

The Corner-Stone of St. Margaret's Protestant Episcopal Church  
Laid with Masonic Honors.

The corner-stone of the new Protestant Episcopal Church, which is to replace the historic St. Margaret's Church of which Dr. C. S. Spencer, was formerly rector, was laid this afternoon with Masonic honors, in which the Annapolis lodge of Masons officiated. In the corner-stone were placed copies of all the Annapolis papers, including the Evening Capital, of dates of July 9th and August 1st and 3rd, 1895, and also the names of the vestrymen, building committee, contractor, rector of the parish; also denominational coins of the present day, together with historical church records of the old parish. The new structure will be partly of brick and frame and of Gothic design. There was a large attendance, including a number from Annapolis.

The following is a copy of a paper among other things, that was put in the corner-stone for safe-keeping:

St. Margaret's, Aug. 5, 1895.

"This is the third Episcopal Church built on this site. An older one was built on an estate called "Severn Height", owned by the heirs of Jacob Winchester. This has erased all traces of this building, except a part of the brick foundation and a few tombstones which were in the church yard.

"The first church built on this site was a frame building. It was accidentally set afire by two workmen who were building an addition to it and burned. Some of the parish books were burned at this time, making it impossible to give dates. The second church on this site was built about fifty-five years ago. It had a seating capacity of one hundred and was built of brick. This church was built chiefly by private subscription. Mrs. John Ridout (of Pleasant Plains), by her own individual exertions collected \$600. She was ably assisted by many of the other church members. This building becoming dilapidated and unfit for use, it was decided to replace it by this present one. For this purpose a fund was started May, 1886, by Rev. Dr. Charles S. Spencer, who was rector at the time. Collections and other amounts to date amount to \$800.

"One Thousand dollars was borrowed from the New York Building Fund Commission, and in July 1895, Mr. Edward Woodfall, from Glen Burnie, contracted to build the New Church for \$2000.00, and the brick of the old church. Some of the brick from the first church at Severn Heights was used in this church. Building committee, Rev. B.T. Turner, Rector, R.T. Brice, vestryman. T.S. Corner, Warden. At the time the church was built and for a year previous Rev. B.T. Turner, formerly of Virginia, was Rector. Vestrymen, R.T. Brice, Charles D. Ridout, G. Burley Duvall, Thos. C. Winchester, George R. Jones, Orlando Ridout, Asbury F. Stinchcomb, Dr. T.H. Brayshaw, elected but failed to qualify. Wardens, Theodore S. Corner, and Chas. Duvall, Jr. Registrar and Treasurer, James M. Ridout.

"The sheet upon which this is written is a leaf out of the oldest parish register known to the parish. It dates from 1673 to 1885, which was the date of the death of the Rev. Dr. Samuel Ridout, who was the last Rector of the parish to use the register. This old register was placed in the hands of Bishop Paret, Bishop of Maryland, by the vestry for safe keeping.

T. S. CORNER, Warden."

The silver vessel containing wine was then handed to the Senior Warden, who pouring its contents upon the stone, asked that "plenty be showered upon the people of this place, and that the blessings of the Bounteous Giver of All Things attend this their undertaking".

The silver vessel containing oil was handed to Junior Warden, who while pouring its contents upon the stone, asked that "the Supreme Ruler of the World preserve this people in peace and vouchsafe to them the enjoyments of very blessing."

Worshipful Master - May corn wine and oil, and all the necessaries of life abound among men throughout the world, and may the blessings of Almighty God be upon this undertaking; may the structure here to be erected be preserved to the latest ages, in order that it may promote the purposes for which it is designed. (To the builder, Mr. Woodwall) I deliver to you the implements of Architecture, which are ~~xxxx~~ to guide you in the erection and aid you in the Superintendence of the construction of this Church of the Everliving God, with the fullest confidence, that by your skill and taste, you may erect a structure that will be an honor to yourself and a credit to these people."

A very able and instructive address was then delivered by Rev. Mr. Turner, brother of the rector, which was much appreciated; after which music and benediction, and the Lodge closed. This is the third church built upon this site, a HISTORY OF WHICH WAS PUBLISHED IN THE GAZETTE a few months ago. (Look up)

An older one was built on an estate called Severn Heights and owned by the heirs of Jacob Winchester. Time has erased all traces of this building except a part of the brick foundation and a few tombstones which were in the church yard. The first church built on this site was a frame building. It was accidentally set on fire by workmen who were building an addition and destroyed. Some of the parish books were burned at this time making it impossible to give dates. The second church was built about fifty five years ago. It had a seating capacity of 100 and was built of brick.

This church was erected chiefly by private subscription. Mrs. John Ridout of Pleasant Plains, by her own exertions collected \$600.

(The above from one of the local papers, date unknown, it is thought about Aug. 6, 1895 or soon after, as the corner-stone was laid on Aug. 5, 1895. The church mentioned is the present St. Margaret's church FMC).

Last Monday afternoon the corner stone of the new church which is being built on the site of the historic old St. Margaret's Church was laid with Masonic honors by Annapolis Lodge No. 89, A.F. and A.M.

Annapolis Lodge met at 3 o'clock in the lodge room, this city, and were conveyed in teams to St. Margaret's, where the following proclamation was issued by Worshipful Master Richard W. Green, Jr.

W.M. - Brother Senior Warden - Annapolis No. 89 Ancient/Free and Accepted Masons, having assembled for the purpose of laying the corner stone of this House of God here to be erected, with Masonic honors, it is my order that the Lodge now proceed with the ceremony.

This my will and pleasure you will communicate to the Junior Warden, and he to the Brethern present that all have due notice may govern themselves accordingly.

The Lodge was then opened by Brother Senior Warden, P.F. Porter, communicating the proclamation to Brother Junior Warden Frank H. Stockett, and he to the Brethren and all others present. The following program was then observed. Music, Prayer by Rev. B.T. Turner, Rector of the Parish; reading of inscription on the stone and the list of its contents, by Brother Treasurer L. Dorsey Gassaway. (The list consisted of a copy of the Balto. Sun, Maryland Republican, Anne Arundel Advertiser, Maryland Gazette, Record and Evening Capital, silver and ~~many~~ copy coins, and ten and twenty five cents notes, United States money, a history of the P.F. Churches built in the neighborhood, constitution and by laws of Annapolis lodge, together with a list of the membership, a poem written by a young lady of the neighborhood, entitled "Pulling down the old Church", and other articles).

After the stone had been placed in position, Worshipful Master Green delivered the following remarks.

Brethren, Ladies and Gentlemen:- Once again has a Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons assembled here under the all seeing eye of our Grand and Supreme Master and before you people to perform a duty which universal custom has for centuries allotted the fraternity.

"The time was when the Master, his Fellow Crafts and Apprentices, placed the cope-stone on the edifice to whose corner-stone ~~mark~~ they had applied plumb, level and square.

"While not implements of labor in our hands today, these tools of our predecessors have become emblems of principle which must remain the same while man exists.

"Faith, Hope, and Charity, which admonishes us to have faith in God, Hope in Immortality and Charity to all Man kind. The greatest of these is Charity, for our faith may be lost in sight, hope end in fruition, but Charity extends beyond the Grave through the boundless calms of Eternity.

"A Charity without stint, religion with one God, patriotism without party, a reunion not of hands but of hearts, an union not limited to persons, but embracing States and nations, all this accompanied by the recognition of our dependence in Him, whose seeing eye is our emblem.

"Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out the earth with a span, comprehended the dust of the earth in a balance, and weighed the mountains on scales and the hills in a balance.

"May His blessing be with those who are to complete what we have this day begun, until this Church shall stand forth not only as a temple of the builder's art, but as a monument of the goodness and greatness of God."

The Marshal then presented the tools of the building to the Worshipful Master, and he applied the plumb, level and square to the stone, and pronounced it well formed, true and trusty. The golden vessel containing corn was then presented by the Marshall to the Worshipful Master, who spread its contents on the stone, saying "May the health of the workmen employed in this undertaking be preserved to them, and may the Supreme Architect bless and prosper their labors."