bible, and it there as truly urges him toward right living as when his mother read it to him kneeling as a child by her side.

In the early history of mankind teaching was by parable and symbol, and all the symbolism of the Lodge is adapted to impress the cardinal belief in a Supreme Being. Again, Masonry teaches most impressively the immortality of man. Old religions consign man at his departure to the under world. Masonry fixes his thought on the Temple above to which he is to ascend when this life shall end. The ladder reaching from earth to heaven which Jacob saw in his dream, is seen by every Mason in every Lodge. I do not know at what remote period in Masonry the sprig of Acacia was planted at the head of the grave. I do not know when the ceremonies of Masonic burial were first devised and it became a custom for each brother in turn to drop an evergreen sprig on the coffin of the departed; but from that early period, whenever it may have been, belief in a future life has been conspicuously outlined and taught. If it be true, as is claimed, that these rites antedate the coming of the Saviour and the revelation of immortality through Him, it may be justly claimed that belief in a future

life was taught earlier, and more certainly in Masonry, than in the Old Testament. Symbolic teaching has by no means lost its force. The symbol stands to-day as truly for the thing symbolized as ever. The cross is but a symbol; our flag is but a symbol; but we all know what they stand for and teach. The cross inspires our faith; the flag intensifies our patriotism. Every Masonic symbol has its voice and speaks to us of the Divine nature, of self culture, or of social obligation.

Let me consider now man's duty to himself, a duty which cannot be separated from his duty to God; and here Masonry presents the highest ideal of life to be found outside the church. Virtue, temperance, forbearance, justice and truth are taught as the elements of manly character and the foundation of a noble life. Without these qualities man is little better than a brute; with them in full and harmonious play he is little less than Divine. Add to these the graces of Faith, Hope and Charity, and man becomes the noble being intended by his Maker. Nor is this teaching merely nominal. Whether the Mason practices such virtues and is adorned by such graces, or not, Masonry continuously holds up to his apprehension the perfect image of a man thus ennobled. It may be said that no Mason lives up to the high ideal of Masonry in this respect,—but who does live up to his ideals in this world? If men in practical life could only realize the ideals of their better nature the long expected millennium would be an accomplished fact. But he who strives for such ideals is truly a better man than he to whom no such ideal is present. It is an old maxim that he who aims at the sun will shoot higher than he who aims at the ground; and lofty ideals do, after all, elevate humanity. Surely that organization which thus places before each member his duty to himself must be of the highest value.

We come then to man's duty to his fellow men, and preëminently Masonry is calculated to teach and enforce this obligation. Liberty, Fraternity and Equality are the three grand watch words of social life. Misapprehended, indeed, and never fully realized in this world, they constitute the foundation of all true human progress and development. Here, too, Masonry teaches with no uncertain voice. The Golden Rule is the rule of Masonic life. On the Holy Bible rest always the Square and Compass. The Rule and the Level have a scarcely less prominent position. They teach that men are to meet on the level and part on the square; that all dealings between them must be upright and fair; that class distinctions have no place in Masonic life; that neither riches nor station can give superiority; that wealth should not excite envy; that

advancement comes only by merit, and merit depends upon work. In these days, when so much is said about class distinctions, think how the teachings of Masonry in this respect are calculated to promote harmony and mutuality among men. Let me refer to one phrase which occurs somewhere in the work or the lectures of the Order: "Harmony being the support and strength of all societies, but more especially this of ours." What a world we would have if that sentiment could be as fully recognized outside as inside the Masonic Lodge! In the charge at initiation into the first degree the novitiate is enjoined as follows: "In the state you are to be a quiet and peaceful subject, true to your government, and just to your country; you are not to countenance disloyalty or rebellion, but patiently submit to legal authority, and conform with cheerfulness to the government of the country in which you live."

If Masonry taught no other duty than this, it would be worthy of all praise and of perpetuity. The Mason who heeds this teaching and makes it the rule of his life, will be a loyal patriot and a citizen of the highest usefulness. The life of a nation is preserved by the patriotism of its people, but patriotism depends on good citizenship.

I do not know that I have ever seen the true nature and tendency of Masonry more aptly described than in the language of Henry Clay. In the year 1827 a movement was started by Mr. Clay, then in Congress, for the organization of a Grand Lodge of the United States, a movement which did not succeed, but which, I think, was wise and should have succeeded. A meeting of leading Masons was called, a committee appointed, and an address, of which Mr. Clay was the author, was issued to the Masonic bodies of the United States, in which he thus describes the institution:

"These reflections, drawn from the external circumstances of Masonry, are strengthened by the consideration of its intrinsic nature. Its foundation is fixed in the social feelings and the best principles of the human mind. Its maxims are the lessons of virtue reduced to their practical application. It stands opposed to sordidness; to a jealous or revengeful temper; to all the selfish and malevolent passions. It coincides with the highest motives of patriotism; the most expanded philanthropy, and concentrates all its precepts in reverence to a Divine Creator, and good will to man."

I may not dwell longer upon the principles and teachings of the Masonic Order. I have spoken of them, not to defend Masonry, but to eulogize it. It no longer needs defense; it commands praise.

We cannot but note to-day the fact that the life of this Lodge is co-

incident with the last half of the nineteenth century. It would be interesting to go back to its starting point, to recall the incidents of its early life, to speak of the character and virtues of its original members and those who were first initiated, but that time seems so far in the past as to almost dissociate its early from its present life. One who has lived the active and intense life of the past fifty years can scarcely avoid the feeling that he has lived two lives, one in the far distant past, a life in some sense closed, and one in the present, which looks toward the future. I forbear, therefore, especially after the admirable historical address to which you have listened, to call up the past of this Lodge, or to dwell upon its growth, or that of the Order. It is enough to say that the growth of Masonry has more than kept pace with the growth of our population and the development of our resources. I suppose that at the outside we had not more than 2,000 Masons in the State of Connecticut in the year 1850, and probably about 100,000 in the United States. We have now members of the Blue Lodge in Connecticut 17,500, and in the United States 800,000. Masonry has thus been multiplied eightfold, and its future is hopeful and bright. It is a positive increasing force in our moral and social life. Measuring its future usefulness and influence by what it has done in the past, one can scarcely predict too much for the good which it is destined to accomplish in the world.

Men grow old and pass away. Many of our brethren have been called to the Temple above and into the presence of the Supreme Architect; but institutions, if founded on right principles, live on, and so long as this Lodge is true to the nature and teachings of Masonry, it will be an ever-increasing power for good. I look to see a widely enlarged field for Masonic effort and action. The Masonic system is modeled upon the family life. In some respects it more truly approaches the ideal than the family itself. The beauty and influence of family is often marred by family pride and selfishness, but Masonry never seeks its own advancement at the expense of others, and never clothes itself with the garments of pride or selfishness. Its members may not always be brothers in the truest sense, but it is a great thing in this world to acknowledge the tie of human brotherhood which depends upon being children of the Infinite Father. I look to see the idea of Masonic brotherhood widening more and more and developing into the idea of universal brotherhood. I look to see the spirit which permeates Masonic life gradually but surely finding its way into and blessing all human life.

What changes have been wrought during this half century. Surely

the time foretold in scripture, when "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased," may be said to have really come. In all that pertains to material life, development has been scarcely short of the miraculous. How little we thought fifty years ago of what those two forces of nature, steam and electricity, were to accomplish. In science, art, business and knowledge, literally the field is the world. If life is to be measured by the opportunity for knowledge, by the capacity for acquirement, by the means of comfort, then he who has lived actively during this last half of the nineteenth century cannot measure the length of his life by the years that have passed. We need no longer envy the patriarchs of old their length of days. One lives more now in the period allotted to man than they lived in the centuries during which we are told their existence was prolonged. But in all this wonderful era of change some things remain unchanged and permanent. I know of nothing more mysterious in Masonry than the thought that the principles, sentiments, teachings and rules of Masonic life are to-day what they were centuries ago; that even in those rude times, in which we are wont to think there was little of real civilization and much of barbarism, cruelty and selfish wrong, the high truths of Masonry were thought out and established, and its pillars reared upon eternal foundations.

We stand facing the new century full of faith that material progress and advancement are to go on increasingly. The hill of knowledge has not yet been climbed to its summit; the wonderful powers of nature have but just come under the control of man; the horizon of life will yet widen more and more; the adjustment of mankind to new conditions of life will go on, and though the present may appear to be marred by displacement and suffering, it seems to me that the future is to be one of increasing comfort and happiness for mankind. Have we not the right to hope that with this increasing happiness will come an increased understanding of God and our obligations to Him, and of that universal brotherhood which Masonry typifies and teaches, and which is finally to unite and bless mankind? So mote it be.

# Banquet,

AT ARMORY OF COMPANY I, SECOND REGIMENT, C. N. G.,

AT SIX O'CLOCK.

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## Invocation,

Reverend Brother HENRY BLATZ, JR., of Meridian Lodge.

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## Programme of Music,

RENDERED BY ROOSA'S ORCHESTRA DURING THE BANQUET.

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March,	"Across the Continent,"	<i>Schwartz</i>
Overture,	"Poet and Peasant,"	<i>Suppe</i>
Characteristic,	"Colored Aristocracy,"	<i>Bernard</i>
Grand Selection,	"Ernani,"	<i>Verdi</i>
Intermezzo,	"Salome,"	<i>Lorraine</i>
Medley Selection,	"In Gay Bohemia,"	<i>Beyer</i>
Rag Time,	"The Colored Major,"	<i>Langey</i>
Selection,	From "The Rounders,"	<i>Englander</i>
Caprice,	"Flight of the Butterflies,"	<i>Knauer</i>
Two Step,	"Under the Flag of Victory,"	<i>Von Blon</i>
Selection,	From "Idol's Eye,"	<i>Herbert</i>
Galop,	"Fire Fly,"	<i>Weingarten</i>

## **Post-Prandial.**

WORSHIPFUL MASTER WILBERT L. BABCOCK,  
PRESIDING.

PAST-GRAND MASTER WILLIAM WALLACE LEE,  
TOAST MASTER.

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**Music,**

QUARTETTE.

**“Grand Lodge of Connecticut,”**

Most Worshipful JOHN O. ROWLAND, Grand Master,  
Grand Lodge of Connecticut.

**“Our Country,”**

Reverend Brother ALEXANDER H. MEAD,  
Chaplain of Meridian Lodge.

**Recitation,**

Worshipful Brother MATTHEW BEATTY,  
Past Master of Meridian Lodge.

**“City of Meriden,”**

Worshipful Brother E. ERNEST WEST,  
Past Master of Meridian Lodge—Mayor of Meriden.

**“Our Sister Lodges,**

GRAND OFFICERS.

**“Religion and Freemasonry,”**

Reverend Brother CORNELIUS G. BRISTOL,  
Grand Chaplain Grand Lodge of Connecticut.



Solo,

Brother ERWIN M. BEEBE, of Meridian Lodge.

**“Patriotism and Masonry,”**

Reverend Brother JOSEPH J. WOOLEY,  
Past Chaplain of Meridian Lodge.

**“Masonic Charities,”**

Past Grand Master LUKE A. LOCKWOOD,  
President Masonic Charity Foundation of Connecticut.

Recitation,

Brother FREDERICK M. DEAN, of Meridian Lodge.

**“Early Days of Masonry in Connecticut,”**

Past Grand Master JOHN H. BARLOW,  
Grand Secretary Grand Lodge of Connecticut.

**“Our Mother Lodges,”**

COMPASS, No. 9, Wallingford.  
FEDERAL, No. 17, Watertown,  
HARMONY, No. 20, New Britain,  
COLUMBIA, No. 26, East Haddam,  
ST. ANDREWS, No. 64, Winsted.

**“Woman”** (with that word Life's dearest hopes and memories come),

Reverend Brother WARREN S. PERKINS,  
Past Chaplain of Meridian Lodge.

Music,

QUARTETTE.

**“Auld Lang Syne,”**

(SUNG BY ALL).

## Officers, January, 1851.

---

REV. JOHN PARKER,	.	.	.	.	Worshipful Master
ASAHEL CURTIS,	.	.	.	.	Senior Warden
WILLIAM ALLEN, JR.,	.	.	.	.	Junior Warden
BETRAND L. YALE,	.	.	.	.	Secretary
CHARLES PARKER,	.	.	.	.	Treasurer
W. B. OLDS,	.	.	.	.	Senior Deacon
LUTHER PARMELEE,	.	.	.	.	Junior Deacon

## Officers, January, 1901.

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WILBERT L. BABCOCK,	.	.	.		Worshipful Master
FREDERICK E. TUCKER,	.	.	.	.	Senior Warden
CHARLES P. CONNOLLY,	.	.	.	.	Junior Warden
EUGENE A. HALL,	.	.	.	.	Treasurer
GEORGE A. DAVIS,	.	.	.	.	Secretary
GEORGE S. CLARK,	.	.	.	.	Senior Deacon
JOHN G. NAGEL,	.	.	.	.	Junior Deacon
ROBERT J. WALKER,	.	.	.	.	Senior Steward
JOHN D. ROBERTS, JR.,	.	.	.	.	Junior Steward
REV. ALEXANDER H. MEAD,	.	.	.	.	Chaplain
ARTHUR E. MILLER,	.	.	.	.	Marshal
FREDERICK S. BIDWELL,	.	.	.	.	Organist

### Auditing Committee:

H. A. W. PRAGEMAN,      GEORGE E. BICKNELL,      EDWARD J. POOLEY

### Trustees:

JOHN P. WEIR, JR.,      WILLIAM H. WESTWOOD,      JOHN A. LEEDS

## Worshipful Masters.

WITH DATE OF THEIR ELECTION.

---

John Parker,	January 1, 1851	Matthew Beatty, December 20, 1875
Humphrey Lyon,	" 8, 1851	Lyman H. Hall, " 25, 1876
Almeron Miles,	July 23, 1851	John C. Booth, " 24, 1877
Almeron Miles, December	10, 1851	LeMoine N. Fay, " 23, 1878
Almeron Miles,	" 29, 1852	LeMoine N. Fay, " 22, 1879
Bertrand L. Yale,	" 12, 1853	John A. Leeds, " 20, 1880
Almeron Miles,	" 25, 1854	John A. Leeds, " 26, 1881
William A. Fosket, January	14, 1856	Albert R. Yale, " 26, 1882
Almeron Miles, December	15, 1856	E. Ernest West, " 24, 1883
William Cochran,	" 28, 1857	James P. Platt, " 29, 1884
William Cochran,	" 20, 1858	Edgar C. Savage, " 21, 1885
Newton F. Hart,	" 5, 1859	John P. Weir, Jr., " 20, 1886
Geo. S. Dickinson,	" 24, 1860	John P. Weir, Jr., " 26, 1887
Marshall C. Augur,	" 16, 1861	George E. Bicknell " 24, 1888
Levi E. Coe,	" 29, 1862	Joseph L. Porter, " 16, 1889
David T. Lyon,	" 21, 1863	William H. Sprout, " 15, 1890
Levi E. Coe,	" 12, 1864	William H. Sprout, " 21, 1891
Robert Oughton,	" 25, 1865	David F. Powers, " 19, 1892
* Wm. Wallace Lee,	" 24, 1866	Wm. C. Comstock, " 18, 1893
Wm. H. Westwood,	" 23, 1867	Eugene A. Hall, " 17, 1894
Wm. H. Westwood,	" 21, 1868	Edwin A. Watrous, " 16, 1895
Levi E. Coe,	" 20, 1869	Frank A. Stevens, " 21, 1896
Henry J. Church,	" 26, 1870	Arthur E. Miller, " 20, 1897
Edwin O. Hibbard,	" 25, 1871	Robert L. Mackay, " 19, 1898
H. Wales Lines,	" 23, 1872	Wilbert L. Babcock, " 18, 1899
Wm. H. Westwood,	" 22, 1873	Wilbert L. Babcock, " 17, 1900
Matthew Beatty,	" 21, 1874	

\*GRAND MASTER, 1874-1875.

## Membership Roll, January 1, 1901.

---

Adams, John V.  
Andrews, Julius  
Atwell, Seager S.  
Alexander, Thos. S.  
Austin, A. Ellsworth  
Atkinson, George.

Barnes, Lewis  
Bradish, James Q.  
Bacon, J. Buckley  
Bassett, Jared B.  
Babb, Albert  
Barker, Alfred  
Bradshaw, Arthur  
Bradley, Clarence P.  
Banks, John W.  
Babcock, Wilbert L.  
Blatz, Rev. Henry  
Blake, Charles N.  
Bauer, Gottlieb A.  
Beardsley, Miles B.  
Beatty, Matthew  
Beckley, Frank L.  
Breckenridge, R. M.  
Bernstein, Sigmund  
Beach, Henry B.  
Breckenridge, A. E.  
Belknap, George D.  
Bemis, Fred E.  
Beebe, Erwin M.  
Bridgen, William

Bristol, Walter R.  
Bristol, Joseph L.  
Bicknell, George E.  
Bidwell, John S.  
Britton, John W.  
Briggs, John R.  
Bidwell, Fred'k S.  
Billard, Walter S.  
Billings, Stephen A.  
Brough, Harry J.  
Bronson, Frank H.  
Booth, John C.  
Bolles, Franklin G.  
Bockius, Geo. K.  
Brown, James W.  
Brown, Lauren C.  
Bowers, Ellsworth T.  
Brown, Fred H.  
Brown, Andrew L.  
Burgess, Abram Y.  
Bushnell, Henry E.  
Budd, Fred F.  
Byxbee, John C.  
  
Clark, Geo. L.  
Chapman, Rufus E.  
Crane, Wm. J. L.  
Cannon, Geo. A.  
Clark, Wm. A.  
Clark, Geo. S.  
Chapman, Chas. E.

Coe, Levi E.  
Cook, James  
Coe, John W.  
Comstock, William B.  
Collins, William  
Connolly, Chas. P.  
Comstock, William C.  
Converse, Aden J.  
Coe, Walter E.  
Cooley, Irving G.  
Coggins, Sanford  
Crombie, Paul C.  
Cody, Lynn R.  
Church, Henry J.  
Curtis, Louis K.  
Cushing, Frank H.  
Church, Louis H.  
Church, Robert G.

Davis, Wilbur F.  
Davis, Geo. A.  
Dreher, Louis  
De Peyster, Frederick  
Dean, Frederick M.  
Dillaway, Daniel H.  
Doolittle, Edgar J.  
Dowd, Zina E.  
Doolittle, Curtis A.  
Duncan, Alexander  
Dunlop, James  
Duis, Adolph T.  
Duis, Adolph T., 2nd.

Evarts, Frank P.  
Everitt, Edwiu B.  
Eggleston, Jere L.  
Ewers, James E.  
Elliott, Joseph M.  
Eliot, Wm. R.

Fairchild, Henry E.  
Franks, Joseph  
Francis, Edgar S.  
Fechter, Henry A.  
Fisher, Daniel C.  
Ford, Roger M.  
Fox, Christian F.  
Furniss, Walter H.

Garvey, Patrick  
Gardner, Wm. C.  
Graham, Benj.  
Grant, Frank T.  
Graham, Benj. L.  
Glaesner, Arthur F.  
Green, Frederick  
Green, Wm. R.  
Griswold, Nathan F.  
Gill, James F.  
Griffin, Albert V.  
Griswold, Daniel S.  
Gilkey, D. William  
Gough, John A.

Hart, Newton F.  
Hamilton, Wm.  
Hayes, John.  
Harvey, Wm. H.  
Hastings, Frank N.  
Haywood, Geo. W.  
Hall, Eugene A.  
Hennion, Wm. H.  
Hiney, Jacob W.  
Hirschfeld, Henry W.  
Hills, Simon S.  
Hotchkiss, Frederick M.  
Holt, Irving L.  
Hull, P. Ethan  
Hubbard, Hermon E.  
Hughes, Oliver J. D.

Hull, Clarence A.  
 Hyatt, Isaac B.

Ives, Amos  
 Isbell, Rufus D.  
 Ives, Phineas T.

Johnson, Sidney E.  
 Jopson, Geo. W.  
 Johnstone, Hector  
 Jones, Augustus H.

Kay, James T.  
 Kelsey, Dwight  
 Kelsey, Otis S.  
 Kintz, Joseph  
 Kendrick, Wm. A.  
 King, Harry T.  
 Kirwin, John W.  
 Kibbe, Horace W.

Lawton, Lyman T.  
 Laytham, Thomas  
 Laytham, Edward  
 Lane, John S.  
 Lee, Wm. Wallace  
 Leeds, John A.  
 Levi, Henry B.  
 Leeds, Fred A.  
 Lewy, Julius  
 Lines, H. Wales  
 Liddell, John  
 Logan, James  
 Lohmann, Geo. H.  
 Lyman, Chas. H.

Magoun, Henry  
 Markham, F. Geo.  
 Mackay, Wm. R.  
 Marble, Geo. E.

Mather, Albert B.  
 Mather, Henry M.  
 Mason, Walter  
 Malloy, Richard J.  
 Mansur, Chas. H.  
 Marhle, Geo. G.  
 Maguire, John T.  
 Mackay, Robert L.  
 Mackay, Alexander L.  
 McMaster, Lyman W.  
 May, Albert A.  
 Merriman, Emerson A.  
 Merriman, Julius E.  
 Merwin, Nelson D.  
 Mead, Rev. Alexander H.  
 Merriman, A. H.  
 Miller, Chas. A.  
 Miles, Richard W.  
 Miller, Arthur E.  
 Millon, Ira H.  
 Morgan, Wm. P.  
 Mosher, W. W.  
 Monckmeyer, Fred.  
 Morse, Herbert G.  
 Murphy, John T.  
 Mueller, Wm. C.  
 Myatt, William W.

Nankervis, Wm. H.  
 Nagel, John G.  
 Newport, Herbert E.

Otis, Samuel D.

Platt, Orville H.  
 Parker, Luman F.  
 Page, Benjamin  
 Platt, James P.  
 Pragemann, H. A. W.  
 Parker, Wilbur F.

Parker, Louis C.  
Parish, John H.  
Pardee, Charles F. W.  
Perkins, Chas. R.  
Perkins, Chas. S.  
Perkins, Rev. Warren S.  
Peck, Chas E.  
Petts, Ambross S.  
Perkins, Louis H.  
Pistorius, August  
Pritchard, Alfred  
Powers, Luther A.  
Powers, Wm. W.  
Porter, Joseph L.  
Powers, Charles C.  
Powers, David F.  
Pooley, Edward J.

Rand, Philip C.  
Reynolds, Walter H.  
Redfield, Halsted  
Rice, Hiram H.  
Rightmeyer, Wm. T.  
Rogers, Gilbert  
Roeth, Henry A.  
Rollins, Frank  
Roebuck, Alfred  
Robinson, Geo. H.  
Roberts, John D., Jr.  
Rust, Theodore S.  
Rudolph, Geo. H.  
Rudkin, George

Sawyer, Moses H.  
Stanley, Joseph E.  
Sharp, John M.  
Sawyer, Lodovick L.  
Shaw, Francis H.  
Schafmeister, John A.  
Stevens, Anson L.

Schleiter, Henry L.  
Shelley, Florence W.  
Stevenson, Francis, Jr.  
Seidensticker, Fred R.  
Seips, Michael  
Steuck, Geo. H.  
Stretch, James  
Stevens, Frank A.  
Schmelzer, Victor W.  
Steinholtz, W. R. C.  
Spencer, Elmer E.  
Stevens, Egbert  
Stevens, Harry A.  
Stevenson, Howard L.  
Smith, Henry G.  
Smith, Walter E.  
Smith, Nicholas C.  
Smith, Frank D.  
Smith, Norman E.  
Smith, Arthur C.  
Smith, James B.  
Schott, John  
Sprout, Wm. H.  
Stockder, Chas. H.  
Storm, Fred K.  
Schunack, C. Emil  
Squire, Allan B.

Tait, John  
Taylor, William  
Tanner, Richard T.  
Tredennick, Charles H.  
Thomas, John A.  
Tower, Charles H.  
Tuttle, James B.  
Tucker, Fred A.  
Tucker, Fred E.  
Tryon, Albert C.

Upham, Chas. L.



Van Nostrand, Geo.  
Vibberts, Fred C.  
Voorhees, Harvey C.

Waterman, Reuben  
Watrous Edwin A.  
Watt, James R.  
Washer, Charles L.  
Walker, Robert J.  
Westwood, Wm. H.  
Wheeler, Frank  
Wheeler, Wm. W.  
West, E. Ernest  
Weir, John P., Jr.  
Wheeler, James A.  
Wilmot, Geo. R.

Wilson, G. Herrick  
Winslow, Geo. M.  
Wilcox, Charles C.  
Wilcox, Geo. H.  
Wilson, Edgar A.  
Wright, Chas. R.  
Wilkinson, Walter H.  
Wilcox, Norman T.  
Wiese, John M.  
Williams, Chas. M.  
Wolf, Leopold  
Wood, Chas. H.  
Woolley, Thomas H.

Yale, Chas. W.  
Young, Frank C.







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