



Palestine Lodge Working Tools

Presented to Palestine Lodge No. 357 - January 3, 2019

Bro. Douglas Mooney, Historian

Worshipful Master,

Tonight we'll talk about the early days of this lodge. In fact, the earliest days. This is not meant to be a history of the lodge, but we'll briefly discuss our founding to provide some context. If you've read the lodge history on our website, you'd know that former members of Detroit Lodge No. 2 met in December 1880 to begin the formal process of starting a new lodge.

Action was quickly taken and in the January 26, 1881 Detroit Free Press, the following was reported:

A NEW DETROIT LODGE

On the 20th inst. [January 20], Grand Master McGrath received a petition from thirty-five Masons residing in Detroit, together with the recommendation of six out of seven lodges of this city, asking for a dispensation for a new lodge here to be known as Palestine Lodge. The Grand Master submitted the application, together with the charter fee of \$100. Five of the seven lodges of Detroit have a membership of 1,500 and the other two about 100 each, and the field is deemed sufficient for an additional lodge. The Grand Master had no hesitation in recommending that a charter issue forthwith.

Palestine has the distinction of receiving a charter without working under dispensation and things moved quickly for the new lodge. On February 8, 1881, our first officers were installed. The Free Press reported that the four first officers of the other lodges in the city attended, along with 150 guests. A cotillion, or ball, was held afterward in the banquet room of the Detroit Commandery.

Our lodge history further tells us that we are named after Palestine Commandery of New York City. And the purpose of tonight's talk is to discuss their visit on June 16, 1881. From the Detroit Free Press, June 17, 1881:

MASONIC COURTESIES

Presentation of Working Tools to Palestine Lodge No. 357

Yesterday evening a very interesting presentation occurred at the Masonic Temple on Congress Street West. There was recently organized in this city a new "blue" lodge which is named Palestine No. 357 in honor of Palestine Commandery of Knights Templar of New York, and last night's event was a visit by a committee of Palestine Commandery consisting of Sir Knights H. H. Brockway, J. W. Bowden, W. R. Carr, James A. Rich, and John Scott. Sir Knight J. L. Reed also of Palestine Commandery, but not one of the committee, was a guest of the home brethren.

The visiting committee, through Sir Knights Bowden, Carr and Rich, presented the lodge with a beautiful set of working tools consisting of a square and compass, twenty-four-inch gauge, Holy Bible, a gavel made of wood from on the Mount of Olives, and a sprig of cassia cut from Mount Moriah by a member of Palestine Commandery.

Thanks were returned by Worshipful Master Wm. F. Moore, and Past Eminent Commander Jesse E. Saxton of Detroit Commandery, and after a general fraternal interchange, the company adjourned to the banquet-room, where covers were laid for 100 persons under the director of Tyler Alex McGregor.

The visiting Knights will remain in the city two or three days, the guests of Detroit Commandery and Palestine Lodge. The officers of the latter are as follows:

*W.M. - Wm. F Moore
S.W. - Joseph T. Lowrey
J.W. - Ed Telfer
Treasurer - Edward Mayes
Secretary - M. W. Hall
S.D. - H.H. Veazie
J.D. - J.D. McPherson
Stewards - W.T. Ryan and W.H. Rouse
Chaplain - J.W. Kermott
Mashal - J. Humphrey Jr.
Tyler - Alex McGregor*

Now Brethren, I call your attention to our altar, where our lodge's current square and compass rest upon our Volume of Sacred Law.

I invite you to inspect these sacred tools of our craft after we close Lodge today. You will find engraved on both the square and the compass the following message:

Palestine Lodge 357, F and A. M. From Wor. J.W. Bowden, Crescent 402. P.M. W. R. Carr, Crescent 402, Bro. H. H. Brockway, Republic 690. New York City 1881.

For these working tools, presented in a gesture of brotherly love to our original officer class, still guide the work of our lodge 138 years later. They are a very real link to our past, serving as a reminder of our history and lineage. When you hold them, you can imagine the hands they've passed through, and the thousands of degrees they've witnessed. In fact, one imagines that every man who has called himself a Palestiner - who was initiated, passed, and raised in our lodge - has placed his hand upon them.

They are also a testament to the stewardship of the Lodge from generations of brothers, having survived for our use today.