



## Carl H. Claudy

Presented to Palestine Lodge No. 357, August 6, 2020

Bro. Douglas Mooney, Historian

Worshipful Master,

The name Carl H. Claudy may be unfamiliar to some younger Masons, but he was one of the greatest sources of Masonic education for generations of Brothers.

Most Worshipful Brother Claudy was born January 13, 1897 in Washington DC. As a young man, he spent time prospecting in Alaska, but soon returned home to Washington.

He was a prolific author, writing 32 books and for 160 publications. He wrote Science Fiction titles, and books on topics such as baseball and photography. His writing appeared in magazines, newspapers, and even in some early DC comics. His 1909 book *Tell Me Why: Stories about Mother Nature* was illustrated by an 18-year-old Norman Rockwell. He was a foreign correspondent for The Scientific American, covering post-World War I reconstruction in Europe.

He wrote about photography as an expert, having captured historic early flights of the Wright Brothers military flyer and experiments of Alexander Graham Bell. Some of his aviation photos are held in collection by the Smithsonian Institution.

In 1909, Bell wrote to the Smithsonian saying he'd obtained photographs of Wright Brothers flights from Carl Claudy to donate to the museum. He'd sent Claudy's photos to Eastman Kodak, where George Eastman himself had taken an interest and oversaw their enlargement.

MWB Claudy became a Master Mason at Harmony Lodge No. 17 in Washington DC in 1908, beginning his long association with the fraternity. He served as Grand Master for the Grand Lodge of Washington DC in 1932.

His greater Masonic fame largely derives from his association with the Masonic Service Association from 1923 to 1957. He was the associate editor of the publication The Master Mason and also wrote and distributed the MSA's Short Talk Bulletins.

Short Talk Bulletins are described by the MSA as "an informative, chatty discussion of some aspect of Freemasonry: symbols, allegories, history, individuals, etc.. They are sent to all Lodges of the constituent Grand Lodges, and are intended to be read in all Lodges."

MWB Claudy wrote more than 350 Short Talk Bulletins, distributed and read throughout the country.

He also wrote many Masonic titles, including *The Master's Book*, a still-relevant guide for any incoming Master, and *Introduction to Freemasonry*, which remains popular as an item given by Lodges to new Masons.

Due to his contributions to the craft, Most Worshipful Brother Claudy was bestowed with many honors. He was a 33rd Degree, and was made an honorary member of many bodies and lodges, including being named Honorary Past Grand Master of North Dakota and of Utah.

How proud our lodge must have been to call Most Worshipful Brother Carl Harry Claudy a Palestiner. For among the honors bestowed upon our Brother was being made an honorary member of this lodge. On April 1, 1948 our lodge voted to make Most Worshipful Brother Claudy the second honorary Palestiner as an expression of our "deep regard, esteem, friendship, and brotherly love" following a visit where he spoke before our lodge.

Most Worshipful Brother Claudy wrote to Palestine Secretary C. Bryant Huff, saying his dear friend John Cunningham, Director of Welfare for the MSA, presented him the award on June 17, 1948.

"I assure you that I appreciate it more than I can say. The Honorary Membership of which I was told some time ago has gladdened my heart and now the verbal presentation, by way of this handsome and delightfully framed certificate, adds to the joy I had in the original information of the honor conferred upon me."

He said that he was unsure that he was worthy of the honor, but that he would display his Palestine Certificate on his office walls, where, "I shall show it to many friends and visitors with pride."

"It will be appreciated if you make it a part of your minutes that your newest Honorary Member wishes you the greatest possible and happiest of success in the years to come and hopes from the bottom of his heart that at some future time he may be again permitted to stand before your East and express to you all his pleasure, satisfaction, and sense of being highly honored in the membership and the Certificate attesting thereto which are now his."

His friend John Cunningham also wrote to our lodge, to share the news of his presentation:

"The Certificate arrived safely a few minutes ago; the official family was immediately assembled and to the accompaniment of the clicking of the camera shutter, I proudly presented it to Brother Claudy who, for a few minutes was speechless with emotion...

Brother Huff, I deeply appreciate your kindness in deputizing me to make this presentation to my dearest friend. It is an honor I will not soon forget."

Most Worshipful Brother Claudy remained in correspondence with our lodge. He was happy to see the report of his membership in the Palestiner, and also wrote every year to express his

thanks for birthday wishes. In 1952 he called it “a most pleasant custom which ‘our’ lodge has and I appreciate it to the full.”

He laid down his working tools on May 27, 1957 and was interred at the National Memorial Park following a service at the Scottish Rite Cathedral in Washington DC.

Today our Brother is remembered as a giant in our mystic circle - an author, a leader, and a Palestiner.



Most Worshipful Brother Carl H. Claudy, 33° receiving his Palestine Honorary Membership at the Masonic Service Association in Washington D.C. June 17, 1948