

The Odd Fellows' Home

AS early as 1846 the various I. O. O. F. grand bodies began discussing the establishment of Odd Fellows' homes as an important feature of fraternal work. The need of a place where the aged and indigent members of the order might spend their declining years in peace was everywhere felt, but it was not until 1887 that the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts took action in this matter. In that year a committee was appointed, of which the Hon. A. S. Pinkerton was a member, and a report presented indorsing the project. The original Board of Trustees consisted of Francis Jewett for five years, Henry K. Braley for four years, James Joslin for three years, William E. Ford for two years, and Hon. John J.

the Past Grand Treasurer of the Grand Lodge, who gave \$1000.

Rufus B. Gifford and Nathan Taylor having been elected Trustees of the Home on the part of the Grand Encampment, its membership was thereby increased to seven. By February, 1889, the Grand Lodge had accumulated \$35,737.99 for the new institution.

Then began the perplexities incidental to securing a favorable site. All parts of the Commonwealth offered eligible locations, including among others Shirley, Belmont, Worcester and Lowell. The choice finally fell upon Worcester, thanks to the splendid generosity of Hon. Thomas H. Dodge, who, though not a member of



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Whipple one year. These gentlemen at once issued an appeal to the order asking for \$100,000 to build a suitable Odd Fellows' home in this State. The circular also embodied the action of the Sovereign Grand Lodge at Denver that year, which warmly endorsed the erection of such structures everywhere. Zealous workers at once began visiting the various subordinate lodges and explaining to the members the objects and benefits of the Home, and contributions commenced to pour in. Particularly active in this pioneer work was Past Grand H. A. Barbour of De Soto Lodge, Springfield. The next session of the Grand Lodge showed before adjournment \$22,149 in the treasury to the credit of the Home. The Daughters of Rebekah materially assisted in securing this sum, and from that day to this their interest in the cause has continued unabated. Among the early contributors was Charles Hayden of Boston,

the fraternity, gave to the order in perpetuity for the purposes designed eleven acres of land at the north end of the city, and this the Grand Lodge, through Grand Master Pinkerton, in fitting language gratefully accepted at the session in August, 1889.

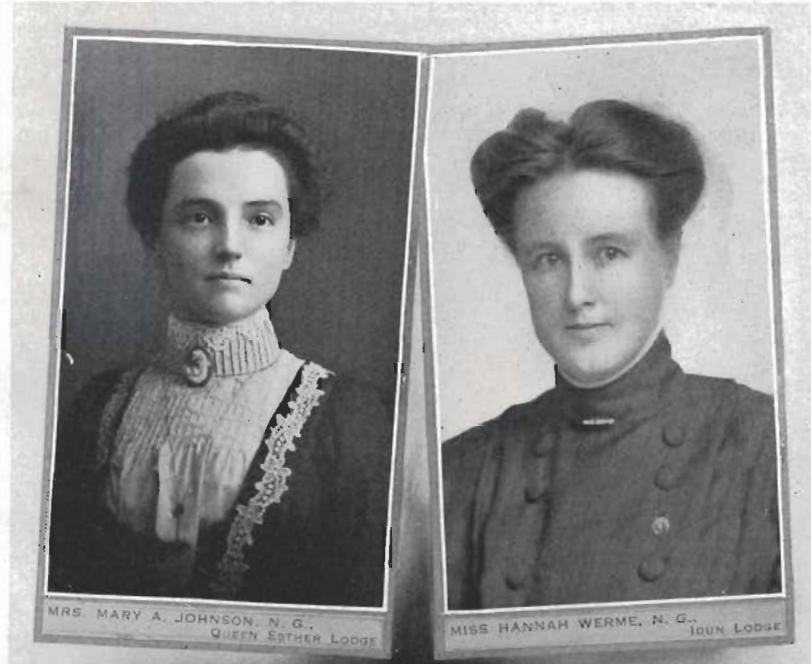
Other Worcester citizens contributing liberally to the Home, although not identified with the fraternity, were Hon. Stephen Salisbury and Hon. Samuel Winslow, then Mayor of the city. Mr. H. H. Bigelow also showed his public spirit by offering the order a building site of ten acres on the shores of Lake Quinsigamond scarcely less desirable than the lot finally chosen.

Not content with the plot given, Mr. Dodge determined that nothing should interfere with the view from the Home, and he accordingly presented the trustees with the tract of land extending to the adjacent tracks of the Boston & Maine R. R., thus ensuring forever a



COL. GEO. W. DICKINSON

clear outlook at this point. Even this did not exhaust his benefactions, for he gave to the city of Worcester thirteen acres of land directly contiguous to the Home for a public park, and that gift being accepted by the Park Commissioners made it certain that the institution would always be blessed with ample light and air. Furthermore, to complete his munificence he gave eighty feet of driveway for a boulevard leading to the Home,

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THE FOUR NOBLE GRANDS OF THE REBEKAH LODGES

and made a substantial donation for the establishment of a library.

The building was formally dedicated June 22, 1892, with elaborate ceremonies and with a procession of the order through the streets of the city, which attracted great attention.

The Home has at present one hundred inmates, men and women, and Mr. H. B. Belcher is its very capable superintendent.

GEORGE B. MULLIKIN
C. P. Mt. Vernon
EncampmentLOUIS M. WEBB
C. P. Wachusett
Encampment