



Presentation Series

# Freemasonry: Global Ideas Building a Local Heritage





# Today's Presentation

- Summary of Freemasonry
- Summary History from Origins to Establishment in Michigan
- In-Depth Discussion of Freemasonry in Grand Rapids

# What is Freemasonry?



# The Basics

1. The world's oldest and largest fraternity
2. A system of education that uses symbols and allegory to reinforce character-building skills.

# How Many Freemasons?

Worldwide: 4,000,000

United States 1,200,000



# Requirements for Membership

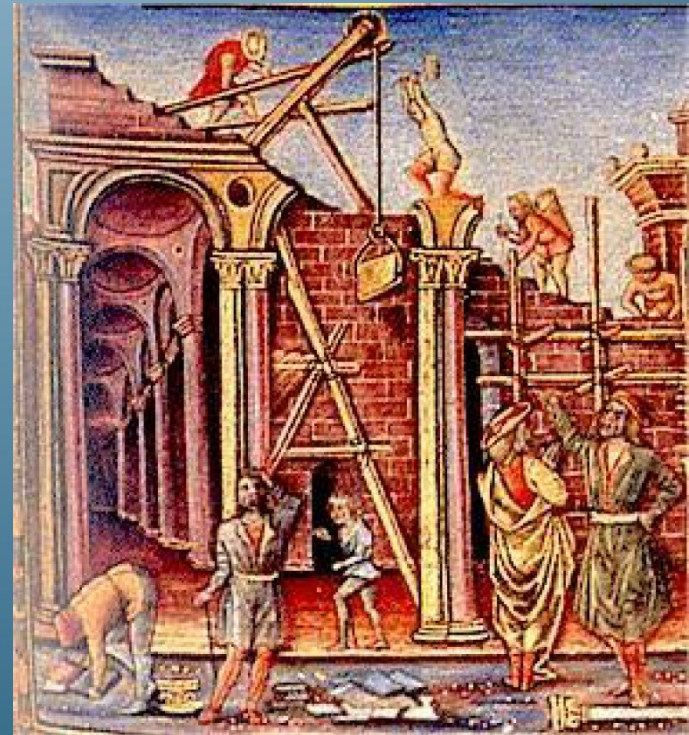
- Male at least 19 years old
- Belief in a Supreme Being
- Of good character





# Origins

Operative stonemasons (freemasons) of  
Medieval Europe



# Origins

Operative → Speculative



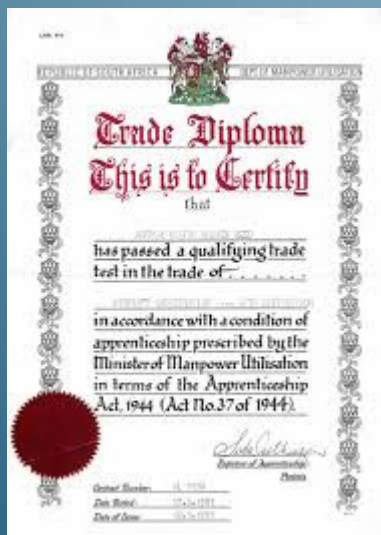


# Origins (The Secrets)

Methods of recognition



# Origins (The Secrets)



# The Birth of Modern Masonry: No Longer a Secret Society

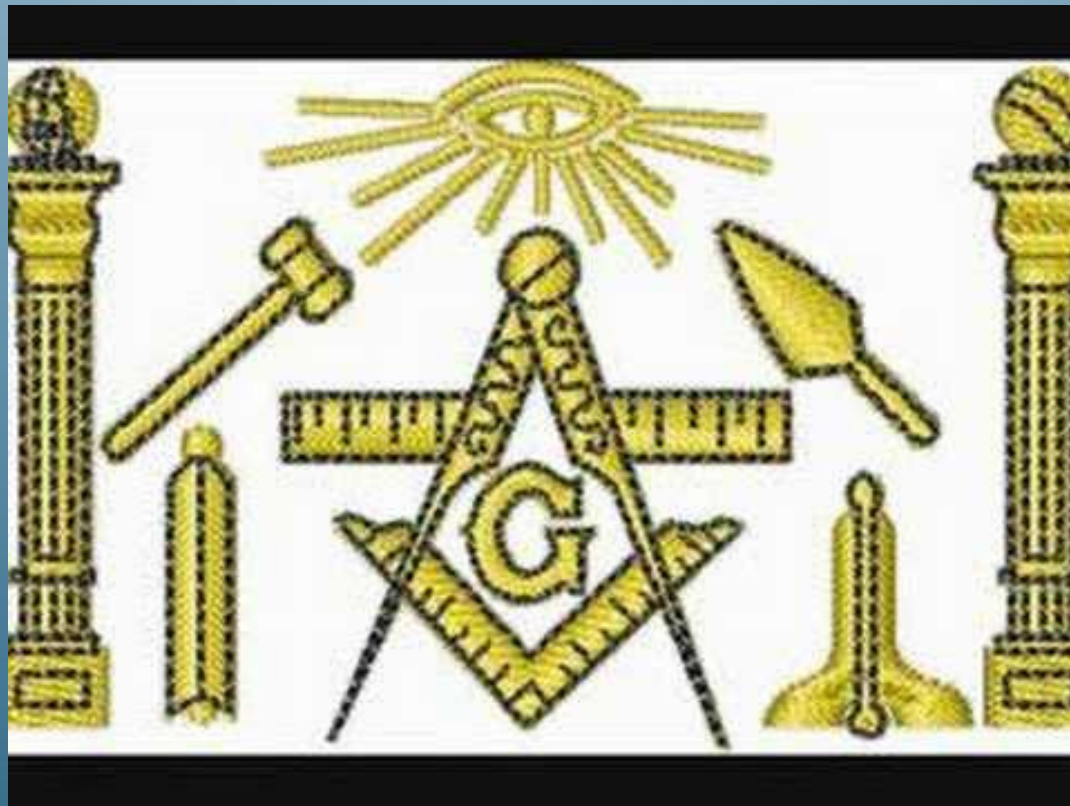
Formation of  
The Grand Lodge of England

June 24, 1717

All regular Grand Lodges  
trace their lineage to this event.



# The Symbols



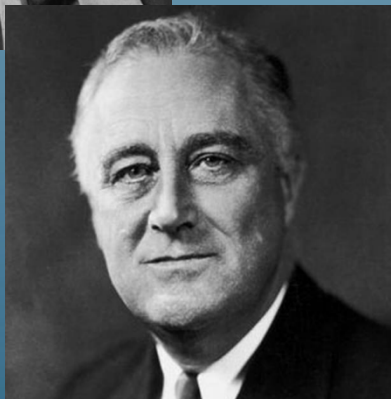
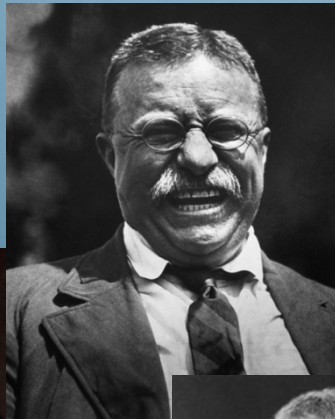
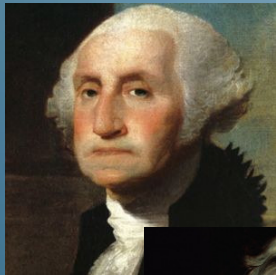


# Coming To America



# Masonic U.S. Presidents

14 of our 44 Presidents have been Freemasons



# Freemasonry in Michigan

French establish Fort Detroit in 1701

British – 1<sup>st</sup> documented lodge  
east of the Allegany Mts.

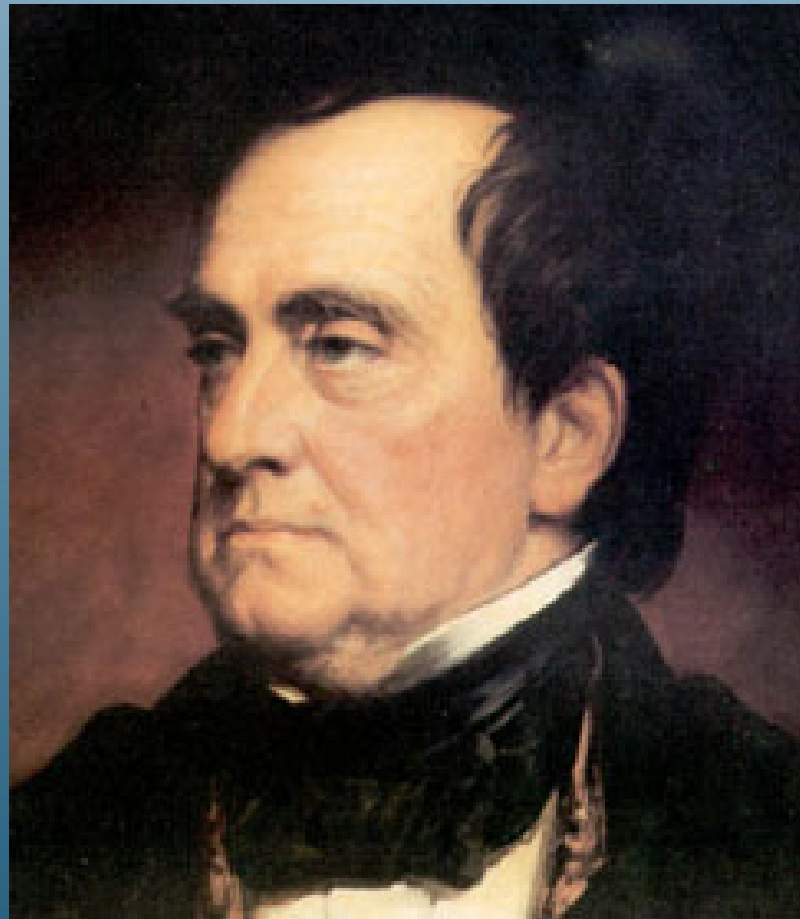
Detroit - 1764





# Grand Lodge of Michigan - 1826

1<sup>st</sup> Grand Master – Lewis Cass



# “Masonic Secrets of Old Grand Rapids”

Dirk Hughes and Michael Clark



Michigan Masonic Museum and Library  
2016

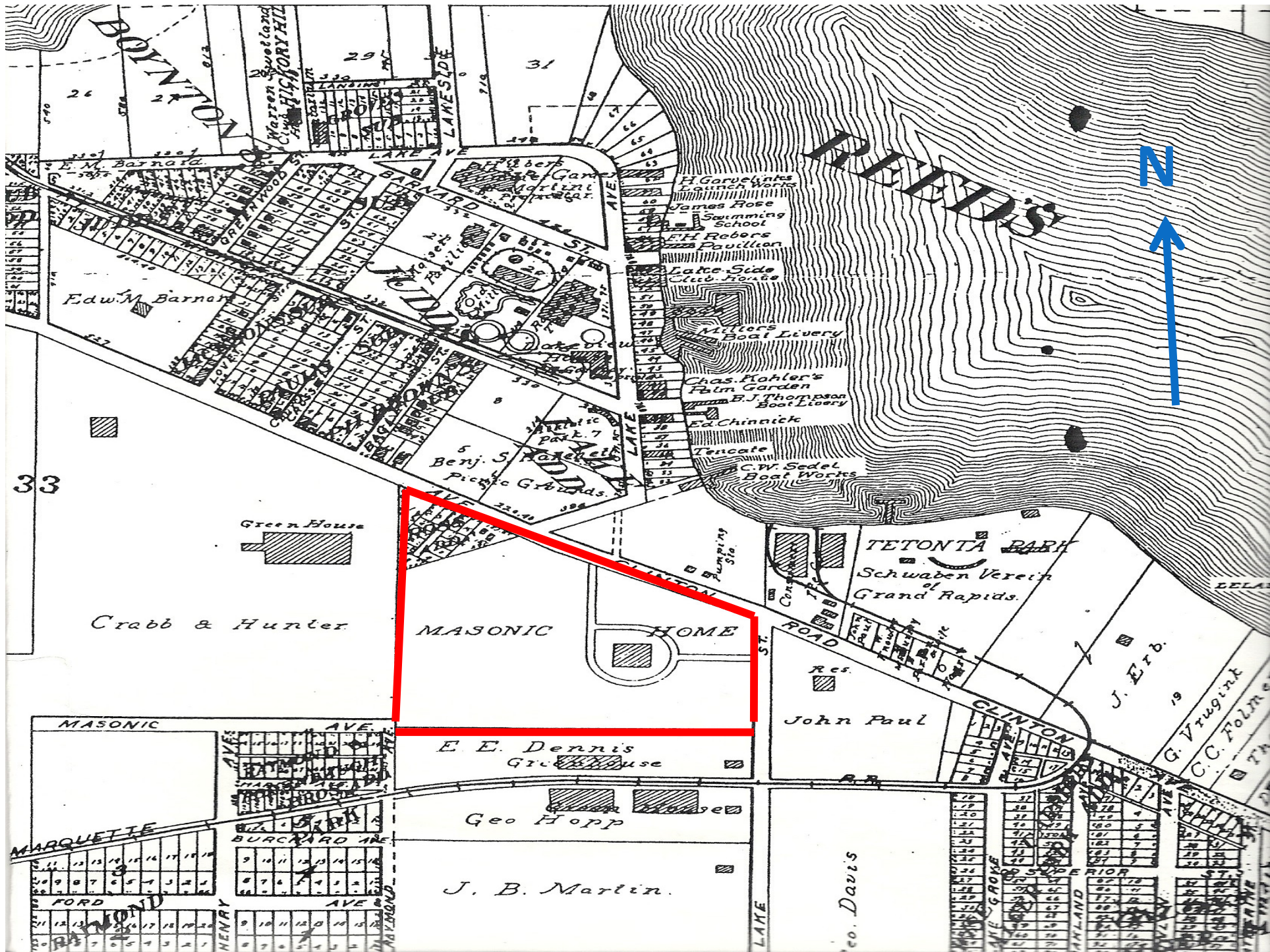




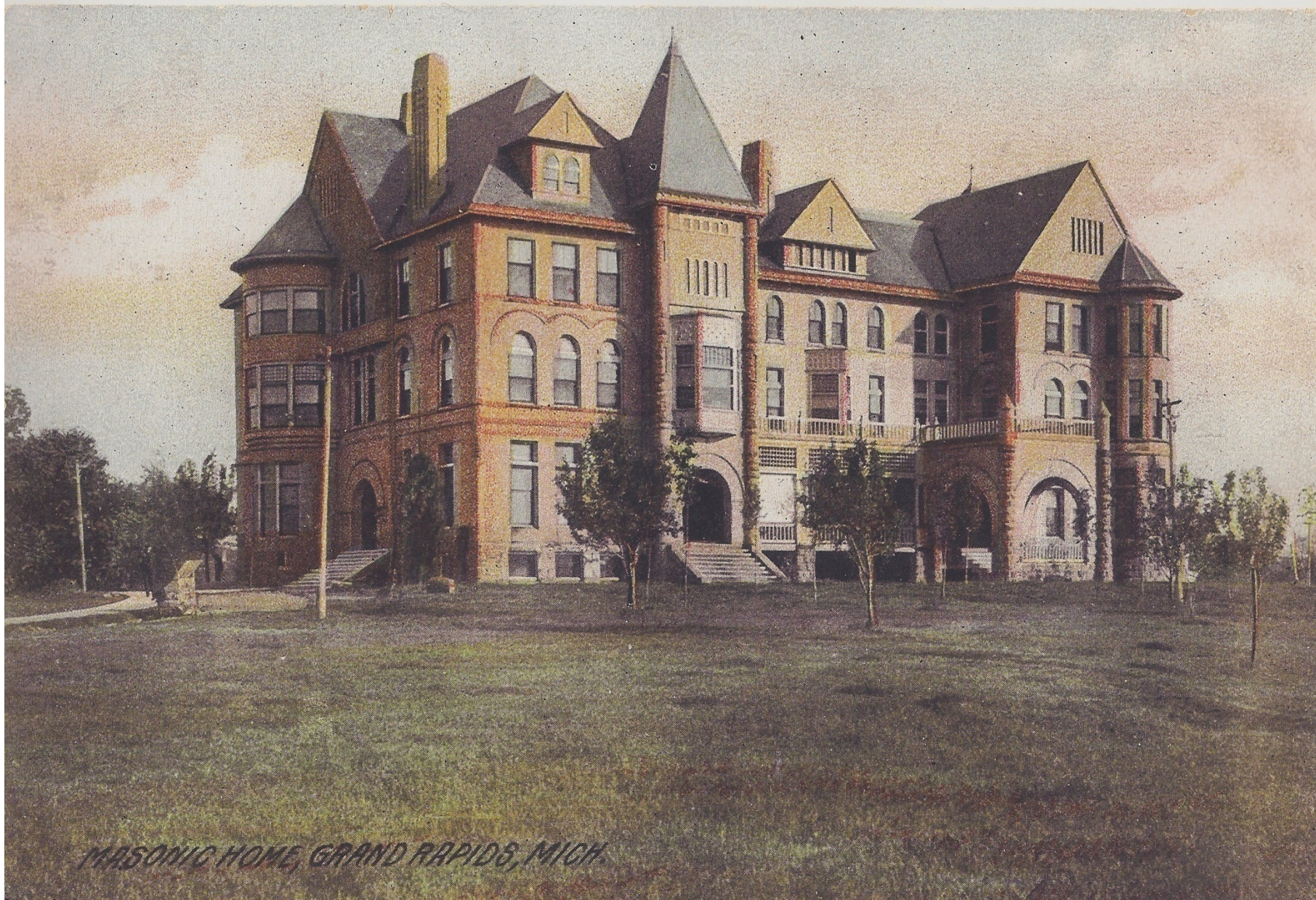












*MASONIC HOME, GRAND RAPIDS, MICH.*



***FIRE!!!!***











*An Early Map Obtained from City Engineer's Office*



buildings in the Square are gone but the lines of the foundations in the ground still show—1873.









# The First GR Masonic Temple - 1895



MASONIC TEMPLE, GRAND RAPIDS, MICH.

1365



Description of the Magnificent Domi-  
otic and a Brief Account of the  
Grand Rapids Bodies Which  
Will Occupy It—Oldest and  
Strongest Fraternity  
on Earth.

100

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\_\_\_\_\_

100

[illegible]

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100

[illegible]

The following are the names of members of the Executive Committee of the organization, listed from left to right, as they appear in the photograph, with the years in which they served in parentheses:

William H. Lyon, was first elected in 1901 and served until 1902.  
John P. Hancock, first elected in 1902 and served until 1903.  
William K. Woodward, teacher in 1903, was elected in 1904 and served until 1905.  
John W. Smith, first elected in 1905 and served until 1906.  
Charles H. Church, elected in 1906, and served until 1907.  
John W. Smith, elected in 1907 and served until 1908.  
Edward H. Church, elected in 1908 and served until 1909.  
Charles H. Church, elected in 1909 and served until 1910.

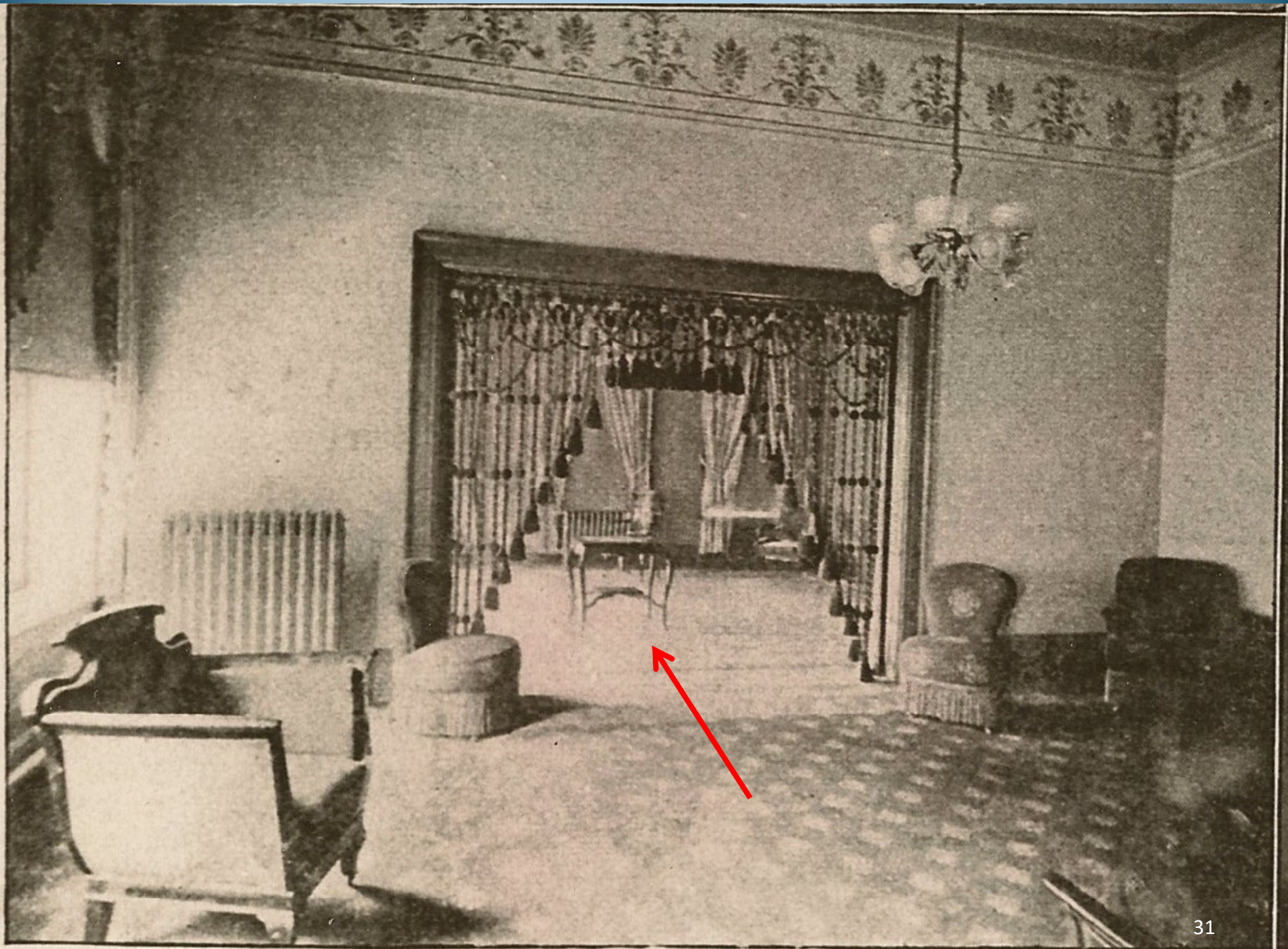
**Figure 1**



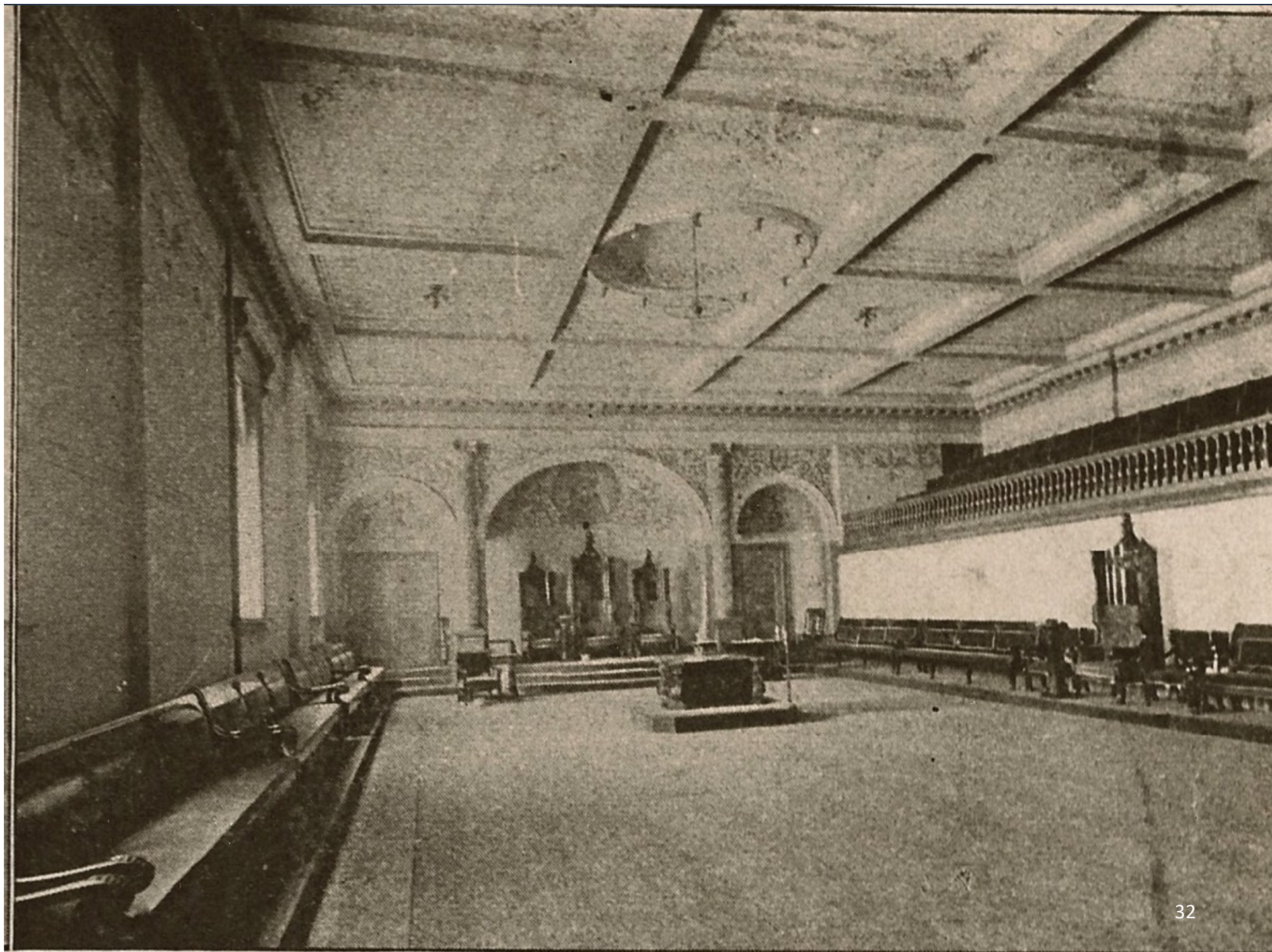
# Masonic Temple Decorations Dedication 1895















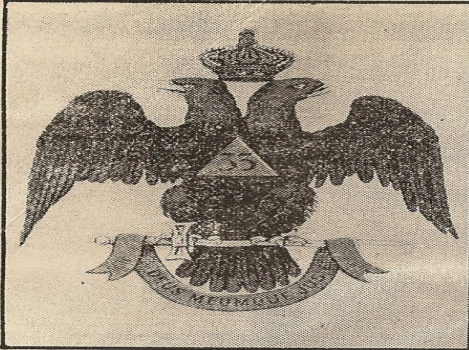












The 33rd degree, given for outstanding service, was conferred on Orle Nicholson of Grand Rapids, now 94, a 70-year Mason who was active in the old temple.



# The best-kept secret in town

Story by  
Michael Clark

Press photos by  
Jay C. Abbott

This downtown landmark once housed the Masonic Temple. Its completion in 1895 launched one of the city's biggest celebrations.

## It's doubtful more than a handful of people knows about it

**T**he secret involves the Bishop Furniture Co. building at Ionia Avenue and Louis Street NW, which Bishop has left for a new location.

Little did the thousands of persons who've been in and past that seven-story, red-brick structure realize the upper four floors were once the scene of grand balls and ornate rituals in a setting purely Victorian.

The building was opened in the fall of 1895 amid one of the largest parades and celebrations seen in Grand Rapids up to then.

Arches built to resemble blocks of granite spanned the intersections of

Ionia and Canal Street at Monroe Avenue. Electric lights adorning these arches illuminated emblems and bunting.

Bands and other paraders from as far as Detroit, Middleville and Lowell, as well as the Wurzburg band, entertained the hundreds of persons lining the parade route and provided the cadence for the numerous marchers from all over the state and Midwest.

Many of the largest firms in Grand Rapids closed for the day to allow their employees to participate in or watch the parade. Among them were Valley City Milling, Bissell Carpet Sweeper, Grand Rapids Chair Co. and many other furniture companies,

which gave their employees the day off to enjoy the festivities.

The center of attraction was the dedication of the new Masonic temple. This structure would enable organizations such as the Order of the Eastern Star, Royal Arch Masons, Royal and Select Masons, DeMolai Commandery, Consistory, Scottish Rite, Saladin Temple of the Mystic Shrine, Palestine Shrine and several others to meet under one roof for the first time.

Bishop Furniture leased the first three floors from 1896 to 1915, when it bought the entire building. Bishop sold it last year to a group of investor-developers.

The old temple is basically the same today as when the Masonic organizations left in 1915 to erect the present temple on E. Fulton Street.

Partitions and walls have been removed but the domed ceiling in the ballroom, the ornate pillars in the banquet room, fireplaces and, most notable, the oak-walled lodge room with its domed ceiling, remain.

Sliding wood doors still roll easily into their wall receptacles. Hand-carved designs decorate doors, walls and pillars.

The capped ends of gas lights and chandelier fixtures remind us of a by-gone era of simple elegance.

continued next page











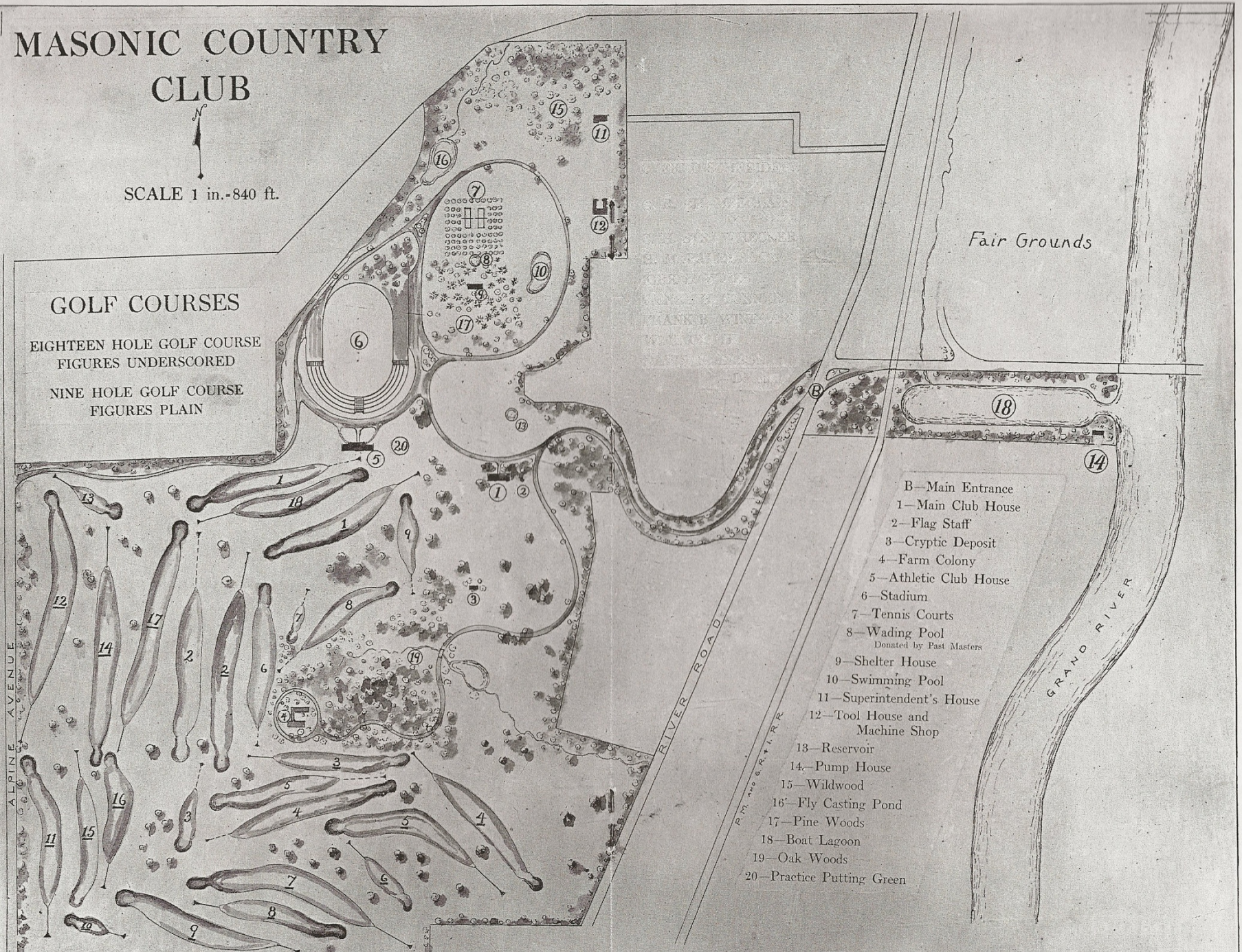
# MASONIC COUNTRY CLUB

SCALE 1 in. = 840 ft.

## GOLF COURSES

EIGHTEEN HOLE GOLF COURSE  
FIGURES UNDERScoreD

NINE HOLE GOLF COURSE  
FIGURES PLAIN



Fair Grounds

- B—Main Entrance
- 1—Main Club House
- 2—Flag Staff
- 3—Cryptic Deposit
- 4—Farm Colony
- 5—Athletic Club House
- 6—Stadium
- 7—Tennis Courts
- 8—Wading Pool  
Donated by Past Masters
- 9—Shelter House
- 10—Swimming Pool
- 11—Superintendent's House
- 12—Tool House and  
Machine Shop
- 13—Reservoir
- 14—Pump House
- 15—Wildwood
- 16—Fly Casting Pond
- 17—Pine Woods
- 18—Boat Lagoon
- 19—Oak Woods
- 20—Practice Putting Green



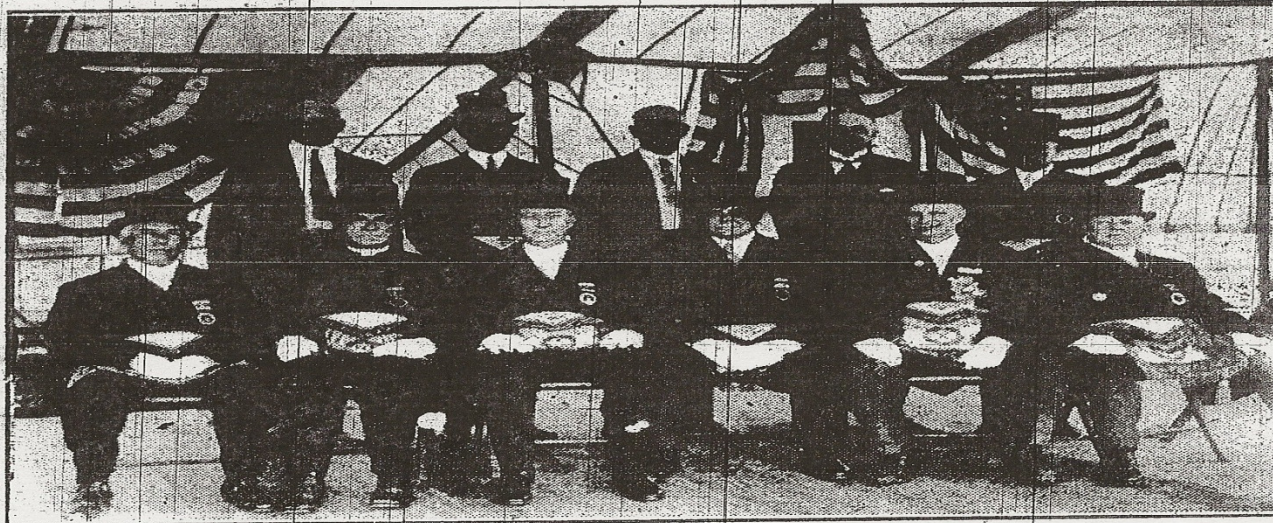
# ie Sunday Herald

GRAND RAPIDS  
PUBLIC LIBRARY

GRAND RAPIDS, SUNDAY MORNING, AUGUST 20, 1922

58 PAGES

## MASONS FLOCK BY THOUSANDS TO SEE NEW COUNTRY CLUB DEDICATED

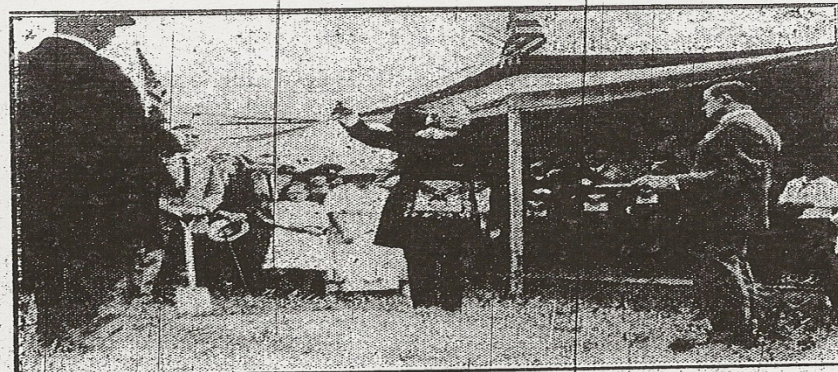


### One of Largest Gatherings Here in Lodge's History Witnesses Impressive Ceremony.

Seven thousand Master Masons from Grand Rapids and other western Michigan cities gathered yesterday afternoon when the officers of the grand lodge formally dedicated the Masonic Country club of western Michigan. Never since the establishment of the first blue lodge in Grand Rapids has there been such a gathering. The expectations of even the most optimistic members of the committee were exceeded.

Beginning about noon, the cars began streaming up the long winding road that leads to the clubhouse site on the crest of Sunset hill, and during the afternoon the procession was never ending. It was estimated that when parked the automobiles covered an area of 10 acres.

Seen as Masonry's idea. Promptly at 2 white cars were still emptying hundreds of Masons and Eastern Star members on the scene, the dedication ceremonies were solemnly opened with prayer by Rev. William H. Gallagher, of Allegan, grand chaplain. C. Fred Schneider, as president of the club, made the presentation address to Grand Master Clark W.



Michigan Masonic Grand lodge officers just prior to their dedication of the club grounds. Standing (left to right) John H. Hawks, past grand master; Charles A. Donaldson, senior grand deacon; John Rowson, past grand master; George L. Lusk, past grand master. Seated—Frank O. Gilbert, grand lecturer; Rev. William H. Gallagher, grand chaplain; Clark W. Mackenzie, grand master; Charles A.

### BURGLAR OF \$1,700 IN JEWELS PROVES TO BE PET POODLE

NEW YORK, Aug. 19.—Mrs. Louise Feibelman of 502 Washington st., Newark, telephoned to the police yesterday that burglars had stolen a bag containing jewels placed on a sideboard. Detectives searched the house and found Mrs. Feibelman's poodle, Snuff, chewing on the bag in a corner of a bedroom. The jewels, according to Mrs. Feibelman, are worth \$1,700.

## MISSION SEEKS NEW SOLUTION OF INDEMNITY

MUST ADJUST GERMAN PAYMENTS TO SUIT FRANCE AND ENGLAND

### VISIT TO BERLIN MARKS BEGINNING OF FINAL EFFORT

French Bring Forward Poincare Program—U. S. Claims Must Wait Until New Solution is Found and Accepted.

PARIS, Aug. 19.—(By Associated Press.)—The departure of the reparations mission for Berlin tonight marked the beginning of the final effort of the reparations commission to find a temporary solution of the German indemnity problem acceptable to both French and British public opinion and thereby prevent the threatened independent action by France with a consequent breaking up of the entente. Sir John Bradbury, British member of the commission, and his associates left Paris at 7:40 o'clock and will arrive at Berlin tomorrow night. They have an appointment to see Chancellor Wirth Monday morning.

Renew French Plan. Relative to the departure of this mission, French official circles have renewed with increased vigor the French plan for a comprehensive reparations settlement which Premier Poincare would have presented to London but for the refusal of Mr. Lloyd George to permit discussion of the allied debts. The reparations commission is being unofficially urged to take up the plan now that the governments themselves have failed to solve the problem. Briefly, the scheme provides for a reduction of the interest-bearing reparations to 50,000,000,000 gold marks, in addition both cash and merchandise.



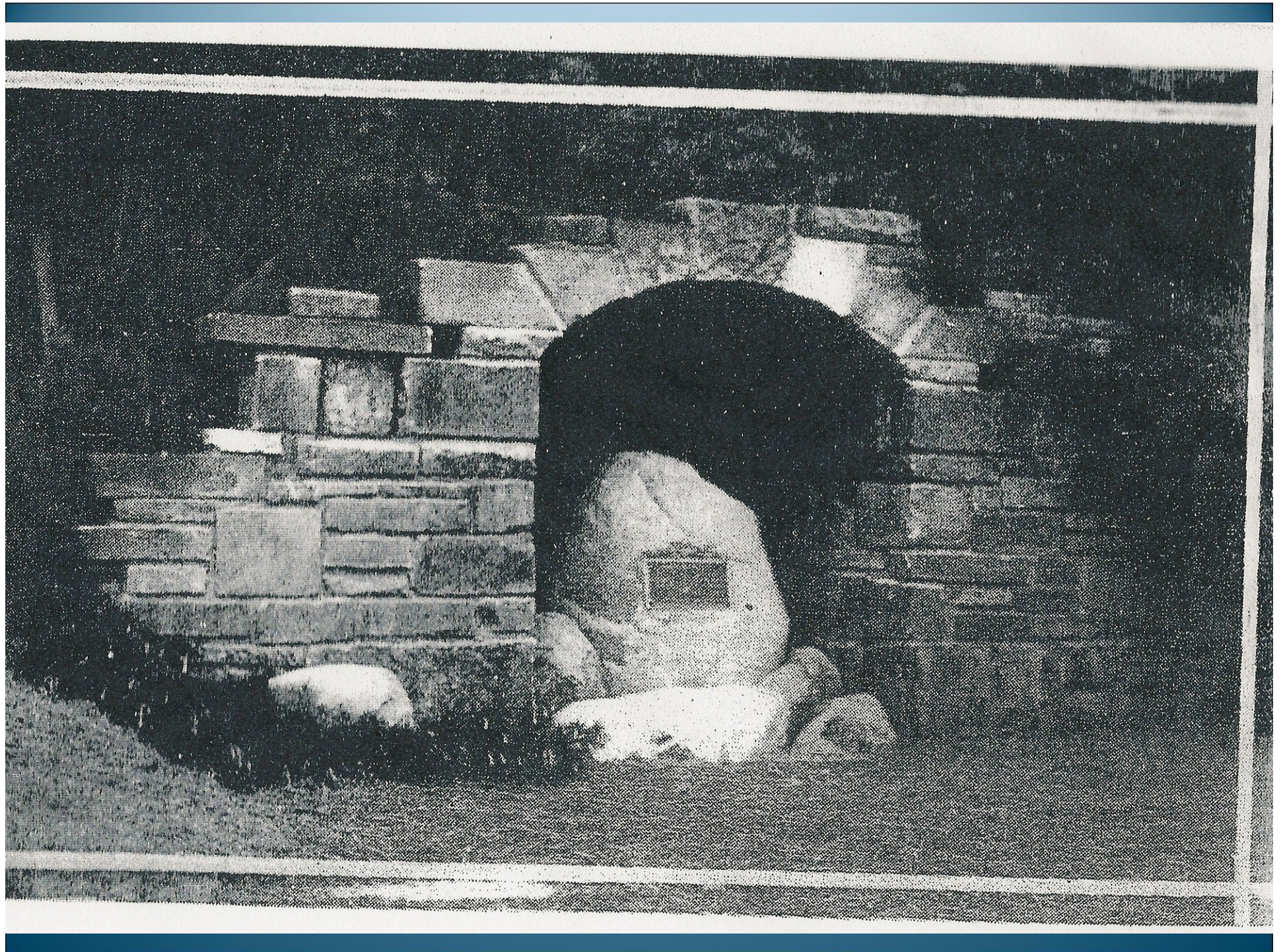






GREEN RIDGE  
COUNTRY CLUB  
IN THE 1940'S  
DONALD S. COE  
PAUL & LUSTIG PHOTOGRAPHY





















# The Masonic Temple 1915



ERALD, FRIDAY MORNING, JANUARY 15



DeMolai Commandery, K. T., Escort to the Masonic Parade from Temple to the New.



# Setting the Stone

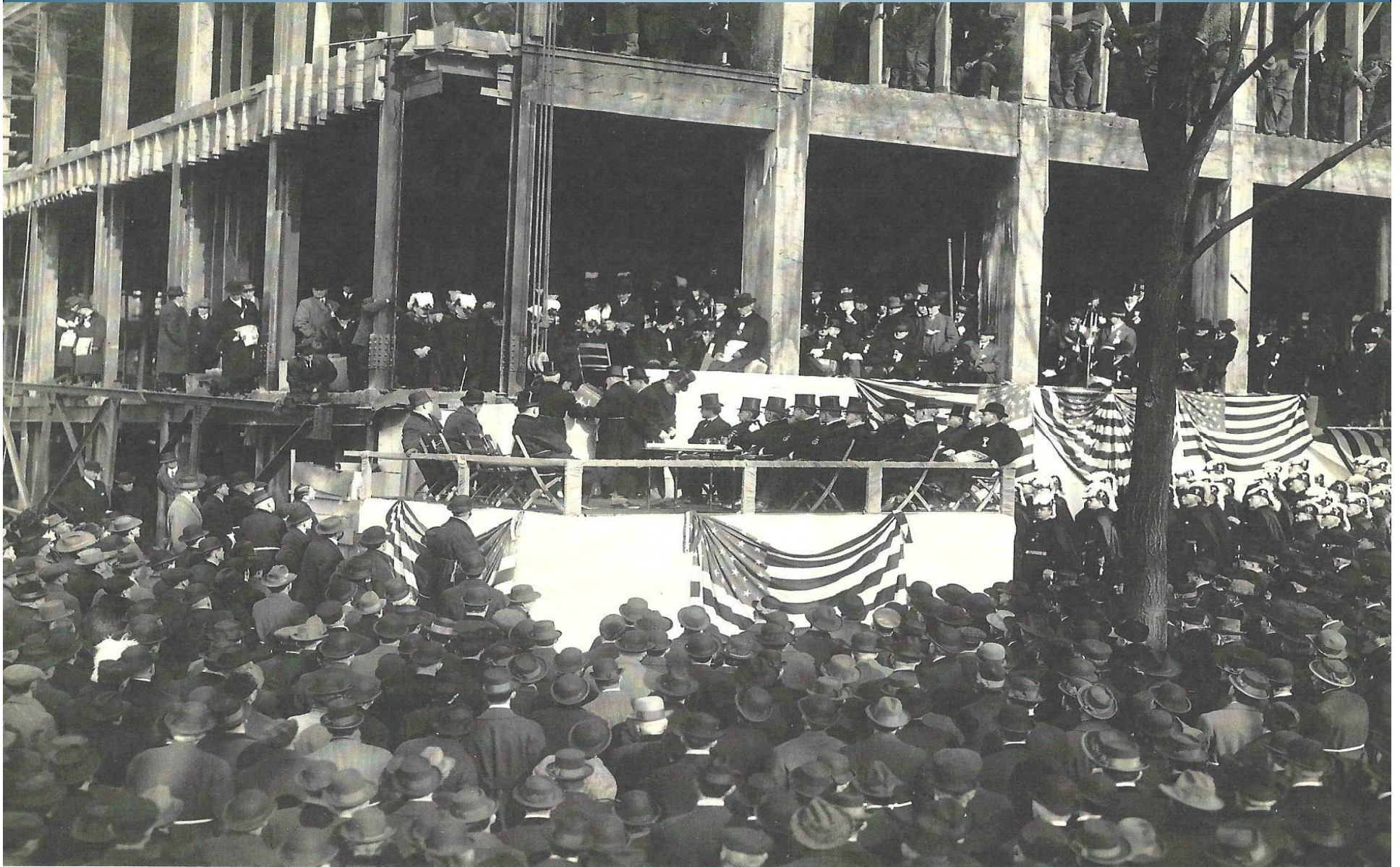


Corner-stone laying at Grand Rapids.  
Reading from left to right: Senator William Alden Smith; James F. McGregor, Grand Tiler; Wm. M. Perrett, Grand Marshal;  
Mrs. Longworth; Mr. Longworth; Herbert Montague, Grand Master; Lou. B. Winsor, Grand Secretary.

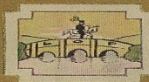
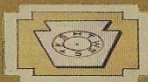


# Cornerstone Ceremony

January 14, 1915







**INAUGURAL MASONIC  
FAIR**    **GRAND RAPIDS · MICHIGAN**  
    **NOVEMBER · 19 TO 27 · 1915**  
**SOUVENIR PROGRAM**





PRESENT AND PROPOSED BUILDING

The working out of the proposed addition embraces the making over of the present banquet room on second floor, into Blue Lodge room of approximately the same size and facilities of the present Blue Lodge room on first floor; the transferring of Blue Lodge Secretaries' quarters to the present Board room main entrance lobby; removal of cafeteria from first floor mezzanine to new portion, doubling the capacity of billiard room in Club Section; placing card game room in new addition on same level, providing a possible Club or Game Section in basement back of billiard room, approximately 60'-0" x 83'-6" or 5 sq ft. in area, using present cafeteria for small supper rooms; providing coaching or posting room for candidates on second floor at center off lobby; the removal of Shrine Secretary's quarters from third floor to a more spacious office with vault and toilet on first mezzanine adjoining auditorium floor level of addition. Ample connections between present building and new giving a flexible comprehensive use of the entire structure, with all the facilities of the new building hereinafter shown, combined with the possibilities of our present temple.





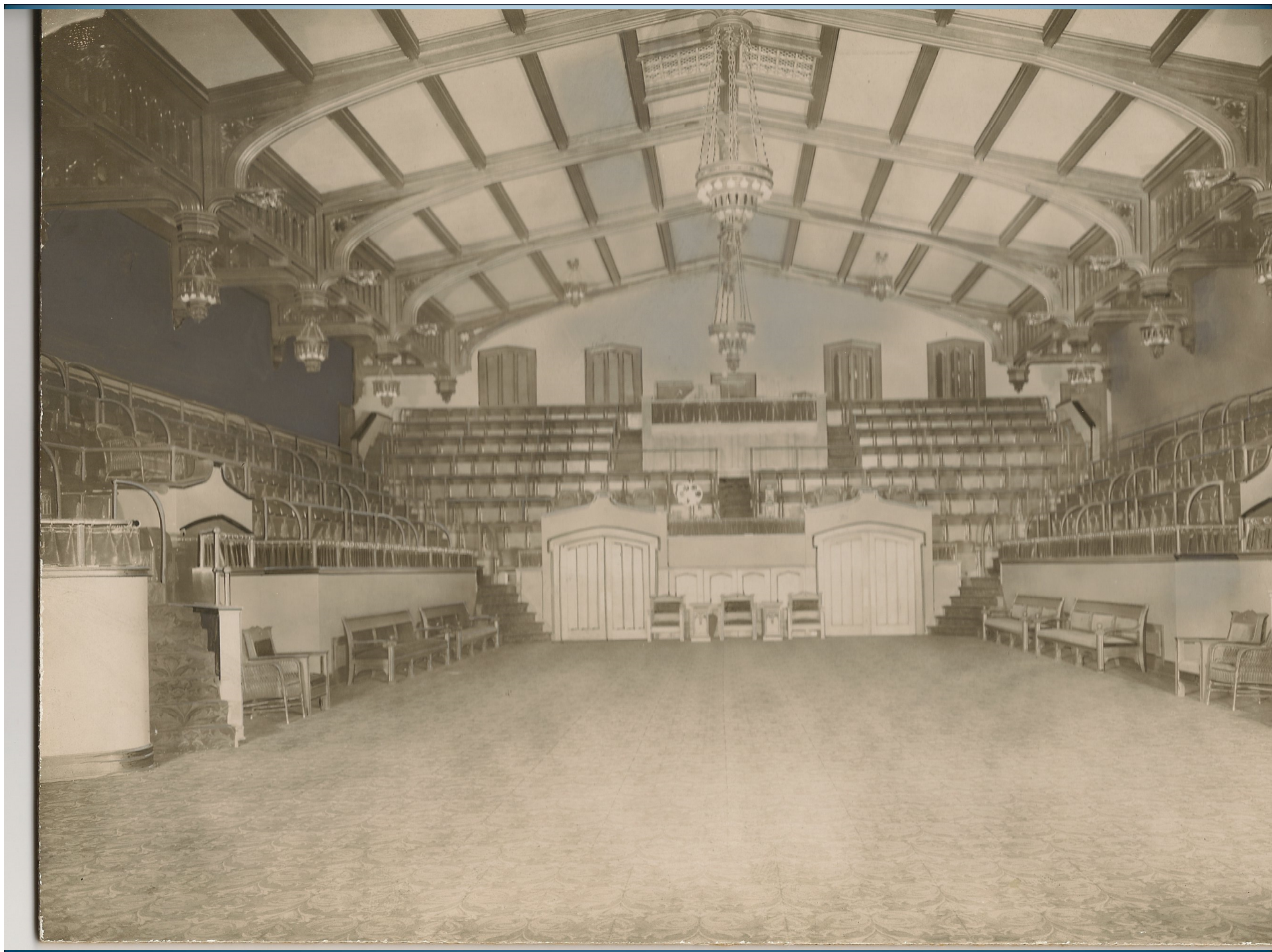
















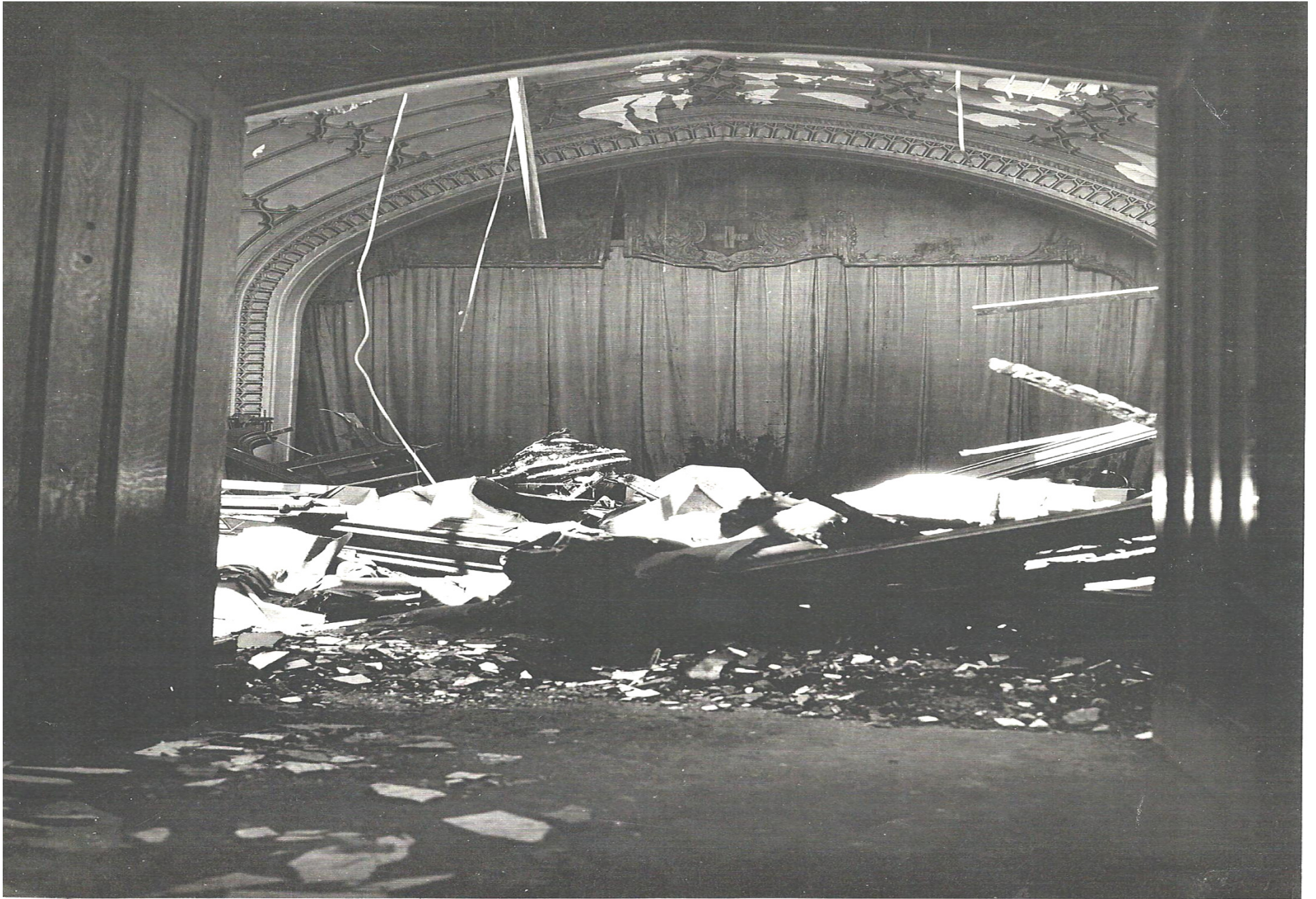












Fifth Floor Amphitheater Stage Damage, 1947 Fire













Lower Level Entertainment Area, pre 1947







GRAND RIVER-VALLEY CITY  
LODGE NO 34  LODGE NO 86  
F. & A. M. F. & A. M.





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C. HOERTZ & SON - D