

**MANCHESTER LODGE No. 73**

**AF & AM**

**CHARTERED 1826**





## FOREWARD

Freemasonry is a fraternal order. It is part of a world wide group of men. They have been called the "QUIET FRATERNITY", because of the way they conduct their affairs, with little fanfare.

Freemasonry is thus explained:-It is a fraternal order that seeks to make better men through its firm belief in the brotherhood of man, Freemasonry proudly proclaims that it consists of men bound together by bonds of brotherly love and affection, it dictates to no man as to his beliefs, either religious or secular, it seeks no advantage for its members. Masonry is kindness in the home, honesty in business, courtesy in society, fairness in work, concern for the unfortunate, help for the weak, and love for the Supreme Being.

Freemasonry is not a religion, although it is religious in character, It does not pretend to take the place of religion nor serve as a substitute for the religious beliefs of its members. The basic tenents of the Fraternity is dedicated to teach its initiates and subsquent members, friendship, morality and brotherly love. Freemasons believe that strength of the family, community, and country rests with the men with strong convictions, sound ethical and moral values, and devotion to our system of government. Masons help one another strengthen their devotion to these enduring values.

Masonry is not a secret society, it does not hide its existence or its membership.

There are no attempts to conceal the purpose, aims, or principles of the fraternity. Its constitutions, rules and regulations are published and open for inspection for all to see.

Manchester Lodge #73, AF&AM, is the first and now oldest fraternal organization in the town of Manchester. Only a few Churches are older and were meeting places for the towns people prior to the incorporation of the town itself.

Manchester perhaps, has been a better town to live in because a Lodge of Masons was formed early in the life of the town, and helped to develop good citizens that served well both the town and state. Today there are many men belonging to the Fraternity who are involved in our local and state governments, these men do not exploit the fact that they are Masons, They are free to express and carry out their ideas of good governing as their individual conscience dictates. Many of the Brothers also serve their respective Churches with distinction.

To all Masons and interested persons who may read this book, we hope the following pages on the history of Manchester Lodge #73 will give you a picture of the life and development of our organization over the years past. We also hope and wish that the Lodge members will continue to carry on the work that our Brethren in the past had dedicated themselves and contributing financially to in providing us today with an organization and a Temple to continue the teaching of the precepts of Masonry.



# Manchester Lodge, No. 73, A. F. & A. M.



Instituted 1826

In May 1823, by act of the Connecticut General Assembly, Orford Parish was set off from East Hartford and the Town of Manchester came into being.

Three years later a group of men belonging to the Masonic Fraternity in other towns but residing in Manchester petitioned the Grand Lodge of the State of Connecticut for the right to form a Lodge in the town. The Grand Lodge did grant a Charter to these men on May 10, 1826. Manchester Lodge #73 Ancient Free and Accepted Mason's thus began their work.

This was one of the early signs that the town of Manchester was growing. The Lodge joined with the Methodist and Congregational Churches as places or organizations for the townspeople to meet in common causes.

Manchester Lodge #73 is the first and the oldest Fraternal Organization now meeting in the town.

The original charter is still in the hands of the Lodge's trustee's, it is in a safe deposit box in a local bank, a working charter is always in place on the altar when Lodge is at labor.

Many of the charter members of the Lodge had been members of Orient Lodge #62 of East Hartford, so that Orient Lodge is looked up to as our Mother Lodge. The offspring has proven healthy, an honor to our Mother Lodge.

There are two reports relative to the first day of the Lodges beginning. The first appeared in the Hartford Courant prior to the event and read as follows:

"The installation of Manchester Lodge will be attended at the Methodist Church in Manchester on Tuesday the Fifteenth at eleven o'clock A.M., where an oration upon the occasion will be delivered.

Procession will be formed at Mr. Dudley Woodbridges Hotel, who will be furnishing the refreshments for the day. The Brethren from neighboring Lodges are particularly invited to attend.

Attest: Jabez L. White Jr. Secretary, Pro Tem, August 10, 1826"

The next report is from the first elected secretary's minutes of the day, is recorded as follows:

"The Masonic Brethren which was to compose the Masonic Lodge #73 assembled at their Hall on Tuesday the 15th of August, 1826 where they were marshalled by Brother John Hubbard who had previously been appointed for that purpose and escorted by the Orient Lodge and a band of music to the Methodist Meeting House where an oration delivered by Brother Isaac Perkins, after which they were installed by Brother James M. Goodwin in Due and Ancient form.

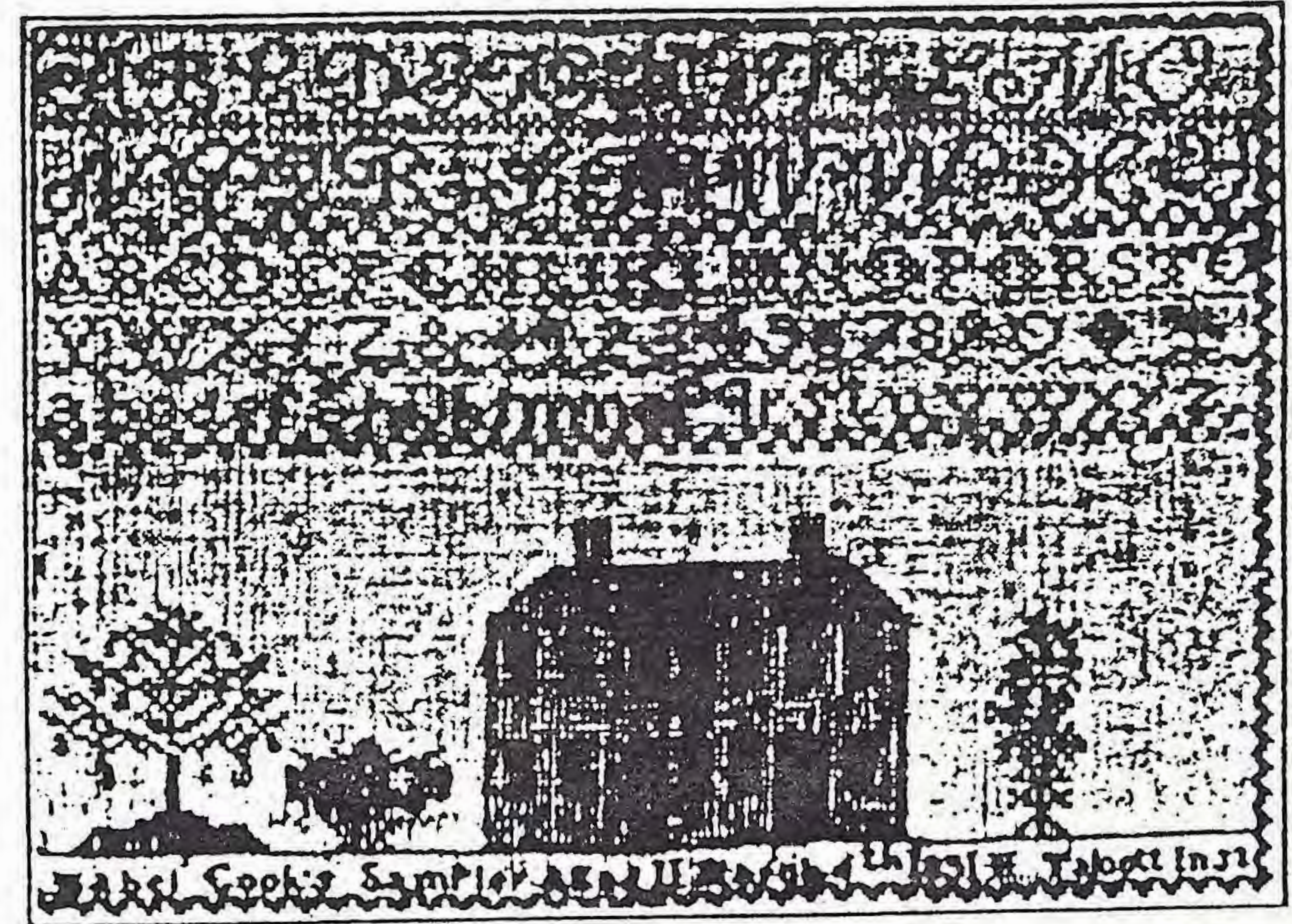
After which they returned to the Lodge Room where it was voted that Brothers Armin Bolles, John Mather and Wells Woodbridge be a committee to wait on and present to the Grand Lodge the new Lodges thanks and compensate the orator and request a copy of the oration. No other business being before the Lodge, it was closed in Due Form.

Attest: Erastus Vorra, Secretary."

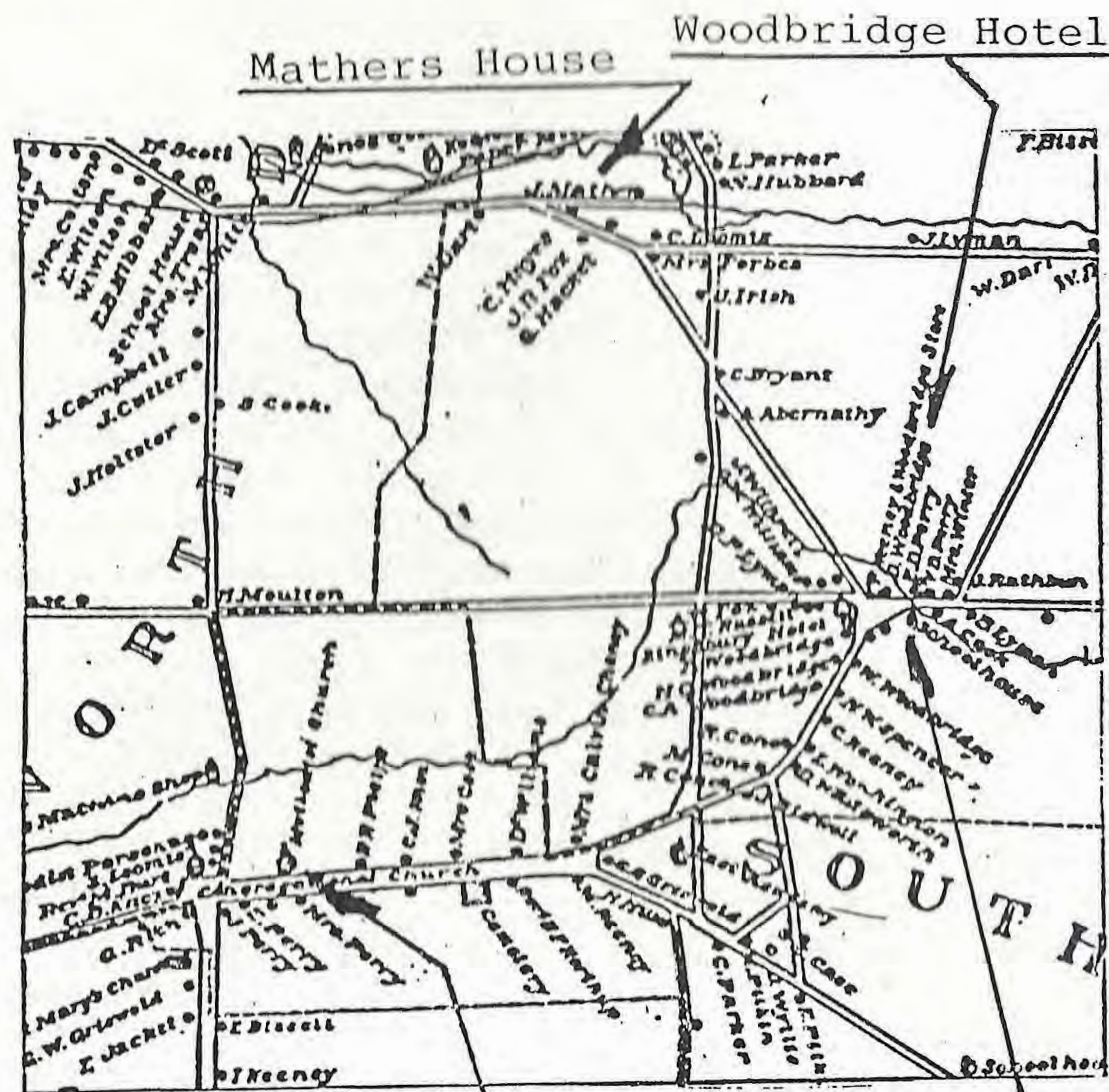




Looking west from the Manchester Green, The Methodist Meeting House is on the right, The Congregational Church in the background.



First Manchester Green School. From an old Sampler.



Methodist Meeting House | East District Schoolhouse

The Lodge Room that has been referred to was on the upper floor of a two room schoolhouse at Manchester Green, situated in the East District. This building had been built in 1816 while Manchester was still Orford Parish, a part of East Hartford. A Rev. Osborn established an Academy in the upper room of the brick schoolhouse in 1825. It was this building that the Masons used when organizing in 1826. The public Hall of this building became their Lodge rooms.

The Lodge met on the second floor of this two room schoolhouse, until about three years after the formation of Manchester Lodge #73, a wave of anti-Masonic sentiment broke over the entire nation.

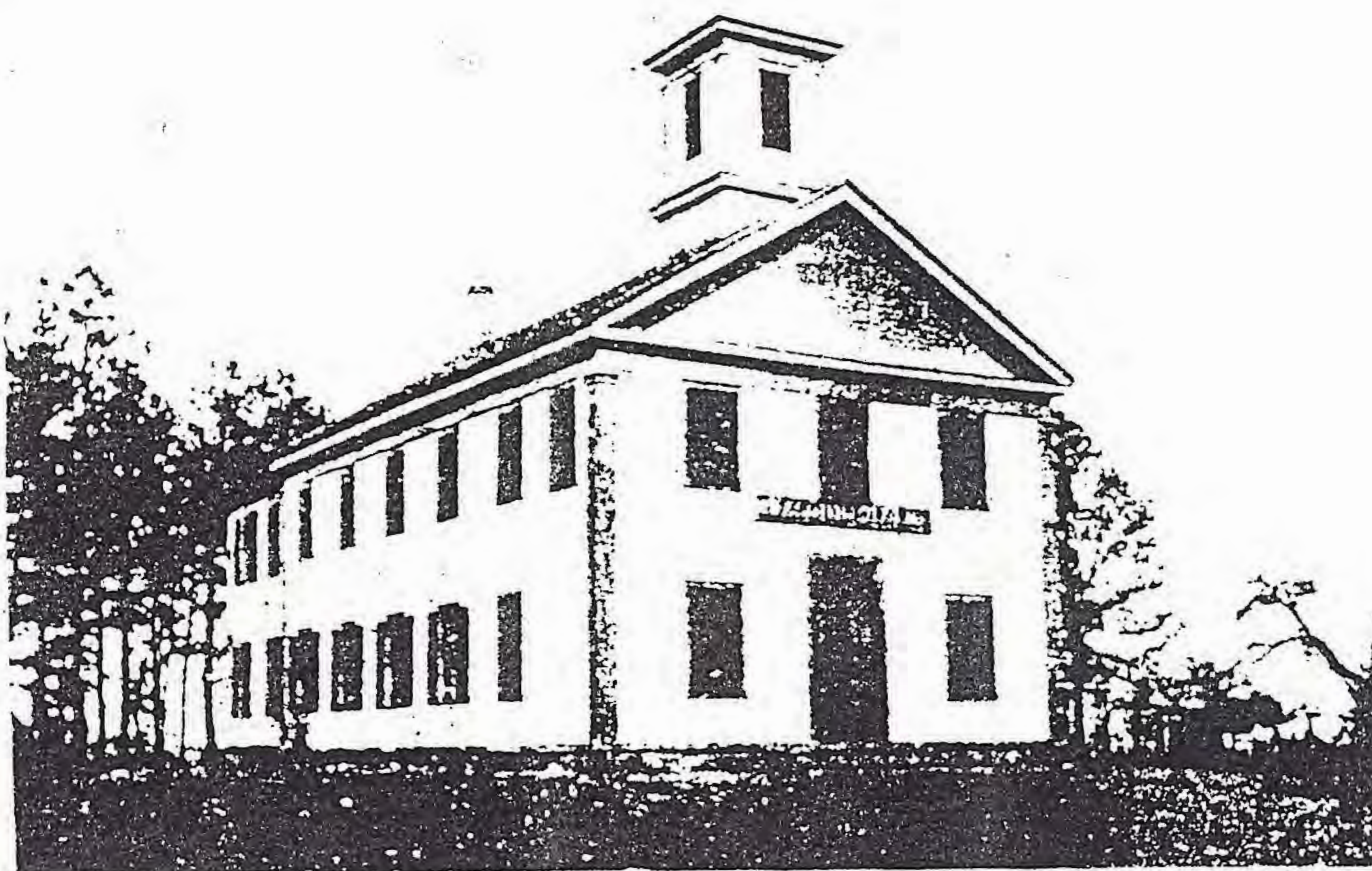
During those trying times the Lodge had given up their meeting place and for the next fifteen years, what few meetings were held, were held at the home of John Mather, who also served as Worshipful Master (1827 thru 1845)



Two  
Old  
Buildings



JOHN MATHER RESIDENCE  
Home of Manchester Lodge  
1829—1844



CENTER ACADEMY — Home of Manchester Lodge  
1855—1875 1886—1913

An important note, during this period of anti-masonic feeling, the Charter of the Lodge was not surrendered to the Grand Lodge as many Lodges had done. For this John Mather and that small group of dedicated brothers had kept Masonry alive in Manchester.

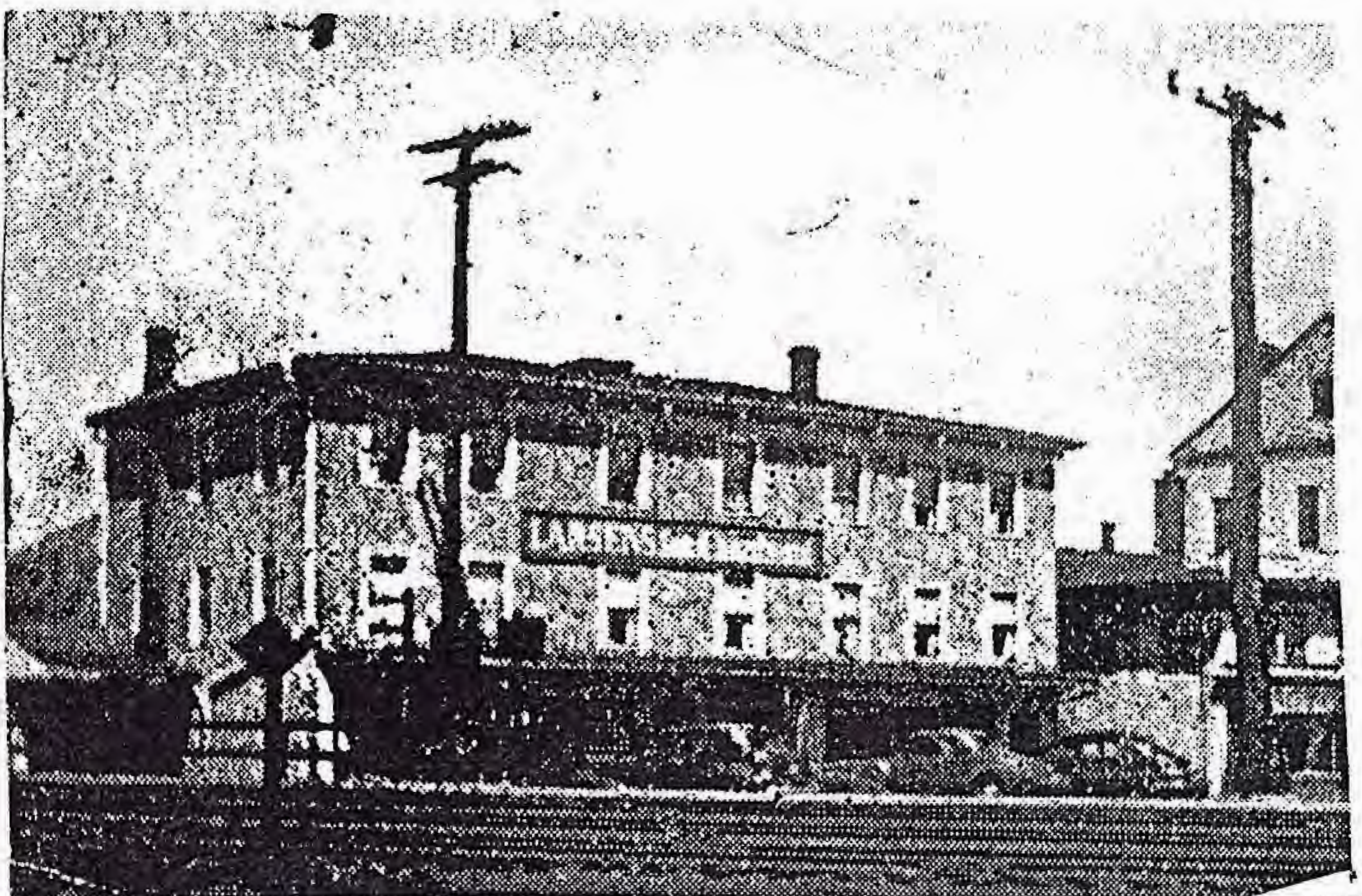
After the anti-masonic feeling had subsided the Lodge met again at the Green until about 1855, when they began meeting in the "Center Academy" building that had been built in the meantime a few feet west of the Methodist Meeting house, and they met there for twenty years, when they moved in 1875 to the Spencer Block in the North end of town. This building was torn down in 1967 to make way for the redevelopment of the North end.

At the last communication before removal, February 9, 1875, the following resolution was passed: "Whereas for the future welfare of the Lodge it has been deemed advisable to remove to another place of meeting and as we are about to leave the Old Hall occupied by us so many years and where most of the Brethren first saw Masonic Light and where the present prosperity of the Lodge was achieved, therefor,

Resolved--"that it is with regret that we bid adieu to our present Hall and that we separate from it as an old and trusted friend and that the many interesting meetings held, and scenes passed with those now gathered hope will ever fill a bright page in our memory and be cherished among our fondest recollections."

On Thursday evening, February 25, the new rooms in Spencer Hall were dedicated by officers of the Grand Lodge. The newspaper account of the event states that representatives were present from East Hartford, East Haddam, New Britain, Meriden, New Haven and other towns and that "over three hundred were present including the ladies, in spite of the inclement weather."

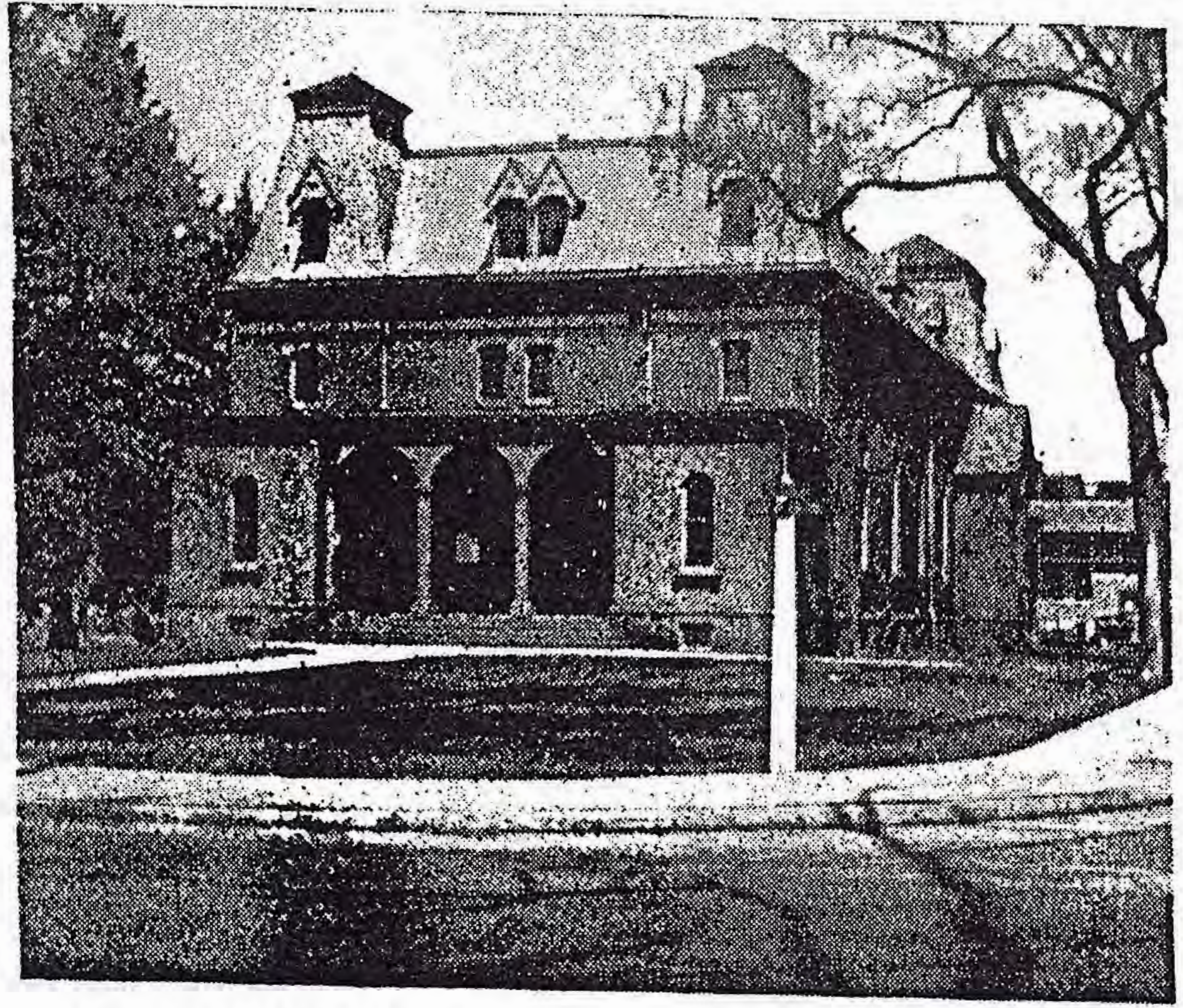




SPENCER BLOCK — Home of Manchester Lodge  
1875—1885.

On December 22, 1885, it was voted, "That on the expiration of our lease (Spencer Hall), which takes place January 1, 1886, we move to our property at the Center." The hall was not ready for occupancy as soon as expected and six communications, January 12, 1886 to March 23, 1886, were held at Cheney Hall. The dedication exercises on Wednesday June 2, 1886, on the sixtieth anniversary of receiving of the Charter for the Lodge.

In 1913 the old Center Academy was partly destroyed by fire and the Lodge removed its quarters to the Odd Fellows Hall. This building has been razed to enlarge the intersection at Main and East Center street. The old Academy building was sold and it was moved to Birch St. and remodelled into stores on the first floor and a Theater on the second floor.



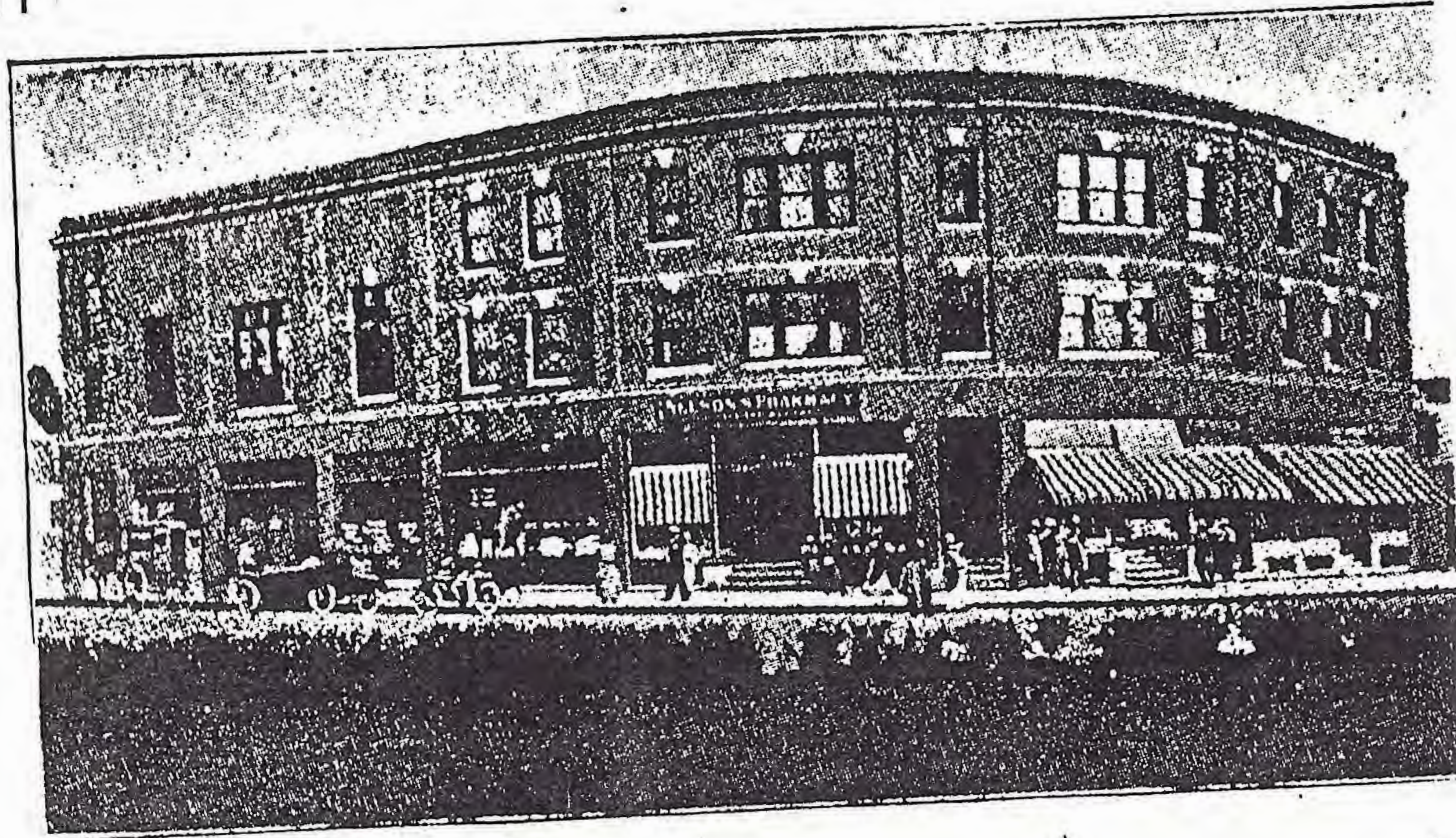
CHENEY HALL — Home of Manchester Lodge  
January to March 1886

It had become evident long before the loss of the Academy building that larger quarters must be provided for the Lodge on account of its growth in membership and for other appendant bodies looking for quarters.

The old Center Academy property belonged to a corporation. Many of the Lodge brothers owned stock and the Lodge itself owned some. The stock was sold for \$330.00 and the proceeds used to help pay for the furnishing the Spencer Hall rooms.

Apparently the old love was stronger than the new since agitation soon began to return to Center Academy. On April 26, 1881, it was voted to buy a "controlling interest in the Center Academy". Through a committee enough stock was purchased to control the property from William Hunniford for \$425.00. The records show that most of the purchase price was raised by subscription and that the funds for making needed repairs were secured the same way.





ODD FELLOWS BUILDING — Home of Manchester Lodge  
1913--1927

The corner section of the property was sold to the U. S. Government for \$12,000.00 in 1911. The proceeds from this sale along with profits from the annual balls averaging about \$200.00 a year, together with savings from fees, dues, rentals and other sources of income, were set aside from time to time toward a building fund. At a communication held April 13, 1926, the building committee was authorized to erect a Temple in accordance with plans presented by the architect.

The cornerstone of our present Temple was laid with appropriate ceremonies by Grand Lodge officers on October 2, 1926, this ceremony was combined with the observance of the 100th Anniversary of the beginning of Manchester Lodge #73, AF & AM.

When the Temple was finally completed and the Grand Lodge was again prevailed upon to conduct the Dedication Ceremonies on October 8, 1927.

A room was set aside outside of the Main Lodge room and dedicated to the memory of John Mather the first elected Worshipful Master of Manchester #73. The north wall of this room has two doors and a fireplace mantle, that had been given to the Lodge by the owners of the house that John Mather had owned and where so many meetings had been held during that Morgan period, when Masonry was dormant. The large stone in front of the fireplace in the McKay Social room came also from the Mather house. This room a fitting tribute to a dedicated Mason.

After the dedication ceremonies a banquet was held for 500 brothers. Following the banquet a special communication was held in the Lodge Room, where the Master Mason's Degree was conferred on a candidate, this being the prelude to many more Brothers being raised to the Sublime Degree of a Master Mason.



PRESENT HOME 1927



Since the opening of the new Temple, other rooms have been named after distinguished Masons. R. LaMotte Russell, (P.M. 1914) was honored by having the room in back of the secretarys desk dedicated in his name, for his work during the depression years, in preventing the loss of the Temple from foreclosure of the mortgage on the Temple.

Another most deserving brother on the anniversary of his 30th year as organist for Manchester #73, Brother James W. McKay was honored by having the social room named after him.

HONORABLE MENTION

Three of Manchester Past Masters have attained the Highest office of the Grand Lodge of Connecticut.

Brother James McCormick was made a Mason in the old Center Academy in the fall of 1853, became Worshipful Master in 1855 and held the office for three years. He moved to Windsor and on May 15, 1866 was given a demit to serve as Worshipful Master of Washington Lodge by appointment of the Grand Lodge. The Lodge in Windsor had lost its Charter in 1838 and was at this time restored. In 1881 Bro. McCormick was elected Grand Master of the Grand Lodge and held the office for 3 years.

Brother Frank W. Havens Master of #73 in 1883, 1884 and 1886 was elected Grand Master in 1898. Later 1911-13 held the office of Grand Secretary.

Brother Fred A. Verplanck, honored and respected by the Manchester Brethren as their most illustrious representative in Masonry, was Master of No. 73 in 1899 and 1900 and was elected Grand Master in 1910.

Brothers Havens and Verplanck also held high office in connection with the Masonic Charity Foundation of Connecticut. Bro. Havens served on the Board of Managers five years and was President for two years, Bro. Verplanck had served on the Board for many years and was President for Seven years. Those who know even casually the history of the Wallingford Home and Hospital, it was apparent Bro. Verplanck services in connection with the "Foundation" was very efficient and valuable.

Mention is made to three representatives of Manchester Lodge who had served as members of the Grand Lodge of Connecticut. In this connection we must mention that Bro. Asa P. Fitch, who affiliated in Manchester Lodge April 11, 1876, coming from Warren Lodge, Coventry. In 1879 he held the office of Junior Warden of #73 and in 1880 that of Senior Warden. He moved to Hartford a little later and affiliated with Hartford Lodge #88. In 1905 he was elected Grand Master of Conn.

At the Grand Lodge annual communication in 1993, Brother Russell W. McClelland was elected Grand Secretary, serving this office with distinction and honor to his mother Lodge.

Many have also answered the call of the Grand Master when he was trying to fill the many committees needed to keep the Grand Lodge running smoothly, there have been several Brothers who have served as District Deputies, Associate Grand Marshals, others have been members of the Publications, Masonic Culture and Public Relations, or Custodians of the Work committees to name a few.

Others have directed their support to the Appendant Bodies and progressed through the chairs, going on to higher offices in the respective State organizations.



Locally many, many Brothers have given themselves to their Churches as Lay Readers, Sunday School teachers, organists or members of their Churches Council. Serving the State and Community we have had Judges, Mayors, Police Chiefs, Constables, Selectmen, Town Directors and Town Managers.

If all the Brethren who have served their Community, Manchester Lodge #73 or the Grand Lodge, serving with Fidelity and Honor, without thought of remuneration were to be mentioned, this book would not have enough pages. All we can say to these Brothers is, "Thanks for a job well done".

### CLUBS OR ORGANIZATIONS ASSOCIATED

#### WITH MANCHESTER LODGE

Fellowcraft Club; Square Circle Club; Square Head Club; Tuscan Lodge #126; Friendship Lodge #145; Temple Chapter #53, Order of Eastern Star; Delta Chapter #51, Royal Arch Masons; Nutmeg Forest #116, Tall Cedars of Lebanon; Manchester Chapter, Order of Rainbow for Girls; John Mather Chapter, Order of DeMolay for Boys.

#### ACTIVITIES OF THE LODGE

No Lodge remains healthy without a vigorous program that each Worshipful Master plans for his year.

To implement some of his plans the Fellowcraft Club, its officers and members are called upon for their input. They assist at all Master Mason Degrees, they plan informative programs, which very often includes family and friends. Occasional trips are made for Degree work at the invitation of another Lodge, or perhaps it is only just a day trip to a big league ball game.

The Square Circle Club meets every Monday morning from 9:00A.M. to 12:00 noon, (except holidays) for card playing, game of pool, or just a cup of coffee and sociability. Retired Masons and their friends are always welcomed.

The Square Head Club is an informal group of Scandiavian Brothers who offer their services to the Worshipful Master when a fellow Scandiavian takes his Degrees.

A Community program that Manchester Lodge along with its sister Lodges, Tuscan #126 and Friendship #145 are very much a part of, is "BROTHERHOOD-IN-ACTION". The B.I.A. program started in 1968 as a state program, whose participants are members of the Knights of Columbus, B"NAI B"RITH and Prince Hall Masons. In Manchester the local Chapter of UNICO has joined. Since 1988 this group has sponsored a Community Breakfast. The profits from these events have gone to the University of Connecticut Childrens Cancer Fund to be used for the benefit of youngsters with a "life threatening illness. It has been possible to send youngsters with their families to Disney World, all expenses paid by money from B.I.A. Equipment for the University of Connecticut's Centers Pediatric Oncology Program in helping those youngsters to enjoy a little bit of happiness during their confinement. Locally Camp Kennedy a summer camp for disabled children has received monies to help pay for their programming. At the discretion of the B.I.A. committee, financial assistance has been given to families whose youngster has been stricken with a serious illness.

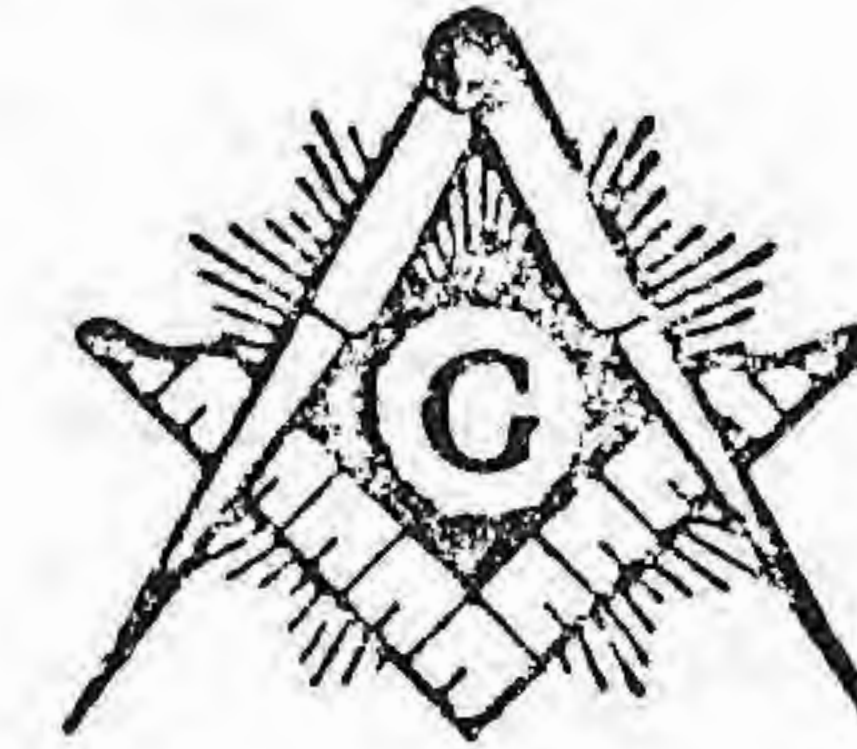


The Lodge itself has several fund designated for specific purposes. The "Widows and Orphans" fund may be drawn on at the discretion of the Worshipful Master, for the purpose that the funds name implies. A Scholarship Fund has been set and it supports the Manchester Scholarship Foundations annual awards to graduating students of the three schools in Manchester. Yearly programs are held by the Lodge to increase the monies available in the respective funds.

The Brethren of #73 continue to donate generously to the Grand Masters Appeal Fund in support of the Masonic Charity Foundation of Connecticut, that helps to enhance the quality of life for the elderly. Manchester #73 is cited each year as one of the top supporters of this Fund.

The Masonic Temple Corporation oversees the maintenance of the Temple. The Trustees, elected Trustees of Manchester Lodge are also Trustees of M.T.C.. There are five members and the Worshipful Master who serve. They have appointed a Comptroller whose prepares the annual operating budget for the M.T.C., and receives all monies from the rentals that the House Manager is in charge of, and other sources and pays all outstanding bills as directed to by the Trustees. A Secretary is also appointed to serve both groups. Neither have a vote in the deliberations. Several Trustees who have served with distinction have been elected Trustee Emeritus. Their continued involvement is a great help to the House Committee who have engaged in a "labor of Love" in all the of the work that is going into maintaining the "Temple", which is recognized as one of the finer meeting places within the state. Appendant Bodies are invited to send a representative to the Trustees meetings, their advice is sought and considered, they have no vote in the final decisions made.

The Corporation has a fund called "SPIN" (Structural Preservation Income Needed) and has solicited the membership to contribute to the fund. All money is earmarked for repairs to the building. Continual donations to this fund is encouraged.



The records of the Lodge through the years show that many Brothers have given much of their time and talent to the Lodge without aspiring to sit in the "Exalted Chair in the East" They served as Trustees of the Lodge and Temple Corp., house committee, Advisors to young men of DeMolay and the young girls of the Rainbow Chapter, Fellowcraft officers or just working with the Club when the Wor. Master needed help on the Master Mason Degree.

#### A FINAL WORD

All in all, the story of the life of Manchester Lodge #73, AF &AM, during the years now past make a record that every living Brother may well be proud. Masonry stands for **MORALITY, BROTHERLY LOVE and FEAR OF GOD.**

The Brothers of earlier years were good Masons and were helped thereby to be good citizens, serving well their Town and State. Beyond a shadow of doubt, Manchester has been a better Town to live in because a Lodge of Masons early took an abode within its borders.

The present membership of the Lodge may best perpetuate the traditions of the Fraternity if in the new century approaching they spend freely their time and strength in trying to make a better community and a better world. So did our fathers-- so shall we do.



# PAST MASTERS OF MANCHESTER LODGE #73

## A.F. & A.M.

*ARMIN BOLLES	1826 CHARTER	*C. LEROY NORRIS	1936
*JOHN MATHER	Master 1827	*CHARLES W. STRANT	1937
	1845	*HAROLD W. WALSH	1938
	FIRST ELECTED	*ROBERT McLOUGHLIN	1939
	MASTER	ROBERT J. BOYCE	1940
*PELEG C. REMINGTON	1846	*JOHN F. PICKLES	1941
*HENRY MARBLE	1847-48-49-51	*RICHARD H. McLAGAN	1942
*CHARLES CHENEY	1850	*JOHN A. TROTTER	1943
*JESSE LADD	1852	*HAYDEN L. GRISWOLD SR.	1944
*WILLIAM C. STRONG	1853	*T. WALTER REICHARD	1945
*RALPH W. HOUGHTON	1854	*JAMES W. MAHER	1946
*JAMES McCORMICK, PGM	1855-56-57	*ROBERT W. WILSON	1947
*HENRY GARDNER	1858-59-60	*IRVING M. WICKHAM	1948
*RALPH B. TREAT	1861	*W. SIDNEY HARRISON	1948
*RUDOLPHUS DeLos PERRY	1862	*RAYMOND D. BLANCO	1949
*FRANKLIN SPAULDING	1863	STEWART R. KENNEDY	1950
*EDWARD S. BRAINARD	1864	*ALBERT D. KRAUSE	1951
*CHARLES H. ARNOLD	1865-66-67-68-85-	*WALTER S. BROADWELL	1952
*JAMES W. CHENEY	1869	*GRAHAM L. CLARK	1953
*GEORGE M. BARBER	1870-71	*JOHN L. Von DECK, SR.	1954
*AARON COOKE, JR.	1872-73	ERIC S. ANDERSON	1955
*DEWITT C. HALL	1874-75-82	*HERBERT I. LEGGETT	1956
*WILLIAM C. WHITE JR.	1876	*MALCOLM ROBERTSON	1957
*JASPER FITCH	1877-78-79	*HAROLD W. LAVANWAY	1958
*A. J. SPENCER	1880	HAYDEN L. GRISWOLD JR.	1959
*WILLIAM A. BUSHNELL	1881	*WALTER C. WADDELL	1960
*FRANK W. HAVENS P.G.M.	1883-84-86	HOWARD F. WADDELL	1961
*GEORGE W. FERRIS	1887-88-89	ERLAND R. JOHNSON	1962
*BETHUME J. BARTLETT	1890	*DAVID R. SPENCER	1963
*JOHN D. HENDERSON	1891-92	CARL C. HULTGREN	1964
*BENJAMIN A. CADMAN	1893-94	WILLIAM R. SANDBERG	1965
*WILLIAM FERGUSON	1895-96	FRANK H. GAKELER	1966
*WESLEY B. PORTER	1897-98	*WALTER A. PERSON JR.	1967
*FRED A. VERPLANCK P.G.M.	1899-1900	WILLIAM A. REICHERT	1968
*CHARLES M. MURPHY	1901-02	RICHARD W. SPILLER	1969
*THOMAS GRAY	1903	JAMES A. STRATFORD	1970
*CHARLES P. MONTGOMERY	1904-05	ARNE P. STERUD	1971
*CHARLES W. FITCH	1906	ROBERT W. FERGUSON	1972
*J. BURDETTE HUBBARD	1907	*NORMAN F. PIERCE	1973
*WILLIAM WALSH	1908	ROGER S. ATHER	1974
*SAMUEL L. ROBINSON	1909	EARL M. ROBERTSON	1975
*NATHAN B. RICHARDS	1910	GEORGE R. OUILLETTE	1976
*WILLIAM S. HYDE	1911	JOSEPH M. HYLAND	1977
*WESLEY H. B. ROBBINS	1912	RUSSELL W. McCLELLAND	1978
*HERBERT INGHAM	1913	RICHARD A. BOLIN	1979
*R. LaMOTTE RUSSELL	1914	ROBERT F. SILVA	1980
*FRANCIS A. ROLSTON	1915	DONALD D. WELLS	1981
*FITCH B. BARBER	1916	WARREN L. POTTER	1982
*HARRY R. TROTTER	1917	ERNEST J. KJELLSON	1983
*ALBERT T. DEWEY	1918	JOHN O. NELSON	1984
*RAYMOND W. GOSLEE	1919	BRUCE F. ROTHWELL	1985
*CHARLES R. HATHAWAY	1920	ROBERT W. LOCKE	1986
*JOHN H. HYDE	1921	DAVID C. TOOMEY JR.	1987
*JAMES RICHMOND	1922	ERIC J. SINNAMON	1988
*MILLARD W. PARK	1923	YLO ANSON	1989
*JOSEPH WRIGHT	1924	RANDALL R. HALL	1990
*GEORGE O. NICHOLS	1925	F. MATTHEW HEINRICH JR.	1991
*W. GEORGE CLENNEY	1926	DAVID J. HERBERT	1992
*HERMAN E. MONTIE	1927	RICHARD W. BEAULIEU	1993
*JAMES O. McCAW	1928	WILLIAM G. BRYCE	1994
*HAROLD L. PRESTON	1929	JAMES E. HAMMITT	1995
*HERBERT L. TENNEY	1930	JAMES W. McKAY HONORARY	1995
*WILLIAM J. THORNTON	1931	Robert C. Gleckler	1996
*PETER WIND	1932		
*CHARLES H. BUNZEL	1933		
*ERNEST L. KJELLSON	1934		
*JOHN McLOUGHLIN	1935		

**\*DECEASED**