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*Centennial
Corvallis
Lodge No. 14*



JUNE 1957

Vol. XXXIV — No. 1

Pioneer Corvallis Lodge Has Glamorous History

Fire Destroyed Lodge Room
Has Been Duplicated
in Rebuilt Temple

By E. B. BEATY, PGM

Corvallis Lodge of today, one of the largest in Oregon and owner of a building which houses a Temple the interior of which is unique among all Lodges of the jurisdiction, does not give a good picture of one of the earliest pioneer Lodges that struggled along to maintain existence after being instituted in 1857. Some of its members have been among the most prominent Masons and citizens of the state and its first Master, David G. Clark, became Grand Master.

Three Lodges, Multnomah No. 1 at Oregon City, No. 1 pioneer city; Willamette No. 2 at the No. 2 city of Portland, and Lafayette No. 3 at Lafayette, at that time third largest city of the state and now one of the smallest, had organized the Grand Lodge only six years ahead of the date of institution of Corvallis Lodge No. 14. (Lafayette was moved in the 90's to Yamhill, where it has since remained under the original name and number.)

The Grand Lodge of Oregon, formed in 1851, soon chartered Lodges as follows: Salem No. 4, June 14, 1852; Olympia No. 5, June 14, 1852; Tuality No. 6, June 15, 1853; Temple No. 7, June 15, 1854; Steilacoom No. 8, June 15, 1854; Jennings No. 9, June 15,

Chamber where we are taught our Wages are paid.

In the final analysis, Wages of a Fellowcraft are not paid in silver or gold, nor are they paid in articles of commerce and trade that may be stolen or may deteriorate through the passage of years. They are paid in Symbolic Wages that the Brother may keep within the repository of the faithful breast. They are paid in those things that are secure in the hearts of his Brethren. Those Wages can not be measured by any standard by which the value of intrinsic things may be measured. The Symbolic Wages of a Fellowcraft are measured only by the value placed upon them by those who receive them.—Elbert Bede.

(The concluding paragraph is a paraphrase of something written by this editor 10 or 15 years ago.)

1854; Warren No. 10, June 15, 1855; Eugene No. 11, June 10, 1856; Harmony No. 12, June 11, 1856; Corvallis Lodge No. 14, June 8, 1857; Laurel Lodge No. 13, June 8, 1857.

The first Masonic meeting ever held in Corvallis, so far as the written records show, was that on Dec. 15, 1856. David G. Clark presided. This group petitioned for a dispensation to form and open a Lodge at Corvallis. This dispensation was granted, and on Jan. 1, 1857, Corvallis Lodge U. D. was formed with the following officers: David G. Clark, WM; J. B. Blumfield, SW; John B. Congle, JW; Morris Stock, Tr.; J. C. Avery, Sec.; Ben Cutler, Tyl. Other members of the Lodge: J. R. Bayley, J. S. McSteany, A. J. Thayer, W. W. Wilson, J. A. Bennett, J. Latshaw, J. Hargrove, W. Hilliard, R. B. Metcalf, G. P. Wrenn, Erastus Holgate, C. Roberts, G. Landerking.

Brother Clark (U. D. Master) was elected WM Jan 1, following and served again from 1866 to and including 1870, also in 1875 an 1876. He was Grand Master 1869-1870. He was one of the best known Masons of the Oregon country and never tired of working in the Lodge.

Brother Congle (U. D. SW) was advanced to WM in 1858, shortly thereafter affiliated with Willamette Lodge and was elected Grand Master in 1874, serving two terms. He was elected Grand High Priest of RAM in 1878 and served two terms.

C. M. Kaufman was WM in 1859 and 1860. Dr. Jas. R. Bayley, who was WM of Lafayette Lodge in 1855, affiliated with Corvallis Lodge while it was yet U. D. and served this Lodge as WM in 1861, 1872. He was first WM of Rockey Lodge (Corvallis) in 1880 and also of Newport Lodge in 1885. He was Grand Master in 1861. He was Grand High Priest, RAM, in 1863 and in 1869 he was again elected to the same office and served continuously to 1875, for eight years. The amount of work Brother Bayley did for Masonry is almost unbelievable. He died May 24, 1901, at Newport.

Corvallis Lodge had only 37 members at the end of three years. The meeting place was



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small and ill-furnished, but the men were of the proper spirit and worked well for the cause.

J. C. Avery was Master in 1862 and 1863. He was the first settler of Corvallis and it was in his home that the first territorial legislature was held in 1848. It is quite likely that he is the man who gave the name of Marysville to the settlement which later became the city of Corvallis. E. L. Perham was Master in 1864 and E. M. Hussey in 1865. During these two years the Lodge was inactive because of the Civil war.

By 1865 Dr. J. B. Lee had become a member of the Lodge, was proficient in its ritual and served as WM in 1873 and 1874. He was a wonderful character, outspoken and abrupt, but he was loved by almost everyone in Benton county. There were no roads in the county but he did not hesitate to go on horseback to all parts of the county to minister to the sick and afflicted, many of whom never dreamed of paying him anything for his services. He became Grand High Priest, RAM, serving in 1876 and 1877.

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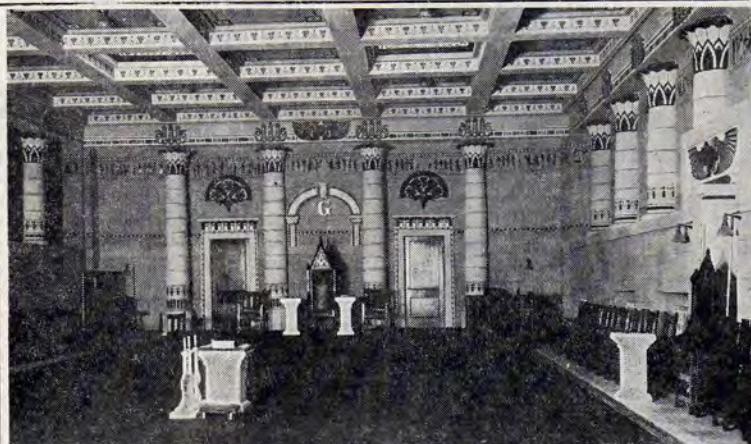
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The Former Lodge Room of Corvallis Lodge, Duplicated in the New Temple

By 1876 the Lodge had grown until it had a membership of 75, including many who became known over the Northwest for the great work they did in Masonry and in other fields. Following are a few of the most outstanding in Masonry: D. G. Clark, PGM; J. R. Bayley, PGM; J. B. Lee, Wallace Baldwin, Thomas Graham, Erastus Holgate, Wm. Groves, John Burnett, Thomas E. Cauthorn, S. N. Lilly, Elias Woodward, B. W. Wilson, and J. D. Johnson. Pages could be written about each of these, but Brother Wilson deserves special mention. He served as Secretary for many years and it is a pleasure to look over the minutes of that period. One cannot but marvel at the beautiful writing and the extreme care he took in his work.

Wallace Baldwin was Master in 1877 and worked in harmony for more than half a century. He, too, was prominent in all branches of Masonry, being a member of

both the York Rite and Scottish Rite. He was Grand Master of the Grand Council, R&SM, in 1887 and Grand High Priest, RAM, in 1886.

Thomas Graham was Master in 1878 following Wallace Baldwin, while he in turn was followed by G. W. Kennedy. Thomas Graham was active in Masonry, was well

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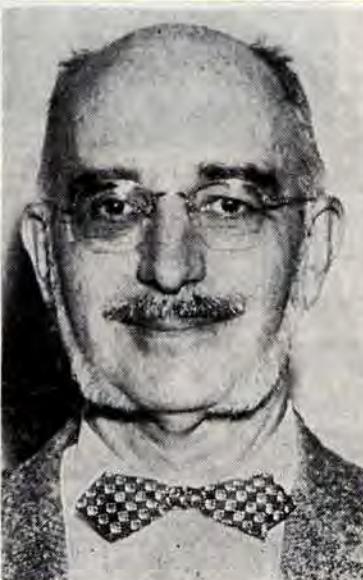
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known throughout the Willamette valley and a member of the Graham family that is well known in Corvallis now.

Graham and Kennedy were followed in 1880 by Erastus Holgate, who was prominent in the city. He was the father of the Holgates so well known in the Corvallis community and his home was on the corner now occupied by the beautiful new city library.

During this period there was something in the Lodge that did not satisfy all the Brethren and a few withdrew to organize Rockey Lodge No. 75. James R. Bayley (PM of No. 14) was the first Master. He had just finished eight years as Grand High Priest, RAM. This new Lodge started with 20 members, several of whom had served as Master of No. 14, and the Master had served as Grand Master. Both Lodges met in what was then known as the Fisher building, located near the present site of the Corvallis State Bank building, but later moved to a spot south of the corner of 2nd and Adams streets, where it stood for many years before being wrecked a few years ago when the new buildings at that place were erected. The pedestals, altar and pillars, which No. 14 used until the recent destructive fire, together with the two settes, were a part of the furniture of the Lodges at that time.

The Lodge and Ferguson Chapter No. 5, RAM, having become dissatisfied with their quar-



H. A. ROWLEY
Master, Corvallis Lodge No. 14
Wearing Centennial Celebration Whiskers

ters, decided to build a new Temple and purchased the north half of lot No. 1 in block 11 and the south one foot front extending back 100 feet of lot No. 2 of block 11. The new building was not, however, erected at this time owing to the Lodge being divided by the forming of Rockey Lodge.

John Keesee was Master of Corvallis Lodge in 1881, being followed by W. C. Crawford in 1884, 1885, 1886. Brother Crawford served as Grand High Priest,

RAM, in 1894 and he was Grand Master, R&SM, in 1890 and 1891. William Groves, who was the father of Brother Frank Groves (WM of Corvallis Lodge 1910), became Master in 1887. The work of the Lodge at this time showed little progress. Meetings were brief, there being very little degree work.

Rockey Lodge No. 75 was formed in 1880 by members of Corvallis Lodge No. 14 and existed until June 16, 1893, a brief period of 13 years. Members of

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Exterior of Block Owned by Corvallis Lodge Which Was Burned in 1956
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today wonder how a condition could have existed in a community of some 1500 that would make it necessary to have two Masonic Lodges. This, however, happened in a number of communities in Oregon and in almost every case after a few years the difficulty was ironed out and the Lodges consolidated.

Wallace Baldwin was the second Master of Rockey Lodge, serving in 1881. He was followed in 1884 by E. M. Belknap. The Belknaps were well known in this part of the country and were connected with educational work at the college for many years. Herman E. Harris was Master in 1885, being followed by M. S. Woodcock in 1886. Brother Woodcock was active in the work and also in the other branches of Masonry. The minutes tell an impressive story of the amount of work accomplished by this Brother. He became Grand High Priest, RAM, in 1913.

Zephlin Job was Master of Rockey Lodge in 1887, being followed by Morris Stock in 1888. Many new members were added each year. James O. Wilson, who had been WM of Corvallis Lodge in 1888, was one of the pioneers of the state and had been Secretary of Corvallis Lodge for many years. Brother Wilson was an active member of the Lodge until his death, at which time he was judge of the Benton county court. M. S. Neugass became Master in 1890, to be followed by James O.

Wilson for a second term. Brother Wilson was followed by his brother, J. H. Wilson, in 1892. The family has always been active in the Lodge as well as in the community welfare. A. J. Gibbard was Master in 1893 and it was during his term that a resolution was adopted to unite the Lodge with Corvallis Lodge No. 14. Rockey Lodge held its last meeting June 21, 1893, and closed its business by turning over its records to Corvallis Lodge.

Bushrod W. Wilson was Master of Corvallis Lodge in 1888 and was followed by Joseph D. Johnson in 1889. He was the father of William T. Johnson, Master of Corvallis Lodge in 1919 and also of James Johnson, PM of Thurston Lodge No. 28 at Harrisburg. He was followed in 1890 by O. W. Beckwith, who was followed by Z. H. Davis, who served two terms in 1891 and 1892. Brother Davis served as Treasurer from 1893 until his death in 1915. He was followed by J. D. Johnson in 1893. It was during this time that it was decided to build a new Temple, and it was through his efforts that Rockey Lodge was united with Corvallis to form a stronger Lodge.

W. T. Peet became Master in 1894. He was followed in 1895 by Hiram T. French, who was followed in 1896 by W. E. Yates, who was a member of an old pioneer family which settled in Linn county two miles east of Corval-



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DAVID G. CLARK, P. G. M.
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lis. Brother French became Master again in 1897 and was followed by Seymour Chipman in 1898.

A resolution was adopted March 2, 1898, authorizing the Master and Wardens, together with the trustees of Ferguson

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Chapter No. 5, to enter into a contract with John Huffman and W. O. Heckart to construct a Masonic Temple on their lot on Second street for the sum of \$4,827. This building, dedicated Dec. 27, 1898, was the home of the Masonic Bodies of Corvallis until 1912, when they moved into the recently destroyed Temple. John B. Cleland, Grand Master, presided at the dedicatory ceremony.

F. L. Miller, Master for 1899, was the first Master elected in the new Lodge hall. He was followed by A. F. Hershner in 1900.

G. A. Covell became Master in 1901 and was one of the most outstanding men who ever held that office. He was the first dean and founder of the school of engineering at Oregon State college.

Virgil E. Waters was elected Master in 1902 and was followed by G. V. Skelton in 1903. He was followed by James A. Harper in 1904, F. L. Kent in 1905 and W. P. Lafferty in 1906.

A. B. Cordley became Master in 1907. He too was active in all Masonic Bodies and was the first dean of the school of agriculture in Oregon State college.

John Fulton was Master in 1908. He, too, has served the several bodies of Masonry as presiding officer and is head of the department of chemistry, the largest department at Oregon State college.

W. F. Groves (son of William Groves, who was Master in 1888) was Master in 1909. The Lodge had begun to take steps toward building a new Temple. Frederick Berchtold became Master in 1910 and was followed by E. L. Strange in 1911. It was during this year that plans were completed for the new Temple. The old building, although but ten

years of age, had been found inadequate. The bodies had grown rapidly and it was therefore decided to buy the two lots on the corner of Third and Madison streets. The Knights of Pythias bought the old building for \$12,000 cash, and the Lodge, having received funds and property from the Manuel Knight estate (a gift from one of the oldest members of the Lodge), elected a building committee and a Masonic corporation was formed with stock amounting to \$25,000. The new building, which cost \$50,000, was dedicated June 6, 1912, by George H. Burnett, Grand Master.

The first to serve in the new Temple were: M. S. Bovee, WM; Charles Murphy, SW; E. B. Beatty, JW; Z. H. Davis, Tr.; W. W. Weniger, Sec.; W. P. Lafferty, SD; R. H. Rodgers, JD; E. B. Moore, SS; C. H. Woodcock, JS; S. B. Babb, Tyl.

E. B. Beatty was elected Master in 1913. He served as Grand Master, R&SM, in 1928, and as Grand Master in 1946.

W. W. Weniger was Master in 1914; B. J. Thatcher, 1915; Hugh Guthrie, 1916. William Jasper Kerr, president of Oregon State college and one of the most beloved men in all of Oregon, was Master of the Lodge in 1917. He

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was elected Grand Master in 1920 and was one of the first Grand Masters to insist on using the income of the educational fund for the purpose for which it was intended. During this period the World war was in progress and many members were overseas. Meetings were held regularly by the small group remaining.

C. H. Woodcock became Master in 1918, being followed in 1919 by W. T. Johnson, who in turn was followed by C. D. Lafferty in 1920. By coincidence the three Masters last named were sons of Past Masters of Corvallis Lodge.

The years 1920, 1921 and 1922 were the most prosperous ever known to Corvallis Lodge. The membership grew from just over 200 to over 500 and the fees were increased from \$35 to \$75.

In 1921 L. L. Graham served as Master. He conferred more degrees that year than had ever been conferred in any previous year.

Donald Bruce Stuart, one of the most ardent Masons in Oregon, was Master in 1922. He was Grand High Priest, RAM, in 1932, Grand Master, R&SM, in 1937. He, too, conferred a large number of degrees.

The work of the Lodge during the next few years was more or less without anything of particular significance and the following served in the order named: Vaughn Youngblood, 1923; Arthur L. Peck, 1924; A. L. Lunn, 1925; Sigurd H. Peterson, 1926; H. M. Francis, 1927; Victor W. Arpky, 1928; Ben H. Nichols, 1929; Herman A. Scullen, 1930; Van Gibson, 1931; Don C. Mote, 1932; Wilbur M. Harper, 1933; Guy Jordan, 1934; Edward Conley, 1935; James Riley, 1936; John W. Ash, 1937; S. P. Babb (honorary), 1938; H. L. Beard, 1938; H. W. Hand, 1939. Jesse J. Yeates was Master in 1940 and it was during his administration that the electric organ was purchased. Charles L. Willey became Master in 1941 and was followed by J. Carey Othus.

Brother J. R. N. Bell, who had been GrChaplain for 52 years, passed to the higher Lodge June 2, 1928.

The Lodge celebrated its 75th anniversary in May, 1932.

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celebration in December, 1937, of 25 years in the new Temple. The Temple was clear of debt and the Lodge was in the best financial condition it had ever known.

An electric organ, costing \$1,700 and installed in 1940, gave Corvallis Lodge one of the most complete Lodge rooms in the Grand Jurisdiction.

Corvallis Lodge is the owner of Crystal Lake cemetery. This is an endowed cemetery in which the graves have perpetual care. The oldest marker in this cemetery shows that burials were started as early as 1850. Most of the members of Corvallis Lodge who have passed away since its founding have their last resting place in this beautiful cemetery which is in a quiet, secluded spot on the banks of the Willamette river.

The Lodge decided in 1925 to make an effort to obtain the pictures of the Past Masters of both Corvallis and Rockey Lodges. After considerable effort and correspondence, pictures of all but three of the PMs were obtained. These were enlarged to a uniform size and placed in walnut frames, with a bronze nameplate on each showing the date served as Master. The frames were again

framed into solid walnut on the walls of the anteroom. This work was done by Brother W. M. Ball. (Editorial note—Brother Beaty's modesty has kept him from telling that it was in large part through his efforts that many of the pictures of pioneer Masters were secured.)

A second World War was started late in 1941 when the Japan air force bombed the United States fleet at Pearl Harbor Dec. 7. Masonic work seemed to be at a standstill. The members of Corvallis Lodge No. 14 immediately gave of their manpower, not only in the field but at home. Camp Adair was established about ten miles north of Corvallis and the Masons from many parts of Oregon were ready to assist the young enlisted men who were away from home for the first time.

Many of the enlisted men were called into service before com-

pleting high school work. Classes were started and many young men found time to do the required work to enable them to enter college when they returned to their homes. Books were solicited from all the Masonic Lodges in Oregon and a wonderful library of the very best books on every subject was established for the use of these enlisted men.

There were many Masons among the men stationed at Camp Adair and the members of the Masonic Lodges helped these young men to complete their work in the various degrees of Masonry.

Claude Hutchens was Master of Corvallis Lodge in 1943 and was followed by Ervin E. Barklow, who in turn was followed by George A. Williams. These three Masters proved to be real workmen and, with their guidance, life was made smoother for the young enlisted men at Camp Adair.

At the end of World War II many young men who had been in the service sought membership in Masonry and our Lodges were called on to confer many degrees.

John O. Garman became Master in 1946. He was, and still is, a real worker. One cannot say too much for all he has done for the young who have come under his guidance.

The following served as Masters of Corvallis Lodge: Walter Baker 1947, George Martin 1948, Earl C. Willey 1949, George Kelly 1950, Walter Durgan 1951, Cecil Hollister 1952, Douglas J. Willson 1953, Mark W. Read 1954, Lloyd L. Lockett 1955.

James H. Rainey was elected Master for 1956 and he had held but two or three meetings when disaster struck our building. It was almost completely destroyed by fire. The problem immediately arose as to the proper course to follow. Should we rebuild or seek a new location? After many meetings and discussions it was finally decided to rebuild and a contract was awarded to Brother Robert C. Wilson, who, with care and patience, labored with a building committee to reproduce the former building with many conveniences which were not in the original building. By the middle of February 1957, one year after the fire, the building was ready for occupancy, since which time the Masonic Orders have been meeting in it.

Harold A. Rowley was elected Master in 1957 and immediately

got busy planning for the completion of one century of Masonry in Corvallis.

Current officers of the Lodge: Harold A. Rowley, Master; Willard A. Hamlin, SW; Nigel E. Rodgers, JW; Cecil Hollister, Tr.; Lester E. Stutz, Sec.; Wilman W. Obrist, SD; Gayle S. McQuery, JD; Chas. L. Clark, SS; Harold W. Moe, JS; John C. Garman, Mar.; Peter M. de Laubenfels, Ch.; Weldon A. Dunn, Tyler.

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