**Northern Light Lodge No. 45, Cooperstown**

            It is interesting to note that the town of Cooperstown was named for the Cooper Brothers, who came to the area in 1880 from Colorado and established the Cooper ranch, a huge wheat raising farm, around which most of the business of the community revolved for several years. Brother Rollin C. Cooper was a charter member of the lodge.

            Among the early settlers were several Masons: Brother William D. Marsh, manager of the Cargill Elevator; Brother John E. Johnson, conductor on the railroad; Brother David Bartlett, lawyer and politician; and sixteen others, who signed a petition for a dispensation to organize Northern Light Lodge U.'. D.'., and on May 25, 1895, received a certificate of proficiency and recommendation to form a lodge from Occidental Lodge No. 27 at Hope, their sponsor, and they were on their way. The dispensation was granted by Grand Master William H. Best of the Grand Lodge of North Dakota June 25, 1895, and the first meeting of the new lodge was held July 5, 1895, with the following principal officers; W.'. M.'. William D. Marsh; S.'. W.'. John E. Johnson; J.'. W.'. David Bartlett; Treasurer Ben A. Upton; and Secretary Jackson N. Brown.

            The charter was granted June 10, 1896, to Northern Light Lodge No. 45 of Cooperstown, with nineteen charter members, and the lodge was constituted August 6, 1896, by W.'. Brother Theodore F. Bronck, Junior Grand Deacon, representing M.'. W.'. Brother William T. Perkins, Grand Master. It is interesting to note that eight of the charter members came from Occidental Lodge No. 27 at Hope, their sponsor, and that the same lodge presented them with a full set of officers' jewels, which were gratefully received and worn over fifty years.

            The lodge met for several years over a drug store, in rooms also occupied by the I.O.O.F. lodge. In 1905 a new store building was erected by Jimeson and Olson and the lodge raised $1,965.00 for the erecting and furnishing of lodge rooms on the second floor; $1,000.00 of the amount was designated as advance rental, at $30.00 per month. By 1916 an advance in rental resulted in the forming of a temple association, the purchase of lots and the building of the present beautiful temple, at a cost of $50,000.00. It was dedicated July 6, 1917, by Grand Master William J. Reynolds, debt free, and is still their splendid lodge home.

            Northern Light Lodge grew rapidly, especially after completion of the new building and in 1927 reached its highest membership of 201. Then came the financial setback of the depression years, which reduced the membership to 120. In 1960, it was up to 132, though in 1950 it had reached 170. The potential is there and only requires prosperous conditions to produce new members.

            The lodge has always been public spirited and in World War I the temple was headquarters for the Griggs County Red Cross and many hundreds of items were made, assembled, packed and shipped from its rooms. For many years the lodge sponsored a lyceum course, at a cost of from $800.00 to $1,500.00 annually, which brought much fine talent to the city. County spelling contests were sponsored in the public schools and the Grand Lodge essay contests were supported with entrants in local, regional and state competition. Many funeral services were also held within its walls for departed members.

            Singled out for special mention are such men as W.'. Brother William D. Marsh, John E. Johnson and David Bartlett, its founders, the first two of whom were Worshipful Masters; Brother John Syverson, one of the persistent planners for the new temple; W.'. Brothers Theodore G. Thompson, W.'. M.'. in 1907 and 1909, Theodore S. Syverson, W.'. M.'. in 1916 and 1917, Halvor P. Hammer and Frederick C. Potter, members of the building committee; W.'. Brothers Leon A. Sayer, W.'. M.'. in 1936; Norman A. Hoel, W.'. M.'. in 1948 and for many years District Deputy Grand Master of District No. 19; I. Willis Nilson, W.'. M.'. in 1955-56, and District Deputy Grand Master, from 1957-1960; and Brother Clarence P. Dahl; S.'. W.'. in 1961, who for many years was lieutenant governor of North Dakota. Two remarkable members were Brothers Samuel B. Langford, tyler from 1896 to 1913, and Glenn W. Dyson, tyler from 1913 to 1956. Both were charter members and Brother Dyson died in 1959 at the age of 96.

            Said W.'. Brother G. Basil Edmondson, author of the lodge's splendid history: "Every member raised in Northern Light Lodge is proud to acknowledge her as his Mother Lodge, because she has always instilled in the minds and hearts of her members the true principles of Masonry."

http://www.glnd.org/Pond/CH10.htm