

KNIGHTS OF PYTHIAS
Centerville, Tennessee

Meeting of

ED
DOTSON

Heritage Day and May 18th is the biggest thing that has happened in this County in a long time. As you can see, the bringing together for regular appreciation of the past things that's gone on before, I think it will be worthwhile. Maybe some-time or another, we'll we'll leave where we'll have a museum where we can keep coming in older things, if Heritage is what we are, not only what we are now, but it is everything that we've inherited in the past. It covers a great deal. Most of you that set down tonight, those of you that is as old as Ed Loveless and myself, it'd be, when it'd be here, Duck River was just a spring branch (laugh).

Each one of you could pick out maybe a hundred things that have happened in your life, and if that one thing hadn't happened, your entire life would have been different. Most of us could look back at 100 different things or more, we wouldn't be married to who we are married to, we wouldn't have the job that we have, we wouldn't have the children we have. It's all wound up in Heritage.

We want to talk a little tonight on this heritage of this lodge. I don't believe there is any organization in Hickman County that has a greater heritage than Sam Davis Lodge. It's 87 years old, isn't that right, Douglas, on July 16--and that's last week, or the first of this week, I've don't forgotten which. They say there is two signs of getting old, and that is, one is that you're getting forgetful, and I, I forget what the other is (laugh). Anyhow, its 87 years on the 16th of this month.

And I would like to read off the names of some of the founders. I don't have all of them, but I did try to pick out--Douglas brought me over some of the petitions for his heritage to the lodge, they weren't all there--but I've tried to pick out some of the people that had played a prominent part, not only in the development of this lodge, but in the religious affairs, the medical affairs, the legislative affairs, political affairs of this county. And out of

that first group, I'd like to read off the names and tell you something about them.

One of them is W. J. McEwen. He was from up at Shady Grove. He served as sheriff of this county. By the way, this, for those of you that is not familiar with this organization, this has always been a peace loving organization; and when I tell you down through the next few minutes who all served of sheriff of this county that was a member of this lodge, it will appall you, so we would, always believed in good order (laugh). But the first one we started off with was Mr. W. J. McEwen. He was the father of Mr. Ervin McEwen; and as many of you older members remember, he sat on the high school board for a number of years and was probably one of the most outstanding school board members in this county in my lifetime.

Another was J. C. Flowers. He was a medical doctor from Whitfield. Now, not many of you would know where Whitfield was. I started to say "is." There is no Whitfield anymore. That's where Jim Walker's ancestors come from because everything from McCullen Hill to the mouth of Briar Pond went by Whitfield. And Mr. Flowers was a medical doctor. He lived at the mouth, he lived at the mouth of _____ Pond, and there is still a rock spring house there--it's right interesting, some of you sometime that's got nothing else to do might want to drive down. It's where Edd Lancaster lives--raised at the mouth of Briar Pond. And he had a brother who was an attorney. That's a little unusual, got a doctor and an attorney there in the same family. Ah, we've been blessed with attorneys in this organization too. I, I didn't have enough note pads to copy down the names of all of them. And Mr. Flowers served as State Representative here at one time.

Another we mentioned here is C., C. B. Swift, he was a blacksmith; so our organization started out with a blacksmith because at that time, a blacksmith was a very important person. He had to make about everything you used on the farm and in the home that had metal on it. They run an old Swift Shop. Some of you older fellows like Ed Loveless and myself can remember the old Swift Shop.

John H. Claggett, one of Hickman County's great citizens, he was a young attorney from 1897 when the lodge was organized, and he was one of them. We'll tell you more about Mr. Claggett later.

J. A. Patterson, some of you older fellows remember him. He was a merchant here for a number of years and served two terms as trustee of the county.

Another one was Robert Brown. He was county court clerk at one time.

John S. Collins and he listed--on the petition they had to list their occupation, and he listed on his petition, he was a lumber man. He operated a mill, him and his brother, but, later, John S. went into the oil business.

P. F. Montgomery. Mr. Pleas Montgomery lives at the place where I live now. He married the sister to Dee Lowe, some of you older fellows remember Mr. Dee; and the reason I mention that, he gave his address on his petition as "Arrow". Somebody told me years ago that there used to be a post office there in Jacobs Pillow, and it was Arrow. I was always a little skeptical of that, but when I checked and saw his petition, it did have "Arrow" as his address.

Another one of the founders in the lodge was Mr. Sam Caruthers. He was a farmer. He owned a good deal of land in this county. He owned a lot of land in this city. He was a very wealthy farmer. He used, he used to live down here where Dr. Elrod lives now.

Another one of the _____ was A. H. Greg Stew, a prominent dentist here for a number of years.

Henry Nixon was a prominent attorney; J. H. Plumber was another dentist--now, that's unusual that we had two dentist here at that early age, but we did. Another one was John B. Stevenson. He was elected sheriff too _____. He was the last man to run for public office in Hickman County for County office on a Republican ticket to win office, and that was in 1896, so he was_____.

Stanley Prew. A. W. Bogle--that's Mrs. Mary Bogle's husband, and Ms. Mary is still living. She is 90 some odd years old, Mr. Aubrey Bogle's fathers. W. P. Morrison, he was the headmaster of the old Fairview Academy, and it is doubtful according to the old farmers if we ever had a better school teacher in Hickman County than Mr. Morrison.

J. I. Sutton; and there's W. S. Nunnely, who was the great grandfather of Douglas Bates, on his mother's side; Horace Nixon, many of you remember his wife, Ms. Daisy, that taught school, music here for a number of years.

J. R. Wheeler, he was a mail carrier from here to Whitfield. I've already told you where Whitfield. He lived across Beaverdam there from where Whitfield is located. Now, same year, we had R. M. Clagett, who was the grandfather of Emmett Thompson; and T. K. Colley, who was Minnie Pearl's father.

In 1898, Stanley T. Prune--now, I've never been able to figure out, I haven't asked anyone--got mixed up on Stanley T. Broom and Stanley C. Broom. They were both in. Stanley C. was person in 1897, and Stanley T. came in in 1898. He served as a number of years as Clerk & Master of this county. And we find on the court records of January term 1901, an unusual happening, it says, "The members of the Centerville Bar and the members of the Centerville Businessmen met together jointly to prepare a resolution in respect to Stanley T. Broom, who was accidently killed while hunting on Christmas day 1900."

Another one who came in in 1898 was Mr. LemAllen. Some of you older ones remember Mr. LemAllen, he run a store down here for years. Part of the time, he was a partner with a Turner and then, they run up down here in the old building right across ~~from~~ the alley from a street here from the 1st National Bank where Wayne Richey has been doing some work lately. I never will forget, I went into the store one time with my dad when I was about 6 years old, my dad was a good friend of Mr. Allen; and he said, ask Mr. Allen how he was doing, and he said "Well, all right," he'd make it all right if it wouldn't for expenses. I've often wondered what Mr. Lem would say if he come back today and run a business. (laugh)

Also, that year was W. D. Lowe, who, who was a farmer and served in the House of Representatives in the State Senate. Same year, Mr. Tom Huddleston, William Howell's father. His occupation was listed as post office clerk. J. F. Horner, many of you remember Mr. Horner. He served as Clerk & Master for a long, long time, a very fine fellow. He was John Lee's father, and he listed his occupation as "drummer." If you younger members don't know what a drummer is, that's what we call a travelling salesman today.

And L. J. Derryberry, he was a druggist, had a drugstore over yonder about where Baker's 5 & 10 used to be, somewhere along in there.

1899, we come in with another sheriff, George S. Roberts. I, I remember Mr. Roberts. He was a sheriff for a long time and used to come in the office to visit me when I first started working in the courthouse. And they told a good story on him when they were building a road at Hickman Hollow. They worked, it wouldn't against the law to work the prisoners then. They put striped suits on them with a ball and chain on their leg, and this particular prisoner's job was to light the fuse on the dynamite, and he had managed to work the ball and chain a loose where he could get it off his foot; and when he lit the charge, instead of stepping back up where the officer was and the other prisoners, he stepped down on the other side, there was a narrow bluff there, and they couldn't get to him because there was some dynamite fixing to go off between them. He took the dynamite off of his leg, I mean the ball and chain, and started running up the hill. And that's the last we was ever seen in Centerville; but he was very considerate, about two weeks later, he wrote a postcard to Sheriff _____, sheriff, and told Roberts and say, "I just wanted to know if anybody got hurt," said, "It made a turrible racket," said, "it even scared me." And that would really make Mr. Roberts mad when you would tell it on him.

J. W. Roscoe came in in 1899. He served as County Court Clerk. And many of you remember John Wilson. John is the father of Rock Wilson. He was a doctor that came in in 1899.

And 1901, I didn't find anyone in 1900. In 1901, Mr. W. L. Pinkerton, who for many years was an outstanding lawyer in Centerville. Mr. S. S. Cunningham, whose picture is back there on the wall. I reckon he worked at, his occupation, he worked at First National Bank, I guess, all of his life, didn't he, Jim? And he was buried a likeable person, never did get married.

And Mr. R. S. Bob Sweeney. Now, not many, I don't know whether any of you know Mr. Bob, knew Mr. Bob or not, but he was, Jim there probably does. When I started working in the courthouse, he was travelling for Ambrose Printing Co. He was a very fine fellow. He at one time--well, he married a girl from Hickman County, I'll tell you about that later. He worked at the depot at Goodrich. Goodrich ^{several,} used to be a great big town, a bigger town than Coble is now, and almost as big as Wrigley was several years ago, and he told me two good stories I want to tell you.

Some of you remember Clint Caruthers. Well, Clint was a young man at that time, he had a horse and buggy, and Mr. Bob told me that Clint had been ordering him a case of whiskey occasionally to be shipped to Goodrich. He lived down in Lowes Bend, but to kindly keep his tracks covered up, he had it delivered at the depot at Goodrich (laugh). And he always ordered it, I forget whether Mr. Bob said it was in his brother's name, or one of his neighbor's name (laugh), but Mr. Bob said that he noticed the pattern there. It was always ordered and shipped to the other fellow, but Clint was always the one that was there in the horse and buggy to pick it up. So one day he had a shipment there, and he happened to see the fellow that it was shipped to that didn't know anything about it, came in there for something else. So Mr. Bob told him about it, says, "Let's play a prank on him," said, "You carry the whiskey on with you and I'll tell him that I didn't know but what it was his, thought it was." And Mr. Bob said he never knew whether the man drank it or whether he give it back to him, but said it sure got the best of Mr. Clint when he came _____ (laugh).

And another story he told, back then, they had a voting precinct in Goodrich, and some of you older fellows remember Mr. Doud and Mr. J. L. Fline, there were superintendents over there, and there was an election coming up. And Mr. Doud and Mr. Fline was very interested in some fellow for sheriff. And Mr. Bob was for the other, for, for another candidate. Said he got a hold of about 25 ballots and the day, day before the election, he called in all those colored workers that he had given them a drink occasionally, you know, when they were thirsty, or had loaned them a little money when they needed a little money, and he marked those ballots the way he wanted them to vote. And said, now, you can't read and write, and said you stick this in your pocket, and said tomorrow when they give you a ballot at the ballot box, you go up there and get it, but put that one in your pocket and when you get ready to put it in the box, pull this one out. Said, now, you be sure and do it because I've got it marked. Said each one thought that they were the only one. And he said he handed out about 25 ballots like that. And the next day when the polls were closed and the votes was counted, Mr. Bob's man won. And said Mr. Cline and Mr. Doud never could understand why (laugh).

By the way, Mr. Sweeney left here years ago. And when he died,

his wife died before he did, Mr. Bob hadn't been dead over 15 years, had he, Chip? And when he died, at the time, the lodge sent \$100 to the members of the family when he died. His children sent the check back to this lodge and told them that they thought Mr. Bob would want it spent for charity here in the lodge; and as far as I know, he was the only one who ever did that. But he was truly a fine fellow.

that
Another one came in in 1901 was C. D. Loveless. That was, he was Commodore Loveless, and his occupation was listed as cattle buyer. He went to Lewis County and for a number of years represented Lewis County and Maury County in the State Senate_____.

In 1902, E. J. Mays, who was for many years an outstanding merchant over at Pinewood. The same year, Ernest P. Mays, was, listed his occupation as hotel keeper. That's some of Melvin Mays's ancestors. Mr. Edgar Graham came in that year. Mr. Edgar Graham, was a grandson of Sam Graham that operated the Pinewood Industry there for a long time. Edgar Graham served in the State Legislature. He served two terms, or, I think, it was two terms in comptroller's office in Nashville for the State of Tennessee. And I've always been told that he was the primary person that got 100 through Centerville, because he was in the comptroller's office at that time and took a pretty good interest in politics.

In 1904, R. C. Beasley, now he's a father-in-law to Mr. Bob Sweeney that I was telling you about. R. C. Beasley was a member of the county court here for many years, and he run a store down in Pleasantville. And then he moved over to Nunnelly and run the store there for many years, wound up in Nashville at the Beasley, he's the one that established Beasley Furniture on the square, so he came from this county.

In 1904, Douglas T. Bates, I, came in, that was Little Doug's grandfather. And F. T. Craig came in the same year. That's one of Molly's ancestors. So the Bateses and Craigs were running pretty close together there in 1904.

In 1905, Tyme Sawyer, a farmer out at Shipps Bend, and he later served as County Court Clerk.

1906, Emmett T. Thompson and Mr. J. B. Walker, I, so we've got, there was Emmett Thompson's father--now, Emmett Thompson's grandfather,

R. M. Clagett, was one of the early members. And same year, 1906, C. H. Caruthers, who used to run the dry goods store, I mean, the hardware store under us here, and who, with his brother, Grady, was in the undertaking business here for a number of years--back when they'd go all over the county with a horse drawn hearse to deliver the remains to the cemetery, and then, later, after the first motor vehicle ambulance came in.

1907, we find that one of the really great members of this lodge came in. That was Mr. Tom Bruner. I doubt if this lodge has ever had a more dedicated friend than Mr. Tom Bruner.

In 1908, Sewell Webb, who many of you remember was a merchant here for a long time. And W. M. Murphree, who was the grandfather of little Bill Murphree that many of you know.

1910, H. B. McBride, who married Jim's aunt. Mr. R. H. Clag-- R. H. Clagett, that's Bob Clagett. He's was the one that came here when Southern Sportswear started. He was the first superintendent of Southern Sportswear, but in 1910, he listed his occupation as a school teacher at Terrill, Texas. Conner Bates came into the lodge then. He was an uncle of Little Doug's. He was a brother to Little Doug's grandfather. Nixon Huddleston came in that year. And Clarence Spence came in in that year. Mr. Spence served as sheriff of this county for six years. He was killed in 1927 raiding a whiskey still out at, on Joe's Branch, down between here and Coble. I remember up at Coble School when they brought word that he had been killed, that he was working for City then, as City policeman.

1912, J. H. Pratt, who came here as a school teacher and football coach at the old Fairview Academy. And he served as school superintendent in, from 1917 to 1921, and he was school superintendent at the time the Hickman County High School was established. And another one of our old brothers here that we all thought a lot of, Gene Harvill, was the only member of the first graduating class of Hickman County High School.

Grady Caruthers came in in 1913 and Alf Clagett--he was a brother to Bob. Alf went on to Giles County and served over there as County Judge for a number of years.

In 1916, Grover Harvill, Grover C. Harvill came into the lodge. He was one of three brothers that went to a one room school out here in Tottys Bend, came on into Fairview Academy, and went on to be president of State Universities. Grover served as school superintendent here from 1913 to 1917 at a salary, I believe, of \$300 a year. Of course, in addition to that, he was a school teacher also. School superintendent was a part-time job at that time. He had a brother, Albert, which we all know, that went on to be president of Austin Peay, State Commissioner of Education, State Senator for a number of times, number of years. W. T. Edwards came in also in 1916. He was a prominent doctor here for number of times.

In 1917, we find that J. C. Hobbs, they're only be one or two of us that probably remember Mr. Hobbs. He was a very distinguished Circuit Judge here, died while I was in high school. He taught school at one time up at Shady Grove. The same year, Jim D. Caruthers and Guy Goodman came in. Also, Carl Edwards, who was a brother to Dr. Ed, I mean, Dr. Edwards, and Carl Edwards, an attorney at Lewis County for a number of years.

1918, we have our first son of one of the earlier members come into the lodge, and that was John S. Colley, Jr. Also, in 1918, Joe, Joe P. _____. He was deputy postmaster. He worked for a number of years here at Security Bank; and when WWII came off, he went on back into the army. He'd been in the National Guard here for years, came out of the army as a Lieutenant Colonel. He's retired now in Sarasoto, FL. He comes back here every year to the National Guard, to the old Battery "C" reunion. Another one that year was Richard P. Craig. And then we find W. E. Turner, and he listed his occupation as a student. He was taught school for a number of years, and went on to Nashville after he left here, about 1931, he was principal of the high school here, he became Assistant Commissioner of Education for the State of Tennessee, a position that he held for a number of years. Dr. D. P. Morrison, that was Brown Morrison, that was Ms. Gill, Emery Gill's father. He was a dentist over here in this building close to where, upstairs where the Men's Shop is.

And to tell a good story on him, and it's true, that two fellows from Coble--well, one of them was Mr. Ed Garner, and another fellow

were in Nashville, were at Centerville one night, and got to drinking and they decided that it would be a good prank to call Dr. Morrison out to pull, to pull a tooth. So this fellow that was with Mr. Garner called him and told him he had a terrible tooth ache, wanted to know if he'd come up and pull it. Of course, back then, a doctor would visit you at midnight if you needed him. So, Dr. Morrison came up to his office and got this fellow and put him up in a chair, and he didn't have a tooth in his head (laugh). I guess Dr. Morrison's sense of humor wouldn't too good; anyhow, he got a little sore about it, and Mr. Garner, said, Well," said, Don't be upset about it," said, "pull one of mine." (laugh) He got in the chair, now that's Sue's grandfather. (laugh) I forgot about that when I started telling it. (laugh) But, anyhow, anyhow, Dr. Morrison pulled a good tooth for him. (laugh) Had you heard that, Sue? (laugh)

And that's the year that Bro. Claude Stephenson came in, in 1918, and went through all the ranks of the officers of this lodge and was a very dedicated member. Pete O'Conner, Joe Lovell--Joe Lovell was a brother-in-law to Mr. Stephenson, he, he taught school and coached football here at one time. That same year, Mr. Tom McEwen, who married one of Jim Aubrey's aunts, and he was the engineer who laid out Hwy. 50 from here to Coble. I believe, Jim, the best I can remember. Tom Porter, not any of you remember Tom Porter, but Tom Porter worked for the telephone company, and on this post, post over here, in front of where the Apothe, where the Town, no, it's the Trophy Case, there at the corner, he was working on a telephone line, and he come into contact with an electric line in the 1920's sometime and lost his life, he was electrocuted there on the post.

In 1920, Thetus Horner. I don't guess any of you remember him. I wouldn't have, but when I was in the legislature in 1940, Thetus was raised here and run a drugstore here for a number of years and he was very kind to me in helping to show me around in the big city of Nashville. And that was a pretty good undertaking for an old country boy.

In 1934, had another sheriff to come in, Lon Loveless. And Harry R. Cotrum. How many of you remember Harry Cotrum? The first time I every remember Mr. Cotrell, I was going to school at Spot, about the 3rd or 4th or 5th grade, and he had just been appointed

county agent. He served in that capacity for a number of years. And I remember him drawing two faces on the blackboard, one of them with the mouth turned up and one with the mouth turned down, and told us if your mouth was turned up, you were smiling, you were all right, but if the corners of your mouth was turned down, you were an old sourpuss. I remember that, that's one of the few things I remember. I remember going to church in 1940 and hearing a great big preacher, weighed about 300 pounds, said that he could eat one pound of turnip greens and gain two pounds. (laugh) I don't remember a thing he said in his sermon (laugh), but I've always remember that. (laugh) It's the little things in life that you remember. (laugh) Harry Cotrell used to operate years ago, when they've have an election here, they'd put a screen over on the front of that big building where the Men's Shop at now, and he would operate, him and Dr. Bailey, a little camera thing up in, where the Clerk & Master's office is now; and when a precinct's tally came in, they'd show it on the screen. We didn't have radio and televisions to listen at then. Another one that came in that year was A. P. Bonnie Hickman, who for a number of years, did all the water works, did all the police work, looked after everything in the Town of Centerville. He was about the only employee the Town of Centerville had. And we find that year that Mr. W. L. Pinkerton was reinstated. He had dropped out. (SIDE ONE TAPE RAN OUT)

. . . Loveless, Edward Fields and myself came in, so that includes the ones that I listed. I had a few notes here that I wanted to share with you now. Olga, I'm not going to take much more time there. (Laugh) And that's the reason I got over here. I knew if I (laugh) stayed over there (laugh), she'd kick me. Emmett, Emmett Thompson was _____ tonight, he was supposed to have been here. And I was sitting in a restaurant a while back, and, one morning drinking coffee with a Methodist preacher and two or three others that go to church down at the Methodist Church; and one of them said that Emmett Thompson made a talk on something, and I spoke up and said, "You know, I'm glad, I'd wish I'd gone." I said, "I could listen to Emmett talk an hour and one-half anytime and enjoy every bit of it." _____ Loveless looked kind of funny and said, "Well, you should have been there." (laugh)

I want to, before I sit down, name you the men that have served as sheriff of this county that's, that has been members of this lodge. There was W. J. McEwen, John V. Stephenson, George S. Roberts, C. D. Spence, Lon Loveless, Will Mitchell, Albert Wilson, and Mayhew Loveless. So that, the, for the 41 out of the 87 years that this lodge has been in existence, there has been a sheriff a member of this lodge, that's nearly half the time.

We've had three trustee that were members of this lodge, that I recall. There may have been others. But there was Mr. J. H. Patterson, Mr. E. C. Hollin over at Nunnelly, and Edward Fields.

County Court Clerks. Robert Brown, J. W. Russell, Hine Sawyers, Nixon Huddleston, and Edward Dotson. Out of the 87 years, there have been 67 of those years that County Court Clerks of the County was a member of this lodge.

County Judges. Mr. John E. Clagett, was elected judge in 1916 and served until 1942. And Hunt McClanahan served as judge to the, 16 years, And Ralph Fly is the County Executive, which is the successor to the County Judge's office. And so that office has been represented 44 out of the 87 years.

In the legislature, I've picked up the following names here that has served in the State Senate or the House of Representatives. W. D. Flowers, W. D. Lowe, C. Commodore D. Loveless, Edgar Graham, John Graham, C. H. Caruthers, Douglas T. Bates, Harry Blackwell, Tom Lambert, and myself.

And at three constitutional conventions which they've had in our lifetime, one of them was Mr. Claude V. Stephenson and Emery, and the other was Eugene Harvill.

In the Treasury of the State of Tennessee, we've had two members, J. B. Walker, Jr., and J. B. Walker, III, that has served in that office for the State Treasury.

Comptroller of the Treasurer, Edgar Graham. Clerk & Master, Stanley T. Broom and Jerry Frank Horner.

I hope Olga doesn't get me for talking too long. And thank you.
(clap)