

Judge Charles S. Bradshaw, affectionately "Charley" was the eleventh Exalted Ruler of #98, 1902-03, Forty Five years ago, an eminent jurist, scholar, humorist. In the early day, before the advent of the Primary system- politically –he was the young king pin of Iowa Republicanism, the spark plug of a small coterie of prominent, dependable, patriotic gentleman. The makers of United States senators, members of Congress, of the supreme judiciary, governors- the name Bradshaw was dynamic- it was success. His word was good, as well as his judgment, he and his associates decided the political destinies of political minded men of Iowa. You have but to scan the pages of Iowa history to discover that the really outstanding members of our government proposed and elected by he and them, of that era, were nationally known and respected for

The Judge, still the head of a great law firm in the city, Bradshaw, Fowler-Proctor and Fairgrave, and his son, Homer. The other son, Charles, is inclined toward the church, the protégé of a famous Church of England Prelate, London, England.

The article prepared at the request of Charley Murrow and the Editor speaks mightily entertainingly of the early history of the Elks' Lodge. Forty Five years is a long while, and Charley's recital undoubtedly is based on a considerably earlier period. It is a true picture of all the history of the Elks, nationally. The forum of manhood, where the youngest, the oldest, the

near and the great- every man can have his say. No other organization in the world is so democratic and free, and we wouldn't have it any other way – The Editor.

The following article depicting early Elks history of our lodge was written by Judge Charles Bradshaw and in the Ninety-Eighter in April 1948.

The very efficient, genial, effervescent and everlasting Secretary of B.P.O.E. #98, asked me to write of the "Early Days" of the Lodge.

I think it(the Lodge) was eight or ten years old when I was privileged to join in 1899, so I know little of the very early days. I did know however, that a small group organized and carried on at that time- as grand a bunch of good fellows and citizens as ever crooked the arm or sang the eleven o'clock toast. A few names will prove this statement: Judge Bishop. D.F. Calleneder, A.B. Cimmins, Lafe Young Sr., Carroll Wright, Dr. J.T. Priestley, Dr. Patchin, Wm. Foster, Henry Cozens, Henry Lehman, J.C. Mardis, John McGorrick, "Billy" Quick, "Fritz" Harbach, Dr. Miller, Frank Kiest, J.E. McDonnell, John and Robert Fleming, Chester Stroock, T.W. Henry, and other equally good.

Judge Bishop had been 98's first Exalted Ruler. A splendid lawyer, a great judge, and withal, a hale fellow with a sense of humor. On an occasion when he was receiving congratulations because Charley Mullan, Attorney General, had ruled that, notwithstanding a constitutional prohibition, Bishop could draw a \$2,000 increase in his Supreme Judge salary, he casually remarked, "It does not make a damn bit of difference to me, but I understand my creditors are holding high carnival over it.

William Foster, owner and manager of Fosters and the Grand, Des Moines' two theatres, was Treasurer of the Lodge, probably from its

organization. No. 98 was usually in the red he had personally carried its overdrafts, for many years. Came the day when he reported debts paid and a cash balance. A thoughtless, possibly well meaning Brother, immediately moved that the Treasurer be required to give bond. Foster was hurt but said nothing. He presented, at the next meeting, a bond signed by F.M. Hubbell, J.S. Polk, James Callanan, P.M. Casady, Simon Casady, George Pearsol, J.G. Rounds, and others. Most of the local big money being pledged as security. When the bond was formally accepted, Foster rose, told us in language not printable, but readily understood, what we could do with the bond; and walked out, never to return to the Club.

This unfortunate incident marked the beginning of prosperity. A book, issued in 1902, shows the membership increased to 423. That book contains photos of 265 of the then members, few now surviving. I prize it highly.

Out of debt and money in the bank, in 1901 and 1902, we dreamed and talked of a Club House of our own. A committee was named to report on location and price of possible club sites.

At Matt Kane's bar in the Kirkwood House, I met L.J. Wells, pioneer livery man. I don't now recall just why I went there, but I doubt if Wells or I were there to buy or sell real estate. On a scrap of writing paper, on Matt's bar- Matt wiped it for us, Wells and I signed an agreement for the purchase of the lot on Fifth Street where the Club House stands. A volunteer treasury watchdog, probably the same one who moved for the Foster bond, objected; informed the members that the price was unreasonable, the location undesirable, and that I had no authority to bind the Lodge. When the argument subsided so I could be heard, I admitted I had no authority; that while I had bought for the Lodge, I had only bound myself on the contract, and that

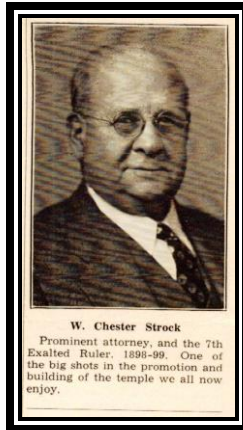
they could take it or leave it; that I ought to tell them, however, that Mr. Hubbell had already offered \$5,000 profit for the contract. The lodge then voted to accept the contract and No. 98 has owned it ever since, though sometimes only a thin equity. It is all ours now.

Financing the building was not as simple as buying the lot. We had membership drives, held carnivals, and resorted to all manner of schemes-some profitable, some not.

Our carnivals were held in and around the Old Ball Park, between Fourth and Sixth streets. They attracted large crowds, but expense was heavy and profit small. A Kangaroo Court, at carnival time, was the most profitable. Fourth Street was closed to traffic between Grand and Chestnut. There the Court operated. The city loaned an old horse drawn patrol wagon, with a loud bell on the dash. A number of husky elks in white uniforms patrolled the streets, entered business houses, arrested citizens and presented them to the Court where they were charged with various impossible offenses and always fined. The more prominent the prisoner, the larger the fine. It was surprising how cheerfully they paid. Many ludicrous things happened, some almost tragic. Gathering a wagon load of bankers one morning, the patrol rushed into the Grand Avenue Bank and arrested Mr. Kooker the president. In the wagon he protested vigorously, but the wagon was on the Grand Avenue bridge before he was able to make it understood that he had been alone in the bank when taken and the money was left unguarded. No harm came to the bank and later it was permitted to fail peacefully.

From one of the carnivals the Lodge acquired an elephant. Some will remember Old Tom, who ate peanuts for the kids at Ingersoll Park. A carnival company left him as security for a debt. Brother Bill Young, in whose livery Tom was housed, soon informed that Tom's

appetite was costing us four dollars a day, so he was sold, or given, to Fred Buchanan, then manager of Ingersoll Park. Later Tom was the center around which was assembled the Buchanan Bros. Circus.



Chester Strook, Exalted Ruler in 1898, was chairman of the Building Committee and devoted much of his time and energy to the details of building and financing. The Lodge voted him a life membership in recognition of his valuable service.

Before moving to the new Club House, we celebrated with a dinner in the old lodge rooms in the Flynn Building. Enthusiasm was high and so were most of the diners. Speakers were Governor Cummins, Judge Bishop, Judge Wade of the Federal Court, Lafe Young Sr., Jerry B. Sullivan, later a Federal Judge, and now the only survivor. Wade was rated the best story teller in the state and had a national reputation. He was at his best. The crowd shouted with laughter and would not let him quit. He told stories for an hour. Lafe Young was the next speaker and it was my job to introduce him. Lafe was no novice to public speaking, but I felt sorry for him. I wondered what he could do or say to break the spell Wade had put on the audience. I need not have wondered. Young rose, and in his inimitable droll way says: "Wade has told every story I

ever heard, an one I had not heard". That was enough. He could have held his audience the remainder of the night. That was by the best dinner I ever attended.

Finally, the new club was opened, beautifully furnished, with the finest café in the Middle West. A steward was brought from Chicago, a man of wide experience and splendid ability, but one who had difficulty in distinguishing between the fine wines and liquors intended to be sold, and those to be consumed. I served with Simon Casady, George Hippee, George Bathrick, and Ike Friedlich on the House Committee and we labored, with indifferent success. The Club had the patronage of the wealthy and fashionable set, but was a little much for the rank and file of members. In short, we had overplayed. The members did not crave a fashionable resort, with imported wines; they wanted just a homelike place with plenty of bourdon and bull beef. Our social efforts fizzled and came the years when Mr. Hubbell's \$50,000 mortgage threatened to absorb the Elk's Building. The slump was temporary only. Elks did not know how to fail. The members were so imbued with the spirit of fraternity that failure was out of the question. A few years later, with new blood, young men again in the saddle, while the old fellows looked on, the mortgage paid, the title clear, the Lodge was solvent and growing.

That is my story. The present generation can carry on. It was a lot of hard work, much good fun, some griefs, but I would not have missed it for worlds. During all the ups and downs of 98, there never was a time when it neglected its sick or unfortunate, nor the needy of the community. Several Brothers who stubbed their toes received such assistance, financial and otherwise, as was needed to restore their confidence and put them on their feet. But those are things that No. 98 does not talk about- it just does.