

CHAPTER XVII.

LODGES, SOCIETIES AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS.

Masonic Order.

The first secret organization to establish itself in Waitsfield was the King Hiram Lodge, No. 45, F. and A. M.

It would seem that numerous citizens of the town had affiliated themselves with the Masonic Order at an early day, for on July 7, 1817, a meeting of Masons residing in the vicinity was held at the home of Roderick Richardson, at which meeting L. Q. C. Bowles was chosen chairman, and Matthias S. Jones acted as Clerk. It was voted to petition the Grand Lodge for a warrant of constitution for a local lodge, and on October 6, 1817, the petition was granted and a charter issued.

The first meeting of King Hiram Lodge was held November 6, 1817, at "Masons Hall," with the following officers:

John Wakefield, Worshipful Master.
Henry Jones, Senior Warden.
Matthias Stone Jones, Junior Warden.
Giles R. Eldridge, Treasurer.
Jennison Jones, Secretary.
Timothy Dolbear and Levi Wilder, Deacons.
Lewis Holden and Jonathan Shattuck, Stewards.
Edward Fales, Tyler.

The first "work" of the new lodge was conferring the third degree upon Abijah Cutting and Zerah Munsel, November 19, 1817. The following members of the lodge served at various times as Worshipful Master:

John Wakefield, elected Nov. 6, 1817.
Ezra Jones, elected Dec. 15, 1820.
Matthias Stone Jones, elected Dec. 24, 1822.
Denslow Upham, elected Dec. 17, 1823.
Ezra Jones, elected Dec. 1, 1824.
H. B. Peabody, elected Dec. 21, 1825.
Jesse Carpenter, elected Dec. 13, 1826.
H. W. Carpenter, elected Dec. 5, 1827.
Oramel Williams, elected Dec., 1828.
Joseph Sawyer, elected Dec. 9, 1829.
Orange Smith, elected Dec. 29, 1830.
Joseph Sawyer, elected Jan. 18, 1832.

LODGES, SOCIETIES, ETC.

191

From June 1, 1832, to September 25, 1834, the society seems to have been inactive, as all records are lacking, and on the latter date, the anti-Masonic agitation being then at its height, the lodge unanimously adopted a resolution dissolving the organization and its union with the Masonic institution.

Mad River Lodge, F. and A. M.

For more than thirty years after the dissolution of King Hiram Lodge, No. 45, no Masonic organization was in any way identified with the town, but in April, 1867, Mad River Lodge, No. 77, was organized by members of the order resident in Waitsfield and Moretown, and headquarters were established at Moretown. In November, 1882, the lodge was moved to Waitsfield by an order of the Grand Lodge, and has since that time maintained lodge rooms in the Belden Block, the first meeting in this town being held March 5, 1883. The charter members of Mad River Lodge were E. C. Smith, William M. Sawyer, Austin G. Prentis, Freeman Parker, Nathan R. Spaulding, I. S. Bailey, Wilder S. Drew, and Hiram Carleton.

E. C. Smith was appointed Grand Master by a dispensation of the Grand Lodge of Vermont, and held his office until October, 1869, since which date Masters have been regularly elected as follows:

1869, William M. Sawyer.	1884, George W. Bulkley.
1870, Austin G. Prentis.	1885, Pliny Parker.
1871, Freeman Parker.	1886-89, Chandler A. Prentis.
1872, Nathan R. Spaulding.	1890-93, James R. Dale.
1873-74, William S. Badger.	1894-95, Dr. Henry T. J. Howe.
1875-77, James R. Dale.	1896-98, John Ferris.
1878-79, Pliny Parker.	1899-1900, Edwin R. Prentis.
1880-81, Chandler A. Prentis.	1901-04, Daniel McLaughlin.
1882-83, James R. Dale.	1905-07, Walter Cyrus Joslyn.

Valley Lodge, Independent Order of Odd Fellows.

On January 25, 1883, Valley Lodge, I. O. O. F., was organized in the hall of the Eaton Block, so-called. Its membership included residents of the towns of Waitsfield, Warren, Fayston and Moretown, although the town of Warren has since withdrawn from this lodge and organized independently. The charter members were:

O. F. Childs	William E. Slayton
Orville M. Eaton	Harlan Page Stoddard
Moses John Long	William Mitchell Strong

and the first officers were:

Noble Grand, William Mitchell Strong.
 Vice Grand, Moses John Long.
 Secretary, Orville M. Eaton.
 Treasurer, Harlan Page Stoddard.

The lodge maintained its quarters in the hall where it was organized until 1895, when it removed to the Norton Block, and occupied commodious rooms to the time of the destruction of that building by fire in 1902, in which disaster the lodge lost all its records.

In 1903 the old Union Meeting-house, which had been for a long time practically unused for religious services, was purchased from the remaining members of that society, and the whole building thoroughly remodeled, at an expense of about \$5000. The first floor of this building is utilized as a public hall, and at the present time the town makes use of it for all gatherings of its voters.

In 1905 the Rebecca Lodge was organized in connection with the Valley Lodge, and has maintained a prosperous existence.

Owing to the destruction of all records of the lodge it is impossible to give a list of the officers in the order of their election, but the following members have served in the capacity of Noble Grand:

William Mitchell Strong	Arthur J. Neill
Orville M. Eaton	Charles Henry Newcomb
Oscar G. Eaton	Warren J. Robinson
Thomas J. Ferris	George W. Wallis
John J. Kelty	Frank E. Story
Moses John Long	Walter Cyrus Joslyn
Willard Edmund Long	Charles A. Cady
Robert J. McAllister	Frank E. Atkins
Edward E. Neill	Frank H. Sawyer

Temperance Societies.

The great temperance movement of the first half of the nineteenth century found its expression in this town in the organization and active work of numerous temperance societies.

Among them was the Young Men's Temperance Society in Waitsfield, organized in 1835. Its constitution was a pledge "to abstain altogether from the use of intoxicating liquors, and to discourage by all proper means and on all fit occasions the use thereof by others," and the names of nearly two hundred and seventy-five of the younger men and women of the town are found upon its rolls. William Morrill Pingry was its first president, and Dr. Orange Smith its first secretary.

Occasional meetings were held at which resolutions dealing with various phases of the temperance question were formally debated.

After some years of activity this society ceased to exist, but its place was taken by a chapter of the secret temperance order of Rechabites, which flourished for some years.

In 1868 a lodge of the Order of Good Templars was organized in town, and for thirty years did active work in promoting the objects of the order, but about 1900 this society also became inactive. Coincident with the early years of the Good Templars the Waitsfield Reform Club, also a temperance organization, held frequent meetings but it was disbanded in 1877 because of the feeling that its work duplicated that of the Good Templars.

Waitsfield Band.

The first band organization in town was that connected with the militia company. It was called the Regimental Band, and attended regularly on June Training. The earliest records now existent are for the year 1824, but it is probable that it was organized a few years earlier.

Levi Smith was the leader for some years, with title of major, and after him came Ezra Jones, jr., and Daniel Kimball, jr. The following names appear at various times upon its roster as "equipt" in accordance with the statutes: Levi Smith, Arad Sherman, Danford Cutler, Ezra Jones, jr., Nathan Thayer, jr., John Kimball, Daniel Kimball, jr., Amos Robinson, Daniel Shepherd, Leonard Loomis, Loren Gilson, William Lamson, Jacob C. Steele, Jared S. Wilder.

January 15, 1859, the Waitsfield Cornet Band was organized largely through the efforts of James M. Richardson, who served as leader. Among its members were Richardson James Gleason, Ezra Osgood Joslin, Cassius Joslin, James R. Dale,

Albert Frederick Richardson, Loren B. Reed, Oscar C. Reed, Charles Cullen Reed, Allen Gorham Matthews, Henry F. Matthews, Henry Skinner, and Romeo W. Green. A teacher was obtained in the person of James Rice, of Burlington, and several concerts were given in Waitsfield and neighboring towns. The organization maintained an existence until 1865 but the outbreak of the Civil War weakened it and its last public service was to escort Company G, Sixth Vermont Volunteers, on its march to Montpelier.

During the fall of 1872 a second organization started under the leadership of Ziba Hamilton McAllister, which for a dozen years or more furnished music on public occasions. Among those who were members at various times were Julius Carlisle Joyslin, Herbert C. Gleason, Charles Henry Newcomb, Melvin J. Waterman, Benjamin A. Holmes, George A. Berry, Charles W. Richardson, Burton Dewey Bisbee, Edward Wyatt Bisbee, Arthur Bisbee, Clarence M. Davis, Frank Azro Bragg, William C. Bragg, Fred C. Carroll, James R. Dale, Leslie O. Reed, Orlo Linfield Barnard, Charles W. Locklin, William M. Strong, George E. Dumas, W. F. Bates, Charles Hammond Hastings.

During the late "nineties" the band was again reorganized, and has since continued its existence under the leadership of Fred C. Carroll and Harry W. Belden.

CHAPTER XVIII.

BURIAL GROUNDS.

Cemetery on the Common.

The old cemetery on the Common is the only one in Waitsfield that was from the beginning under town control. As elsewhere noted the Common was acquired by gift and purchase, and on September 6, 1796, the town raised money "to Chop over the Public Yard," and a year later the vote to clear this patch of forest was renewed.

A section on the westerly side was at once devoted to the uses of a burial ground, and the oldest tombstone bears date March 19, 1797, although it is not improbable that interments were made at a slightly earlier date.

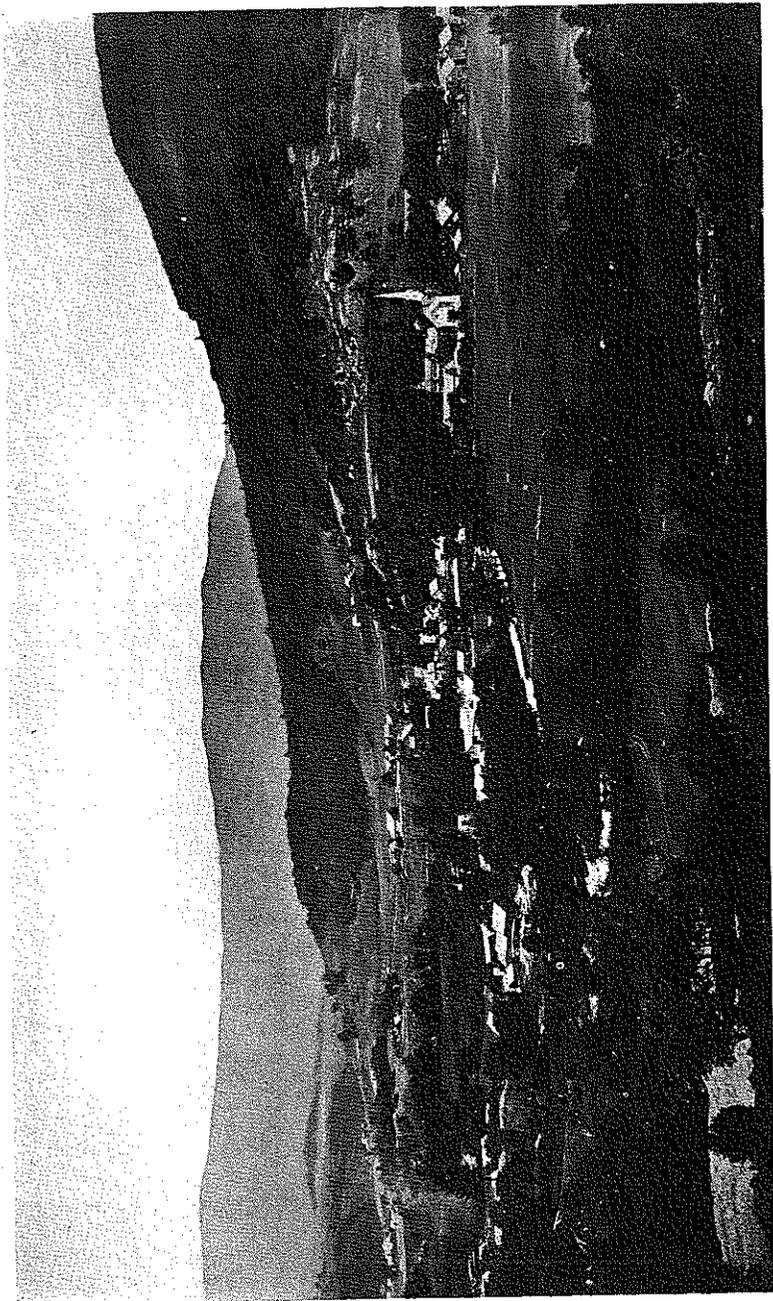
Not until 1807 was formal action taken relative to this burial ground. The permission given to the Congregational Society to erect its meeting-house on the Common and the consequent necessity of fixing its location, led to the appointment of a committee in March of that year to "stake out the burying ground," and it was actually surveyed as follows:

Beginning at a Stake 11 Rods from the Southwest corner of the Common; thence Running 20 rods Northerly on the westerly Line of said Common to a Stake; thence Easterly eight Rods parrallel with the Northerly Line of said Common, thence southerly parrallel with the Westerly Line of said Common 20 rods, thence westerly to the first Mentioned Bounds.

Bissell Phelps, } Committee.
Aaron Minor, }

Waitsfield, 30 April 1807.

The meeting-house was constructed a little to the south-east of the cemetery, there being room between for a line of horse-sheds and an ample passageway. In later years, after the demolition of the meeting-house, all this land was incorporated into the cemetery, and is now largely taken up.



WAITSFIELD VILLAGE LOOKING WEST TO LINCOLN MOUNTAIN.

HISTORY
OF THE
TOWN OF
WAITSFIELD, VERMONT

1782 - 1908

WITH FAMILY GENEALOGIES

BY
MATT BUSHNELL JONES

BOSTON, MASS.:
GEORGE E. LITTLEFIELD,
67 CORNHILL,
1909.