

Lodges, Fraternities and Civic Clubs in Houston County

The first lodge of any secret order to be organized in Crockett was a Masonic Lodge, organized in 1845. The inception of this lodge has behind it a most interesting and historical background. The following matters of record bring to light many names that have been forgotten in Houston County's colorful history. The following is certainly worthy of being preserved as history of local interest and importance.

"TO THE WORSHIPFUL GRAND MASTER, WARDENS AND BRETHERN OF THE GRAND LODGE OF THE REPUBLIC OF TEXAS:

"The undersigned Ancient York Masons of the County of Houston most respectfully represent that they, Ancient and Accepted Master Masons, that they have been members of a regular Lodge, that having the prosperity of the fraternity at heart, they are willing to exert their best endeavoring to promote and diffuse the genuine true copies of Masonry that for the convenience of their respective dwellings and for other good reasons they are desirous of forming a new Lodge in the Town of Crockett, in the County of Houston to be called or named Trinity Lodge. That in consequence of their desire they pray for a Charter to empower them to assemble as a legal Lodge to discharge the duties of Masonry in a regular and constitutional manner according to the original forms of the order and the regulations of the Grand Lodge; that they have nominated and do recommend Selden B. Jasper to be the first Master; George G. Alford, Senior Warden; John Schomaker, Junior Warden; Wm. T. Miller, Sen. Deacon; John Blair, Junior Deacon; Wm. Y. Lacey, Sec.; and E. W. McCracken, Treasurer of said Lodge. If the prayer of a petition should be granted they promise a strict conformity to all the constitutional regulations and laws of the Grand Lodge, December 2nd, 1844, A. L. 5844.

"(Signed) S. L. B. Jasper, G. G. Alford, John Shomaker, Wm. T. Miller, John Blair, Wm. Y. Lacey and E. A. McCracken.

"I certify that the Brethern, who have signed the above, and foregoing Petition are all worthy Master Masons. Furthermore certify that the nearest Lodge to Crockett (to-wit) Milam

No. 2 does not work at present for want of a proper room and that McFarland No. 3 has surrendered for Charter, which is the reason the Brethren of Crockett did not send the Petition to said Lodge for recommendation.

"Washington, December 5th, 1844.

"A Stern, D. D. G. M., 3rd Masonic Dist.

"Dispensation granted 12-7-1844. John M. Wisher, Grand Secretary. Grand Lodge. (Signed) Thomas G. Western, Dep. G. Master."

The above information is furnished from the Grand Secretary.

Extracts from reprint Vol. 1:

"The Eighth Grand Annual Communication of the Right Worshipful Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons, of the Republic of Texas, was convened at the town of Washington, on the 2nd Monday, 13th of January, A. D. 1845, A. L. 1845."

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"A Lodge has been established at Crockett, in Houston County, working under a Dispensation of the Right Worshipful Deputy Grand Master of the Republic. Said Brethren have but recently (since the 27th of last month) commenced their labors, I would recommend a Charter to be granted said Brethren, on their paying the requisite fees.

"Yours very respectfully and fraternally
Adolphus Sterne, D. D. G. M. 3d M. D. R. T."

Page 165: "Saturday, January 18, A. D. 1845, A. L. 1845, 7-1/2 o'clock P. M. On motion of Bro. Sterne.

"Resolved, That Trinity Lodge, No. 21, receive a Charter on application for the same, by paying the balance of the fees as specified in the Constitution of the Grand Lodge of the Republic of Texas.

"Tuesday, June 24, 1845, at 1 P. M. Page 180:

"On Motion of Bro. Alford, the following resolution was adopted:

"Resolved, That the name of Trinity, Lodge No. 21, be changed to Lothrop Lodge, No. 21."

Page 187: "Since the meeting of the last Annual Communica-

tion there have been Charters sent to Graham Lodge, No. 20; Trinity No. 21; Marshall No. 22; Clinton No. 23; Red Land No. 24; and Paris No. 27; and Dispensations to Montgomery Lodge at Montgomery; Olive Branch Lodge at Cincinnati; and Frontier Lodge at Corpus Christi."

LOTHROP LODGE NO. 21

The Lodge at Crockett, when first organized, bore the name of Trinity Lodge, No. 21. The following letter from the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Texas will throw some light upon why the name was changed from Trinity Lodge to Lothrop Lodge.

"THE GRAND LODGE OF TEXAS

Office Of

George H. Belew, Grand Secretary

Waco, Texas, May 22, 1939.

Mr. Houston Wade,
2314 Morse St.
Houston, Texas.

"Dear Brother Wade:

"At the request of Brother Sam B. Cantey I am giving you herewith such information as I have been able to assemble regarding the name of Lothrop Lodge No. 21 of Crockett, Texas; the Charter members of said lodge: The Masonic Record of Brothers Selden L. B. Jasper and J. K. T. Lothrop.

"The dispensation to form this Lodge was issued by Brother Adolphus Sterne, D. G. G. M. of the third Masonic District of Texas on December 5, 1844. The Lodge was set to work on December 27, 1844 and operated as Trinity Lodge No. 21, Crockett, Texas.

"I do not know and cannot find from the records in this office, the reason for the changing of the name of the Lodge from Trinity No. 21 to Lothrop No. 21. I find the following record in the Minutes of the Grand Lodge at the June 24th session in 1845:—"On motion of Brother Alford the following

resolution was adopted. That the name of Trinity Lodge No. 21 be changed to Lothrop Lodge No. 21."

"There existed at this time (1844-45) Trinity Lodge No. 14, Livingston, Texas, chartered in 1840.

"There are seven names signed to the original petition for a Lodge or rather for a Dispensation to organize a Lodge at Crockett to be known as Trinity Lodge. These seven Brothers were the first officers of that Lodge, they are: S. L. B. Jasper, W. M.; John Shoemaker, J. W.; John Blair, J. D.; E. A. McCracken, Treas.; G. G. Alford, S. W.; Wm. T. Miller, S. D.; Wm. Y. Lacy, Sec'y.

"I have very little information concerning the Masonic Records of Brothers Jasper and Lothrop. All the record that I have of Brother S. L. B. Jasper is that he was at one time a member of Temple Lodge No. 2, Houston, Texas, and a Charter member of Lothrop Lodge No. 21.

"I have no record of Brother J. K. T. Lothrop under that name. One J. L. Lothrop was reported by Holland Lodge No. 1 as receiving the degrees on the following dates: Initiated 12-3-1838. Passed 6-5-1839. Raised in 1839. He is shown to have demitted in 1842 and to have died in 1844. Because of the dates involved, I believe this to be one and the same person.

"Trusting that the above information will be of some value to you, I am.

Sincerely and Fraternally,

George H. Belew, Grand Secretary."

The following information has been furnished the author by Mr. J. S. Sturgis of Trinity, Texas. In this connection the author desires to say that Mr. Sturgis deserves great credit for his untiring efforts in gathering and preserving the history of Masonry in Texas.

"The Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons, of Texas, at the Masonic Hall of Lothrop Lodge, No. 21, in the Town of Crockett in the County of Houston, on Monday the 13th day of June, A. D. 1859, at 10 o'clock A. M., being the Twenty-Third Annual Communication."

Page 145: "On motion the Grand Secretary was ordered to strike out in the Charter Of Lothrop Lodge, No. 21, the word 'Trinity' and insert the word 'Lothrop.'"

"The thirty-fifth Annual Communication of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Texas convened in the City of

Houston, at the Masonic Temple, on Monday, June 12th, A. L. 5871, A. D. 1871, at 10 o'clock A. M."

Page: 99: "Having been informed by P. G. M. Richard Douglass that the hall of Lothrop Lodge, No. 21, has been consumed by fire, together with their charter, jewels, and furniture, on the 4th day of May, 1871, I granted a dispensation permitting this Lodge to assemble and work until the present time. I recommend that a Charter issue to this Lodge, with the original number, and without fee."

Page 76: "The following resolution was read and adopted:

"Resolved, That Past G. Master Brother Wm. M. Taylor be and is hereby authorized to insert the original names of W. Master, S. and J. Wardens, in the duplicate Charter to Lothrop Lodge No. 21."

Below is a list of the W. M.'s who were elected and installed to preside over the Lodge:

1845	No. 1	L. S. B. Jasper		Taylor
1846	No. 2	D. C. Neville	1867	No. 7 Wm. M.
1847	No. 3	Andrew C. Love		Taylor
1848	No. 3	Andrew C. Love	1855	No. 8 C. H. Randolph
1850	No. 4	James M. Hall	1857	No. 9 T. B. Henderson
1850	"	"	1861	No. 10 J. C. Wootters
1851	No. 5	James H. Col-lard	1862	No. 10 J. C. Wootters
1852	No. 6	James R. Bracken	1865	
1858	No. 6	James R. Bracken	1868	
1853	No. 7	Wm. M. Taylor	1869	
1854	No. 7	Wm. M. Taylor	1870	
1856	No. 7	Wm. M. Taylor	1871	
1859	No. 7	Wm. M. Taylor	1872	
1860	No. 7	Wm. M. Taylor	1873	
1864	No. 7	Wm. M. Taylor	1875	
1866	No. 7	Wm. M. Taylor	1877	
			1878	
			1894	
			1898	No. 10 J. C. Wootters
			1863	No. 11 John Mc-Connell
			1876	No. 11 John Mc-Connell
			1874	No. 12 B. F. Frymier

1879	No. 12	B. F. Frymier	1910	No. 38	D. C. Scott
1880	No. 13	J. L. Lipscomb	1911	No. 39	M. P. Jensen
1881	No. 14	T. H. Jones	1912	No. 40	Arch Baker
1882	No. 15	W. B. Page	1913	No. 41	C. W. LeGory
1883	No. 15	W. B. Page	1914	No. 42	J. S. Wootters
1884	No. 16	E. Winfree	1915	No. 43	R. H. Woot- ters
1885	No. 17	C. O. Webb	1916	No. 44	J. H. Smith
1886	No. 18	W. C. Lips- comb	1917	No. 45	J. G. Beasley
1887	No. 19	J. L. Williams	1919	No. 45	J. G. Beasley
1888	No. 20	J. H. Wootters	1918	No. 46	A. C. Collins
1889	No. 21	J. M. Camp- bell	1920	No. 47	W. P. Bishop
1890	No. 22	A. H. Woot- ters	1921	No. 48	B. F. Thomas
1891	No. 23	E. A. Pace	1922	No. 49	Nat Patton
1892	No. 24	John A. Mc- Connell	1923	No. 50	C. H. Calla- way
1895	No. 25	Joe Adams	1924	No. 51	H. J. Trube
1896	No. 26	R. Cassidy	1925	No. 52	R. D. Allen
1897	No. 27	H. F. Moore	1926	No. 53	G. L. Cook
1899	No. 28	Hyman Har- rison	1927	No. 54	H. L. Ellis
1900	No. 29	Jim Brown	1928	No. 55	T. J. Welch
1901	No. 30	Earle Adams, Jr.	1929	No. 56	John W. Markam
1902	No. 31	M. Bromberg, Jr.	1930	No. 57	B. O. Perdue
1903	No. 32	J. W. Young	1931	No. 58	Jack Barbee
1904	No. 32	J. W. Young	1932	No. 59	H. O. Mc- Carty
1905	No. 33	T. R. Deupree	1933	No. 60	J. C. Shotwell
1906	No. 34	J. W. Shivers	1934	No. 61	T. B. Goolsbee
1907	No. 35	F. F. Schupak	1935	No. 62	A. B. Brown
1908	No. 36	John LeGory	1936	No. 63	W. A. Spain
1909	No. 37	George W. Crook	1937	No. 64	T. E. Walden
			1938	No. 65	W. H. Schmidt
			1939	No. 66	J. H. Reinicke

After a long lapse of time, the reason for giving the name, Lothrop Lodge, to the Masonic Lodge at Crockett, became lost to its membership, and there seemed to be no one living in Crockett who knew just why it was called Lothrop Lodge. That fact has been explained to some extent in the foregoing part of this chapter. It seems that in this connection some facts relating to the life of J. T. K. Lothrop should be included,

and we include the following, which was published in the *La-Grange Intelligencer*, under date of August 22, 1844:

"Departed this life, on Wednesday the 14th inst, at twenty minutes past nine o'clock P. M. at this place, of billious fever, commander J. T. K. Lothrop of the Navy of Texas.

"Capt. Lothrop was a native of the State of Massachusetts. His parents whilst he was an infant moved to Utilda, the State of New York where the subject of this obituary was reared and educated. In the death of this inestimable young man (he was but 30 years of age) our beloved country has lost one of her noblest defenders, and society one of her brightest and richest ornaments. He was a direct descendant, on the maternal line, from Kirkland, one of the early pilgrim fathers, who, flying from the storms and persecutions of their country, sought an asylum, and planted the standard of freedom upon the Western shores of the Atlantic.

"Capt. Lothrop in 1836 joined the Naval service of this country, under Com. Hawkins, and drew his sword in the cause of Texas Liberty proving him a worthy descendant of his illustrious ancestry. He continued in the service of his country, without intermission, save upon a short leave of absence to visit his aged mother, until July 1843, when our Navy was laid up in ordinary. In 1837 he was 2nd Lieutenant on board of the Independence, captured by two Mexican brigs, after an action of four hours. His coolness and officer-like conduct on that occasion won him the admiration of his country. The schooner was taken to Matamoros, and this gallant officer was thrown in prison, where he was confined for six months, during which time neither his manly spirit cowered, nor his love of country diminished. When released, he again flew to its standard, buckled on his sword, and with a high resolute went forth to establish the character of the Naval flag of Texas and most nobly and gloriously did he lend his arm and the energies of his mighty soul to its accomplishments.

"In 1840-1 he commanded the Steamer Zavalla upon her cruize of ten months off the Mexican Coast, and at the time the City of Tobasco was surrounded. He commanded the Brig Wharton off the coast of Campeche, and sustained with iron nerve his gallant leader, Commodore Moore, who for fifty seven days confronted the overwhelming force of the foe, consisting of two powerful iron steam frigates, carrying Paixhan guns, and five sail vessels. The flag of Texas with her single star, which was so proudly thrown to the battles breeze, was supported only by the ship Austin and Brig Wharton on the 30th of April and the

16th of May, 1843, a day ever memorable in naval history, for its daring and success, thus engaged the fleet of the for-the-enemy were repulsed, Yucatan disenthralled, and the name of Lothrop was added to the list of naval heroes.

"In private life he was one who cultivated all the social virtues—his hand was ever active and prompt to the appeals of charity, or to give help to the calls of suffering humanity. As a friend his devotion was untiring—his counsels were those of wisdom—every pulsation of his heart was responsive to live and kindness. His life was one of elevated thought, in all that exalted the soldier, christian, patriot and friend. In death he resigned himself with christian fortitude to his fate. The people of this place and its vicinity, with whom he had passed two months of social intercourse, gave full and ample testimony of the estimation in which they held his private virtues, his patriotic zeal and indefatigable ardour in the service of his country, by the kind of officers and deep solicitude manifested towards him in his last illness and the mourning multitude that followed his remains to the grave. Such was Lothrop. That sword which he had so gallantly borne in defense of his country's right, he carried with him folded to his bosom, to his sepulchre, as if even in death, he would save his bright blade from blot or blemish. And thus passed from life to the cold grave of death one

*"Who never to tyranny's vile domain,
Could his generous neck ignobly bend,
Nor see Texas drag the odious servile chain,
And mourn her virgin glories at an end.
In the kind bosom of his adopted land,
Ended are his toils and peaceful is his grave."*

Washington, August 16th, 1844. J. S. M."

From the list of Worshipful Masters of Lothrop Lodge No. 21, of the Masonic Fraternity, it can be seen what a large share this Lodge had in the past history of Crockett and Houston County. The long list of names represents the leading citizens of Crockett and Houston County for nearly 100 years. The following items taken from the Crockett Printer published by Oscar Dalton under date of November 14, 1860, will bring to light the names of other prominent citizens who ranked high in Masonic circles and have passed on to their reward. Among the list of lodges of different orders appearing in the above named issue of the Crockett Printer, appeared the following:

"Lothrop Lodge No. 21, of A. F. A. M."

"The stated communications of this Lodge are held at the Masonic Hall, in the Town of Crockett, on the last Saturday in each month, at 3 o'clock P. M.

OFFICERS

Wm. Taylor, Worshipful Master	R. J. Johnson, S. D.
John McConnell, Sen. Warden	J. H. Saxon, J. D.
J. C. Wootters, Jr., Warden	Wm. H. Edwards, Sr. Deacon
J. T. Heflin, Treasurer	Wm. Wortham, Jr. Steward
R. Douglass, Secretary	J. D. Richardson, Tyler."

The ROYAL ARCH MASONS also had a chapter in Crockett, known as Trinity Chapter No. 4 and in the above mentioned issue of the Crockett Printer, under the date of November 14, 1860, the following appeared:

"TRINITY CHAPTER NO. 4, OF R. A. M.

"The stated convocations of this chapter are held at the Masonic Hall in the Town of Crockett, on the first Monday in each month at 3 o'clock P. M.

M. E. John McConnell, High Priest	A. T. Monroe, Treasurer
E. T. B. Henderson, King	R. Douglass, Secretary
E. Moses Warden, Scribe	J. T. Heflin, M 3rd Veil
Comp. Wm. W. Davis, Ca. of the host	Wm. M'Lain, M. 2nd Veil
James L. Lipscomb, P. Sojourner	James Cartwright, M. 1st Veil
J. R. Bracken, R. A. Captain	W. F. Wall, A. E. Gossett, Stewards
	James B. Dawson, Chaplain
	J. C. Zimmerman, Sentinel

There was also a Council of Royal and Select Master Masons, which held its convocations in the Masonic Hall of Crockett. The following notice of its meetings appeared in the Crockett Printer, of November 14, 1860.

"TRINITY COUNCIL, NO. 8, OF ROYAL AND SELECT MASTER MASONS.

"The stated convocations of this council are held at the

Masonic Hall in Crockett, on the third Monday in each month, at 3 o'clock P. M.

OFFICERS: William M. Taylor, The Ill. Master
John McConnell, P. C. of the work
Moses Warden, Treasurer
Richard Douglass, Recorder
Wm. A. Stewart, Capt. of the Guard
Wm. R. Matlock, Conductor
Wm. McLain, Marshall
J. C. Zimmerman, Sentinel"

In 1860, the Town of Randolph, located 12 miles east of Crockett, on the Corltharp road was of sufficient importance to have a Masonic Lodge and the following notice of its meetings were advertised in the Crockett Printer, under the date of November 14, 1860 as follows:

"RANDOLPH LODGE NO. 229, F. A. M.

"The Stated convocations of this lodge are held at their hall, in the town of Randolph, on the 3rd Saturday in each month at 3 o'clock P. M.

OFFICERS: James L. Richards, W. Master
Samuel O. Foster, S. Warden
Wm. Denny, J. Warden
John H. Burnett, Treasurer
Richard Douglass, Secretary
J. A. Stubblefield, S. Deacon
J. S. Carleton, J. Deacon
D. M. Brown, Morgan Rye, Stewards
Wm. Wood, Tyler.

Students of local history should be interested in considering the names of prominent Crockett and Houston County citizens that appear in the foregoing list.

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INDEPENDENT ORDER OF ODD FELLOWS

The next oldest fraternity to be organized in Crockett or Houston County, was the Independent Order of Odd Fellows.