

1875 . . . 1975

ONE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY

Nanticoke Lodge, No. 172

A.F. & A.M.

(Chartered November 16, 1875)



FEDERALSBURG, MARYLAND

NOVEMBER 16, 1975

100th Anniversary Program

November 16, 1975—attendance at Divine services at Union United Methodist Church in Federalsburg with the sermon by the Rev. H. Dwight McAlister, R.W. Grand Secretary and M.W. Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Ancient Free Masons of South Carolina.

November 16, 1975—100th anniversary dinner at Federalsburg Firehouse.

MENU

MARYLAND FRIED CHICKEN

MASHED POTATOES AND GRAVY

SUCCOTASH

TOSSED SALAD

HOT ROLLS AND BUTTER

APPLE PIE A LA MODE

Dinner Served by

LADIES AUXILIARY, FEDERALSBURG VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY

DINNER PROGRAM

Master of Ceremonies ----- DR. GEORGE H. HENNING
Worshipful Master Nanticoke Lodge

Invocation ----- REV. H. DWIGHT MCALISTER
R.W. Grand Secretary and M.W. Past Grand Master of the
Grand Lodge of Ancient Free Masons of South Carolina

Dinner

Remarks ----- Worshipful Master

Greetings ----- FRED B. NOBLE
M.W. Past Grand Master the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted
Masons of Florida, one of the earliest persons to become a Master
Mason in the former Preston Lodge No. 207, having been a
Fellowcraft at the time of the granting of its charter in 1907.

Music ----- Washington College Band
Washington College, Chestertown, Maryland Professor John Klaus,
Conductor

Special Communication

NOVEMBER 21, 1975

7:30 P.M.

Reception of Most Worshipful Grand Master of Masons in Maryland,
J. Thomas Middleton, and the officers of the Grand Lodge of
A.F. & A.M. of Maryland

Remarks by Grand Master

Presentation of:

A ROSE UPON THE ALTAR

A Masonic Play in Two Acts
and an Interlude

by Carl H. Claudy

Adapted from the short story by the same author, "The Rose on the
Altar" published in the New York *Masonic Outlook*, December, 1931.

Presented by Nanticoke Lodge November 21, 1975

CAST

(In order of speaking)

Master Amos Andrews, played by --- Brother Howard M. Harris, P.M.
Treasurer and Past Master Sneed Brother Chester H. Tucker
Past Master Elliot Brother Raymond R. Wright
Past Master Denby Brother William L. Williamson
Chaplain Dr. Blair Brother Russell McQuay
Visitor, Brother Morris Brother
Brother Hiram Woodley Brother Marvin H. Smith, P.M.
Brother and Squire Bentley Brother
Secretary Jeffries Brother Clarence C. Stull
Brother Billy Morton Brother Robert E. McConnell, P.M.
Senior Warden Mather Brother
Dr. Witherspoon Brother Allen L. Smith, P.M.
Junior Deacon Brother William W. Craig
Tiler Brother Joseph A. Larmore

Time: The present.

Place: Doric Lodge room, Aaronton, a small town in the middle East,
off the main line of railroad. Doric Lodge meets every week.

ACT I: Evening, December 20. Lodge has just been opened on M.M. degree.

INTERLUDE: Midnight the same day.

ACT II: Evening, December 27. Lodge has just been opened at the annual St. John's Day Communication.

Beginning of the play; end of first Act and beginning of Interlude; end of Interlude and beginning of second Act; end of play, indicated by lowered lights. The lights are extinguished for ten seconds in the middle of Act II, to indicate lapse of one hour.

Brethren are requested to refrain from smoking, speaking, or taking part in the action, during the play.

The First Seventy-five Years of Nanticoke Lodge

REMARKS BY JEROME FRAMPTON, JR., P.M.

SEVENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

DECEMBER 1, 1950

Freemasonry was introduced into Maryland in 1750, just two hundred years ago, by the Provincial Grand Lodge of Massachusetts which issued a charter for the establishment of a Lodge at Annapolis. One hundred twenty-five years later Nanticoke Lodge #172 in Federalsburg received its charter. Throughout the years the sentiment of general benevolence among Masons has been a real and operative motive of action; not a vague and indefinite expression of philanthropy. As our ancient and honorable order claims for its highest objects to promote the harmony and good order of society, so likewise this urge must have been in the minds and hearts of the founders and organizers of Nanticoke Lodge. One cannot study the history of our Lodge, as I have been privileged to do, without having been impressed with the devotion and sincerity of those who from time to time and from generation to generation have carried the burden of our beloved Order. The story of Nanticoke Lodge is primarily a human interest story; the story of the development of personality. The limitation of time will prevent the presentation to you of any but the outstanding highlights of this Lodge along with some of the interesting details. It will be, as you will observe, a story of people. May I say that the information for this paper has been secured from three principal sources: (1) from an enlightening and interesting paper, the full text of which is printed on our program, prepared for the 50th Anniversary celebration by our first Master, Silas Sparklin (2) from reading the minutes of each regular and special communication from 1884 to the present and (3) from talking with some of you about facts with which you are acquainted.

The seven charter members of this Lodge were W. J. Mowbray, William H. Alburger, James H. Moore and Charles B. Conaway, all members of Temple Lodge at Denton; Dr. W. D. Noble, a member of Coates Lodge at Easton; David O. P. Elliott and Silas Sparklin of Choptank Lodge at East New Market. Three present members of our Lodge are closely related to charter members: Past Master J. Paul Mowbray, now a life member, and D. Willard Sparklin are sons of charter members and Past Master Jerome Frampton, Jr. is a grandson of a charter member. Where the Lodge first met we are not sure, but we are reasonably certain the meeting place was on the West side of Main Street since the charter was presented on November 16, 1875 in Federalsburg, Dorchester County, Maryland. Charles E. Hayward, A. Young, Sr., John Foble and James Foble, all of Cambridge, came and conferred the Past Master Degree on Brother Silas

Sparklin. W. J. Mowbray was Senior Warden with David O. P. Elliott serving as Junior Warden. Since those days in 1875 many Masons have come and gone and today the oldest living Past Master of this Lodge in point of service is William J. Warren who is here tonight and who was elected Master December 16, 1910 taking his place in the East on January 13, 1911. Though our earliest records were destroyed by fire in 1898, Brother Sparklin stated "The financial part of our work was no trifling matter." In spite of these difficulties, which I may say have not as yet been completely eliminated, ministers of the gospel were not charged any fees. This practice was continued until December 20, 1889 when the By-Laws were changed. The point was passed on May 1, 1891 when the Secretary was "instructed to notify the several ministers of the gospel who are members of this Lodge that unless payment of dues was made, action would be taken looking to suspension." This procedure, I might say, was not uncommon during our first fifty years as the minutes are filled with suspensions and threats of suspensions—not against the clergy alone but also among the lay brethren.

When J. Paul Mowbray moved to Federalsburg in 1882, the Lodge was meeting over the store operated by Rufus C. Harris, this building being on the site of the present Holt Oil Company office building. After this building burned, the Lodge met in the hall over the store now operated by Elmer Meredith. Except for a few meetings, which were held in the Odd Fellows Lodge Room over the old postoffice, the Lodge continued to meet on South Main Street until the dedication of our present Temple in 1920.

Our first recorded minutes cover the communication of July 4, 1884 at which time D. O. P. Elliott was Master and Edward E. Goslin, Secretary. Eight brethren were present including one visitor from the Cleveland, Tenn. Lodge. All present, except the visitor, occupied an office. The principal business was the receiving of the petition of John T. Elliott accompanied by the \$10.00 fee. On November 21, 1902, Roland T. Anderson, the father in law of Everett Nuttle, was the first person recorded as paying a \$25.00 fee instead of the \$10.00. On September 19, 1919 the fee to accompany a petition was raised to \$40.00 only to be increased again to \$50.00 on December 17, 1920. On November 18, 1921 the Lodge passed a motion to the effect that the \$40.00 fee should remain in effect. On November 14, 1949 the fee was again increased to \$50.00. So many changes of mind on this particular subject made me wonder whether there was any confusion between the Masonic Lodge and the Ladies Aid which in 1885 was granted the used of the Lodge room!

This has been a Lodge which, in spite of certain continued financial limitations, has been built on friendship and brotherly love—to be sure not to the degree which we would like, but surely recognizable as a fundamental principle throughout our long history, practiced on many occasions without cost to the Lodge or any member thereof. One of

the first, of many examples, which might be cited is recorded in the minutes of December 19, 1884, the communication at which my Grandfather Alburger was elected Master. A resolution was unanimously adopted: "That a committee be named by the Worshipful Master to call upon Brother P. Sizer and present to him our goodwill and fellowship and ascertain whether or not this Lodge can be of any service to him in his present feeble health." This evidence of brotherly love was apparently quite effective for on January 2, 1885 Brother Sizer, who was from New York, was sufficiently improved to personally "thank the Lodge for the courteous remembrance extended to him." On July 3, 1904 the Christ Methodist Protestant Church cornerstone was laid "in due Masonic form", according to the minutes, after which the members of the Lodge attended dedicatory services, \$30.00 having been contributed to the Church in the name of Nanticoke Lodge. Following the San Francisco earthquake and fire in 1906 this Lodge contributed \$25.00 for the relief of Masons in that area. The same year we gave Lodge furniture to the newly chartered Preston Lodge #207. During World War I we contributed to the work of the Y.M.C.A., the Red Cross and sent a book to each of our six members in the Armed Services. Eighty-five percent of our resident members purchased Liberty Bonds and our Lodge purchased \$400 worth of War Savings Stamps. In 1926 we gave one brother a \$50.00 Christmas present; in 1927 we contributed to the Mississippi Flood sufferers; in 1931 we made a gift to the Public Health Nursing Service of Caroline County; in 1941 and again in 1943 we contributed to the Queen Charlotte Maternity Hospital in London; during World War II our brethren in the Armed Services were not required to pay dues; Masonic Service donations were made by us in 1943 and in 1946; and Bonny Blink has been helped by our contributions. These are but a few of the tangible and diversified expressions over a long period of years.

On November 12, 1886 there is the first recorded Masonic Burial by Nanticoke Lodge, for on that date we conducted Masonic rites for a charter member, D. O. P. Elliott. Down through the years, even within the week, death has taken its toll. A note to the minutes of March 20, 1914 written by the then Secretary, Harvey D. Williams, reads: "Just as we were about to partake of refreshments after the close of the Lodge, Brother George F. Galloway came and announced the death of Brother Edward E. Goslin to our consternation and sorrow." Eighteen years later, almost to the day, the painting of this distinguished brother, which now hangs in our lounge, was presented to the Lodge. And many times since we have been forced to repeat the words, "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

The first record of a Masonic dignitary attending our Lodge occurred on March 4, 1887 when Dr. Marshall, the Grand Master of Masons of Delaware, conferred the Third Degree on A. W. Sisk and S. M. Morgan. Twenty-nine brethren were present. Since

then we have been frequently honored, as we are tonight, by having in our midst men who have attained distinction in Masonic circles. Past Grand Master Harry B. Wright, our esteemed neighbor who is here tonight, was first mentioned in our minutes when on March 16, 1917, he delivered the Third Degree lecture on the occasion of the raising of Oliver Wood Spicer. On October 5th of the same year, Warren S. Seipp, who later became Grand Master and who visited our Lodge many times including the dedication of this Temple, addressed the Lodge as Grand Lecturer.

The Lodge room has from time to time been improved and renovated. Extensive improvements were made in 1887 by a Committee composed of Edward E. Goslin, John T. Elliott and William H. Alburger. On April 15th the Lodge approved the bill in the amount of \$70.03. In 1910 electric lights were installed in the Lodge Room by the Idlewild Electric Light Heat and Power Co. at a total cost of \$25.00. These lights, or others like them, went out on January 22, 1934, for on that night Brother Edmond Neal was of necessity installed as Worshipful Master by candlelight! The latest improvement, made this year, though more costly than some of these past improvements, has given us one of the most beautiful Lodge rooms in the State. Yes, costs have changed considerably for the Treasurer's report for the year 1887 shows receipts of \$170.90; disbursements of \$159.66 leaving a balance of \$11.24. Brother Sparklin, by the way, was again serving as Master during that year.

This has been a Lodge of banquets and many of us sincerely trust that this custom may again be revived. For years the Masonic Banquet was the leading social event of the season. You remember, don't you? On December 5, 1902 the first reference to a Masonic Banquet was made. Brother Thomas S. Holt, whose son is here tonight, was appointed as a committee of one to consider the advisability of having a Banquet. On December 19th he reported favorably and on February 6, 1903 the banquet was held. Present were thirty members of Nanticoke Lodge; fifty-three members of Cambridge Lodge #66; twenty members of Temple Lodge #128 of Denton; twenty-four members of Choptank Lodge #156 of East New Market; twenty-two members of Hiram Lodge #21 of Seaford and eight members of Gethsemane Lodge #28 of Reliance. With guests, the total present numbered 175 persons. Edward E. Goslin, Worshipful Master, was Toastmaster. When I tell you there were fourteen speakers, you can well understand why the program did not conclude until midnight! Among the speakers were Hon. Thomas J. Shryock, Grand Master of Masons of Maryland, Rev. Thomas S. Holt, Harvey L. Cooper, Albert G. Towers, Rev. John L. Johnson, Isaac L. Warren and Judge Henry Lloyd. I hate to admit it, but I remember most of those men! The menu, by the way, consisted of Cold Turkey, Cold Roast Beef, Fried Oysters, Sliced Ham, Potato Salad, Celery, Slaw, Mixed Pickles, Oranges, Grapes, Bananas, Apples, Ice Cream, Cake, Coffee and Cigars. A special

train was operated for the convenience of the visitors and after taking the Seaford Masons home, the train returned to Federalsburg to pick up those from East New Market and Cambridge.

On December 16, 1904 Grand Master Shryock granted a dispensation for the Lodge to meet in Federalsburg on the first and third Friday evenings of each month and at Preston on the second and fourth Friday evenings with the specific ruling that the Charter had to be in Preston when the Lodge opened. On November 2, 1906 a group of Preston members petitioned Nanticoke Lodge to recommend a dispensation empowering them to start a new Lodge. Nanticoke Lodge granted this petition and in due time the Preston Lodge was chartered, about which you will hear more a little later this evening.

A bit of personal history, which of course proved interesting to me, was revealed in my studies. My father was raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason just one week prior to my birth. Little excitement, however, was caused by the event of my coming into the world for present at a Lodge communication on that day were my father and grandfather!

On March 1, 1918 the Worshipful Master, now our faithful Secretary, Brother William A. Wheatley, Jr., appointed a committee to look after the matter of securing a location for a Masonic Home in Federalsburg. Thomas H. Chambers, Edward E. Nuttle and George H. Jefferson constituted the committee. Three months later the Lodge turned down a motion to purchase a house then tenanted by the late John W. Hurlock in the amount of \$1450.00. On March 1, 1919 a so called Building and Location Committee was appointed consisting of Thomas H. Chambers, J. Jerome Framptom and Harry E. Kinder. A Finance Committee consisting of Harry W. Davis, Edward E. Nuttle, Harry M. Carroll, Harvey H. Long and George H. Jefferson was appointed. On May 16th the Lodge voted to purchase for the sum of \$3000 the building known as the Davis Block, and on the 5th of September of that year the Trustees were empowered to borrow money for the erection of the Temple. This cornerstone was laid on October 29, 1919 with Deputy Grand Master Warren S. Seipp and other Grand Officers present. Our minute book contains the signatures of all Masons present. C. Homer Turner was Master of the Lodge when the Temple was begun, and he was placed in charge of the work. Harry F. Fluharty, a local contractor, was in charge of the carpenters. In order to save money, much of the work on the Temple was done by members of the Lodge. The total cost amounted to something over \$35,000. On August 20, 1920 the Building Committee announced they were ready to turn the building over to the Lodge and on December 8, 1920 the dedication took place with Frank Brack as Worshipful Master. Grand Master Seipp, assisted by other Grand Officers, dedicated the Temple. Brother Silas Sparklin, the only living charter member, spoke. One hundred sixty-five Masons, whose names we have, were present.

The record for speed in receiving Masonic degrees in Nanticoke Lodge is held, I believe, by Montgomery J. Shroyer, brother-in-law of Brother T. Sewell Noble. Brother Shroyer, by special dispensation, received his three degrees on successive nights—January 6th, 7th and 8th, 1919. You may be interested to know that for some reason unknown to me, many special communications were held during the earlier days of our Lodge. The Lodge has suspended meetings over a period of years, except for the usual summer recess, only once—in 1918. A notation on September 6th reads: "All public meetings discontinued for several weeks—Flu."

In 1921 the Order of the Eastern Star was organized, and in 1925 the Order of DeMolay was organized. In each case they were permitted to use the Lodge room. On August 10, 1923, at the request of the Grand Master, this Lodge, along with other Masonic Lodges, held a Memorial Service for our late brother, Warren G. Harding, President of the United States. On September 4, 1925 plans were formulated for a 50th Anniversary Banquet which was held on November 17, 1925. On the same date, September 4th, the first committee was appointed to solicit funds for the reduction of the Temple debt. We still have such a committee! On October 17, 1929 meeting nights were changed from the first and third Fridays to the second and fourth Mondays. On February 13, 1950 we had the singular experience in this Lodge of having three brothers raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason by their Father. Brother Dufferin McConnell raised James, John and Robert.

And so, through the years, Masonic history has been made in this and many other communities throughout the world. God grant us strength to press ever forward toward the mark of our high calling that those brethren who follow us may rise up and call us blessed. Let us keep the light of Masonry shining ever brightly that during the next three quarters of a century Nanticoke Lodge may enjoy an illustrious and noble history as significant as those seventy-five years which have now drawn to a close. May we build our temple of friendship and brotherly love on the sound, immovable and never changing foundation of trust in God, that when our brittle thread of life is cut, we may welcome the grim tyrant Death, and receive him as a kind messenger sent from our Supreme Grand Master to translate us from this imperfect to that all-perfect, glorious, and celestial Lodge above, where the Supreme Architect of the Universe presides.

Nanticoke Lodge 1950-1975

A point of beginning in recounting the outstanding events of the last 25 years and updating the history of Nanticoke Lodge prepared by P.M. Jerome Framptom, Jr., for our 75th anniversary might be the 75th anniversary itself. On December 1, 1950, a special communication was held to commemorate our 75th anniversary. Grand Master Jacob S. New and his officers were in attendance. The minutes record a

banquet followed by the Lodge session with a total of 136 people in attendance, 14 Grand Lodge officers, 27 Past Masters of our Lodge, 66 members of Nanticoke Lodge, 7 visitors, 6 Grand Lodge visitors, 5 Masters of nearby Lodges, Right Worshipful Past Grand Master Harry B. Wright and 6 persons "not counted elsewhere." In addition to the history of Nanticoke Lodge, Past Grand Master Harry B. Wright, a Past Master of Preston Lodge No. 207, spoke on the relationship of Nanticoke and Preston Lodges. In this regard it is of interest to point out that Dr. Carl N. Everstine in his *History of the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of Maryland, 1888-1950* (1951) records at page 140 that the May communication in Grand Lodge in 1894, "Nanticoke Lodge No. 172, Federalsburg, Caroline County, petitioned for and was granted the right to hold alternate meetings in the town of Preston."

The 75th anniversary celebration was completed with attendance at divine services at Union Methodist Church on Sunday evening, December 3. The Lodge was escorted to the church by Chesapeake Commandery No. 10 and Cambridge Commandery No. 14, Knights Templar. Rev. Roy T. Thawley, Pastor of Union Church, Chaplain of Nanticoke Lodge, Past Grand Chaplain of the Grand Lodge of Delaware, and a member of Oriental Lodge No. 27, Wilmington, delivered the sermon. The Secretary recorded a total of 102 in attendance.

The week of the 75th anniversary was an eventful one in that in a seven day period Nanticoke Lodge was opened a total of five times, possibly setting a record. Its regular communication was held on Monday evening, November 27, at which Brothers John Calvin Rawlins and James Harvey Williamson were raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason. That had been preceded by a special communication on the afternoon of November 27 for the purpose of attending the funeral of Brother William Russell Morgan. (In that day Lodges did not open lodges of sorrow, but a special communication was held for each funeral service.) On Wednesday evening, November 29, a special communication was held for the purpose of conferring the entered apprentice degree on Brothers Ernest Tolbert Workman and Virgil James Wheatley. This was followed by the special communications of December 1 and December 5 relative to the 75th anniversary.

Back in 1949 Nanticoke Lodge had voted to furnish Ralph R. Hunt, son of our deceased Brother Ralph Raymond Hunt, a kit of tools costing about \$65.00 upon his graduation from Thomas Rankin Patton Masonic Institution for Boys at Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania. This came into fruition upon his graduation in the class for "Machine Shop Practice" on May 27, 1951. Brother Raymond R. Wright, who then resided at Sharon Hill, Pennsylvania, attended the graduation exercises as a representative from Nanticoke Lodge. Lodge members were gratified when notified that young Hunt had received the prize for "greatest influence for good and wholesome leadership" while in attendance at the school.

In an earlier day when there was no Bay Bridge and ferry service across Chesapeake Bay ended at 8:00 p.m. visits from the Grand Master and the Grand Lodge officers did not frequently occur. They have occurred with greater frequency in the last 25 years. On January 9, 1953, Most Worshipful Grand Master John B. Hospelhorn raised Brother W. Burnley Wyatt to the sublime degree of Master Mason. Grand Master Charles H. Cover did likewise for Brother Millard Curtis Ayers, Jr., on December 9, 1957. At the same time he presented P.M. William J. Warren, then as now our oldest Past Master in point of service, with a pin signifying the fact that he had been a Master Mason for 50 years. Grand Master Cover returned on May 28 of 1958 for the purpose of presenting 50-year pins to Past Masters Harvey D. Williams and Harry H. Nuttle and Brothers T. Sewell Noble and J. Jerome Framptom.

On October 26, 1959, Most Worshipful Grand Master A. Wayne Reed and the officers of Grand Lodge, including Past Grand Masters John H. Hessey, Harry L. Robinson, Harry O. Schroeder, and Jacob S. New, visited Nanticoke Lodge for the purpose of conferring the Master Mason degree upon Brother Wilmer Fell Davis, Jr.

Grand Master Martin H. Kinsinger and the officers of Grand Lodge were present on March 27, 1961, at which time the Master Mason degree was conferred upon Brothers James Edward Banning and Gilbert Gerald Banning, sons of Brother Gilbert A. Banning.

On March 11, 1974, Most Worshipful Grand Master Philip B. Matthews and his officers conferred the Master Mason degree upon Brothers Michael Bruce Hancock and Clarence Cecil Stull. Brother Paul E. Ellis, then Most Worshipful Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Delaware, was also in attendance.

Brother Framptom recorded in the first 75 years of history our sponsorship of a DeMolay chapter. Unfortunately, this fell by the wayside. However, under the leadership of then Worshipful Master J. Edward Banning, Nanticoke Club of the order of DeMolay was formed in 1974. This is now a duly constituted chapter. On March 24, 1975, that club presented to the Lodge a working tool supported by a square.

Brother Framptom recorded in his 1950 history that we have "been a Lodge of banquets and many of us sincerely trust this custom may again be revived. For years the Masonic Banquet was the leading social event of the season. 'You remember, don't you?'" It had fallen by the wayside during the depression. Our minutes of February 15, 1955, will reflect:

"R.W.B. Elrick made motion that we hold our annual banquet this year and each year in the future in March or April, whichever will suit the committee and the people who are serving the banquet. The motion was seconded by Thomas R. Davis and carried."

Then, on April 11 of that year, the secretary recorded that "P.M. E. L. Bailey stated that the banquet was the best thing that had happened to the Lodge for some time." We are glad to say that this custom has been continued. The exact reason for the February 15 motion by Brother Elrick does not appear, but the minutes on January 24 of the same year reflect another motion by Brother Elrick, seconded by P.M. Roman Morgan and duly carried, that the annual banquet be held during the month of March "to which we may invite our wives or sweethearts or other guests and that the Junior Warden shall be chairman and the Senior Warden and Senior Deacon shall assist him with a committee whom he shall select."

Mention was made in the earlier history of the appointment by then Worshipful Master William A. Wheatley, Jr., in 1918 of a committee to look after the matter of securing a location for a Masonic home in Federalsburg. As we all know, and as the earlier history reflects, this was followed by the erection of our present Masonic Temple in 1919. On February 25, 1957, almost 37 years after the building committee announced on August 20, 1920, that it was ready to turn the building over to the Lodge, the trustees reported that our mortgage was finally paid. Many of the older members will remember a campaign in connection with our 75th anniversary to reduce that mortgage. Brother C. Homer Turner, born about the time that Nanticoke Lodge was chartered, was the Master at the time of the building of our Temple and the masonry contractor for its building. On September 16, 1958, a special communication of Nanticoke Lodge was held for the purpose of conducting Masonic graveside services for Brother Turner.

One of the beloved past masters of Nanticoke Lodge was Brother J. Paul Nowbray. Upon the presentation to him of a 50-year pin on March 23, 1959, the secretary noted that Brother Mowbray "responded with a few remarks in reminiscence: He said he was 'instituted on November 16, 1875, and Nanticoke Lodge was instituted on November 19, 1875.' Brother Mowbray served two years in the East [(1915-1916)]. He operated the slide projector for many years." At the recent centennial celebration of Gethsemane Lodge No. 28, A.F. & A.M., at Reliance, Delaware, P.G.M. Paul E. Ellis in his address on "The Heritage of Gethsemane Lodge," referred to the fact that officers of Nanticoke Lodge, among others, from time to time conferred degrees in Gethsemane Lodge to assist them. He mentioned one such occasion when it was suggested that the Nanticoke Lodge officers proceed to open. He stated that when it came time to close the brother who was acting as Junior Deacon informed the Tiler, "The JIG is up." Brother Claude D. Ellis, past master of Gethsemane Lodge and its present treasurer, later identified the Junior Deacon on that occasion as being Brother Mowbray. All who knew him can well imagine his having said something of that sort. Our minutes of May 23, 1966, reflect the attendance of Brother Mowbray at a regular communication of Nanticoke Lodge. He was at that time a patient

at Deer's Head State Hospital and arrangements had been made to bring him up to that meeting. The minutes record that he "gave a few of his witty remarks." Brother Mowbray's father, William J. Mowbray, was a charter member of Nanticoke Lodge and its Worshipful Master in 1881.

There have been a number of occasions over the years in which fathers have conferred the Master Mason degree upon their sons or raised their sons or both. On May 12, 1947, Brother Clinton S. Poole who was Master in 1917, conferred the degree upon and raised his sons, Brothers Henry Clinton Poole and Thomas Frederick Poole. Brother Frampton alluded to the fact that on February 13, 1950, Brother Dufferin McConnell raised his three sons, Brothers James Richard McConnell, John Hershey McConnell, and Robert Edward McConnell. The minutes on that occasion record that Brother James N. Trice, Worshipful Master of Preston Lodge No. 207, said that "he was quite confident that the raising of three sons by their father had probably never been done before in the history of Masonry in Maryland." There are three recorded instances during the last 25 years of fathers conferring the entered apprentice degree upon their sons: P.M. Wilmer Fell Davis upon Brother Wilmer Fell Davis, Jr., on December 29, 1958; P.M. Edgar M. Fisher upon Brother Allen Fisher on November 8, 1965; and P.M. Marvin H. Smith upon Brother Marvin Hugh Smith, Jr., on October 8, 1973. In the latter instance Brother Smith also gave the obligation. Also, on June 10, 1968, then Senior Warden Robert A. Fisher conferred the entered apprentice degree upon his own brother, Edwin McClellan Fisher, on June 10, 1968, with the lecture given by P.M. Edgar M. Fisher. Finally, on October 8, 1973, P.M. Marvin H. Smith conferred the entered apprentice degree and gave the obligation to his son, Brother Marvin Hugh Smith, Jr.

Instances of fathers raising their sons or conferring the Master Mason degree upon their sons include: October 26, 1959, Brother Wilmer Fell Davis, Jr., was raised by his father, Past Senior Grand Warden Wilmer Fell Davis; March 22, 1964, Brother Russell M. Justis was raised by his father, Brother J. E. Justis, P.M. of Chesapeake Lodge No. 158, Onancock, Virginia; December 27, 1965, Brother Robert A. Fisher was raised by his father, P.M. Edgar M. Fisher who gave the lecture; May 22, 1968, P.M. Randolph Quillen raised his son, Brother Elrick Randolph Quillen; September 9, 1968, P.M. Edgar M. Fisher conferred the degree and raised his son, Brother Edwin McClellan Fisher; May 22, 1972, P.M. W. Randolph Quillen raised his son, Brother Ronald Hanks Quillen; and finally in the presence of Most Worshipful Grand Master Philip B. Matthews, P.M. Marvin H. Smith on May 27, 1974, conferred the Master Mason degree, gave the obligation and raised his son, Brother Marvin Hugh Smith, Jr.

Something a little bit different from the above took place on February 14, 1975, when Brother Albert Gerardi was raised by his son, Brother

Albert L. Gerardi, a member of Pendleton Lodge No. 144, West Virginia.

Gifts have been presented to Nanticoke Lodge over the years. In 1958 rough and perfect ashlar, jewels, and collar pieces were presented to the Lodge by the widow and friends of Brother Robert Kinder Noble in his memory. Working tools, square and compass were presented in memory of Brother Frank L. Williams, and two volumes of an encyclopedia on Masonry were presented by Mrs. Charles W. Becker in memory of P.M. Charles W. Becker. On April 14, 1969, the minutes record:

"P.M. Bro. William J. Warren, with the assistance of P.M. Bro. J. Jerome Frampton, Jr. and P.M. George W. Todd, presented to Nanticoke Lodge beautiful gavels and sounding blocks. The gavels and blocks are made of myrtlewood which is one of the hardest woods known and is very rare. This wood is found only in southern Oregon and the Holy Lands."

Our centennial year opened with the presentation on October 14, 1974, by Brother Walter Leslie Wheatley of a beautiful mahogany plaque in memory of his father, Brother Walter Lee Wheatley, now deceased. The plaque now hangs in the Lodge room. It commemorates 100 years of Masonry in Federalsburg from 1875 to 1975.

Brother Frampton referred to the cost of becoming a Mason. Inflation has hit that along with everything else. This was increased from \$40 to \$50 in 1949, to \$65 in 1951, to \$100 in 1967.

Two of our members have been officers of Grand Lodge, Brother J. Clement Clark, who was Junior Grand Warden in 1901 and Brother Wilmer Fell Davis, who was Senior Grand Warden in 1948. Brother Davis also served as one of the Trustees of the Masonic Homes. He was preceded in that regard, however, by Brother George H. Jefferson who was elected for a three year term in 1923, one of the original members of that Board. Unfortunately, the term of service was cut short by his death on May 26, 1925.

On May 10, 1948, the Lodge agreed to give each newly raised brother a Masonic Bible. At that time members were not required to pass a proficiency examination in the third degree catechism. Change in this regard is reflected by the decision on December 11, 1950, to not present such a Bible until the newly raised brother has passed an acceptable examination in the third degree catechism.

The minutes reflect numerous special communications, as is customary with Masonic Lodges, for the purpose of attending divine services. An extraordinary instance of this is that of October 31, 1951, when, upon invitation from the Pastor of Bethesda Methodist Church in Preston, Nanticoke Lodge joined members of Preston Lodge No. 207, Temple Lodge No. 128, and Coates Lodge No. 102 for the purpose of attending divine services at Bethesda Church where the message of

the morning was brought by Brother and Governor Theodore Roosevelt McKeldin.

Older members of the Lodge will recall that it formerly was not the custom to present the flag of our country at the altar and then place it in the East. When this custom began we used the flag of Nanticoke Chapter No. 64, Order of the Eastern Star. However, reflecting the expansion of our country, the Lodge agreed on June 13, 1960, to purchase a 50 star flag for the Lodge room.

On April 11, 1966, Brother Ernest Earl Short, who instructed many brethren in the catechism, was honored for his faithful service to Nanticoke Lodge and its brethren. On that occasion plaque was presented to him by P.M. Reese M. Dennis. Twenty-nine brethren who had received instruction from Brother Short were present at the communication.

Many Masonic funeral services have been held in the 100 year history of Nanticoke Lodge. This history would not be complete without recounting the fact that on January 25, 1970, the Lodge conducted such services for Brother D. Willard Sparklin, son of our first Worshipful Master, Brother Silas Sparklin.

Reference has earlier been made to our relationship with Preston Lodge. On March 8, 1971, Nanticoke Lodge agreed unanimously "to accept Preston Lodge No. 207 into our Lodge as a body," with it thus returning to the place of whence it came. Grand Master John R. Fogle on May 18, 1971, reported to Grand Lodge that the action on the part of Preston and Nanticoke Lodges, both of which had unanimously voted for the amalgamation were formally approved by him and he requested that "Grand Lodge approve [his] action in order to make the consolidation complete p. 28 of proceedings and in accordance with the Constitution of the Grand Lodge." Such approval was given.

One sidelight on our history might be recorded. We almost did not come into being! E. Schulz, *Freemasonry in Maryland*, Vol. 4 (1888) records in the address of the Most Worshipful Grand Master at the annual communication in 1874:

"The Grand Master regrets to say that the difficulty growing out of the refusal of Choptank Lodge to recommend the formation of a new Lodge at Federalsburg, still continues. There can be no question that the constitutional provision in this connection makes the recommendation of Choptank Lodge necessary; and that it has been refused; and that, unless the Grand Master exercises the Supreme Prerogative of his office, as matters now stand the Lodge proposed to be re-established at Federalsburg cannot be formed. Both parties have appealed to him, and he has received the report of the Grand Inspector of the jurisdiction to whom he referred the matter with a view not only of arriving at the facts, but of obtaining his good

offices in effecting a compromise of the difficulty; and the Grand Master takes occasion to say that, in his judgment, it would have been impossible for any one to have performed the duty that he called upon the Grand Inspector to perform with greater impartiality or with a more Masonic and kindly spirit. His object throughout has been to effect, if possible, a compromise between the parties; recommending, with that view, that to facilitate the attendance of brethren residing at or near Federalsburg, upon their Masonic observances, Choptank Lodge should hold its meetings alternately at two places. Thus far, however, nothing has been effected looking to an amicable adjustment of this unfortunate disagreement.

“The Grand Lodge are, of course, aware of the difficulty that the Grand Master must always experience in making up his judgment upon the *ex parte* statements submitted to him on occasions like the present, and he desires it to be understood that he expressed no opinion upon the merits of the existing controversy. If he takes the report of the Grand Inspector as conclusive upon the facts, he places that officer in the unenviable attitude of pronouncing judgment between his neighbors in a case where both sides are excited, and the losing side is not, at all times, apt to give the judge credit for impartiality. Under these circumstances the Grand Master has thought it proper to lay the matter before the Grand Lodge, in the hope that he may in this manner be relieved from the necessity of using his prerogative should he find it hereafter necessary to employ it.”

Id. at 148-48.

The Grand Master then went on to refer to the prerogatives vested in him notwithstanding the objections of a local Lodge. He observed, however:

“[W]hile this power exists it should never be exercised but in the last extremity, and only upon most thorough conviction of the necessity calling for it. The Grand Master who would use it lightly would be subject to the gravest censure. Entertaining, as he does, these views, the Grand Master has hoped all along that the amicable adjustment of the difference in connection with Choptank Lodge, which has called for their expression, would render it unnecessary for him to inquire into the facts closely enough to enable him to determine whether this was an occasion for their exercise.”

Id. at 149.

It is gratifying to note, however, that at the November communication of 1875 the Grand Master in his address reported, “[O]n the 8th June the G.M. granted a dispensation to Silas Sparklin, W. J. Mowbray and others to open and hold a Lodge at Federalsburg, Dorchester County. This is the Lodge whose formation was objected to by Choptank Lodge, which refused to sign the recommendation required by the Constitution. It was in this connection, that the Grand Master referred in his address to the last November Communication,

to the powers of the Grand Master as paramount. In so doing, he but repeated what has always been held to be Masonic law in Maryland, and he is glad to say, that, after much delay and frequent correspondence, the necessity for the exercise of his authority to the extent it was held by him to exist, was obviated by the action of Choptank Lodge, so that the dispensation that was granted was in strict conformity with the Constitutional provision." *Schulz, op cit.* 172.

Schulz comments relative to Nanticoke Lodge:

"This Lodge although having a membership of only 23, November, 1886, has gone steadily forward, and stands in as good condition financially as any in the State, being entirely free of debt, notwithstanding the Lodge room has recently been refurnished, papered and painted." *Id.* at 176.

As Nanticoke Lodge looks forward to its next 100 years we, as Freemasons, might well bear in mind that *Masonic Americana* (1974) records of Brother Theodore Roosevelt:

"Upon returning to Oyster Bay [from his travels abroad after leaving the White House in which travels 'he made Masonic contacts in Africa, the Azores, South America and Trinidad'] he enjoyed attending his home Lodge where his gardener was Master for three years. John J. Leary, in his *Talks with T. R.*, reports Roosevelt as saying. . . . I am a member of the local Lodge of Masons. You also know, brother, I violate no secret when I say that one of the greatest values in Masonry is that it affords an opportunity for men in all walks of life to meet on common ground, where for the time all men are equal and have one common interest.

"At the laying of the cornerstone for the Masonic Temple in Washington, D.C., he said, 'I ask of each Mason . . . that he shall remember ever that there is upon him a peculiar obligation to show himself in every respect a good citizen . . . the way he can best do his duty by the ancient order to which he belongs is . . . to make that body . . . an instrument for the upbuilding, and uplifting, the ennobling of the great nation to which we all belong.'"

Id. at 35.

The same work records at page 46 that Brother Harry Truman, then a United States Senator, when presiding as Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Missouri two months before Pearl Harbor, "spoke of being Grand Master as 'an honor which I believe is greater than any other which can come to me.'"

SPEECH PREPARED BY BROTHER SILAS SPARKLIN,
FIRST WORSHIPFUL MASTER OF NANTICOKE LODGE,
FOR DELIVERY AT THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY BANQUET.

At a recent meeting of our lodge, when we decided to hold our annual banquet on our fiftieth anniversary, I was requested to give a short bit of the history of the lodge of fifty years ago or rather the origin of the lodge, the records of which were destroyed in 1898. I alone am left to tell the story and I, as you will readily see, am not able to tell it. However, in order to come up more clearly to a few of the things you are most interested to know, I would like, if you will excuse me, to give a bit of my personal experience or history, prior to fifty years ago.

I will begin in my experience, after I had served a term as entered apprentice in operative masonry and passed to the degree of fellowcraft or journeyman and was raised to the degree of master mason or boss, as we then knew it; and settled in Easton, Maryland to work at my trade as a plasterer, remaining there about two years. A part of that time under the firm name of Todd and Sparklin. We received a call to come over to East New Market to plaster a Masonic Temple. It seemed to fall to my lot to go over and do the work. The building was afterward destroyed by fire. Now to cut a long story short . . . I remained there about three years, during which time I was made a Free Mason. Right here I would like to mention the names of many of those old worthies who helped to make me a Mason; but for fear I should seem tedious, I'll simply say I think they are all gone but one, Dr. J. R. Phillips, of Preston, who gave me the Second Degree lecture.

During my last year in New Market, I was called on to plaster a Presbyterian Church which was being built in Federalsburg. It is now the Methodist Protestant Church. While here, I decided, like almost every one who stays here a while. I would like to remain in Federalsburg if I could only persuade some one to become my life partner. I finally succeeded in finding a farmer's daughter, near Hurlock, who decided she would take the risk; so the next January, 51 years ago last January, we signed up for life. And right here I wish to say to the many young men who have come into our order with us recently and some of the older members might not go amiss, to listen. The first day we spent in our own home we erected a family altar and it is still standing. I wish to say, "*Go Thou and do likewise.*" Have your own home and by all means have an altar in it, erected to the worship of Almighty God. I honestly believe that I and mine are infinitely better off than if a pretended friend had given me a million dollars, than to live without the religious life. This is why I have come this circuitous route to say and please do not forget it, for the probabilities are I'll not be with you at our centennial celebration; and this is the best advice I know to leave with you.

This brings us now to consider this lodge of 50 years ago, or its origin. The charter members were: W. J. Mowbray, the father of our present treasurer; W. H. Alburger, whose widow is now with us and who was the father-in-law of the late Charles W. and George H. Jefferson; and also J. J. Framptom, now with us; J. H. Moore and C. B. Conaway, all four, of Temple Lodge, Denton, Maryland; Dr. W. D. Noble, of Coats Lodge, Easton, Maryland, and D. O. P. Elliott and Silas Sparklin of Choptank Lodge, East New Market, Md.

After the required number was found, we received a charter empowering us to work. Charles E. Hayward, A. Young, Sr.; John Foble, and James Foble came up from Cambridge Lodge and instituted Nanticoke Lodge and conferred the Past Mater's degree on your humble servant. I do not remember who occupied the various chairs for the first time, but I do remember that then and there started a long pull, a hard pull, and a pull altogether. Sometimes our members came in slowly. Ministers of the Gospel were not charged any fees and with Grand Lodge dues, rent and other expenses to pay and all of us a little short of cash, you can readily see that the financial part of our work was no trifling matter. Brother E. E. Nuttle, who came in, in 1895, twenty years after the lodge was instituted, said the other day, the financial part of the work was quite a burden. But with the management of such men as Edward E. Goslin, Edward E. Nuttle, W. S. Goslin, Martin W. Smith, Dr. J. C. Clark, J. H. Douglas, Charles W. Wright, John T. Elliott, A. W. Sisk, J. Frank Lednum, Thomas W. White and many others who were willing to keep their traces tight; all of whom preceded 1896. After this, the burdens began to lighten, especially for the charter members.

Outsiders seeing we were spreading well tempered mortar, *the cement of Brotherly Love and Affection. That cement which unites us into one sacred band or society of friends and brothers among whom no contention should ever exist but that noble contention or rather emulation of who can best work and best agree.*

This Temple in which we now are, is an evidence of the kind of material we have been working into this Lodge.

... Thank you.

History of Preston Lodge No. 207, A. F. & A. M.

Prior to May, 1907, the Masons who lived in the Preston area were affiliated with Nanticoke Lodge No. 172, A.F. & A.M. in Federalsburg, Maryland. This Lodge held one meeting night of the month in Federalsburg and the other meeting night in the same month in Preston.

Early records show that there were twenty-one Master Masons living in the Preston area, one of whom was Albert W. Sisk who became Master of Nanticoke in 1892.

Travel between the two towns was a little difficult in 1907.

Travel was by horse and buggy and the time consumed was over an hour.

It therefore became desirable, because of the number of Masons living in Preston, and the difficulty of transportation between the two towns that a new Lodge should be founded.

The Grand Lodge was petitioned for a charter in May of 1907. The charter was granted and the first meeting of Preston Lodge No. 207 was held June 4, 1907. This meeting was in what is known as the Brick Building. The Masons continued to meet there until the Lodge surrendered its charter in 1971.

As the new formed Lodge had no Master, the Deputy Grand Master had a special Past Masters' Lodge opened in Preston and the Past Masters' degree conferred upon Alva F. Blades. Bro. Blades was the Senior Warden of Nanticoke at the time.

There were at this meeting twenty-one Master Masons. Also there were two Fellowcrafts who had not as yet become Master Masons, namely Fred B. Noble and John W. Payne.

The following is a list of the charter members:

Blades, Alva F., W.M.	Phillips, Dr. J. R.
Blades, Luther L.	Phillips, Jas. R., Jr.
Downes, Dr. J. Raymond	Proctor, Burton
Fooks, E. L.	Reid, Levin C.
Fooks, Nelson H.	Sisk, A. W.
Gardner, Rev. Edwin	Smith, Roy C.
Kelley, Orlan T.	Williams, Rev. Geo. C.
Lednum, J. Frank	Williamson, G. Edgar
Lednum, Nace	Wright, Walter M.
Noble, Fred B.	Wright, W. J.
Payne, John W.	

The first installed officers were:

A. F. Blades, Worshipful Master
Nelson Fooks, Senior Warden
Edgar Williamson, Junior Warden
Frank Lednum, Senior Deacon
Nace Lednum, Junior Deacon
L. C. Reid, Steward
A. W. Sisk, Steward
Burton Proctor, Secretary
L. L. Blades, Treasurer

Of the charter members of Preston Lodge No. 207 there is only one living today, Fred B. Noble who now resides in Jacksonville, Florida. He spoke at the 50th anniversary of Preston Lodge.

Two men of Preston Lodge gained prominence in Masonic circles in the states in which they lived, namely,

Harry B. Wright, Assistant Grand Lecturer for the Eastern Shore—
1923

Grand Lecturer—1926

R.W. Deputy Grand Master—1934

M.W. Grand Master—1935, 1936, 1937

Fred B. Noble was raised in 1907 and later moved to Jacksonville, Florida. He was very active in the Florida Lodge having served as Grand Orator, Deputy Grand Master and in 1943 became Most Worshipful Grand Master of Masons in Florida.

Preston Lodge had to surrender its charter in 1971. Some of the reasons were as follows: the area is very small in which to draw new members; the young men who became Masons were not interested in going through the chairs, thus placing this burden on Past Masters; and the Missouri Synod of the Lutheran Church increases its influence each year in the Preston area. This church prohibits its members from joining secret organizations.

Charter Members of Nanticoke Lodge No. 172

Silas Sparklin, *Worshipful Master*

William J. Mowbray, *Senior Warden*

D. O. P. Elliott, *Junior Warden*

James H. Moore, *Treasurer*

MEMBERS

William H. Alburger

Charles B. Conway

James H. Moore

W. D. Noble, M.D.

MASTERS OF NANTICOKE LODGE NO. 172

Silas Sparklin, 1876, 1877, 1878, 1884, 1889, 1891
 Edward E. Goslin, 1879, 1882, 1893, 1896, 1903, 1904, 1909
 Walter S. Smith, 1880, 1883
 William J. Mowbray, 1881
 D. O. P. Elliott, 1885
 William H. Alburger, 1886, 1894, 1895, 1902
 C. B. Conway, 1887
 J. Clement Clark, 1888
 James H. Douglass, 1890
 Albert W. Sisk, 1892
 Sorin M. Gordy, 1897
 Edward E. Nuttle, 1898, 1899, 1900, 1901
 George H. Jefferson, 1905, 1907
 George F. Galloway, 1907
 Rufus F. Noble, 1908
 J. Fred Gambrill, 1910
 William J. Warren, 1911
 Harvey D. Williams, 1912, 1913
 Isaac N. Willoughby, 1914
 J. Paul Mowbray, 1915, 1916
 Clinton S. Poole, 1917
 William A. Wheatley, Jr., 1918
 C. Homer Turner, 1919
 Frank S. Bradley, 1920
 Wilmer S. Noble, 1921
 Thomas Ira Johnson, 1922, 1923
 Chevior Davis, 1924
 J. Arthur Johnson, 1925
 Paul C. Cantner, 1926
 James R. MacSorley, 1927
 Gilbert E. Wright, 1928
 Claudel E. Wright, 1929
 Wilmer Fell Davis, 1930
 E. Hambleton Grace, 1931
 William Sewell Nabb, 1932
 Elwood L. Bailey, 1933
 W. Edmond Neal, 1934
 Edward Pierce, 1935
 W. Elbert Liden, 1936
 Harry H. Nuttle, 1937
 Bryon F. Griffith, 1938
 James S. Neal, 1939
 William C. Galloway, 1940
 George A. McDaniel, 1941
 Thomas W. Bullock, 1942
 Paul A. Croll, 1943
 Allen L. Smith, 1944
 Roman Morgan, 1945
 Wesley E. Dobson, 1946
 J. Jerome Framptom, Jr., 1947
 Ralph L. Nagel, 1948
 Reese M. Dennis, 1949
 Marvin H. Smith, 1950
 Charles W. Becker, 1951
 Ralph W. B. Elrick, 1952
 Leroy J. Nichols, Jr., 1953
 George W. Todd, 1954
 Robert E. McConnell, 1955
 William R. Quillen, 1956
 John H. Hallowell, 1957
 Richard R. Hallowell, 1958
 Thomas R. Davis, 1959
 Myers E. Nagel, 1960
 Edgar M. Fisher, 1961
 H. Duval Sherwood, 1962, 1972
 Calvin C. Nagel, 1963
 Robert Lee Ramsburg, 1964
 Earl R. Bell, 1965
 Willard D. Swift, 1966
 Wilmer C. Nagel, 1967
 Robert L. Culhane, 1968
 Robert A. Fisher, 1969
 Russell M. Justis, 1970
 Ronald R. Southard, 1971
 J. Edward Banning, 1973, 1974
 George H. Henning, 1975