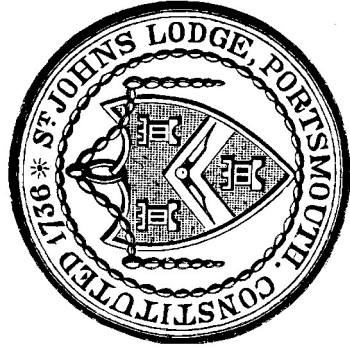
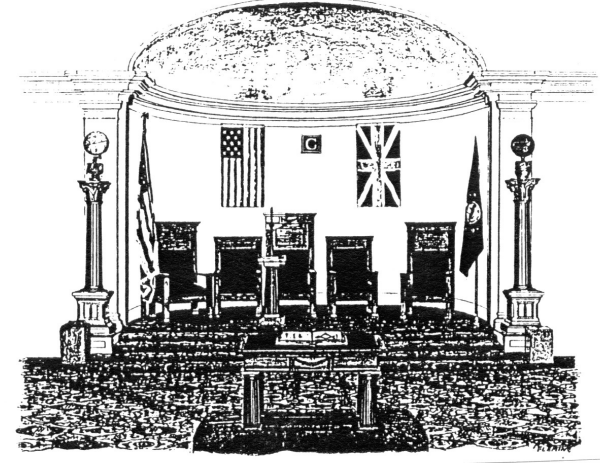


St. John's Lodge, No. 1, F&AM
351 Middle St
Portsmouth, NH 03801



Stamp

March 2024



March 2024 Trestle Board

St. John's Lodge No. 1
Portsmouth, NH

The Master's Message



We've made it through another New England February — but it hasn't been all cold and darkness. Thanks to the diligent efforts of our Brother Senior Warden Mike Hudson, St. John's Lodge was able to deliver beautiful Valentine's Day flowers to our Special Ladies both here and elsewhere around the country. Thank you Brother Hudson!

According to Punxsutawney Phil, we are in for an early spring — and at the risk of provoking Old Man Winter, I'd like to say I'm very much looking forward to a season of renewal. By happy coincidence we have a new candidate, a candidate who, like those who came before him, represents renewal for our Lodge — both in terms of perpetuating our membership and providing us an opportunity to revisit the lessons of the degrees as he travels through them.

With that in mind, let's consider one of the most profound moments in all our ritual, the presentation of the lambskin apron to the Entered Apprentice. Its significance is twofold. First, as the badge of a Mason, it says to our new Brother "you are one of us now". Everyone who wears the apron belongs to the "in" crowd. And it's true — the cliques and divisions of the profane world have no place among us as a Band of Brothers.

Second, the apron admonishes us to keep a pure heart. We point to its white and spotless surface when new, but in reality, the apron is a humble work garment — and we can imagine how the aprons of our ancient Brethren looked after years of work in the quarries and cathedrals. Our work is sometimes messy, but the self-sacrificing nature of the apron — a garment traditionally and fittingly lambskin — protects us.

I received my apron from the late Worshipful Brother Robert Buffum, and one of my fondest memories was being able to wear it when he received the Grand Lodge Centenarian Award at his 100th birthday celebration. These first aprons are meant to be worn, and I encourage everyone to dig theirs out on occasion — perhaps, say, to commemorate the month of one's initiation — wear it to a meeting, and think about what it means. So mote it be.

Fraternally,

Worshipful Alan D. Ammann
Worshipful Master



Pictured above are the 2024 officers of St. John's Lodge, from left to right Josh Nixon (SD), Jeffrey Hatch (Tyler), Cliff Hodgdon (JW), Daniel Silverman (Musician), Thomas Haslam (Secretary), Michael Hudson (SW), William Sawyer (Treasurer), Ian McDonald (Assistant Treasurer), Daniel Stolworthy (Assistant Secretary), Alan D. Amman (Worshipful Master), Howard Kalet (Electrician), Gregg Annis (Chaplain), Alan P. Amman (Past Master), Jason Dubrow (JD)



For Mother's Day, St. John's Lodge sent bouquets of flowers to our Special Ladies. Left is a picture of one of the bouquets. We received a special thank you from one Special Lady that the flowers brightened her day. Thanks to SW Michael Hudson and the Special Ladies Committee for arranging this.



We are accepting applications for the **Ward / Day Education Scholarship** from now until April 19th

Applications can be found at portsmouthfreemasons.org and can be mailed to the lodge at

351 Middle Street, Portsmouth, NH 03801.

children were given instructions to return to Portsmouth and amazingly, they made the trip from New York, NY to Dover, NH on a train, alone. They were met by Wor. Tucker who took them in charge. On December 31, 1913, Mabel Victoria Root (age 9) and Clyde Theodore Root (age 5) legally became the wards of St. John's Lodge.

The Lodge made efforts to have the children admitted to the Masonic Home in Manchester but they were unavailing since the children were not orphans. For the first half of 1914, the children were boarded at the Chase Home for Children in Portsmouth at a cost of \$1.50 each per week, paid for by the Lodge. In an effort to place the children in a suitable long-term home, the Lodge made arrangements with Mrs. Annie F. (Russell) Crowell on Wallis Road in Rye Beach. Mrs. Crowell was 59 years old and recently widowed – her husband Moses Crowell had died in 1910, and their two sons, Arthur and Chester, were grown up. The Lodge paid Mrs. Crowell \$3 per week. For eleven weeks, that arrangement worked well until another living option became more desirable.

In the Fall of 1914, the children moved in with Mrs. Grace E. (Fife) Moulton. Grace had been widowed twice – from her first husband, George E. Fife, who died of tuberculosis in 1894 at age 23; and her second husband, Warrington Moulton, who died in 1911 at age 50. Warrington was a Portsmouth native and a local grocer, and a member of St. John's Lodge. There will be more on Brother Warrington in an upcoming tresleboard. His widow, Grace, was a wonderful lady in her mid-forties who raised four children and lived on Austin Street in Portsmouth. The Lodge paid her \$3 per week to care for the Root children who made this their permanent home. While they lived with Mrs. Moulton most of the time, over the next 10 years the kids would occasionally spend time with Mrs. Crowell.

Until the Root children were fully grown and out of school, the Lodge paid all of their expenses from a special fund called the Care of the Root Children Fund. Several times a year, Wor. Fred Tucker would give a report of the care of the children and every January, he would give a detailed financial report of the fund that was established for their care. Every year the Lodge made a lead contribution to the fund from its charity funds, and every year, DeWitt Clinton Commandery and the York Rite of Portsmouth contributed hundreds of dollars to the fund that was collected at their annual Christmas Observance. The Shrine Masons from Bektash Temple were also very generous in their annual support of the two children.

.....Part 2 to be continued next month

**Alan M. Robinson, PM
Historian**

March 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Stated Communication Wednesday, March 6, 2024

(Dinner 6:00, Meeting 7:00)

**Dinner—Lasagna
Officer dress—white tie and tails
Collation to follow**

**FC Rehearsal
Date TBA**

**Special Communication
Fellow Craft Degree
Wednesday, March 27, 2024
(Dinner 6:00, Meeting 7:00)
Dinner—Hot Dogs and Beans
Officer dress—white tie and tails**

**Contact
Information:**

**Alan D. Ammann
Worshipful Master
Ammann.alan@gmail.com
(603) 781-2455**

**Thomas W. Haslam, PM
Secretary
stjohnstom@comcast.net
603-498-7205**

St. John's Lodge

Historical Sketch

The Root Children (Part 1)

On a pleasant winter's day in 1913, things suddenly became very dark and difficult for the Root family... Our story begins with John Lambert Root who was born in Stockholm, Sweden, on March 23, 1878.

John was a friendly and well-educated young man with an ambition to become a successful businessman in America. In 1898, at the age of twenty, he immigrated to the United States and settled in Duluth, Minnesota. He became a store clerk and in 1900, invited his Swedish girlfriend, 16 year old Rose J. Lundquist of Stockholm, to join him in America. Like other immigrants, Rose arrived in New York on a passenger liner and then traveled across the country eventually arriving in Duluth where she moved in with John. In October 1903, they were married in nearby Two Harbors, Minnesota. On September 5, 1904, they welcomed their first child, a daughter, Mabel Victoria Root.

A few years later, in early 1908, John, Rose and Mabel relocated to New Hampshire and settled in Portsmouth. They lived for a time at 24 Court Street and at 143 State Street, and later in an apartment at 9A Mark Street where they invited Rose's widowed mother, Josephine Lund, to live with them. Josephine had recently immigrated to America from Sweden and it seems likely that the immigration officials shortened her family name from Lundquist to Lund. While living on State Street, Rose was expecting her second child and on August 11, 1908, she gave birth to a son, Clyde Theodore Root.

While all this was happening, John petitioned for membership in St. John's Lodge. His petition was dated June 3, 1908. He was elected, and from July to September that year, he took all three degrees and was Raised a Master Mason on September 9, 1908. Brother John enjoyed Freemasonry very much, especially the companionship of his brothers, and over the next several years, continued to seek more light in Masonry, becoming very active in the York Rite. He held offices in Washington Chapter, No. 3, Royal Arch Masons; DeWitt Clinton Commandery, Knights Templar; and Bektash Temple Shrine.

Soon after arriving in Portsmouth, John was hired as a store clerk and it wasn't long before his business aptitude caught the attention of Hiram Thomson. Hiram was a successful businessman and entrepreneur who was also serving as postmaster of his home town of Kittery Point, ME. Hiram and John established a business partnership and in October 1909, they opened a gentlemen's furnishings store called Root and Thomson in the location of the former jewelry store of W. P. Robinson at 4 Market Street in downtown Portsmouth. Business was good, but nine months later, in July 1910, the partnership dissolved and the store was renamed for its then sole owner, John L. Root.

For the next few years, life was good for the Root family. The John L. Root haberdashery was very successful selling high grade men's furnishings including shirts, ties, collars, hats, rain coats, trunks, bags, suit cases, umbrellas and gloves; all at reasonable prices. John and Rose were active in the

community and had many friends, especially in the Masonic fraternity and at the Methodist Episcopal Church on Miller Avenue where Mabel took part in Sunday school activities.

Then something went wrong, something life-changing happened, though it's not clear what it was...

On January 13, 1913, John L. Root took out an advertisement in the Portsmouth Herald stating that he had "sold my Gents Furnishing Business to Mr. F. J. Milan, my former clerk, who will continue to carry on the business at 4 Market Street. I wish to take this opportunity of extending my sincere gratitude and thanks to the public, for the liberal patronage accorded me, and who have in any way contributed to my success in business." Unfortunately for both parties, the arrangement to sell the business fell apart and the store was forced in bankruptcy. In February 1913, another local men's clothing store called Goodman Brothers, purchased the inventory and fixtures of John L. Root's store and in March 1913, they had a bankruptcy sale at the 4 Market Street location.

Goodman Brothers was a very successful Portsmouth men's store owned by Max and Moses Goodman, two pillars of the Portsmouth community. When Moses retired, Max and his son Melvin opened a new store, Goodman's Men's Store, which was located on Congress Street in Portsmouth. Eventually Mel's two sons, Mark and Michael Goodman, joined him in the family business. The Goodman's story will be featured in an upcoming trestleboard.

Shortly after declaring bankruptcy, John L. Root disappeared. He deserted his wife Rose and their two young children, and he left Portsmouth. No one knows where he went... and he was never seen again. To this day, sadly, there is no further information. In view of his actions, and with no hope of contacting him, on May 5, 1915, he was suspended from the Fraternity.

John's wife Rose was devastated when he deserted her and their two young children, ages 9 and 5. In the early Spring of 1913, she packed up her belongings and moved with her children to Newark, New Jersey, where she hoped to find work to better support herself and her children.

Over the next few months, with the help of an occasional donation from the charity funds of St. John's Lodge, Rose was succeeding pretty well; but as Wor. Fred C. Tucker reported to the Lodge, "the worryment of her desertion, and the struggle to obtain a living for herself and her children, caused her mind to give way." On November 6, 1913, she was taken to the New Jersey State Asylum for the Insane at Morristown. Located near Newark, the facility's name was changed in 1894 to New Jersey State Hospital at Morris Plains.

Rose's two children immediately became the concern of St. John's Lodge with Wor. Fred C. Tucker leading a standing committee to oversee them. The

Continued on page 6.....