

Missing History of Anoka Lodge #30 AF&AM 1859-1884

Part Story – Part Fact

By WB John A. Freeburg

Anoka lodge began with a group of men who were in pursuit of that high ideal that all masons share and seek, namely, the light shining from within illuminates the path that leads toward each of us becoming better men. This ideal had been shared by other men for hundreds of years in the fraternity of Freemasonry. There is evidence that Masonry, in a form similar to ours, was in existence in northern England in 926 A.D., and there is a document called the Regius Poem, written about 1390 A.D., that shows that a ritual, very much like our modern one, had been in use for a very long time.



THE FARRINGTON BUILDING, NO. 198 WEST
THIRD STREET

The upper floor was fitted up for Masonic purposes by St. Paul Lodge, U. D., in the fall of 1852. It was occupied by the Lodge for several years. Here the Grand Lodge of Minnesota was organized, February 23-24, 1853.

The Grand Lodge organization of English\ Masonry began in June of 1717 when four Lodges of Masons met in a tavern in London and formed the first Grand Lodge. Minnesota Masonry began in August 1849 when St. Paul Lodge 223 was granted a dispensation by the Grand Lodge of Ohio. St. John's Lodge 39 of Wisconsin was chartered in Stillwater in October 1850 and Cataract Lodge 121 was chartered by the Grand Lodge of Illinois at St. Anthony in February 1852. These three Lodges met and formed the Grand Lodge, Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of Minnesota on February 24, 1853.

The original Charter for Anoka Lodge #30 was granted on October 25, 1859 with the following officers:

Owen Evans, W.M. James H. Colbath, Sec.
Josiah F. Clark, S.W. Nathaniel Small, S.D.
John H. Martin, J.W. Isaac P. Strout, J.D.
Jacob B. Lufkin, Treas. Harvey Richards, Tyler

There were four additional charter members: Francis Thorndike, Dwight Woodbury, George Small, and Edward Cundy. Although we have no records of other masonic lodges in Anoka during this early period, the archives of the Grand Lodge show that in 1880 a petition was submitted by several members of Anoka Lodge, requesting to form a second Lodge to be known as Doric Lodge. This application was denied by the Grand Master.

The original records of the Lodge and all its possessions were destroyed by the fire of August 16, 1884, which wiped out the entire business district of Anoka. On August 30, 1884, the Lodge met at Chase's Parlor (also known as Chase's Hall). At this meeting a letter from the Grand Master was read, which authorized the Lodge to continue meeting until a duplicate charter could be issued at the next annual Grand Lodge session. Anoka Lodge received donations from many other Lodges to help purchase new equipment, furniture, etc.

Articles of Incorporation
 State of Minnesota }
 County of Anoka }
 We, the undersigned, do hereby certify that the Grand Lodge of Minnesota duly chartered said Anoka Lodge No. 20 on the twenty sixth day of October in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty nine. That said Owen Egans is the present W. Master, and said Francis F. Slack is the present Senior Warden, and the said John H. Martin is the present Junior Warden, of said Anoka Lodge No. 20 - That said Lodge is and shall be known by the name of "Anoka Lodge No. 20 of Anoka". That said Lodge meets and is to meet

at the Town of Anoka, in the County of Anoka and State of Minnesota.
 In testimony whereof the Owen Egans, W. Master, Francis F. Slack, Senior Warden and John H. Martin Junior Warden have hereunto subscribed our names and affixed our seals to this Certifi-
 cate this eighth day of August A.D. one thousand eight hundred and eight
 signed and sealed Owen Egans W. Master (Seal)
 in the presence of Francis F. Slack Senior Warden (Seal)
 John H. Martin Junior Warden (Seal)
 A true record
 Attest
 Clerk of Lodge

Articles of Incorporation 1860

The above paragraph is true and correct and was written by W.B Elder Opem in 1955 for use in the 100th Anniversary program pamphlet of 1959. The letters WB stand for Worshipful Brother which refers to a member of a masonic lodge who is currently the Master of a lodge or a Past Master, the word worshipful means greatly respected. When referring to the current Master of the Lodge (i.e., president) we call this person the sitting Master.

. In 2013 I, W.B. John A. Freeburg. as the author of this essay, set about to discover what could be found out about our lost history for the years 1859 Through 1884. The sources for this research into the Lodge's history were multiple.

Amongst them, the existing newspapers of the day, and there were several, but relying mostly on the Anoka County Union (ACU) and its editor and owner T. Granville S. Pease, a man of high integrity and known for speaking his mind. Along with these sources, I also reviewed the Anoka Lodge annual reports that were submitted to the Grand Lodge of Minnesota and are still there today. In addition, I conducted several in person interviews with members of the Cutter family of Anoka including my brother-in-law Marcus Hancock Cutter. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the management and staff of the Anoka County Union Herald, the Anoka County Historical Society, Bro. Hans Neisz and the brothers on staff at the Grand Lodge (GL) of Minnesota for the immense amount of time and help that they provided to me in pulling this part of our history together.



GRANVILLE S. PEASE.

Please bear in mind that the amount of information available for this task was meager at best. But none the less reliable. This reconstructed history is by design more of a story than a recitation of facts from minutes and newsletters, as will be the case once we get beyond 1884. Many references are made here to the

“Lodge”. Most people will associate that word to mean the building that we meet in. To avoid confusion that will be the meaning of this word as it is used in this document. The actual meaning of the word “Lodge” in the Masonic context refers to the membership of the organization. Just as the word University does not necessarily refer to a group of buildings, the actual university is the faculty that uses those buildings. Also mentioned here are several references to social and personal events that may not immediately bear witness to our lodges history but are critical to understanding the times and events that shaped the making and functioning of Anoka Masonic Lodge #30. Please remember that in the period covered here, there were no automobiles, no electricity and no telephones. Water came from hand pumped wells, rainwater collecting cisterns or the rivers. Refrigeration was supplied by ice taken from the rivers or lakes and stored in special barns called ice houses, using sawdust for insulation.

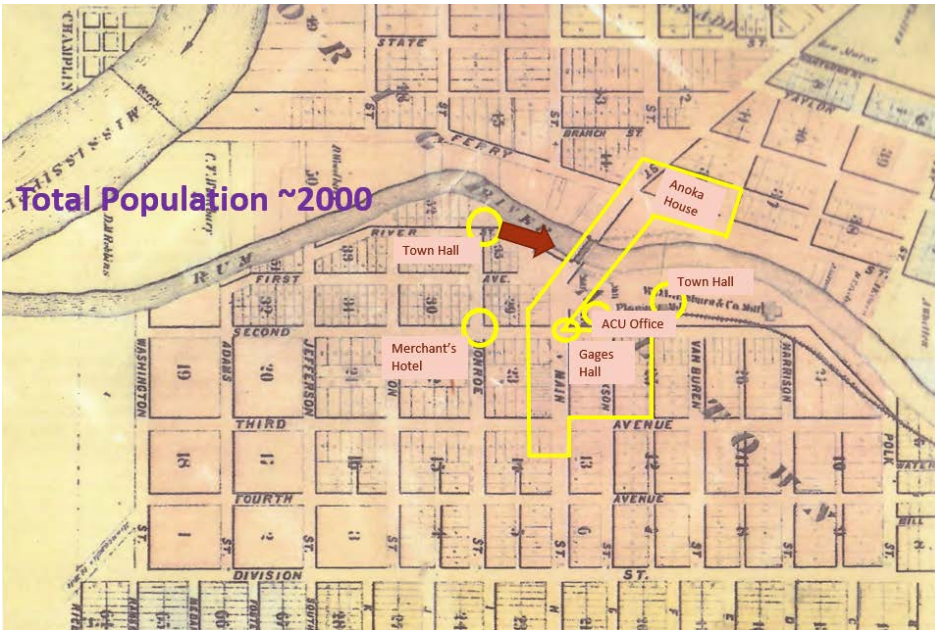


Anoka Main Street 1868

The city of Anoka had a plentiful supply of both. Heat was provided by fireplaces or standalone Franklin stoves with sheet metal chimneys. Life and property insurance for individuals was a new concept, previously unavailable. Many of the fraternal organizations existing in the country at that time, offered life and

dismemberment insurance as a benefit to its members, for the welfare and protection of the member’s widows and orphans.

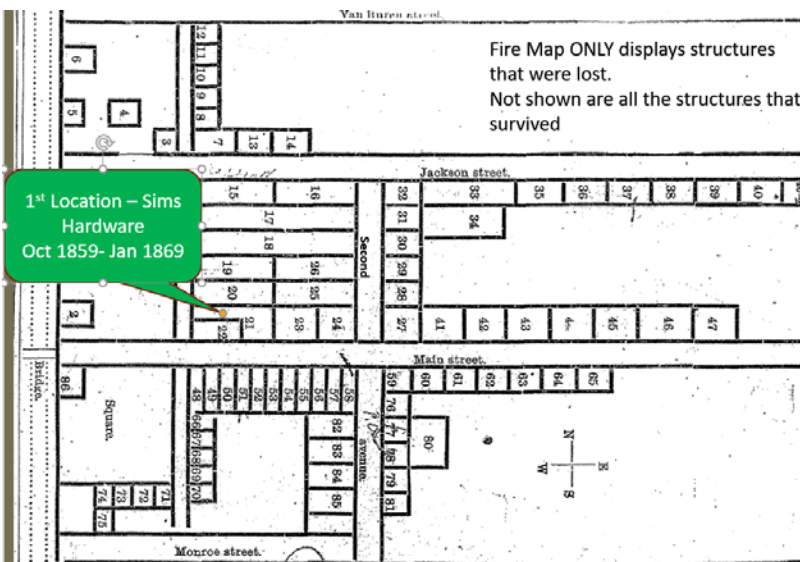
There was no such thing as building addresses, sidewalks were wooden or dirt and there were no paved roads. Wagon trains, in their pursuit to claim free land in the West, came through town following the Red River Ox Cart Trail (now US Hwy. 10) from Minneapolis to North Dakota. The fire department consisted of volunteers and the fire truck (built by the Fire Protection Co.) was human propelled and carried several buckets of water. Farms were not protected. Transportation to and from Minneapolis and St. Paul was usually by train. Local transportation was by foot, horseback or horse and buggy. Lighting was provided by candles or kerosene lamps. The local newspaper provided information about the world around you and your next-door neighbors. In other words, they were the social media of the day, appearing regularly once a week. Anoka did not consider itself a frontier town, but you could see one from here.



The information here about events in 1859 comes from the January 1st issue of 1880 ACU. In that issue, WB Oscar Cutter gave a presentation on the occasion of a joint installation for Anoka Masonic Lodge #30 and North Star Chapter #7 Order of the Eastern Star (OES). At this event WB Cutter gave the history of the Lodge up to that time, even pointing out that, they were currently in the Masonic Hall above Bean and Guderian's hardware store on Main St. Anoka. The information he provided appears to have come from the then existing minutes

books of the lodge since he calls out specific months, days and years of certain events occurring. This information was then passed onto the ACU for publication. Without this unique piece of data, the following history would have been much harder to assemble and the reconstruction of the history was thus enabled.

We send in our Foundation Document, basically our request to form a lodge, to the Grand Lodge of Minnesota In St. Paul in the fall of 1859. This precious document has since disappeared from the G.L. archives. On Sept 12th.1859 Owen Evans, Dwight Woodbury, J.B. Lafkin, J. H. Colbath, J. H. Martin, J.F. Clark and Ed Cundy met and voted to organize a lodge of Freemasons and appointed a committee to secure a hall and make necessary arrangements. The exact place of this meeting is unknown but could have been the Town Hall as this was about the only public meeting place. On Oct. 13th, the above-mentioned officers were designated to their appropriate offices. The committee on the hall reported that they had secured the hall over Sims hardware store later to be known as Putman, Chesley and Lindsey hardware.



This building was an L shaped two story wood frame structure at the Southwest corner of 1st Ave. and Main St. on the north side of Main St. The long part of the L was laid East to West and was about twice as long as it was wide. On Oct. 22 the first regular communication at the lodge was held at this location with the aforementioned officers presiding. The first candidates to be received into the lodge were O. N. Carpenter, Israel Thorndike, N.W. Curial, C.T. Curtis and Albert Woodbury, who were initiated on Nov. 26th. Albert Woodbury was the first to take the third degree.

The first annual elections of officers for 1860 occurred on Dec. 12th, 1859 and resulted in the election of all the first officers, except Harvey Richards being elected in place of J.H. Colbath. It appears as though an annual report was not submitted to the GL for the year 1859. 1860 This is the year we filed our first certificate of incorporation. We still have a copy this document and it is framed in the lodge room atop of the library book shelf. This year we did submit an annual report, a copy is held in the GL office, as are copies of all of other submitted annual reports. This report shows that the lodge has 23 members, two of which are EA's. All of the existing members were born in a state or country other than Minnesota. Mostly from New England. All but one, indicated that they lived in the city of Anoka.



The stated meeting was to be held on the first Saturday after the full moon in each month. We were known as a moon Lodge as many others were at the time. This meeting time provided for natural light at a time when artificial light was not available to assist the brothers in traveling to and from lodge meetings.



1861 The annual report for this year shows a total membership of 28, two of whom are EA's. No annual report was submitted for this year, possibly due to the start of the Civil War.

1862 Nothing to report

1863 This year's report indicates that we now have 40 members. Heman L. Ticknor is now secretary.

1864 This year's report is somewhat unclear as to our total membership. The form sent out by the GL has been slightly different for each year. This, combined with usually having a new secretary each year, seems to have caused some confusion in reporting.

1865 A better report this year. We now have 64 members, five of whom are FC's. The membership still is coming from the East coast and none were born in Minnesota. From the report it appears as though annual dues for Anoka lodge are \$1.00 per year.

1866

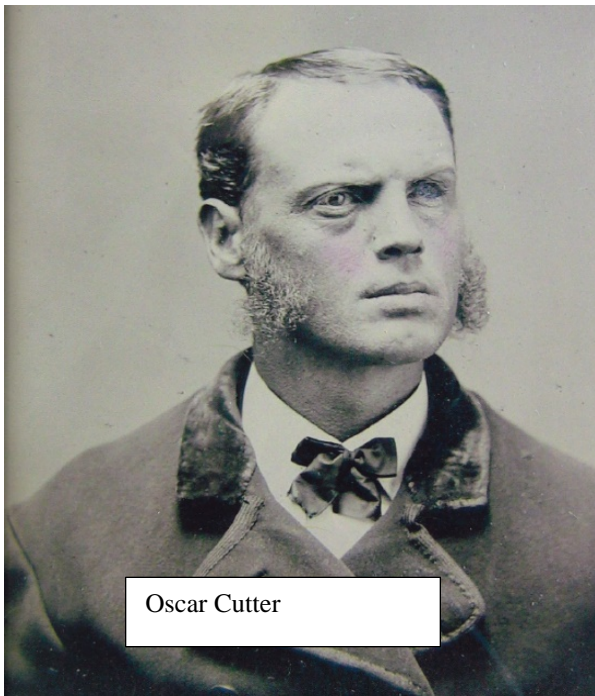
This is the year that a new newspaper began publishing in Anoka County. In time it became known as the Anoka County Union (ACU) and even later the Anoka County Union Herald. It is from this source that most of the information we now have regarding the activities of Anoka Lodge comes from (other than the annual reports). During this period in the history of the United States, many fraternal

organizations began to organize in many of the states. In the city of Anoka, the Freemasons were among several other fraternities including The Grand Army of the Republic (GAR), composed of widows of the civil war, Independent order of Good Templars (IOGT), a temperance society and the Independent Order of the Sons of Malta (IOSM). The editor and owner of the ACU (Mr. Pease) was favorably disposed to report on all fraternal activities within the county and city and was very favorable to any Temperance movement. Mr. Pease never became a member of Anoka Lodge, but his son and grandson did and they also in their time became the editor of the ACU. As will be seen, editor Pease would always give us favorable articles and appears to have attended many of our public functions and reported on them in the first person. He was especially careful to report the details of our public installation and the meals that followed. Another newspaper at the time, The Anoka County Press, reported the following in its Dec. 13th issue. "The Masonic fraternity have bought the lot on the corner beyond J. F. Blodgett's glove manufactory (this is the first of two lots that will be purchased with the intent of putting up a structure for our use). They propose to build in the spring store below, hall above- good luck to them say we -may their corn, wine and oil abound". No evidence exists that we ever built such a building but it seems that the writer of the article was familiar with our fraternity. The annual report for this year shows a total membership of about 70, none of which were born in Minnesota.

1867

One of the lesser-known newspapers of the time, The Minnesota Farmer, is the first to mention the presence of Oscar L. Cutter in Anoka at an IOGT meeting.

Oscar is the nephew of Ami (Capt.) Cutter who was a business owner in Anoka. We now start to see more mention of our activities in the local newspapers.



Oscar Cutter

In the early part of the year, we held a festival for the installation of officers at the Anoka House (formerly the New England House located at Main and Ferry). The occasion was marked by an evening meal, singing, dancing and social reunion.

—At the festival communication of Anoka Lodge No 30 A. F. & A. M., held in their Hall, Friday evening, December 28 A. L. 5866 the officers for the ensuing term, were regularly installed, as follows:
 H. L. Ticknor, W. M., W. E. Cundy, S. W., H. F. Blodgett, J. W. Dwight Woodbury, Treas., J. F. Blodgett, Sec., L. H. Lennon S. D., H. H. Cutter, J. D. E. Partt, Geo Townsend, S. P. B. B. oaks, T

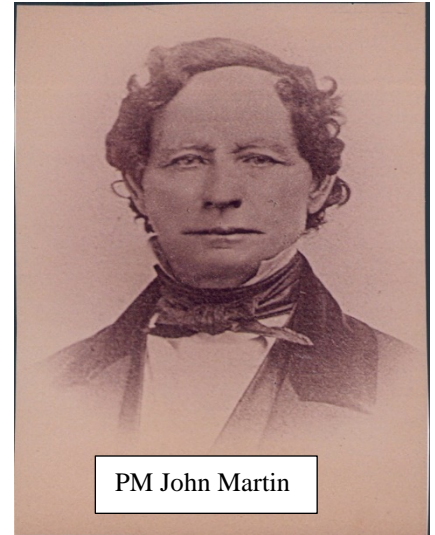
The Masonic Festival At the Anoka House, on Friday evening last is said by those who were present to have been a pleasant affair. A special reunion, a supper, singing, speeches and dancing were the features of the occasion.

Anoka County Union Jan. 03 1867

THE ANOKA HOUSE,
ANOKA, MINN.
Formerly The New England House.
 Having purchased the above property and re modeled and refurnished it throughout the un derlined proposes to accommodate those who favor him with a call. Situated in a pleasant town, with a picturesque country surrounding, he invites parties coming to the state in quest of health, to call, guaranteeing to all such ample accommodation, kindly attention and moderate charges. No passenger expense will be wanted to make the Anoka House the very best above St. Paul.
 P. C. RANDOLM.
 Anoka, June 15th, 1865.

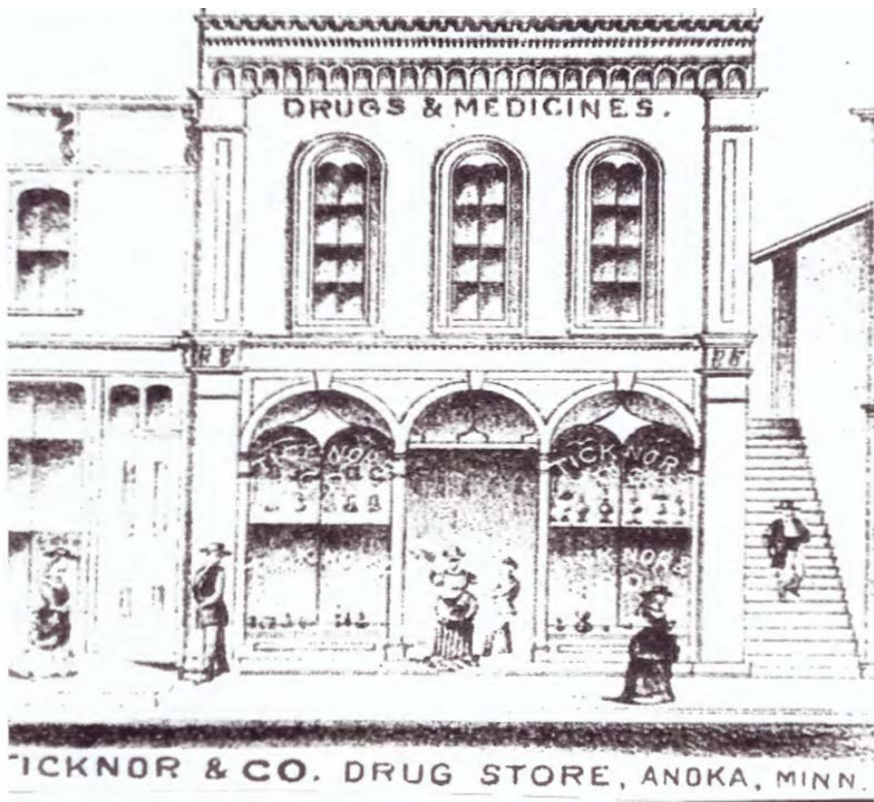
Rock County Union June 15 1865

The ACU also noted the passing of John H. Martin, master of Anoka Lodge for 1863-4. "His funeral was attended by almost the entire community together with the members of Anoka lodge and about one hundred brothers of the "mystic tie" from St. Paul, St. Anthony and Minneapolis. The body was conducted to the cemetery where the solemn rites of the of burial of the Masonic Fraternity were conducted". We were listed in the ACU as one of the cities "Public Institutions", along with the Good Templars, O.L. Cutter was listed as one of the officers of the IOGT. During this year, WB Heman Ticknor started construction on his



PM John Martin

new brick building on Main street (the first brick building in the city) where we would eventually occupy the second floor. See picture of artist rendering of proposed building. Our current Secretary was also our representative in the state legislative body in St. Paul.



The local papers carried several articles regarding the occurrence of many fires in town and promoted the idea of carrying adequate insurance on your property. We finished the year with about 80 members, still no native Minnesotan.

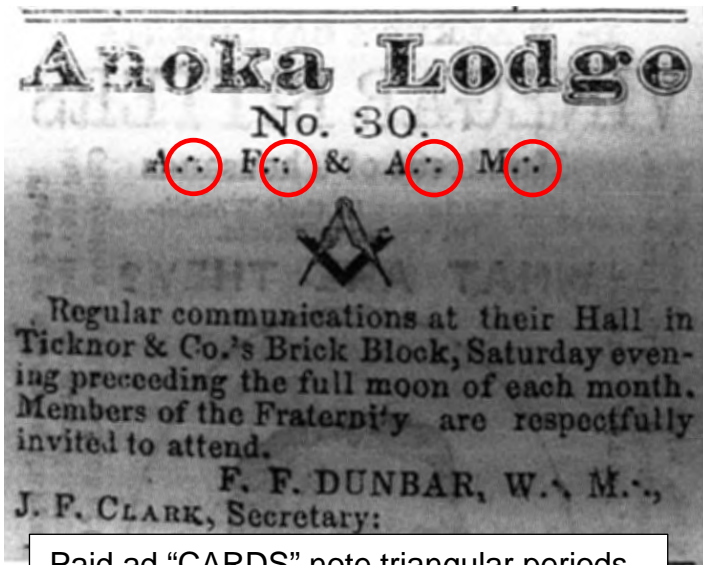
An interesting piece appeared in The Minnesota Farmer of May 23rd, 1867 which I will quote in its entirety. "A good Mason- A good Mason is an honest man, one who duly pays his duty to his great Creator; one who strives by honest industry to excel in that trade, profession or science he is called to; one who is just in all his dealings and dependences, cultivating his mind and behavior with social adepts and brotherly benignity in all the duties of life; one who would willing do to all men as he would have them do to him".

“This definition embraces the golden rule. Obedience to it will do to live by, it will do to die by. It is Masonry in its purest, unadulterated form, it is the Masonry taught in our Lodges, and it ought to be practiced by all. – Grand master of Indiana”. I dare say that this type of statement would seldom, if ever be found, in our newspapers of today, even though it should.

1868

This year started with a grand Masonic gathering. The article in the Jan 2nd of the ACU had the title “Masonic Festival Immense Success”. It went on to state “the largest and most pleasant time ever in Anoka came off last Tuesday evening under the auspices of the Free Masons of this town”. The lodge would be hosting guests from Minneapolis and St. Anthony who were to arrive by special train at 7:00 PM.

The lodge is now in the process of moving into W.B. Ticknor’s new brick building on Main St. which we are using as one of the four venues for this occasion. This hall is trimmed in the highest



Paid ad “CARDS” note triangular periods

jollier crowd never visited Anoka. The music in attendance, was the celebrated Millers Quadrille Band, which is equal by few and excelled by none. The band won the highest praise from every mouth, and when we have to dance may Millers Band discourse the music. At 3:00 o’clock the guests are moving toward the depot in sleighs, after a few moments of delay the train leaves and they are gone. And thus, the Grand Masonic Festival ended”. Needless to say, this article expresses the great social presence that Anoka lodge had on the city at this time in history. The Anoka County Press expressed similar sentiments regarding this event. This paper also ran short pieces announcing our meeting time and place which is now in Ticknor’s & Co. Brick Block.

On Jan. 30th of this year, the ACU printed a very interesting story for which they did not provide a source. This piece took up about four full length columns of the paper which was an extraordinary amount of ink for those days. The title of the story was “Why Mrs. Herbert Loved Masonry.” This was a story about a Mason’s wife who was returning to Boston from visiting family in Wisconsin. A pick pocket stole her train ticket and all her money. This stranded her in a strange town and prevented her from traveling further. She found the Masonic Lodge in this town and received a large helping

SCHOOL BOARD.

Clerk, J. F. Clark ; Director, E. T. Alling, Treasurer, Lewis Martin.

PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

Masonic Lodge, No. 30. A. F. and A. M. Hall, on main street in Ticknor and Co’s brick building.
 Good Templars’ Lodge, No. 71. Hall, on main east of the bridge.
 Anoka Brass Band, James Miller, leader.
 Anoka Library Association, Rev. R. B. Abbott Pres., E. Pratt secretary, Rev. A. K. Packard, treasurer.
 Fire Co.— Protection Hook and Ladder Co, No. 1, north of Public Square.
 Anoka Musical Society, E. Pratt, Director.
 Post Office, east of the bridge, S. P. Starrett, P. M.
 The Anoka Union School, Rev. R. Abbott, A. M. Principal

PHYSICIANS.

D. C. Dunham, M. D. Office over Dickens’

Anoka County Press May 25 1867

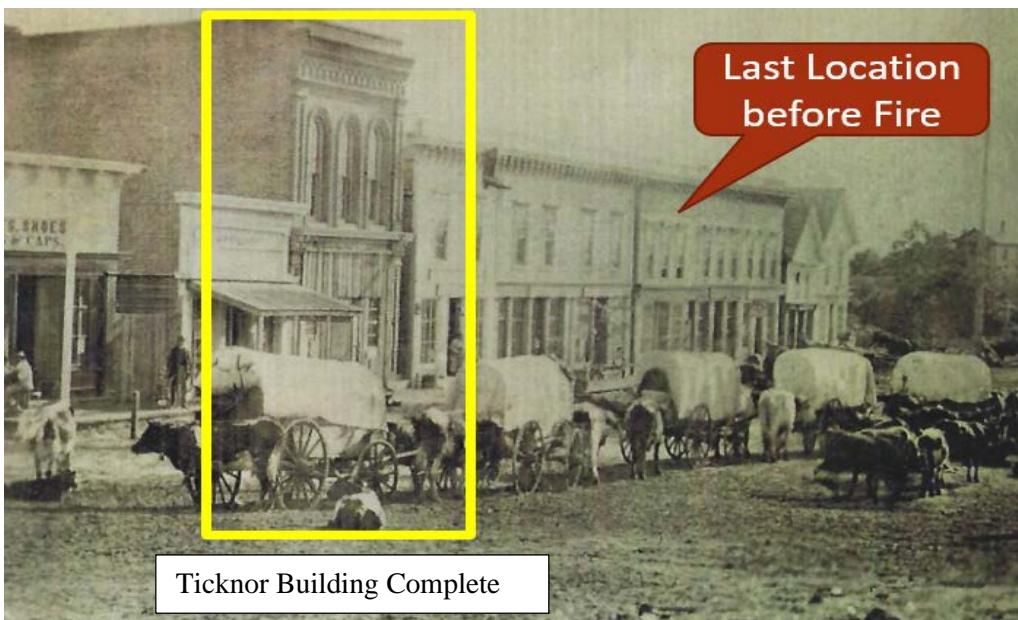
Arreurance from The ‘Chamber of Commerce’

style of art with evergreens, illustrating the mystic signs of Masonry. This hall is prepared for the dancers as well as the hall beneath. Then to (Ami) Cutters hall where we find music. Then to the hall where we find cards, chess and checkers tables. Lastly to the Town Hall where we are greeted on every side by tables filled with every delicacy of the season, and which won golden opinions from the guests soon to arrive. All in all, the tables were magnificent and reflected great credit on the getters up”.

“7:00 o’clock is upon us and 200 guests are arriving from the train. The halls where the mazy dance was the order of the evening seemed to be the most popular, for a happier, merrier and

hand from the brothers that enabled her to get home. This was not the usual fare of stories that would occasionally appear in the ACU. The only other similar stories involved the various temperance movements such as the Good Templars. I find this to be a peculiar single event, but one that typifies the morals of the times that editor Pease was more than happy to present to his readers as a fine example of Masonic Brotherhood.

The August 20th issue of the ACU carried the following article from which I will liberally quote. "Ticknor & Co's new store, the great want of Anoka has heretofore been business houses that are comparatively fireproof. The exposed situation of our principal business streets and the high rates of insurance, have been a source of anxiety and expense to our merchants. The pioneer brick building of the town is now completed. It is a fine structure, thoroughly built, and every respect a worthy model and pattern for imitation of subsequent builders. It is 24 by 60 feet on the ground consisting of two lofty stories and a deep cellar under the whole building. The first story will be occupied by the owners of the drug store. The Second story is occupied by the Masonic Fraternity as a lodge room. Its proportions are justly the admiration of the many adepts who have visited it. It is finished neatly meeting we should think all the demands of the purpose of which it is devoted, and at once an honor and an ornament to the flourishing order which occupies it. A metallic roof, and iron doors and shutters at exposed points, fully protect the structure, and its contents from danger of destruction by fire". The Anoka County Press was equally generous in its description of this new building. They said "that its design was unequaled of its kind even in Chicago. The new Masonic Hall is on the second story directly over the store and is decidedly the best proportioned hall in the state. It is charmingly furnished, in blue and gold, and friends of Hiram can congratulate within its walls with every satisfaction. As it is soon to be dedicated, I will defer further remarks until that event, when I trust I may be there to see". There is little doubt that both of the local papers and most likely the whole town, was extremely proud of this new brick building in the city. One of its main functions was to show the folks out East that Anoka was more than just another frontier town. The wood frame buildings did not project the kind of presence that potential newcomers were looking for. One point to keep in mind here is that the frame of the building is still just wood beams and planks. Yes, the outside is brick, but the innards are still wood!



The Anoka County Press ran on Aug.31st, what I would call a Chamber of Commerce promotional article, touting the many new wonders of the city of Anoka. Among these new features was WB Ticknor's new brick building and the Masonic hall above. The article, credited to the editors of the St. Paul Pioneer, is quoted as follows. "A visit here after an absence of two years, shows a thriving town of upwards of two thousand

inhabitants and every facility the most sanguine could desire to double its present population within three years. There are but few towns that appear to have made so healthy a growth as Anoka". In an earlier article it described the many attractions that Anoka had to offer including such things as schools, physicians, businesses and public institutions among which Anoka lodge No. 30 was

classified as first on the list followed by the Good Templars, The Anoka Brass Band, The Anoka Library Association, The Anoka Musical Society, and Fire Co- Protection Hook and Ladder Co. # 1 north of public square. It should be noted that the Hook and Ladder Co. was an all-volunteer organization with no source of public funding and a functioning fraternal society. Again, these articles were all intended to promote the city of Anoka as a fine place to come to and live in, instead of that crowded city out East that you are currently living in.

Now let's catch up with one of the most talked about citizens of Anoka; Oscar L. Cutter. A June first article in the Anoka County Press said the following. "We notice Mr. O.L. Cutter's genial phiz again on our streets". Another paper of the time, The Anoka Weekly Union, ran the following article from which I will borrow." MARRIED, In Anoka at the residence of the bride's father by Rev. A.K. Packard, Mr. O.L. Cutter to Miss Ella Butterfield. Married! Married!! Who is married? O.L. Cutter! Do our eyes deceive our ear-sight, or are we awake or are we dreaming? Oscar! Are you married certain? You have always told us, that you would never become benedict, and yet at the first opportunity, you have become one. What meanest thou, oh, base hypocrite, to tell us only the day before, that you would never marry. We hope the judgments may follow you for your wickedness. And now through blinding tears {which were produced from a very damp towel} we wish you joy, riches, children and all good things that make married life happy. The fair bride will please accept our kind wishes for her welfare and happiness in the future". An Aug. 31st article in The Anoka County Press noted that "Mr. Cutter and his wife are in town. Mr. C has been having a severe attack of Bilious fever". To say the least Oscar Cutter was a man about town and his every move was noted by the local press. The Bride's father Marcus Q. Butterfield is a local attorney who joined Anoka lodge in April of this year and would soon become the Mayor of Anoka.

The Annual report for the year 1868 shows a total membership of 75. Again, the annual report is somewhat short on specific details regarding the lodge, especially our financial condition.

1869

What a difference a year can make. The ACU reported on our installation of officers on Jan. 7th of this year. After that, there were no notices regarding upcoming stated communications or degrees. Nor were there any articles regarding any social activities that the lodge may have participated in. It's kind of like we just disappeared into the night. I can only ascribe this situation to the change of officers, especially the master and the secretary. Both the ACU and the Anoka County Press did however note the passing of Thomas G. Jones. Bro. Jones transferred his membership to Anoka Lodge in 1864. Both articles noted that he was a member of both the Good Templars and the Masonic lodge. Bro. Jones had a very interesting life and at one point was in business with his brother in Georgia. When the civil war broke out, Bro. Jones felt deeply committed to the Union cause and came back to Minnesota where he lived for the rest of his life. The Lodge provided the funeral services at the graveside. The papers noted that the funeral drew about 1000 mourners to the services from both the local area as well as St. Anthony and Minneapolis.

The Annual Report lists a total membership of 74.

1870

A slow year for news on the Lodge. The ACU reported on our annual election of Officers and a few paid ads announcing our presence and that we are still meeting in Ticknor's brick building. The annual report shows a total of about 85 members. Mr. Oscar Cutter has been appointed county auditor.

1871

The news got even slower this year as far as Anoka Lodge activities were concerned. We did not even get in our election results or an announcement of an installation of Officers. That part aside, we did hold a Festival and I will quote the ACU article in full. "The Masonic Festival held last week Friday night was a splendid and gratifying success. The town Hall was used for refreshments, and we never saw tables that looked more inviting and tempting. The Masonic Hall was used for music and sociability. Cutters Hall was used for dancing, and with the exquisite music discoursed by Millers band the dancers enjoyed themselves greatly. Receipts of the evening, \$187.20, and after paying expenses, will leave the Masons about \$120.00, for their Charity Fund".

In other news, it was noted that insurance premiums would be going up all over the country as a result of the Chicago fire. Brother Oscar Cutter age 25 was initiated into Anoka Lodge in this year. The Annual report is very unclear as to our total membership for this year.

1872

As in past years, we did not see any announcements regarding our elections, installations or meeting times and place. This did not seem to slow us down as we added six new members for the year. The Knights of Pythias (KP's) organized a lodge in Anoka this year with many members also holding membership in Anoka Lodge. Oscar Cutter was appointed as Master of Finance for the KPs. One very curious article did appear in the Aug. 27th issue of the ACU. This article stated that the Freemasons purchased a lot from Mr. F.F. Dunbar (Brother Frank Dunbar) on Main St. and will immediately commence the erection of a brick building 23X60. This flourishing body will occupy the upper story for their lodge room, and the ground floor is to be occupied with a large clothing store. I believe that this lot was located just west of the corner of 3rd and Main fronting on Main St. No mention is made of the lot purchased in 1866, we may have sold it to purchase the new one. In another Chamber of Commerce style of story entitled "Anoka Enterprise- A Live Town", dated Oct. 1st, mention is made of the Free Masons commencing excavation for their new brick building this week. As far as we know today, this building was never built. The article goes on to say that strangers passing through Anoka say that it exhibits more signs of life and go-a-headness, than many places they have visited. Newcomers are constantly arriving and every building is crowded with occupants".

The Annual report shows a total membership of 89 for the year. Bro. Oscar L. Cutter was appointed Sr. Deacon.

1873

It's been a quiet year in Lake Wobegon as Garrison Keillor might say regarding the activities of Anoka Lodge. We were in the paper only once with a resolution for the death of Bro. Frank Blodgett. The custom of the day was, when a brother died, the master appointed a committee to draw up a resolution, something like an obituary to be placed in the minutes book and also sent to the local paper. Other than this singular item, we did not make another appearance in the local news.

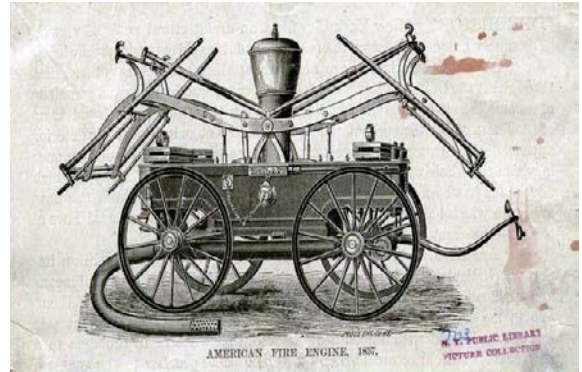
The same cannot be said for other fraternal societies however. Most especially the Knights of Pythias. In April they held a public presentation of their play 'Damon and Pythias' in Gages Hall. The ACU noted that they spared no expense in the production with beautiful costumes and new scenery. The lead role of Damon was played by Oscar Cutter and drew great applause in the packed house. Shortly after the play another article appeared in the ACU extolling the virtues of the KP lodge and

noted they are growing rapidly with new members joining most every meeting. "Their hall in (Ami.) Cutters brick building is fitted up in handsome style and the lodge appears to be in a flourishing condition. Success".



At this point in time, the KP's have their own lodge hall and meet separately from other fraternal organizations. It must be remembered that there was very little in the way of public entertainment such as plays or concerts and the like. The KP's scored big with their presentations.

On the civic side of things, the city held an election in March to decide on whether to spend \$3000 to purchase "a Fire Apparatus" for the protection of the town. The vote failed. Editor Pease wrote the following regarding the vote "those who defeated the measure will live to see the day that they will regret it".



In a June article it was noted that the Protection Hook and Ladder Co. received two dozen new buckets for their truck, apparently at public expense. In August it was noted that the Co. acquired new uniforms for the entire membership at a cost of \$175, paid for at their own expense. Several articles noted the need for a new fire bell that could be heard throughout the entire city.

The Annual report for this year noted that last year's report was incorrect as to the total membership. This year shows a total membership of 88. Oscar Cutter is now JW.

1874

At this point it appears as though, we as a lodge, have completely forgotten how to blow our own horn. The case here seems to be, as it has been for several years now, is that "no news is the news". The ACU will publish what we bring them, but nothing seems to come from the lodge. No election notice, no election results or installation ceremony. The city did hold a large New Year's Day celebration which brought out many citizens. It was noted that in the evening many of the citizens went to Elk River to attend the Masonic Festival and dance, where they had an excellent time. The lack of news in the papers does not mean that we did not have activities, but it does mean that we were not reporting them to the press.

The city of Anoka did not pass up any opportunity to pat itself on the back and tell the rest of the country what a fine place this is to move to and settle in. In a short article of Dec 22 entitled "Our Town", the paper went on to report about the positive points of life and times here in the city. In the list of attributes, one was labeled "secret societies" and goes on to list them. The Masons are first followed by the KP's, the Grangers and the Good Templars. We are in fine company.

A short article on Sept. 29th covered the Funeral of PGM Dr. A. E. Ames. From the ACU "A special train went down to Minneapolis, Sunday loaded with Masons from S. Cloud, Sauk Rapids, Clear Water, Elk River and Anoka to Attend funeral services of Dr. A.E. Ames. An immense number of people were present at the ceremonies and we estimate that there were over a thousand Masons in

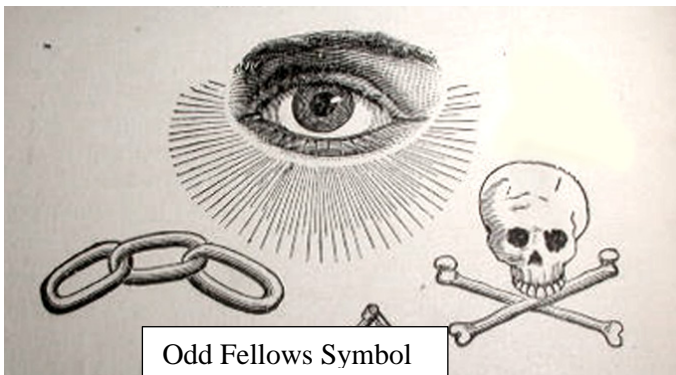
the procession, followed by innumerable carriages and vehicles. The procession was an imposing sight, long to be remembered by those who participated”.



The Annual report is even more confusing than in examples from the previous years. It appears that annual dues are still \$1.00 and we took in one new member this year for a total reported of 87. Oscar Cutter has been elected WM for the year 1875.

1875

We started this year off in our location on the second floor over Ticknor's brick building, just West of the corner of 2nd and Main St., facing Main on the South side of the street. And now for the big news. The ACU reported on Feb.9th that we have now moved to the KP Hall over Peters' store. Peters store was the previous location of Ticknor's store. He had the entire building moved to erect his new brick building. With the addition of our furniture and other belongings, the hall now looks very inviting. From information gathered from several other articles, it seems that WB Ticknor's business has been increasing at a fast pace and he needed the upstairs hall to expand his operations. It also appears that the KPs were short of furnishings and that we improved their hall which was located at the corner of 1st Ave and Jackson St, fronting onto 1st.



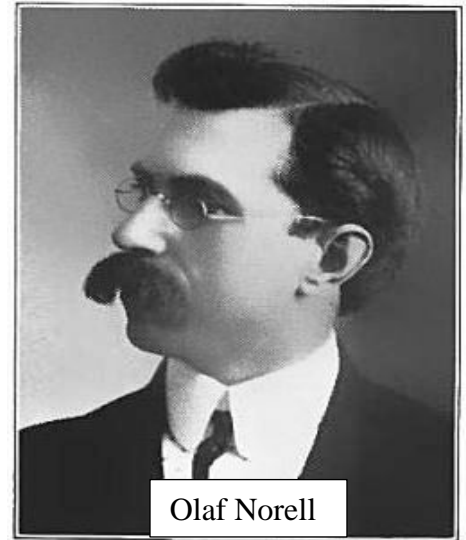
Also, on Feb. 9th the ACU reported that “The Independent Order of Odd Fellows” (IOOF) is soon to organize here and will hold their meetings in the KP hall. This largely explains how these three organizations eventually came together and shared a common meeting space and when it happened.

In early Feb. the ACU reported that the KP Grand Lodge of Minnesota held its annual meeting in the hall of KP lodge #8 over Peters store in Anoka. Two of the Grand officers were from Anoka including our Bro. M.V. Bean. The ACU carried a number of very favorable articles about the KP's, describing them as a young and popular order, including their new uniforms, participation in various parades and a Christmas party. We were only noted for our move in January.

On the social and political front, a Sept. 11th article in the ACU describes a demonstration by the Champion Engine Co. of their hand powered fire extinguishing truck in the public square. The machine had a capacity of 7 gallons. The machine was able to put out a prearranged fire consisting of wooden boxes etc. soaked with kerosene. After the demonstration a meeting was held to determine if the city should purchase the apparatus. Arguments for the purchase were voiced by many attendees while others opposed the purchase on the basis that taxes were already too high. In the end no

decision was reached. Editor Pease expressed his dismay at the indecision! He also ran a short article on Nov. 20th as follows "Look well to your stoves or other heating apparatus. A careful examination of pipes and flues, may save your home from destruction. A delay in such matters is dangerous".

This year also marks the appearance of future brother and landlord Olaf Norell. Olaf became a very successful businessman and land developer, having at one time owning the land that we now occupy and in the late 1880's selling it to the Dr's Aldrich. He joined Anoka Lodge in 1896 and the Shekinah Chapter of the Royal Arch shortly thereafter. His name appears many times in the newspapers of the day as having participated in many social and fraternal events, his birthplace was Sweden.



This year's annual report indicates, we now have a total membership of 85. We brought in six new members in this year. WM Oscar Cutter was elected to be the WM for the upcoming year.

1876

It's the year of the American Centennial and its celebration brought both joy and tragedy to the city of Anoka and Anoka Lodge #30.



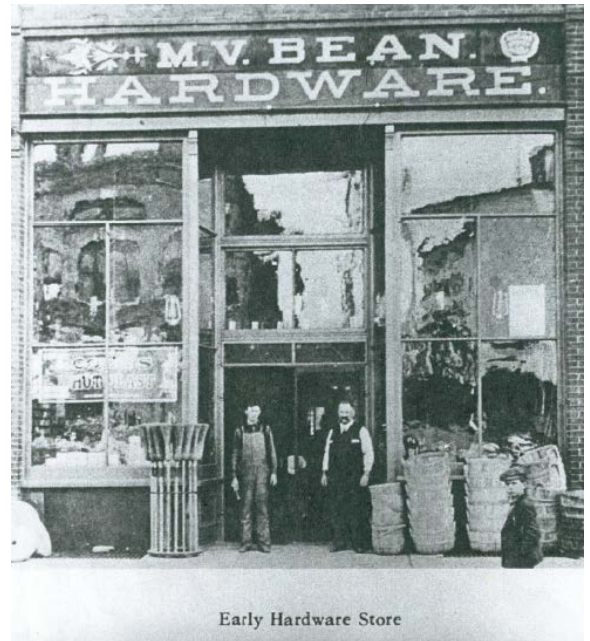
There was a good size article in the ACU about our Installation of officers in our hall over Peters Store where we have been meeting for the last year. The Installing Master was WB Mabie, sitting master of Sherburne Lodge #95 in Elk River. The Lodge hall was not large enough to accommodate the crowd present. After the ceremonies, the newly installed Master invited all present to refreshments at the Town Hall, over 100 were in attendance. Editor Pease noted "it has seldom been our lot to set down to tables beautifully and magnificently spread. Everything good to eat was here in abundance and the arrangement of the eatables on the tables showed the masters hands had been there. They were indeed handsome to look on. The oysters and coffee were the best we have partaken of for a long while. After all, had been satisfied enough remained to feed as many more". Our year gets off to a good start. The next week, several of our members and their wives traveled to Elk River to attend their Installation. At the end of January North Star Chapter # 7 O.E.S. held a meeting in the hall to initiate new members. The present

number of members is 60, of whom 28 are female and 32 are males. The KP's continued with their activities by performing the play "Among the Breakers" at Gages hall to an overflow crowd. The demand was such that another performance was conducted the following week.

In April, Messrs. Bean and Guderian commenced erection of a fine new two-story brick building on the lot now occupied by them. This means that they removed their existing wood frame building and replaced it with the new. The ACU describes the new building as follows "The building will be 24½ by 70 feet, with 14-inch walls, and when finished be a decided improvement. We understand that Mr. Chas. Frauman is also contemplating the building of a brick store on his lot in the Main row. If these two buildings are built, it will make the Main row comparatively safe from fire." A June 10th article in the ACU noted that The Masons and the KPs will probably occupy the hall in the new building of Bean & Guderian's.

In mid-June a meeting was held in Town Hall to see if Anoka should fittingly celebrate the Centennial Fourth or not. A vote for was unanimous for a celebration. A committee was formed to raise the funds for such a celebration and was to report back next week. There were seven men on the committee, Oscar Cutter was appointed finance chair, this means that he had to raise the money to pay for the event. Because he was so well known, this was a task that he could easily accomplish.

The Oscar Cutter residence was a large two-story wood frame building on the SE corner of Main St. and 3rd Ave where the old post office now sits. The front door and porch overlooked Main St. Even for the day, it was an imposing structure. As the big celebration was commencing Mrs. Cutter and her little son were on the top of the portico (see arrow) at the rear of the house where he was lighting off firecrackers. It is then supposed that he dropped a lighted match that set his mother's clothes on fire which she did not immediately discover until the flames were well underway.



Early Hardware Store



She then entered the house through a window and ran downstairs where her mother-in-law smothered the flames and applied water. Dr. Giddings was immediately called and rendered assistance, but the injuries were already apparent, she suffered severe burns on her back arms and leg. The burns left her in terrible pain. The news of the tragedy sent a hush through the crowd of revelers. On Saturday the 20th of July at 11:00 PM, Mrs. Cutter succumbed to her injuries. The ACU reported the following on July 29th "Her funeral services were held at her residence last

Monday, and the deserted stores on that day, the sad look on many faces, the tears in the eyes unused to weeping, and the throng that crowded the house, all testify to the well-nigh universal sorrow. To her bereaved husband we extend the hand of sympathy in his sore affliction and trust that "he that doeth all things well" and "doth not willingly afflict" may give him strength to bear his great burden of sorrow."

On a lighter note, The ACU reports in late July that Bean & Guderian have moved into their new building this week. The following week this note appeared "The Knights of Pythias met in their new hall over Bean & Guderians hardware store for the first-time last Monday night. It's the best and handsomest hall in town but it is none too good for the two excellent lodges that are to occupy it". The ACU also noted the passing of our Secretary brother Wesley Boyd. Bro. Boyd was also a member of the KP's, and they duly noted his passing as well.

Editor Pease again reminded the citizens of Anoka of the dangers of fire with the following article, "Ten persons in the town of Anoka have been notified by the Fire Warden to build or repair their chimneys, the same being in an unsafe condition, only two of whom have complied with the order". If nothing else, editor Pease was the conscience of the city when it came to fire awareness. Also noted was the purchase of a store in Center Block (now the block bounded by Main St., Jackson St. 1st and 2nd Ave's) by Olaf Norell and the improvements that were made to it.

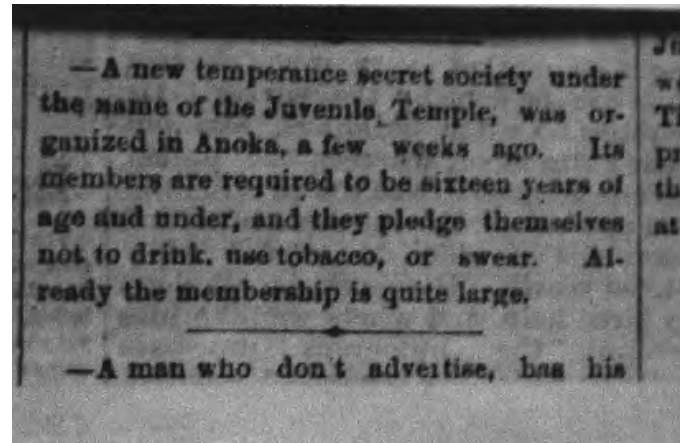
The Annual report showed us having raised five new members this year and four affiliates. Our total is now 83. The affiliations brought the attention of our GM A.T.C. Pierson in the form of a marginal note to the Secretary to please provide the information as to which Lodges these new Brothers came from. And he wanted this information at once! A. T. C. Pierson was our most notable GM and I can see why. Our installation of officers for 1877 was also noted in the ACU, Oscar Cutter was elected Master for the third term in a row!

1877

There were no articles regarding the activities of Anoka Masonic Lodge #30 in the ACU for this year, none! Editor Pease has noted in the past that he will print any news that is fit to print, but he requests that you bring it to him. Looks like we were unable to cross Main St. to deliver our news to him. The KP's again captured most of the ink for fraternal activities in the city. Their installation was noted as well as the large number of people who attended. They also put on two plays in a local church for the benefit of farmers suffering from a grasshopper plague. These events raised \$40.00 for the relief fund and the money was sent directly to Gov. Pillsbury for distribution. This event shows how the fraternal societies were the main force in providing public assistance when the government could not. The article ended with "All honor the Knights of Pythias for the good work." They also put on a guest performance for the Elk River KP lodge. The Grand Lodge of the KP's held their session in Minneapolis in June of this year. Oscar Cutter was appointed District Deputy for the Upper Mississippi district and chairman of the finance and mileage committee. M.V. Bean was appointed as a member of the same committee. It should be noted that at this time in history, there were approximately fifteen fraternal organizations operating in the city of Anoka, as noted by articles in the ACU. In the Nov. 3rd issue of the ACU the following appeared. "Quite a number of our citizens gathered at Washburne's office last Saturday night to observe the workings of the telephone. The machine was connected with the office here and Washburne's office in Minneapolis, and all you had to do was to put your mouth to the telephone and say what you want to and in an instant you were answered by the person on the other end. Singing and whistling from the other end was distinctly heard.

Altogether it is a wonder and if you want to buy one Supt. Hankinson of Northwestern telegraph company will be pleased to furnish you one".

If that news was not enough, the following also appeared this year. "A new Temperance secret society under the name of the Juvenile Temple, was organized in Anoka a few weeks ago. Its members are required to be sixteen years of age and under, and they pledge themselves not to drink, use tobacco, or swear. Already the membership is quite large".



As if to continue our record of inactivity, we only raised one new member this year. Total membership now stands at 81. The good news; no nasty notes from the Grand Master. John L. Giddings was elected Master for the coming year.

1878

So as not to outdo ourselves, we only managed to get one article about Anoka lodge in the ACU for the year. It was a November announcement of our upcoming elections!! However, two of our brothers did get noted as follows "Quite a number of Anoka citizens enjoy riding around in bran new buggy. H.S. Plummer, O. Norell and N. W. Curial have got neat top buggies". A notice did appear, informing all members of North Star Chapter, No. 7 O.E.S. of a regular meeting and all members are requested to be present.

On the civic front there were two interesting articles. The first reported on the formation of 'The Washburn Club' at city hall. Notwithstanding the short notice given, sixty-seven joined the club and names are being added every day. One of the Vice Presidents was Brother Wm. Sowden and the other Olaf Norell, Oscar Cutter was an Asst. Secretary. Mr. Washburn was the owner of a large sawmill as well as a large flour mill in the city. This club has all the appearances of being the formation of a Chamber of Commerce for the city.




Washburn Mill

The other article regards the newly acquired fire bell. Editor Pease again raises the alarm so to speak "The fire alarm bell is a total failure. Had not the Congregational Church bell rung, last Sunday, during the progress of the fire, hardly a citizen in the eastern part of the city would have known there was a fire. A good-sized cow bell would be better. Take down the cheat and get something worthy of the name of "fire bell" ". Now there is an editor that is not afraid of letting you know his opinions. One other note of interest did appear, it seems that WB Oscar L. Cutter has married Miss Mary Cutter, his first cousin. They took off for a two-week trip to Washington. Looks like we raised four new brothers this year and now have a total membership of 85. WB Oscar was elected Master for the coming year, his fourth trip to the East.

1879

Yet another slow news year for Anoka Masonic Lodge #30. The best we could do was the following from the June 26th issue of the ACU. "The intended picnic at Crooked Lake for Anoka Lodge #30 A.F. & A.M. last Tuesday, on account of the wet weather was postponed one week" That's it, that's all there was! From other accounts it appears that Olaf Norell had a piece of property on Crooked lake and this may have been the intended location of the picnic. Speaking of Olaf, he received more ink this year than the Lodge. This from the August 7th ACU "Olaf Norell is making extensive improvements in the interior of his store building in Centre block. His business has assumed so large proportions that he has rented the store lately occupied by P.B. Morse and will fill it with goods" It should be noted here that his Centre block is located next to the ACU office. And finally, this in the January 18th issue. "Olaf Norell the handsome Centre block grocer appeared on our streets last week, with the finest and best sleigh in the city. Next to ourselves, we should as soon like Olaf own a fine sleigh as anybody".

On January 11th The KP's reported their installation of officers for the upcoming year. Of the six officers named, two were also members of Anoka Masonic lodge including Oscar Cutter as Prelate. This year Oscar Cutter became the city Fire Chief as noted in a January 18th ACU article. He also took on other duties as noted in the article. "Chief O. L. Cutter, of this city, has been appointed one of the Finance Committee of the State Fire Association. In the Globes report of the proceedings of the Association at Mankato, is the following: "O.L. Cutter of Anoka, spoke without notes upon the importance of arranging iron shutters so that they could be opened from the outside in case of fire. It was quite an able effort, considering it was all gleaned from contemplating the only pair of iron shutters in Anoka from the top of a rail fence on frosty moonlight night"". These kinds of activities are why WB Oscar had his name in the paper at least three times a week. The ACU also carried three paid ads for fraternal supply companies, two were from the M.C. Lilley Co. of Columbus Ohio. It is believed that at this time we had a strong business tie with M.C. Lilley.

 <p>MASONIC</p> <p>Supplies for Lodges, Chapters, and Commanderies, manufactured by <i>M. C. Lilley & Co., Columbus, O.</i> <i>Send for Price Lists.</i></p> <p>Knights Templar Uniforms a Specialty.</p> <p>Military, Society, and Firemen's Goods.</p>	<p>FOR I.O.O.F. K. of P. I.O.G.T. K. of H. A.O.U.W.</p> <p>REGALIA</p> <p><i>Red Men, Druids, and all other Societies made to order by M. C. Lilley & Co., Columbus, Ohio. Send for Price Lists.</i></p> <p>Military and Firemen's Goods, Banners & Flags.</p>
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Scarlet Book of Free Masonry. Thrilling account of imprisonment, torture and martyrdom of Masons for the past 600 years. Graphic illustrations. Magnificent binding. Rare chance for Agents. REDDING & CO., Masonic Publishers, 731 Broadway, New York.

This year's Annual Report shows that we raised no new members, but we did have three that joined us from other lodges. However, we did not report from which lodges that these new members came from, as had been recently and strongly suggested for us to do by GM Pierson. Looks like not remembering to follow GL requests is not a new thing. There was a new addition to the report for this year that required the WM to sign and certify that the submitted report was "correct and true". This section was signed by WM O.L. Cutter and Secretary Cotton. Total membership 84. Ard Hilton has been elected Master for 1880.

1880

This year turned out to be a very remarkable for Anoka Lodge but was not realized as such at the time. As mentioned earlier in this document, some of the information that we now have regarding the early history of Anoka Lodge came from WB Oscar L. Cutter in an article in the January 1st, 1880 issue of the ACU. The occasion was a Joint public installation of Anoka Lodge #30 and North Star Chapter # 7 of the OES, given in the lodge room above Bean and Guderians hardware store. Following the ceremonies, WB Cutter gave an address that covered the entire history of Anoka Lodge including where we first met and for how long up until the present moment of the address. His information included full dates including month, day and year of our movements and locations as well as listing all the officers and their positions for the same period. This level of accuracy and precision would seem to indicate that he extracted the same from the then existing minutes books. This information was the basis for the presentation entitled "The Traveling Lodge" given by WB Freeburg in 2019.

The ACU article continued as follows "the presentation was brim full of happy conceptions and witty allusions and those present were convulsed with laughter several times. – total membership during its existence, 158: 10 have died and 62 have either demitted or otherwise dissolved their connection with the lodge, so the present membership is 87. After Mr. Cutter had finished, all present were invited to repair to Gages Hall. At arriving at this hall, a half a dozen or more long tables loaded with most everything the culinary art could produce greeted the eye. In a moment we were all seated and doing ample justice to the sumptuous supper spread before them. While the filling of the inner man was in progress, it was announced that all the food remaining would be distributed to the poor, and a committee was appointed to see that the wish of the lodge was carried out in this particular. After supper the company again sought Masonic Hall and the remainder of the evening was spent in pleasant social intercourse". It again appears as though that Editor Pease and probably his wife attended the event and reported on it as only, he could do and in the style that only he could put into words. Another ACU article in January noted that a dozen members of Anoka Lodge and their wives attended the Installation of Officers for the Elk River Lodge and a right merry time they had. In February we sponsored a dance at the courthouse which was attended by sixty-five couples and included a supper at Gages Hall which was first class. Another couple of social successes for Anoka lodge.



Early form of document preservation

The other big event of this year was the request sent to the Grand Lodge of Minnesota to create a new lodge in Anoka to be called Doric Lodge. The written request itself would become known as the foundation document for the proposed lodge. As mentioned earlier, the foundation document for Anoka Lodge is no longer extant. This was discovered when Right Worshipful Brother (RWB) Douglas Campbell and I were searching through the stored GL annual reports of Anoka Lodge. These reports for all the Minnesota Lodges are stored in the GL office in metal containers referred to as “cans”.

When we searched through the Anoka can we found one document that RWB Campbell assumed was the foundation document for Anoka Lodge as it was rolled up and in a prominent place at the front of the can. Upon further investigation of the document, it was discovered that it was the request to form Doric Lodge and not the Anoka Lodge Foundation Document. RWB

Campbell surmised that at some time in the past, someone must have seen two documents in our can and assumed that they were duplicates of one another, apparently without confirming this. It appears that this person disposed of one of the documents to make the Anoka can conform to the same physical arrangement of the cans of all the other lodges. And this my brothers, is a classic story of how history gets lost.

But let's see if maybe we can make lemonade out of lemons. The Doric document probably has nearly the same form and wording as the original Anoka Document. The Doric document is dated August 14th, 1880, only 21 years after the founding of Anoka Lodge. The Doric document is addressed to the GM of the GL of Minnesota and states that the signers are Master Masons and are willing to exert their best endeavors to promote and diffuse the genuine principles of Masonry. That they are desirous of forming a new lodge in the city of Anoka to be named Doric and they pray for letters of dispensation to empower them to assemble as a regular lodge to discharge the duties of Masonry in a regular and constitutional manner. They then recommend that Brother O.L. Cutter be the first WM, Brother G.E. Cotton to be the first SW and Brother J.P. Hunter to be the first JW. And they promise strict conformity to the laws and regulations of the GL. A full copy of this document is on file in our historic records. I believe it is safe to assume that the original Anoka Foundation Document was very similar to the existing Doric document and can be used as a suitable reference as to the form and style of the day.

To the M. W. Grand Master of the M. W.
Grand Lodge A. F. & A. M. of the State of Minnesota.

The undersigned petitioners, being Ancient Free and
Accepted Master Masons, having the prospect of the
fraternity at heart, and willing to exert their best endeavours
to promote and diffuse the genuine principles of Masonry,
respectfully represent - That they are desirous of forming
a new Lodge in the City of Anoka, Anoka County
Minnesota, to be named Doric No.

They therefore pray for letters of dispensation, to empower
them to assemble as a regular Lodge, to discharge the
duties of Masonry in a regular and constitutional
manner, according to the original forms of the order,
and the regulations of the Grand Lodge. They have
nominated and do recommend Brother O. L. Cutter
to be the first W. M., Brother G. E. Cotton to be
the first S. W., and Brother J. P. Kemmer to be
the first J. W. of said Lodge. If the prayer of this
petition shall be granted, they promise a strict
conformity to the articles of the Grand Master, and
the constitution, laws and regulations of the Grand
Lodge.

Dated Anoka, Minn August 14th A. D. 1880. A. L. 5880.

O. L. Cutter, Anoka Lodge No. 80, Anoka Minn.
Geo E Cotton " " " " " "
G. H. Fairbanks " " " " " "

Copy of Original Doric Lodge Request

So, the question here might well be why would WB Cutter be so willing to form a new lodge in the city of Anoka when we already have a very successful one well established. We will probably never know the true answer to that question, but we can speculate. European lodges were noted for having fewer than forty members back in that day and still do to this day. The reasoning goes that when a lodge gets to be over forty members, it is very difficult to form the bonds of Brotherhood that are necessary for the proper functioning of a Masonic Lodge. So, when a lodge gets close to the magic number in membership, they simply split off some of the senior members to establish a new Lodge and create a new group of brothers. Instead of trying to get to know an ever increasingly large number of new members to be the better enabled to serve the needs of those you are in closer contact with. Today England, a small country, has about 10,000 numbered lodges that are based upon this way of organization the craft. Again, we may never know the real answer here but this may be at least one possible proposition. In the end the GM did not authorize Doric Lodge to be established in the City of Anoka and this is recorded in the proceedings of the GL for the year 1880. This is the one time that I really wish that we had the minutes from Anoka Lodge to see what the discussion might have been

like during this time. The two significant events here, one being the joint Installation, provided us with crucial information as to our beginnings as a lodge but we did not discover them until recently. The other being an attempt to form a second lodge in the city apparently headed up by WB O. L. Cutter was not approved by the GM. It is difficult to know what might have happened if this was approved.

There is some mystery as to how we have come to know about the events regarding the request to form Doric lodge. A newspaper article, reporting on our fiftieth anniversary in 1909 referred to the event. This could be possible due to the existence of members still living in that year that were around when the Doric request was made only thirty or so years prior. The 1909 article did not give any other historic details and I doubt that anyone in later years knew of the article. During our seventy fifth anniversary celebration in 1934, the then WM said that we did not have a history of our lodge before 1884 and went on to erroneously speculate on where we met during those years. No mention was made of Doric lodge. In preparation for our one hundredth anniversary in 1959, there was a lot of research going on regarding the history of Anoka Lodge. In 1955 WB Elder Opem wrote the first history of Anoka Lodge, apparently in preparation for our Centennial celebration. This document has been the basis for our history, with a few updates, since that time. The write up by WB Opem states that "information was obtained from Grand Lodge records that in 1880 a petition was submitted by

several members of Anoka Lodge to form a second Masonic Lodge in Anoka to be known as Doric Lodge”.

This information may have been obtained while searching for the original Anoka Lodge Foundation request to use as a display item for the 100th celebration. This may have been the moment when the modern-day discovery was made that this document was nowhere to be found. That is probably why the 1860 articles of incorporation were copied and framed for use in the ceremony. As mentioned previously they now reside on top of our lodge room library cabinet. Those articles would be our third oldest, right after our charter of 1859 (now having been replaced due to loss in the fire) and the now lost foundation document. Thus, it would now appear that the real discovery of the loss of our foundation document dates from the research done by the Centennial committee (1955) in preparation for that event but it does not tell us when it went missing from the Grand Lodge records.

The Annual report indicates that we raised two new Master Masons, had two affiliates and restored one to finish the year with a total of 84.

1881

Another slow news year for Anoka Masonic Lodge #30. We did however manage to initiate and raise two new members that were born in Minnesota, details later. We did have two well know brothers pass away this year. It was the usual custom then to appoint a committee to write a resolution, a Masonic obituary as it were, to be inserted into the minutes and to be given to the newspaper for publication. The other fraternal societies in town had a similar practice. The resolutions for these two brothers were of particular interest because of their form and content and are reproduced here for the enlightenment of the members.

ACU March 17th 1881 “Whereas it has pleased the Great Architect of the Universe to call our Bro. Richard Thornton from labor to refreshment, and to raise him from the dead level of mortality to a living perpendicular in spiritual life; Resolved, that while we bow in submission to the Divine Will thus expressed, we realize that in the death of Brother Thornton, the Lodge has lost a worthy member, a just and upright Mason, whose purpose in life was so to live as to keep his Masonic apron unspotted before the world. That we cherish his memory as a friend and brother, whose heart and conscience were so divested of the vices and superfluities of life, so as to fit his mind as a living stone for that spiritual building, that house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens. Resolved, that we extend our deepest sympathies to the bereaved widow, and other relatives of our deceased brother. Resolved, That the furniture and emblems in our Lodge room be draped in mourning for ninety days, as a token of respect to the memory of our departed brother. Resolved, that a copy of these resolutions be furnished the widow of our late brother, and copies furnished the city papers for publication”.

ACU January 27, 1881 “Whereas, it has pleased Almighty God to remove from among us, our worthy brother Moses Goodrich: Resolved, That in the death of Bro. Goodrich, this Lodge has lost a member whose life was an exemplification of the teachings of Masonry; whose kind disposition, urbanity, gentlemanly deportment and patience under continued affliction and long suffering, furnish us with an example worthy of imitation: that the community has lost a respected citizen, who will be greatly missed as a neighbor and friend” The last three paragraphs are similar to that of Bro. Thornton. Both of these resolutions express the closeness of the Brotherhood that the entire lodge felt for each and all of the brothers of Anoka Lodge. How wonderful!

The KP lodge continued to get more ink than the Masons despite the fact that we shared many members in common. The KPs published an article in the ACU regarding the loss of their Brother James A. Garfield, President of the United States. They also held their Installation of Officers in early January which included a presentation by Oscar Cutter on the complete history of the KPs in the city of Anoka. This was reported in the Jan. 9th issue of the ACU. The ACU also noted that our Brother P.F. Pratt was chosen as one of the directors of the Masonic Mutual aid society.

Our public installation of Officers was held in our hall over Bean and Guderians hardware on Main St. The ACU reported that the ceremonies opened with a singing quartette and an organist. WB Oscar Cutter was the installing Master. After the ceremony, the attendees were treated to music from an instrumental quartette. After which an address from the Rev. W. H. Harrington from Stillwater was delivered on the subject of Masonry. And then, more singing and music after which the entire company repaired to Gage's Hall where an elegant repast had been prepared by Anoka's popular caterer George. E. Cotton. Who also happened to be the installed Master. Afterwards all went home greatly pleased with their evening's entertainment.

An addendum to this year's Annual report reveals some interesting facts about lodge operations. For the first time, the Grand Lodge is asking for some hard financial data. The attachment entitled "ASSETS" asked if the lodge owned the building they were meeting in; we answered NO. Next question what amount of dues is owing the lodge? Our answer \$205.75, please remember that dues are \$1.00 per year at this time with a total membership under 90. This is equivalent to the entire lodge not paying their dues for two years. One wonders how we were able to pay the rent. Next question; Other assets; amount? Our answer \$500.00 about. I assume this number includes such things as lodge furniture and paraphernalia. Last question LIABILITIES amount; our answer 0. That was the extent of the questions regarding the financial condition of the lodges in Minnesota for the year 1881. And now for some amazing news, this year we took in two new members who were born in Minnesota, our first since the founding of the lodge. These were Bro. S. Albert Stockwell and Bro. Frank E. Abear, both residents of Anoka. We raised 10 new members for the year, giving us a total of 95. WB George Cotton will again be the Master of our lodge for the year of 1882. WB Oscar Cutter was appointed as Treasurer for the Protection Hook and Ladder Co., something that we would call the Fire Department.

1882

No reason to change a trend, this year was another very slow year for fraternal articles in general in the ACU. But two short items did catch my eye.

The first was about our friend Olaf Norell. "Olaf Norell has taken the lead in selling goods for years, and is now selling more than ever. Honesty and fair and square dealing with everybody, tells the story. Everything sold is warranted as represented. Olaf Norell does not offer you 10&1/2 pounds of sugar for a dollar and weigh you out scant 10. Such games are unknown at the double front store in Centre block. His many thousands of customers know where they can get the best goods for the money". Sounds like Olaf is practicing Masonry even before he becomes one!

The next article is unreferenced but I assume it was placed at the initiative of Editor Pease. ACU November 23 1882. "The State Christian association (anti Masonic) held a meeting at Blue Earth City, commencing December 6 and lasting three days.

—The State Christian association (anti Masonic) hold a meeting at Blue Earth City, commencing December 6 and lasting three days. The object of this association is to expose, withstand and remove secret societies, Free Masonry in particular, and other anti-Christian movements, in order to save the church of Christ from being depraved, to redeem the administration of justice from perversion, and our republican government from corruption. The resolutions they expect to pass will undoubtedly squelch forever all secret and Masonic orders. There is no doubt about it.

The object of the association is to expose, withstand and remove secret societies, Free Masonry in particular, and other anti-Christian movements, in order to save the church of Christ from being depraved, to redeem the administration of justice from perversion, and our republican government from corruption. The resolutions they expect to pass will undoubtedly squelch forever all secret and Masonic orders. There is no doubt about it". We seldom see such explicit articles like this one in the newspapers of today. But in the day and age of 1882, I believe that they were fairly common. The article on Olaf juxtaposition to this article are certainly cause for serious reflection and discussion.

The annual report for 1882 was as dull as the year itself. We raised one new member, affiliated four and restored one. Total membership 99.

1883

This year brought many pleasant surprises to research efforts that attempt to reconstruct our history, mainly due to the fact that we are getting a lot of ink in the ACU. The first surprise was that we published the results of our annual election in the January 4th issue of the ACU. WB H.S. Sparks is now the Master and Bro. Frank E. Abear is the secretary. From the beginning of the year until the end virtually all of our stated and special communications were published in the ACU. Not sure if this is because of the efforts by the secretary, the master or both although the announcements were signed by the secretary. The fact is, we were making our presence and activities known to the community at large.

And speaking of community, Anoka now has a new National Bank with assets of \$50,000 being held or owned by citizens of Anoka. This is a big deal for our city. About half of the officers of the bank are members of Anoka Lodge. This situation would continue for about the next one hundred years or so. In February it was announced in the ACU that WB Heman L. Ticknor, President of the new bank, would be erecting a new building at the corner of 2nd and Main St. that will house the new First National Bank.

Artist drawing of proposed bank building



FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF ANOKA.

In the February 8th issue of the ACU there was an announcement of a Masonic Dance or Grand Ball will be held on Feb. 22nd to celebrate Washington's Birthday. Several following articles were also printed. On March 1st the ACU printed an article that covered the event, Editor Pease again outdid himself in praise of the event. "The dance at the court house last week Thursday evening, given under the auspices of Anoka Lodge No. 30 A.F. & A. M., was one of the most successful, delightful and happy occasions of the kind ever held in our city. The room was just comfortably filled by as fine a company as one would wish to see; while the music furnished by Brooke's orchestra, of Minneapolis was most excellent. The program was carefully prepared and suited both fancy and plain dancers, but a happy medium. The supper furnished by W.C. Goss and his estimable wife, at the Merchants hotel, was a success in every particular, and praise of the admirable and elegant repast was

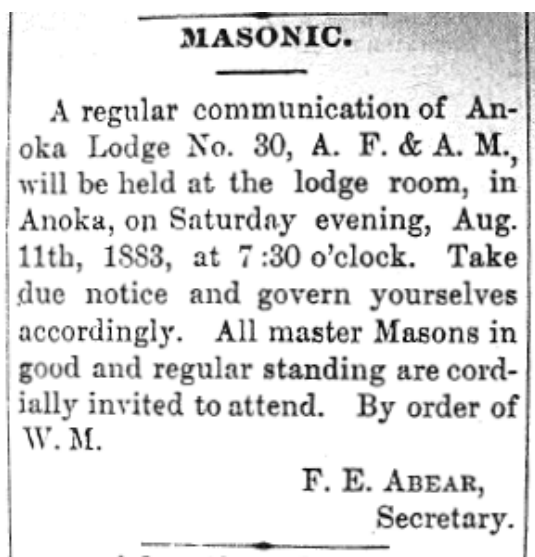
heard on every side. It was a number one supper, served in a superb manner. At a seasonable hour the company broke up and thus ended one of the most recherche affairs occurring in our city for many a day. (my dictionary defines recherche as: sought out with care, rare). The receipts more than paid the expenses, which were quite heavy, owing to the elaborate preparations, but it wasn't given for the purpose of making money". My belief is that, as in most cases, Editor Pease received a complimentary ticket for him and his wife to attend our dance and supper. His reporting is from the heart and professional. And at least the event was reported on and probably would not have been if left to the prerogatives of the lodge.



Second Ave. across from High School.

Our lodge received a letter from Corinthian Lodge No. 67, A.F. & A. M. of Farmington MN dated Jan. 4th 1883. We have in our files what appears to be the original version of this letter that predates the fire of 1884. It is unclear how this letter survived. This letter seems to refer to a letter written by Anoka Lodge containing a resolution which disputed items contained in the recently received letter from Corinthian Lodge. The original letter from them seemed to imply that Anoka Lodge had committed various acts of unmasonic conduct. Corinthian Lodge did not state any specifics other than that our letter to them containing the resolution was "discourteous". Trying to sort this matter out, I called Corinthian Lodge and asked if they had any correspondence from us from the late 1880's. They indicated that they did not because they too suffered a fire that had destroyed all their past records. The mystery here continues, if anyone knows anything about this incident, please contact the author. This is the second case where it would be really nice to have our now lost minutes etc.

A series of articles appeared in the ACU, the first of which indicated that we had purchased from a Mr. James M. Mc Glaulin a lot 44X80 feet at the (NW) corner of Main St. and Third Ave. upon which this season the lodge will put up an elegant two-story brick building. Ground level for a store and second level for a lodge room at a cost of \$6000. Following shortly after this information came an article that said that we decided not to build such a building and would instead sell the previously acquired lot. History confirms that we did not build this structure. It now appears as though that we now own two lots fronting onto Main St. from the corner of Third Ave.

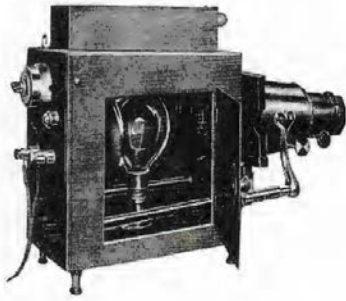


During this time, as I have previously mentioned, we were constantly running announcements in the ACU regarding our schedule. Here is an example of one. "A special communication of Anoka Lodge No. 30, A.F. & A.M., will be held at the lodge room in Anoka, on Saturday evening Sept. 8th, for work on the second degree. All master masons in good and regular standing are cordially invited to attend. By order of the W.M. F.E. Abear Secretary".

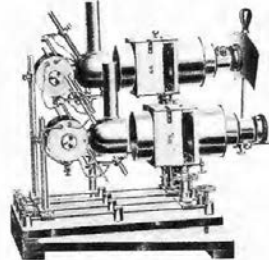
Now let's catch up with the life and times of WB Oscar Cutter. Oscar has now been elected as mayor of Anoka on a strong temperance platform. In August, an Anoka resident was arrested on a complaint from Mayor Cutter for selling intoxicating liquor. This was just one of several complaints recently filed by the new Mayor. One of the big civic issues of the day was regarding the issuing of bonds to construct an iron bridge over the Mississippi River due to the Ferry not been operating for several years. Mayor Cutter says he was never in favor of building a bridge over the river! Lastly an ACU article in December related that the mayor was thrown from his buggy when trying to board it as another horse raced by him and frightened his steed. The mayor landed on the ground unhurt and his buggy undamaged. Also, an update on Olaf Norell. A November ACU article states as follows "Olaf Norell has placed in his store a steam engine of one-eight horse power, manufactured and built by G.C. Pratt to be utilized in running his coffee mill. If you want to see it run call around and buy a pound or two of coffee and have it ground". Will wonders never cease.

Speaking of wonders. The ACU ran a story on Aug. 9th that caught my attention. It is as follows. "Friday evening at the Methodist church in this city, Prof. J.S. Akers & son will give one of their sun graphic entertainments with immense dissolving views, lecture and music. It is no magic lantern affair; a double power stereopticon will be used". As mentioned previously, the newspapers of the day were

the “Facebook” of the day. The stereopticon is the virtual reality of the day. “These entertainments are highly spoken of and recommended by all who have seen them. Don’t fail to attend. Admission 25 cents”. We are now starting to see the appearance of sophisticated optical projection equipment such as the double power stereopticon with dissolving views. Prior to this, there was something known as the magic lantern which today we would call an opaque projector where you could put in a piece of flat art and have it projected onto a wall or screen using an internal light source.



The Magic Lantern



The double focusing Stereopticon



Hand painted Glass Slide ~1880

The stereopticon was a step up, allowing the use flat art as well as painted glass slides. The dissolving system provided for two separate slides to be inserted and then dim out one of the images while at the same time brightening the other. This new technique was used in a variety of settings such as education, business, theater and fraternal organizations. The hand painted glass slides provided stunning color images as well as an image showing some depth of field. We still have the set of glass slides depicting scenes from the degrees that we purchased as used, back in 1924. Our original projector which was acetylene powered was discarded in 1975. We have had great difficulty duplicating the quality of the image delivered by the original style of projector. Even when we try to transfer the glass slide images unto any modern form of projection system. And now this from the ACU of October 18th; “Postmaster Foote is seeing how many subscribers he can get to patronize a telephone exchange. If twenty-five are secured we shall get it”. Looks like that lone telephone in the Washburn building has generated some further interest. Somewhere around this time, another newspaper began publishing in the city of Anoka, known as the Anoka Herald. The Herald was also favorably disposed to covering fraternal events in the city and county and was first to use photographic images in its work. Editor Pease was unimpressed.

And now to fraternal news. The International Order of Oddfellows (IOOF) has now appeared on the horizon of the city of Anoka. The December 27th issue of the ACU reports the following; “The Odd Fellows of Fidelity Lodge NO 95, will open the new opera house in the Washburn building, New Year’s night, Jan 1st, with a public installation of officers and a grand ball. Money or time will not be spared to make this a first-class entertainment”.



“Dr. A.G. Aldrich, of Adams Berkshire county, Mass. Is in the city, visiting J.W. Stocking and family. The doctor is talking of locating permanently in our midst, and as he brings with him the highest recommendations, we hope he may”. And thus, starts the great and wonderful career of Dr. Alanson Aldrich to Anoka Lodge and the city of Anoka.

In late December, The ACU published the results of our election of officers for the coming year and then followed that up with an announcement that our installation will take place in our hall (above Bean & Guderians) and that the banquet will be at the Merchants hotel. The Annual report shows that we raised 8 new members and restored 1 for a grand total of 104. No financial information was provided. The new Master, and last year’s master as well, has the last name of Sparks!! When the Lodge burns down Masters name is awkwardly matching event.

1884

A year we remember! This will be our twenty-fifth anniversary year with a celebration coming in October. As reported in the ACU we held our installation of officers in our hall above Bean & Guderians Hardware store. The hall had been recently repapered and repainted and looked neat as a pin. Music was provided by Moshers Quadrille Band. The Installing Officer was the Most Worshipful Grand Master of Minnesota C.H. Benton. After the ceremony GM Benton gave a very long speech regarding various aspects of Freemasonry which was carried in full by the ACU. “following the address, W.M. H.S. Sparks announced that Anoka Lodge No. 30 was closed informally and that a banquet was waiting at the Merchants Hotel for all who desired. Some eighty members, wives and guests proceeded to the above hotel, and sat down to one of the best suppers ever provided in Anoka. The worthy host and hostess Mr. and Mrs. W. C. Goss, assisted by Mesdames Jamieson, Cotton, Wentworth and E.W. Pratt were very attentive to the wants of all, and everyone enjoyed the elegant and complete repast. After the banquet was over all went home feeling well pleased with the evening’s programme and wishing that Anoka Lodge No. 30 will always in the future have public installations”! The officers for this year were the same as for last year (reason unknown) so again, each meeting and degree night were announced in advance in the ACU.

Shortly after our installation, the newly formed Odd Fellows Lodge Fidelity # 95 held their installation ceremony in the Washburn block (probably in the Washburn Opera House just North of the intersection of Main St. and 2nd Ave). The ACU reported the event in full detail much the same as they did for the Masons. “the hall was delightful with excellent taste and judgement displayed in decorating and trimming the beautiful room. Evergreens, bunting, netting, flags, flowers, mottoes, &c were co-mingled with artistic effect”. There were sixteen officers installed that night, five of whom were also members of Anoka Lodge # 30, including O.L. Cutter as Treasurer.

The Masons, Knights of Pythias and Odd Fellows have leased the hall over the First National Bank and Putnam, Chesley & Lindsay building for five years, at an annual rental of \$200. The hall is being finished off, and as soon as completed will be occupied by the above lodges.

An August 7th article in the ACU indicated that the afore named organizations have leased the hall over the First National Bank and Putman, Chesley & Lindsay building for five years at an annual rental of \$200. "The hall is being finished off and as soon as completed, will be occupied by the above-named lodges". This looks like the first time that these three groups have decided to share meeting space, most likely for financial reasons. As we shall soon see, this grand plan of space sharing will encounter a forced review. On August 14th The ACU ran an announcement of our upcoming meeting for a first degree on Saturday Aug. 16 at

7:30. This meeting would not happen.

On the early morning of Saturday Aug 16th, the great fire of Anoka rolled across the city starting near the Merchants Hotel {corner of 2nd and Monroe} and then, driven by a warm summer breeze, proceeded North to the center of town which quickly became fully engulfed. By the time the sun rose almost the entire East side of the city had been burned to the ground. The Merchants hotel was not damaged. In all 86 buildings were lost including about a dozen owned by the Washburn Companies, the Ticknor brick building, several stores owned by Olaf Norell, M. Q. Butterfield's law office, O.L. Cutters insurance office, the Pease newspaper office, the Herald newspaper office and on and on.

ANOKA, 3

FIRE-SWEPT IN A NIGHT.

Fire Sweeps Unrestrained Through
the Business District of
Anoka.

Losses Aggregate Over \$600,000, with
But a Fraction Insured.

Gen. Washburn's Flouring Mills and
Large Business Block Completely
Destroyed.

The Origin Supposed to Be Incendi-
ary and the Fruit of a
Quarrel.

Local Firemen Unable to Cope With
the Flames and Outside Aid
Sought.

From the Pioneer Press August 17.

COMPREHENSIVE FIGURES.

Buildings burned.....	86
Loss on buildings.....	\$341,650
Loss on contents.....	277,540
Insurance on buildings.....	191,350
Insurance on contents.....	124,875
Total loss.....	629,190
Total insurance.....	316,225

54. Two-story brick, owner, Bean & Guderain. Loss \$6,000; insurance \$1,500. Occupants—Bean & Guderain, hardware; loss \$8,000; insurance \$1,000; and the orders of Masons, Odd Fellows and Knights of Pythias; loss \$1,000; insurance \$100.

And of course, Bean & Gudarians hardware store with our lodge hall and the KP's above. The report showed our combined losses of \$1000 with insurance coverage for only \$100.

City of Anoka 1879



- Settlement is now beyond 7th Ave
- Boundaries Anoka fire of 1884, as described "Fire Map"

The new brick and stone First National Bank building, intended to share with the other two fraternal lodges is also gone. The fire station also burned along with the city hall and the jail. Editor Pease had many friends in the newspaper business. A crew from the St. Paul Pioneer Press rushed to Anoka to cover the story. On August 21st, the ACU was published on the presses of the St. Paul Paper. This extensive article showed a graphic of the city and which buildings were lost and who occupied them.

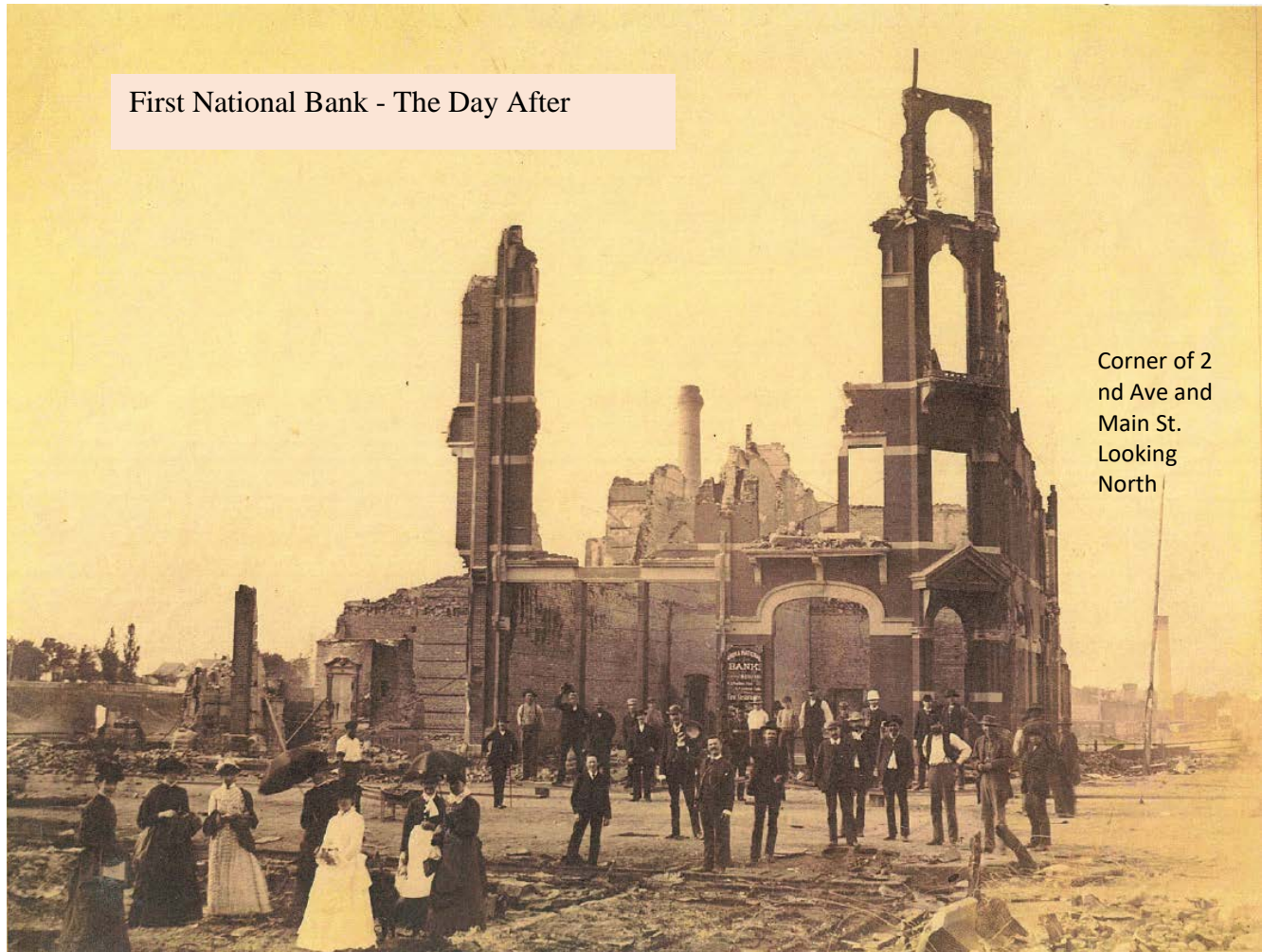
It is by this information that I was able to determine the exact physical locations of Anoka Lodge #30 for the past twenty- five years. At the time of the fire, WB O.L. Cutter was the fire Chief.



O. L. CUTTER, Fire Chief in 1879, and in 1885; he also served as chief engineer.



It appears as though while he was inspecting the ruins after the ashes had cooled, he discovered the Senior Wardens rod top in the remains of our building. This artifact was heavily damaged and had lost its Nickel coating. This rod top was retained by the Cutter family until the early 1970's when it was given to me by my brother- in- law Marcus Cutter and now resides in our display case. It is the only physical object we have of the original loge furnishings.



At this point in time, it should be pointed out that no matter how large or well-equipped and manned the existing Hook and Ladder Co. was, they would be no match (not to make a pun) for this fire. All the conditions were in favor of the fire and nothing would be able to change that. Yes, Editor Pease and others had been warning for years that the city was ill prepared to fight virtually any fire that came along. But even the things that they were asking for would not have made a difference in the outcome of this one.

As devastating as this event was, it did not prevent or delay any planned activities of Anoka Lodge #30. It appears that we immediately purchased a new record book for the keeping of our minutes and still have it to this day. From this point on, we now have the minutes of our lodge meetings starting with our regular communication of August 30th ,1884.

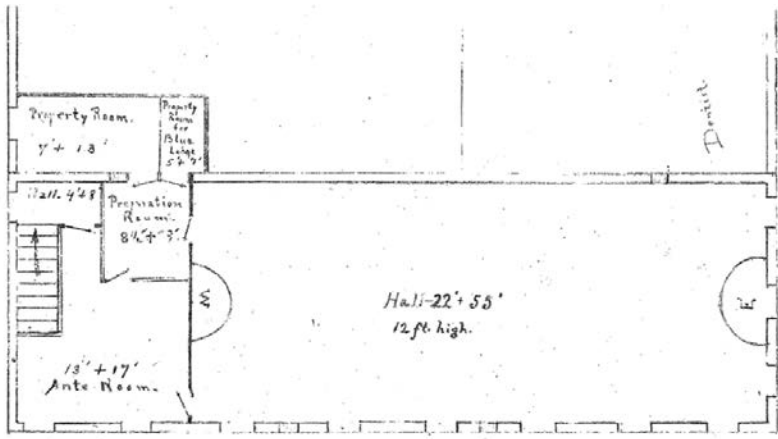


This meeting being held in Chases hall, one of the few buildings not destroyed in the fire. Chases hall was then located at what was to be known as 227 Jackson St. This location is slightly West of the building now known by that same address. Chases Hall (a grocery store with a partially finished attic and I mean partially, (it was more like an ice rink warming house) sat where the entry to the city parking ramp is now. The finance committee reported that they had nothing to report regarding the move to the First National Bank building as that location was in ruins. The lodge voted to order new furnishings and paraphernalia which may have included the oilcloth master's Carpet that we now have hanging in our lodge hall. This image is copyrighted 1882, and the large Bible that we now keep in the lodge room bookcase. We also sent out a letter to other lodges in the state seeking donations to aid our recovery. Many Lodges from around the state responded with much needed financial aid. A special communication was set up for the next Saturday night for

work in the third degree. It should be noted here that when the lodge was formally opened, the minutes record the following; "Lodge opened in form in the {blank} degree for work and instruction" this phrase continued for many years. The operative word here is "instruction". Our next regular meeting was held in the Merchants Hotel parlor, this is one of the few buildings that also survived the fire. So as an organization, we were up and running as if nothing had happened. This was of course not the case for the city of Anoka. The city of Anoka decided to enact a new building code ordinance that required all structures downtown to be built of brick. We can see many of these structures from the late 1880's still in use in the city.

The Oct. 1st issue of the ACU reports as follows "Olaf Norell has about completed the foundation for his double store in Centre block. The building will have a frontage both on bridge square and Second avenue, and Chas. Ersin will occupy one store while Wicklund, Abear & Co. have secured the other. The different societies will occupy the hall." So here we are about forty -five days after the fire and Olaf Norell is working hard to put up a building for his business and others. The "Centre block" is now the area between 1st. and 2nd Avenues and Main St and Jackson St. Norell's structures were mostly to the North end on the block. The ACHS has an original drawing, showing details of part of the second floor of this building that shows a hall 22X55 feet along and 12 foot ceiling with a property room for blue lodge, preparation room and ante room. A





note at the bottom says "\$160 5 yrs." The minutes from the stated communication of Sept 27 indicate that we would pay Olaf Norell \$50 to do the lodge room buildout. Also noted at this meeting was that we had received donations from other lodges around the state totaling \$81. This would seem to indicate that we were working very closely with Olaf to have a lodge room of our own design on the second floor of his new location. During all this we held a 1st degree back at Chases hall on Oct. 4th. During this degree Charles Ersin received his first degree.

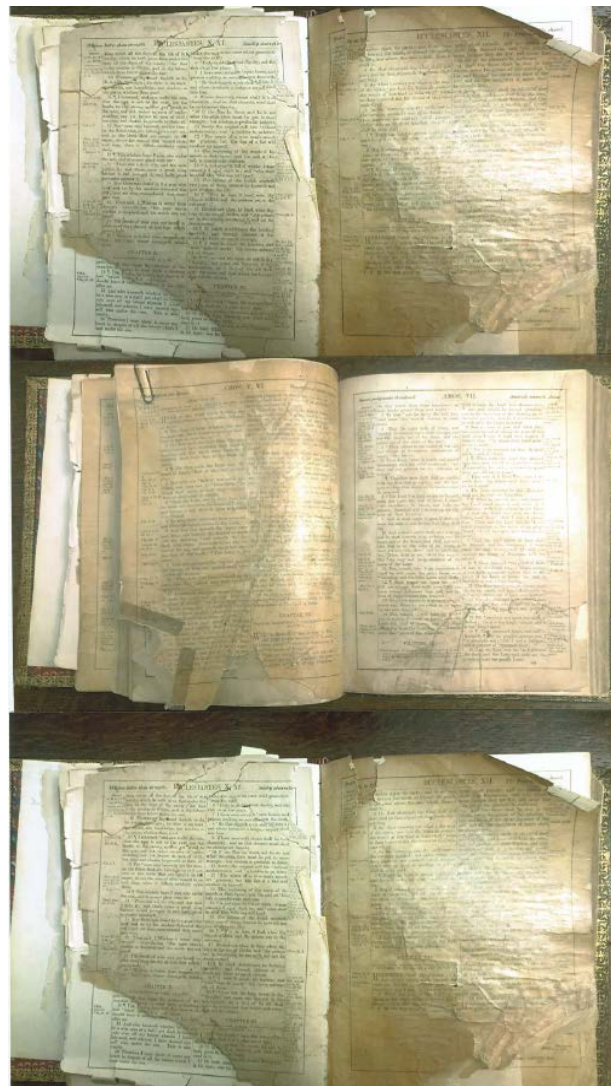
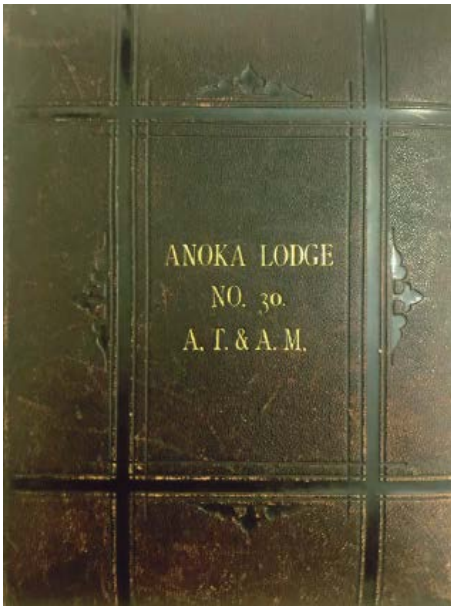


Reconstructed rendering of Master's Carpet, now hanging on East wall of lodge room

At the Nov. 1st stated communication, the WM appointed a committee to work with the KP lodge and the IOOF to purchase furniture and other fixtures for the new lodge room. We also noted the receipt of an additional \$40 in donations from lodges around the state. We also received \$16.67 from Bean and Gudarian for refund on rent, not used because of the fire. At the stated communication held on Nov. 28th, the furnishings committee reported that we would have the new furniture in time for the opening of the new lodge room. The WM reported that he had purchased insurance for the new furniture and was completing the terms for our new lease. At this same meeting it

was decided the THREE societies that are to occupy the new hall are desirous of having a dedication ceremony and ball.

Following are pictures of the acquired new bible:



The proceeds from this event would be used to help finance the new lodge meeting location. It should be noted here that this entry into the minutes is the only record of this event made by the lodge. Thankfully editor Pease was invited to this commemoration and as we shall soon see provided a very descriptive accounting of this upcoming event. Again, I must say without his articles describing the details of our public events, we would know almost nothing about the early history of Anoka Lodge #30. Elections were held at this meeting and Bro. H.O. Hilton was elected Master and WB O.S. Cutter was elected Secretary. A motion was made and passed that the new officers would be installed on Saint John's day, Saturday evening December 27.

The evening of December 27th was to be our first meeting in our new lodge room in the Norell block. There are two separate entries in the minutes book regarding this meeting. The first notes the installation of the new Master (H.O. Hilton) in the ante room of the new lodge. I believe that this was done because of preparations going on in the lodge hall for the upcoming public installation of officers and the subsequent dedication and ball. At this meeting two petitions for membership were read and committees were assigned. WB Oscar Cutter reported the finance committee had completed its work in furnishing our part of the lodge hall and requested \$400.00 to pay the bills that were due on this task. One of the bills read during this meeting was for \$5.80 to pay for taxes on our lots. This appears

to indicate that in fact we now owned two lots fronting on Main St. near 3rd Ave. The lodge also decided to hire a janitor for the hall. The meeting was then closed in due form, peace and harmony prevailing. No mention was made of the big celebration that was about to take place in the next few days.

The ACU ran the following article on Dec. 24. "Grand Dedication Banquet and Ball, The Masons, Knights of Pythias and Odd Fellows of Anoka have decided to give a grand banquet and ball on the opening of their new hall in Olaf Norell's block on the evening of December 30, 1884. All members of the above orders are cordially invited to attend without further notice. Banquet at the lodge rooms consisting of vocal and instrumental music, games, supper, etc., and entertainment for all who do not dance. Dance at the courthouse with music by the celebrated Italian band. Admission to dance and supper \$2.50 per couple; to gallery 25 cents each person; supper without dance, 50 cents each. Members having friends that they wish invited will please notify committee on invitation, H.S. Sparks or Dr. C.H. Tasker". The publisher's information section of the ACU is indicating that Mr. T.G. J. Pease (Gleason's son) is now the managing editor and Gleason seems headed toward retirement in one form or another. We may no longer see the glowing descriptions of the meals that were served at our various festivals and installations.

A short piece dated Dec. 31 in the ACU noted that the carpet for the Masons, Knights of Pythias and Odd Fellows hall in Norell block cost over \$400. It was put down last Friday. As 1884 comes to an end, we find that Anoka Lodge #30 and two other fraternities are now sharing meeting space in the Norell block second floor. It took just a little over four months to recover from the Aug. fire and be securely settled into our new location in a brand-new brick building. We will stay in this same location until 1916 after we will move within the same building complex to share space with another fraternity.

The annual report shows us as having 114 members. Dues are still \$1.00 per year. No detailed financial information was requested or supplied.

Our 25th anniversary year did not turn out the way that many thought it might have. WM H. S. Sparks (1883-1884) guided us to a soft landing in a new location with even more members. No matter how much money the city could have spent on firefighting equipment and personnel, it would not have been enough to control the great fire of August 16th. The city adopted a new building code requiring a brick exterior for all downtown buildings. We now have a written lodge history, starting on August 30th of 1884 until present. As I mentioned earlier, this "HISTORY" has been part fact and part story, but it is more than we have had regarding the first twenty-five years of our existence.

What have we learned from the exercise of writing this "History" of Anoka Lodge #30? First, without the contents of the articles appearing in the local newspapers, we would have almost no idea of the activities of our Lodge or other Lodges. This is because the social engagements occurred outside of a tiled meeting and thus, would never be recorded in the minutes, even if we still had them.

Secondly, the influence that the fraternal organizations had on the civic and governmental affairs of the time were instrumental. When the need arose to help a neighbor, the fraternities were the ones called upon and they responded.

Thirdly, in a city of approximately 2000 citizens, many citizens were members of at least one fraternal society and many more were members of multiple societies. This, I believe points to the importance of social networking and how societies fulfilled this role in a town that had extraordinarily little of what we could call public gatherings such as sporting events, arts, music festivals or plays. Things we take for granted in this day and age.

Without the fraternal bonding provided by the various societies, there would be much less of what we would call communal sense. So, as we go forward, let's not forget the role that we and others played in the making of the City of Anoka, a sought-out place to live, work and play.

For more information on early Anoka, see "What did Anoka's Founders believe?" "ACU Dec. 9th 2011 by Bob Kirchner (see article below)

What did Anoka's founders believe?

Anoka's founders were from New England, mostly Maine. Even 30 years later in 1880 more than 28 percent of Anoka's population was from this region (17 percent from Maine alone), more than any other Minnesota town.

These New England Yankees brought their worldview shaped by its roots in puritan England, the war for independence and religious revivals of the 1700s and 1800s.

They were Baptists, Congregationalists and Methodists.

They held to orthodox Christianity – the Triune God – the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth; Jesus Christ, Risen Savior and Lord; and the Holy Spirit, active comforter and guide.

They trusted in the dynamic power of prayer to redeem souls, heal bodies and deliver people from the bondages of the devil.

They connected the material and spiritual worlds. They took on the role of combatants in an epic struggle between good and evil. Their mission was to establish a moral society.

They stood for elimina-

by Bob Kirchner



tion of slavery, preservation of the union, destruction of the liquor trade, expansion of America and extension of Christian missions.

They believed America had a manifest destiny from God to occupy the North American continent south of Canada. They wanted to make their values the values of the nation.

The settlement and development of the new state of Minnesota was part of that larger mission. Anoka was their battleground.

They balanced piety, education, good government and commerce; churches, schools and government buildings were of equal importance.

They pursued holiness in their personal lives and businesses; they put their faith into practice.

They observed the Puritan Sabbath of rest; they

closed their businesses on Sunday.

They declared slavery to be a sinful institution; they were active abolitionists.

They proclaimed the Union indivisible; they were Lincoln's first volunteers.

They condemned the curse of alcohol; they prayed in front of saloons to close them.

They expressed their moral convictions; they debated their beliefs openly in their newspapers.

But some embraced unorthodox beliefs such as Adventism (the soon coming Christ), Mormonism (another gospel), Universalism (all will be saved) and Spiritualism (communication with the dead). Some regularly sought out mediums to dial up long gone ancestors.

Still others searched for meaning in the hidden knowledge of secret societies such as Freemasonry.

So a complete patch of New England was transplanted to Anoka.

How would these founders react if they visited Anoka today?

They would certainly recognize the layout of the city, the streets, the bridges and

the dam, although updated with blacktop and concrete.

They would notice the streets still bearing their family names: Bean, Branch, Cutter, McCann, Rice and Shaw.

They would be drawn to the familiar historic downtown but marvel at the high rise structures.

They would search the old neighborhoods for their former homes, delighted to find some but surprised to find others replaced by a new house, apartment or office building.

They would be gratified to read the banner of the Anoka County Union newspaper still stands for the indivisible Union.

They would take comfort in the Baptist, Congregational and Methodist Churches still being here.

They would inspect Main Street where the "liquor wars" were fought. While pleased to find no saloons at their old locations, they would be disheartened to discover plenty of vendors of the ardent spirits elsewhere in town. They would regrettably conclude that Anoka is a "wet town."

They would learn that the secret societies are gone save

the Masonic Lodge on Third Avenue. That last fact would bring opposing reactions of satisfaction and disgust.

The Halloween celebration would also draw mixed emotions. Those bent toward spiritualism would revel in its dark mysteries but many orthodox Christians would be appalled.

And of course, they would search for their descendants living here today. And what would they say to them?

Would they celebrate or condemn our modern culture? Would they connect with who we are or challenge us to a higher standard?

If one of those praying, saloon storming saints got a hold of us she just might quote the Scripture in II Timothy 3 ending with "...having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof, from such turn away."

Our founders lived in boldness somehow lacking today. Truth trumped tolerance then.

Bob Kirchner is a local historian, seminary student and city of Anoka's part-time community development director.