**History of Alna Lodge No. 43**

**By William Hilton 1874**

On the 12th day of October, A. D. 1822, less than three years after the admission of Maine into the Union, a few lovers of masonry residing in Alna, in Lincoln County, having the prosperity of the fraternity at heart, and being willing and anxious to exert their best endeavors to promote and diffuse the genuine principles of masonry, petitioned the Grand Lodge of Maine, setting forth the advantages and convenience of having a new lodge established in that town and praying for a warrant of constitution empowering them to assemble as a legal lodge and discharge the duties of masonry in a regular and constitutional manner, according to the original forms of the order. This petition was signed by George Jones, John McLean, Samuel W. Clark, James L. Child, Daniel Carlton, Jr., Charles Wilkins, Aaron Young, Elias Cobb, and Levi F. Eldred. It seems that masons at this period in this sparsely settled regions, consisted of but “a handful of brave men”: for the records show that Lincoln Lodge at Wiscasset, and Herman Lodge at Gardner, were the two nearest lodges, and that the petition was forwarded to these lodges for approval which was cheerfully granted. James L. Child, Esq., was appointed to present the petition to the Grand Lodge, and “urged before it the reasons in favor of the establishment of a lodge at Alna.” On the 11th day of January, A.D. 1823, the prayer of the petitioners was granted, and a warrant of constitution was duly issued, bearing date of January 14th, A.D. 1823. Thereupon the charter members of the lodge, “with a view to the more convenient management of their concerns,” applied to the Legislature for an act of incorporation, which was granted on the 21st day of January, A.D. 1823; and on the first day of February following, due notice was given for a meeting of “said corporation” to be held at Masons’ Hall in Alna, February 21st, A.D. 1823, at six o’clock in the afternoon, for the purpose of organizing, and transacting such other business as might be thought advisable. Pursuant to said notice, the following Master Masons, viz: James L Child, Elias Cobb, John McLean, Samuel W. Clark, Daniel Carlton, Jr., Aaron Young and Levi F. Eldred assembled at Masons’ Hall, at the time designated in the notice, and proceeded to organize under their charter and act of incorporation.

Bro. Elias Cobb called the meeting to order, and “James L. Child Esq., Past High Priest of Jerusalem Chapter, and Scribe of the Grand Royal Arch Chapter Maine,” was chosen chairman, and “M.E. Samuel W. Clark” Secretary. After reading the charter and act of incorporation, and also the notice of calling the convention, the chairman reminded the brethren that “it was considered by all good Masons to be their duty, before proceeding to the transaction of important business, to implore the Divine blessing upon their undertakings; and Bro. Aaron Young thereupon addressed the throne of Divine Grace.”

After the transaction of business of minor importance, the convention proceeded to the election of officers, with the following results:

James L. Child Esq., of Alna, W. Master,

Elias Cobb, Esq., of Pittston, S. Warden,

John McLean, Esq., of Alna, J. Warden,

David Otis, Treasurer,

Samuel W. Clark, Esq., of Alna, Secretary,

Charles Wilkins, Esq., of Alna S. Deacon,

Daniel Carlton, Jr., of Alna, J. Deacon,

Jeremiah Carleton, of Alna, S. Stewart,

Elisha Palmer, of Alna, J. Stewart,

These officers were duly installed on the same evening, and committees were appointed to draft by-laws, to procure a device for a seal, to procure regalia, furniture, &c.: and all necessary steps were taken to put the lodge in good working order at the earliest practicable day. Measures were also taken to procure the services of one skilled in the arts and architecture as an instructor. At this, the first meeting of the lodge, two citizens of Alna, Jeremiah Pearson and Carlton Doyle Esq., made application for the degrees, and at a subsequent day, were received into the lodge and made masons in due form. The brethren did not close the lodge without devoting a time to lecturing. Particular mention is made of the transactions of this meeting to show how much importance the fathers of the lodge attached to a strict observance of the rules and regulations of the Order. During the year 1823, the lodge held forty-four meetings, with an average attendance of about seven: there were made and received into membership in the lodge during this time eleven. The brethren labored diligently and faithfully, and spared neither time nor money to improve themselves in the work and lectures. The records disclose the fact that the brethren frequently sent abroad for instructors at no small outlay of money.

The second election of the lodge was held December 31, A.D. 1823, when Bro. Elias Cobb was elected Master; and at the same meeting James L. Child, Esq., was appointed proxy of the lodge to attend the next meeting of the Grand Lodge, making Bro. Child the first representative of Alna Lodge to the Grand Lodge of Maine.

March 5, 1824, Bro. Elias Cobb resigned his position as Master, for the reason that he was about to remove to a distant part of the State; and Bro. James L. Child acted as Master until March 17th, when Samuel W. Clark was elected to fill the vacant chair, and was duly installed.

At the meeting of the lodge, held March 5, 1824, certain charges were made against an erring brother, which disclose a glimpse of the moral tone of the lodge at that time. The charge was substantially as follows:

“That he has been and now is addicted to the unmasonic and highly censurable habit of intemperance.”

Notwithstanding that the brother against whom the charges were preferred was a charter member, the lodge in its infancy and few in number, yet it appears that those stern old craftsmen were unwilling to sacrifice principle, order and decency to make a show of members and strength; and the promptness with which the lodge noticed the wayward brother’s conduct, rendered its action the more appreciable.

June 19, 1824, the lodge voted to procure new aprons enough to make the whole number thirty, and also to have the rods painted,-- in view, no doubt, of the approaching consecration of the lodge; for on the 30th of the same month, it was voted to close the lodge, to meet at 8 o’clock the next morning for that purpose. Early on the morning of July 1st, there was a general turnout of masons and citizens for miles around; along the highways and wood paths, across fields and pastures, they came to witness and to participate in the services of the occasion. A large number of visiting brethren from Lincoln and Hermon Lodges also attended; and the record, among other things says:

“The Grand Lodge having been organized by the Most Worshipful Deputy Grand Master, Robert P. Dunlap, Esq., at ten o’clock repaired to Masons’ Hall, where they were received by Alna Lodge in due and ancient form. After partaking of suitable refreshment prepared for the occasion, a procession was formed, and, attended by a band of music, proceeded to the meeting house where the ceremonies commenced with a suitable air performed by the choir of the town. An appropriate prayer was offered by the Rev. Samuel Johnson. An address followed by R.W. James L. Child, Esq., which was interesting, masonic, and a source of general satisfaction. Alna Lodge was then consecrated, and the following officers installed, in a manner solemn and impressive, by the Deputy Grand Master, Robert P. Dunlap and his assisting officers, viz:

Samuel W. Clark , R.W.M.

Elisha J. Ford, S.W.

Aaron Young, J.W.

David Young,2nd, Chaplin

Jonathan Young, Sec.

Jeremiah Jewett, Treas.

Daniel Carleton, Jr., S.D.

Nathaniel Plumer, J.D.

Elisha Palmer, Stewart,

Joseph Blish, Stewart,

Elisha McKenney, Tyler,

“The ceremony being closed, the procession re-formed and proceeded to Bro. Elisha Palmer’s, where they partook of an excellent dinner, furnished in a cool retreat fitted up for the occasion.

Though the brethren held frequent meetings during the year 1824, and labored diligently and perseveringly to improve in masonic knowledge, yet their numbers were but slightly increased, there being only five new members added, viz: Elisha Mckenney, Wm. Trundy, James Jewett, Eli Nelson, and Snow Baker.

December 8th, A.D. 1824, Elisha J. Ford was elected Master. During this year there was a fair amount of work done; for the first few months the brethren devoted much time to the lectures in the different degrees; but towards the close of the year, the lodge, for some reason, did not exhibit its wonted zeal and constancy. In the month of April, the lodge received an invitation from St. George Lodge to unite with the members of that lodge and other brethren, in celebrating, at Waldoboro, the approaching festival of St. John the Baptist; and it was recommended that all the members of Alna Lodge whose business would admit, should accept the invitation of St. George Lodge, and join them in the proposed celebration.

The next election of the lodge was not held until February 22nd, A.D. 1826, when Aaron Young was chosen Master, and March 1st was appointed as the time for the installation of officers. But on assembling, Bro. Young declined accepting the position of Master, and Bro. John McLean, who had been elected S.W., Bro. Wm. Trundy who had been elected J.W., and George Jones who had been elected Treasurer, declined their respective offices: and the lodge postponed filling the vacancies occasioned by the declination of these brethren, until the next regular meeting. Bro. Elisha J. Ford also resigned the office of Master, which he still held by reason of the non-acceptance of that office by Bro. Young.

And here follows a period of more than seven months, during which not a meeting of the lodge was held. The following statement, noted on the records, is the reason assigned for this long season of inactivity:

“A sufficient number of brethren did not assemble to enable a lodge to be opened, and as the evenings were short during that period, there seemed to be a general sentiment prevailing among the members that it was not expedient to hold a meeting.”

However on the 11th October, A.D. 1826, the brethren rallied, and a lodge was opened with six members present, Bro Elisha J. Ford acting as Master, pro tem. At this meeting the petition of William Hitchcock, whose character and death are elsewhere noticed, for the degrees in the gift of the lodge, was received, and in due time he was accepted; and on the 22nd November following, he was raised to the Sublime Degree. The 18th October was designated as the time to fill existing vacancies, at which time Bro. Elisha J. Ford was re-elected and duly installed Master.

November 8, 1826, a communication was received from a number of brethren residing on the Damariscotta River, praying that Alna Lodge would consent to hold its meetings in alternate years at some convenient place on said river and Alna. The subject was referred to a committee, and on the 13th day of December of that year, William Bickford, in behalf of the Damariscotta River brethren, met the committee from Alna Lodge, and informed the committee that there were twenty Master Masons in good standing residing on the Damariscotta River, who would join the lodge and pay the usual fees, on condition that the request they have made was granted; that they would furnish a good hall at a very reasonable rent; that they would, at their own private expense, furnish all the common furniture for the convenience of the lodge, and in like manner pay the expense of removing the lodge from Alna to Newcastle, and that the lodge should never be requested to go east of the Damariscotta river, nor further distance from Alna than Damariscotta Bridge; and if Alna Lodge should then consider that the Damariscotta brethren ought to pay anything more to the lodge fund, the matter should be referred to respectable, disinterested Master Masons. The committee of Alna Lodge having reported the propositions made by the Damariscotta brethren, the lodge, after some deliberation, voted to grant their request by holding meetings alternate years at Alna and Newcastle. And on the 20th of the same month, the following Damariscotta brethren applied for membership, viz: John D. McCrate, David Dennis, Daniel Waters, John Madigan, John Cottrill, Jesse Dunbar J. Borland, Henry Little, William Hitchcock, Charles Boyles, John Cox, James Erskine and Joseph Merrill; and on the 9th of the following January, Jason Thurston applied for membership. All these brethren were in due time admitted to membership.

January 31, 1827, occurred an election of officers, and the following brethren were elected and installed, viz:

William Bickford, W. Master.

John Cottrill, S.Warden.

Jesse Dunbar, J.Warden.

Jeremiah Jewett, Treasurer.

Elisha J Ford, Secretary.

David Dennis, Jr., S.Deacon.

William Hitchcock, J.Deacon.

John Madigan, Stewart.

The lodge then voted that the next regular meeting should be held at Masons’ Hall in Alna, and that subsequent meetings for the year should be held at Borland’s Hall, in Newcastle. Borland’s Hall was then situated where Capt. John Borland’s dwelling-house now stands, a few rods north of Lincoln Academy, on the hill originally known as Dartmouth or Sheepscot, where a settlement was made at an early period in our colonial history; this first settlement was destroyed by the French and Indians. At this time Newcastle was a comparatively old town, having been incorporated June 19, 1753; and was the 12th town incorporated. The town of Damariscotta was then unknown, its present territory being then a part of Nobleboro’ and Bristol, and was not incorporated as a town, until July 26, 1847, more than twenty years after the first meeting of the lodge was held at Borland’s Hall. At this time, the territory embracing the present village of Damariscotta and Newcastle was very sparsely settled, and a great portion of it was uncleared land. The first meeting of Alna Lodge at Borland’s Hall was on the evening of February 14, A.D. 1827, and was attended by a goodly number, who passed the evening profitably in lecturing. During this year the Alna brethren, for some unexplained cause, almost wholly neglected to attend the lodge; but the Damariscotta brethren were very constant in their attendance, and during the time the lodge was held at Borland’s Hall, which was until February 6, A.D. 1828, there were made and admitted to membership twenty-one masons.

The lodge must have made a very favorable impression on the community, for during the year there were initiated and raised to the Sublime Degree, three clergymen, viz: Rev. Samuel Johnson, Rev. Winthrop Morse and Rev. Charles Blanchard.

January 30, 1828, an election of officers, consisting entirely of Alna brethren, was had, Bro Elisha J. Ford being Master; and it was voted to hold the next meeting in Masons Hall in Alna.

Alna lodge then quietly sank out of sight, and from that evening until the month of November, A.D. 1850, there is no known record of its existence. It probably yielded to the strong anti-masonic movement set in motion about that time. This blind prejudice against masonry became so bitter and strong as to lead to the nomination of an anti-masonic candidate, Thomas A. Hill, for Governor, in 1833, and a re-nomination of the same candidate, on the same anti-masonic platform in 1834; but as he received only 1076 votes out of 73,031-- less than half the votes he received the preceding year-- it is supposed that Mr. Hill and his supporters came to regard the gubernatorial project as a forlorn hope, and resorted to different tactics.

1850 to 1854. In November A.D. 1850, the following record appears:

“At a meeting of certain Master Masons, members of Alna Lodge, held at Odd Fellows’ Hall in Damariscotta, on the evening of November, A.D. 1850, together with Master Masons belonging to other lodges, present by invitation, assembled with a view to taking certain necessary steps to promote the interests of Masonry in the vicinity of Damariscotta. Bro. Thomas B. Johnston, a Past Master, and member of Lincoln Lodge No.3, was chosen to preside, and a lodge of Master Masons was opened, by the appointment of the following officers pro tem.:

Thomas B. Johnson, Master.

John S. Wright, Senior Warden.

E.B. French, Junior Warden.

Wm. Hitchcock, Treasurer.

John Madigan, Secretary.

Geo. Q.H. Putnam, Senior Deacon.

S. Albee, Junior Deacon.

Henry Mellus, Senior Stewart.

John Taylor, Junior Stewart.

Isaac Chapman, Tyler

“It appearing that the charter of Alna Lodge, No. 43, had been surrendered to the R.W. Grand Lodge for safe keeping, and that more than seven members of the lodge now reside in this vicinity who are anxious to re-organize them-selves under it, upon the motion of Bro. Wm. Hitchcock it was

“Voted, That a petition be drawn, and the necessary steps be taken as required by the general regulations of the R.W. Grand Lodge, to procure the assent of Lincoln Lodge, at Wiscasset, and also of the R.W. D.G. Master.

“Voted, that Bro. Ezra B. French be requested to act as committee, to prepare and forward the necessary papers, and to receive the charter for said lodge, and a dispensation to open a working lodge at Damariscotta.

After a lecture by Bro Johnson, the lodge was closed in due form.”

Bro. French, who was ever zealous and active in the cause of masonry, and who for years after the resuscitation of Alna lodge, was a pillar, both of wisdom and of strength to the fraternity here, promptly attended to the duties assigned him; and on the 31st of December, A.D. 1850, when a second meeting of the members of Alna Lodge was held at Odd Fellows’ Hall, in Damariscotta, with Past Master John Taylor, acting as Master pro tem., Bro French reported that he had obtained the charter and dispensation desired. John S. Wright, Henry Mellus, Isaac Chapman and Ezra B. French were then admitted to membership, and the lodge proceeded to the election of officers; and having chosen Bro. Ezra B. French, Master, it was voted to suspend the further election of officers until a future meeting.

January 28, A.D. 1851, the following officers were elected and duly installed:

Peaslee M Wells, S. Warden.

Isaac Chapman, J. Warden.

Wm. Hitchcock, Treasurer.

Wm. Jones, Secretary.

Geo. Q.H. Putnam, S. Deacon.

Lemuel Hubbard, J. Deacon.

Henry Mellus, S. Stewart.

John Taylor, J. Stewart.

The first persons who made application for the degrees after the resuscitation of Alna Lodge, were the Hon. Abner Stetson and Charles A. Jones, Esq., of Damariscotta, whose petitions were presented January 24, A.D. 1851. Mr. Stetson’s many years of business enterprise and extensive engagement in shipbuilding have added very materially to the growth and prosperity of the community. And it may be safely said, that during his long and busy life he has never turned his back on those suffering from cold, hunger or disease, but has treated them with masonic generosity. Bro. French served the lodge faithfully as Master until December 14, A.D. 1853, when Bro. Everett W. Stetson was elected and installed Master. During Bro. French’s three years administration, forty-five members were added to Alna Lodge. Many of the brethren this year exhibited a most commendable spirit of improvement. For a portion of the year, when the length of the evenings would warrant it, they assembled in the lodge room and devoted an extra evening of each week, to the study of the work and lectures.

June 3, A.D. 1854, Eastern Lodge, of Eastport, invited Alna Lodge to unite with that lodge in the festival of St. John the Baptist; and at the same time Richmond Lodge extended a similar invitation to join that lodge in said celebration. The lodge however decided to accept the invitation of Richmond Lodge.

October 5, A.D. 1854, Benjamin E. Lombard was raised to the Sublime Degree in Alna Lodge, and became a great favorite among the brethren. Several years later he went to the Pacific Coast, and finally found his way into Washington Territory, where he was blessed with kind friends and prosperity in business; and in time, was elevated to the honorable position of Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of that Territory. About the first of June, A.D. 1872, it came to the ear of the lodge, that Bro. Lombard was on his way home to Maine; and it was planned to give him a warm and hearty welcome; but these joyous anticipations were turned to grief and mourning when the sad and unexpected intelligence of his death was announced. It seems he had taken a severe cold on his homeward journey, and reached the home of his brother in Auburn just in season to die among kindred and friends. He was universally respected and his death deeply deployed.

Bro. Everett W. Stetson was re-elected November 29, A.D. 1854; and there was a public installation of officers, to which the ladies were invited, and attended. After the installation of the brethren and visitors, with their ladies, repaired to the Maine Hotel, where an excellent supper was served, and all present seemed to enjoy the evening’s entertainment, and expressed very great satisfaction.

On July 29, 1855, the lodge, in full numbers, assembled to perform the sad duty of committing to the grave the body of our deceased Bro. Daniel A.P. Weeks. In the language of the record:

“The lodge formed in procession and marched to the residence of Daniel T. Weeks, the father of the deceased; there received the body and conveyed it to the Congregational meeting-house in Newcastle, where funeral services were performed, after which they conveyed the body a due west course from the meeting-house to the cemetery on the brow of a hill, where it was buried with proper masonic honors and ceremonies.”

December 19, 1855, Daniel A. Campbell was elected Master, and was re-elected for the years 1857 and 1858, and under his wise and prudent administration the lodge steadily gained in strength and increased in masonic knowledge.

In 1859, Bro. Ezra B. French succeeded Bro. Campbell as Master. This was Bro. French’s fourth and last term of office. During his four terms he gathered into the lodge fifty-two members.

December 7, A.D. 1859, James A. Hall was elected Master, and was re-elected for the year 1861.

At a meeting of the lodge on the evening of November 18, 1861, Worshipful Master James A. Hall announced the deaths of Bros. J.S. Fernald and James T. Dana as follows:

“Brethren of Alna Lodge: It becomes my painful duty, on this occasion, to announce to you the death of two of our worthy and respected brothers. On the tenth instant Bro. J.S. Fernald, who a short time since enlisted in the army from Maine, and went forward to aid in the defense of his country, died from disease contracted in camp. On the fifteenth, only five days later, our brother who represents the Pillar of Strength, Bro. James T. Dana, followed his Brother Fernald into the cold shades of death. Brethren, it needs no eulogy of mine to call to mind the value to us of these brothers, or to remind you of the great loss we as a lodge have sustained in their departure. Ever faithful to their duty as masons, both were bright and glowing lights in our Order, and their fall strikes a tender chord in the heart of every brother. No more shall we hear their voices in our deliberations; never more on earth shall we greet them or receive their friendly tokens; never again will the latter assist in opening and closing our assemblies or attend to preserve harmony and strength among us. No more will his gentle voice greet our ears in singing our closing anthems. Alike honored, they have both fallen while yet in the meridian of their lives. Then let us all cherish their amiable characters and be admonished by their sudden departure, that we too are mortal, and must sooner or later meet our approaching fate. Around our hearts let their memories cluster, and forever may it be kept green throughout our whole fraternity. And when time shall be no more with us upon this earth, may we all meet them in the Celestial Grand Lodge above, and take our seats under the sound of the gavel of the Grand Master of the Universe, our hearts having already been prepared as living stones, so that no inspection of the Overseers will be required to show their fitness for a place in that Spiritual Building, that House not made with hands.

“And, brethren, I do most sincerely beseech you not to forget the duties you owe to their widows and orphans, let us kindly hold them in remembrance, and see that they are not neglected. Should assistance be needed, cheerfully let it be bestowed; should counsel be solicited, in the spirit of true brotherly sympathy let it be wisely given.”

The following resolutions were passed by the lodge:

“Whereas, A Providence ‘too wise to err and too good to be unkind’ has broken the chain of our Brotherhood, by the death of our highly esteemed brothers James S. Fernald and James T. Dana, and

“Whereas, By the sad event of their death we are deprived of the counsels of two of our most useful and highly esteemed brothers and faithful friends, therefore

“Resolved, That under this sore bereavement, we recognize the hand of the Grand Master of the Universe, and will try with fortitude and resignation to submit to the chastisement, saying,’ Thy will, O God, and not ours be done;’ and that we will as masons, discharge to the best of our ability, the duties we owe to their deeply afflicted and grief-stricken families; and that while offering our heart-felt sympathies to them we feel anxious to express our high appreciation of their characters as citizens and as masons.”

The lodge room was draped in mourning, and on the day of the funerals, the outer walls of the Hall were draped with black. In this connection I must not fail to insert here, in the history of Alna Lodge, a little gem. Here it is: A communication from Mrs. James S. Fernald was received and ordered to be recorded:

“Boston, July 19, 1864,

“With profound gratitude I acknowledge the generous gift of $55.00 from Alna Lodge; it affords me immediate relief and frees my mind from much anxiety. Many, many thanks; and, may Heaven prosper and bless you all, is the prayer of

“Yours very gratefully,

“Julia A. Fernald”

This is but one of the many grateful acknowledgments with which the records of Alna Lodge are adorned. Ninety-six dollars were given to the sufferers by the Waldoboro’ fire, in 1854; fifty dollars were given to the sufferers by the Wiscasset fire, in the year 1866. Fifty dollars to the sufferers by the Portland fire of 1866; and many such benefactions it is pleasing to see placed to the credit of the lodge, in evidence of the truthfulness and honesty of its professions of charity and humanity.

December 11, A.D. 1861, Bro. Everett W. Stetson was elected Master. In the month of March following Bro. Jason Thurston died and was buried under masonic honors. His intense love of masonry, his affectionate regard for all masons, his unbounded enthusiasm, and his constant attendance at all masonic assemblies, created in the lodge an unusual regard for him; and the brethren often testified their estimation of him, by the bestowal of substantial benefactions in his declining years.

At the annual election in December, 1862, Bro. John W. David was chosen Bro. Stetson’s successor, and his administration was characterized by industry and prosperity. Thirteen new members subscribed to bylaws of Alna Lodge, during the year.

Quite a large number of the fraternity volunteered, at the breaking out of the Rebellion, and the lodge was called upon to receive the lifeless body of several of her worthy members, and commit them to their final resting place.

From December 23, 1863, to December 19, 1866, the lodge was under the administration of Bro. Everett W. Stetson, and during that time fifty-two new members subscribed their names on the role of membership. Early in the spring of 1864, the lodge sustained a great loss in the death of this venerable Secretary, Bro. Isaac Chapman. He had for many years held that office, and had been very constant in his attendance. The last meeting of the lodge, the transactions of which he recorded, was on January 11, 1864. The lodge attended the funeral in a body, conveyed his remains to the cemetery and deposited them in the grave with masonic ceremonies. And at a meeting held April 6, 1864, the lodge adopted the following resolutions:

“Whereas, In the Providence of God, He has seen fit to remove from his post here on earth to the Celestial Lodge above our late lamented and respected brother Secretary Isaac Chapman therefore

“Resolve, That we have received, with profound regret, the intelligence of the death of our late brother Secretary of this lodge; that while his talents commanded our respect, his many masonic virtues endeared him to our hearts.

“Resolve, That though in our future meetings his form may not be present with us, that we shall cherish his memories with profound respect, and trust that, though gone from us and his labors here on earth, he has ascended to Heaven to partake of that Refreshment

“’Such as Saints in glory love,

And such as angels eats.’

“Resolved, That we tender to the afflicted widow of the deceased our most heartfelt sympathy in her affliction, and hope that she may speedily be restored to health and strength.”

April 27, 1865, the following resolutions on the death of President Lincoln were unanimously adopted by the lodge:

“Whereas, Our country has been plunged into sudden and deep grief, by the murder of our beloved fellow countrymen and Chief Magistrate, St. Abraham Lincoln.

“Resolved, That we desire to make a record of our admiration for his distinguished public services and private virtues, and also to give an expression of our sympathy in the great bereavement of our whole land.

“Resolved, That in the death of our President we have lost a ruler, who by his uncompromising spirit of justice, unshaken love of liberty, unyielding integrity and unfaltering faith, has added new glory to the office which Washington first filled, and has endeared himself to every loyal heart.

“Resolved, That we shall ever hold sacred his irreproachable example in public life, joining prudence with power, patriotism with humanity, wisdom with religion.

“Resolved, That with new ardor we pledge our time, money and influence to the cause which has now laid new obligations upon us by the precious blood it has given.

“Resolve, That as truly loyal American citizens we pledge our support to the newly constituted chief magistrate, and to sustain him in the punishment of all crimes of whatever name against our beloved land.

“Resolved, That a copy of these resolutions be placed on the records of this meeting of Alna Lodge, to show future generations who may come after us that as a lodge we are true to our country and discountenance disloyalty.”

The years 1865 and 1866 were very active ones in the history of Alna Lodge, eighteen candidates having been initiated, crafted, and raised, in the former year, and twenty-one in the latter.

December 11, 1867, Bro Daniel A. Campbell was elected Master, and presided over the lodge with his accustomed dignity and ability. At this election our beloved Bro Henry Mellus, who has been identified with masonry half a century or more, and who was admitted to membership in Alna Lodge immediately after its resuscitation, and who had served the lodge faithfully as Treasurer many years, declined a re-election, assigning as a reason that he was too old and infirm to attend the lodge meetings as regularly as he deemed it the duty of an officer to attend. It was in affecting sight to witness the staunch old craftsman, who had labored with his fellows through evil and through good report, bravely facing the fierce storms of persecution-- ever steadfast, ever loyal, ever true to the tenants of his profession,-- and after the storms had passed, and sunshine, peace and prosperity had returned, still toiling with his brethren through many years, and finally coming into the lodge with feeble steps, bent form and white locks,-- and yielding at last to the infirmities of age, ask his brethren to relieve him from further active duties.

During this administration and that of Bro William Southworth’s next following, in the year 1869, there was not a large amount of work done in the line of initiating candidates, yet the brethren steadily improved in masonic knowledge.

October 8, 1869, the venerable and highly esteemed Bro. William Hitchcock died very suddenly, at the age of seventy-eight years. He had, at the time of his decease, been an honored member of Alna Lodge nearly half a century, having been initiated and received into membership soon after the organization of the lodge. With an amiable disposition which endeared him to all with whom he associated, and integrity of character which commanded universal respect, he combined a spirit of enterprise which rendered him a valuable citizen. For many years he was largely engaged in ship building, affording employment for many of his fellow citizens, and was a prompt and cheerful supporter of all projects calculated to enhance and promote the industrial interests of Damariscotta and vicinity. The lodge attended his funeral and bore his remains tenderly to the grave, where they deposited them with solemn and impressive ceremonies.

During the year 1870 the role of membership was increased by six and in 1871 by eleven new members.

Bro. Samuel J. Knowlton was elected Master December 20, 1871, and, under his administration the brethren diligently prosecuted their studies and made substantial improvements. They frequently assembled to consider and discuss the rights, duties and obligations of masons, and with a view to cultivating and encouraging social intercourse. These meetings were a source of great profit and pleasure to the brethren.

During Bro. Knowlton's administration, the lodge was called to mourn the loss of one of its most worthy and highly esteemed members, in the death of venerable Jesse Dunbar, of Nobleboro. Bro. Dunbar was a native of Bridgewater, Mass., and removed with his father to Nobleboro about the year 1791, where he resided during the remainder of his long and useful life. At the time of his decease he had been a Master Mason for more than sixty years, and a member of Alna Lodge about forty-five years, having been admitted to membership on the evening of January 31, 1827, when the lodge was held at Alna; and on the same evening he was elected Junior Warden. His amiable disposition, his Christian character and his purity of life and conduct rendered him most truly a Pillar of Beauty. The following resolutions, adopted by the lodge, most fitly represent in what estimation he was held by Alna Lodge:

“Whereas, It hath pleased the Great and Allwise Architect of that House not made with hands, external in the Heavens, to call a venerable and beloved brother, Jesse Dunbar, from his labor in the lodge below to rest in the Celestial Lodge on high, and

“Whereas, The sad event has deprived us of the pleasant companionship and wise counsels of the oldest member of the lodge, therefore

“Resolved, That by the death of Bro. Dunbar, Alna Lodge has lost the support of a true and faithful Christian brother, a wise counselor and a tried friend; that the Masonic Fraternity, of which he had been a member for over sixty years, has lost a shining light, a firm and uncompromising supporter, and one of the safe repositories of masonry during the years of persecution.

“Resolved, That the town where he had spent his long life (90) years, and the Baptist Church of Nobleboro, of which he had been a useful and consistent member for forty-seven years, have suffered with us an irreparable loss, and that his surviving children have lost a kind father, to whose constant, loving and tender solicitude and devout prayers, they acknowledge indebtedness for the useful and honorable positions in society.

“Resolved, That we recognize the Divine Hand in the bereavement’ and bow with submission to the afflictive stroke, with the confident hope of a reunion with thy departed brother, in that Lodge where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary shall find rest.

“Resolved, That we deeply regret, that by uncontrollable circumstances, the lodge was prevented from carrying out his wish (often expressed), of performing the last sad office of love and respect by committing earth to earth, dust to dust, ashes to ashes.

“Resolved, That the lodge will be clothed in the emblems of mourning for the period of three months.”

December 11, 1872, William H. Hilton was elected Master, under whose administration harmony and good will prevailed; and ten candidates were raised to the Sublime degree and added to the membership of the lodge.

December 3, 1873, Bro Frederick D. March succeeded to the office of Master, and since his installation five candidates have been initiated into the Entered Apprentice degree, and three of them made Master Masons.

The brethren of Alna Lodge have for years labored together in friendship and brotherly love. Happily, discord and confusion have never distracted their assemblies. Whenever difficulties may have occurred among the brethren, prompt and efficient measures have been adopted to effect a speedy, quiet and amicable adjustment. The lodge has been slightly blessed with several Past Masters, constant in their attendance, thoroughly imbued with the true spirit of masonry, and conversant with masonic jurisprudence and with the work and lectures. And while the younger members have delighted to sit at their feet and learn wisdom, they have come to regard these honored brothers as oracles to be consulted in all cases of doubt or difficulty, and to be guided by their counsel. The work and lectures are made studies in the lodge; and there are at present a large number of the brethren who are fully competent to assume and discharge creditably the duties of any office in the lodge at a moment 's notice.

The present prosperous condition of the lodge, the prevailing fraternal feeling, the general desire and effort for masonic knowledge and self-improvement, augur a glorious future for Alna Lodge.

**Copy of Charter of Alna Lodge**

To all the Fraternity to whom these presents shall come; the Grand Lodge of the Most Ancient and Honorable Society of Free and Accepted Masons for the State of Maine,

Send Greeting:

Whereas a petition has been presented to us by John McLean, George Jones, Samuel W. Clark, Daniel Carlton, Junior, James L. Child, Charles Wilkins, Elias Cobb, Levi F. Eldred and Aaron Young, all Ancient Free and Accepted Masons, praying that they, with such others as shall hereafter join them, may be erected and constituted a regular lodge of Free and Accepted Masons, which petition appearing to us as tending to the advancement of masonry and the good of the craft:

Know Ye, Therefore, that we, the Grand Lodge aforesaid, reposing special trust and confidence in the prudence and fidelity of our beloved brethren above named, have constituted an appointed, and by these presents, do constitute and appoint them, the said John McLean, George Jones, Samuel W. Clark, Daniel Carlton, Junior, James L. Child, Charles Wilkins, Elias Cobb and Aaron Young a regular lodge of Free and Accepted Masons, under the title and designation of Alna Lodge, hereby giving and granting unto them and their successors, full power and authority to convene, as masons, within the town of Alna, in the county of Lincoln and State of Maine, to receive and enter Apprentices, pass Fellow Crafts and raise Master Masons, upon the payment of such compensation for the same as may be determined by the Grand Lodge; also to make choice of a Master, Wardens and other Office Bearers, annually, or otherwise, as they shall see cause; to receive and collect funds for the relief of poor and distressed Brethren, their widows or children, and in general to transact all matters relating to masonry which may to them appear to be for the good of the craft, according to the ancient usages and customs of masons.

And we do hereby require the said constituted brethren to attend the Grand Lodge at their Quarterly Communications, and other meetings, by their Master and Wardens, or by proxies regularly appointed; also to keep a fair and regular record of all their proceedings, and to lay them before the Grand Lodge when required.

And we do enjoin upon our brethren of the said lodge that they be punctual in the quarterly payment of such sums as may be assessed for the support of the Grand Lodge; that they behave themselves respectfully and obediently to their superiors in office, and in all other respects conduct themselves as good masons.

And we do hereby declare the precedence of the said lodge in the Grand Lodge and elsewhere, to commence from January, the eleventh day, A.D. 1823. In testimony whereof, we the Grand Master and Grand Wardens, by virtue of the power and authority to us committed, have hereunto set our hands, and caused the seal of the Grand Lodge to be affixed, at Portland, this fourteenth day of January, in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and twenty-three.

Simon Greenleaf, Grand Master.

[seal.] William Swan, Deputy Grand Master.

Charles Fox, Senior Grand Warden.

Samuel Fessenden, Junior Grand Warden.

By order of the Grand Lodge,

William Lord, Grand Secretary

**Act of Incorporation of Alna Lodge.**

State of Maine

In the year of our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Twenty-Three.

An act to incorporate Alna Lodge.

Sec. 1, Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives, in Legislature assembled, That James L. Child, John McLean, George Jones, Samuel W. Clark, Charles Wilkins, Daniel Carlton, Junior, Aaron Young and Elias Cobb, and their associates and successors, be and they hereby are incorporated into a body politic, by the name of Alna Lodge; with power to sue and be sued; to have a common seal and to change the same; to make any by-laws for the management of their affairs, not repugnant to the laws of this State; to take and hold, for charitable and benevolent uses, any real estate to the value of three thousand dollars, and any personal estate to the value of five thousand dollars; and to give and grant, or bargain and sell the same; and with all the privileges usually granted to their societies instituted for purposes of charity and benevolence.

Sec. 2. Be it further enacted, That the first meeting of said corporation shall be holden at such time and place, and be notified in such manner as the majority of the persons herein named made direct.

Sec. 3. Be it further enacted, That the powers granted by this act may be enlarged, restrained or replaced at the pleasure of the legislature.

In the House of Representatives, January 18, 1823.

This Bill, having had three several readings, passed to be enacted.

Benjamin Ames, Speaker

In the Senate January 20 1823

This Bill, having had two several readings, passed to be enacted.

Daniel Rose, President

January 21, 1823.

Approved. Albion K. Paris