

1809  
CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

Court of Common Pleas until 1847, Supervisor of our town in the year of his death. He was the first man in our Village to start a Bank, and of which the First National Bank is the successor. He obtained the first Charter for a Mutual Fire Insurance Co. in the State of New York. It is recorded of him: "To his efforts and exertions, more perhaps than to any man's, the Village of Saratoga is indebted for its most valuable improvements and its prosperity. He gave his life and vitality to the business of the place," dying at the early age of fifty. We find in the records that a vote of thanks was extended by Rising Sun Lodge to all the Railways entering the Village of Saratoga Springs for the gratuitous use of their roads for the accommodation of the visiting Brethren. Those Corporations, or the Managers at least, would appear to some to have had souls at that time.

I wish to say a word about the social air or atmosphere of our Lodge as shown during my Masonic life. When I was made a Mason, little if any cordiality existed in the Lodge room. It was decidedly chilly. No such fraternizing as is now seen on the floor, when many social groups are at once formed, while the Lodge is at refreshment. To

1909  
RISING SUN LODGE, No. 103, F. & A. M.

be sure there was a strong tie recognized between the brethren or no growth could have taken place. No efforts were then made to bring the members and their families together, as is now in evidence. No music was then in use as we know it to-day. We had a little melodeon and then a small organ, and when we had a brother who could act as organist the appropriate hymns were helped along. At that time no Master ever invited anyone to grace the East with him, nor did he invite anyone to assist him in the work of the degrees. The first effort to modernize, so to speak, this condition, was made by W. Brother Charles H. Sturges, who committed to memory the Eastern Star Degree Lectures, and on two occasions we enjoyed what has since developed into "Ladies' Night," which function has been greatly amplified, as well as beautified, through the efforts of Brother John Bennett, with the assistance of the brethren — it now constitutes the great social event of the Masonic year. Until what I term the modern era, no banquet was ever served with any of the doings attached to Blue Lodge Masonry, within my memory. It is barely possible that the conviviality existing in the early days of the Lodge led to the other extreme. It appears that