



MOST WORSHIPFUL

United Grand Lodge A. F. & A. M.

FOR IOWA AND JURISDICTION

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Keokuk, Iowa, Feb. 28th 1925

A. G. Clark, Grand Master,

Oskaloosa, Iowa.

My dear Grand Master:-

In spite of your protestations, your letter of 24th inst. indicates that you have not gone backward so very far as a correspondent, from the standpoint of either length or meaty content. Your letter is typical of the yesteryears. You said as much in less space because you didn't use that fearful long hand of yours which nobody could read but me and which was the bane of my life. It was a good letter, Grand Master, newsy and, best of all, it contained so much for my information and guidance.

Now, as to Kentucky, I have only casually read it. I had some work left on hand when it came and there have been other things to prevent uninterrupted attention to reviewing. The BIG something among other lesser ones was that our sweetheart (guess who that is) came to visit us from St. Louis. About all that I read was what Davis had to say about Iowa. I suppose we all do that-- read about home first. Of course, I have seen his comment on that decision of the Com. on Jurs. I don't think I shall attempt to satisfy him that the committee was wholly right. And then the committee may not have been wholly wrong, basing, as it did, its decision on the judgment of the Grand Lodge, rendered in 1913. The committee did its best to interpret the spirit of that judgment. Personally, I take the ground between you and Davis on the one hand and our Grand Lodge on the other. While I myself think the decision somewhat arbitrary I am not ready to concede lodges the absolute right to decide a matter of this kind. I think on a question of this nature lodges should act by and with the advise and consent of the Grand Master, as our law provides in cases of minor physical defeats.

I have the Colorado proceeding but neither have I read that. I did notice though some loose printed matter with it which I assume is the court decree you refer to. What you say concerning the nature of the decree and on what it is based is interesting and I agree with you that it is dangerous. I have long thought that some day we may have to defend our right to Masonry in the courts. If Grand Lodges commit themselves to the doctrine of exclusive territorial jurisdiction and write it into their organic law, as I suspect the most of them have done, when the crisis comes they won't have a leg to stand on. This is the way I saw the future four years ago when we met at Sioux City. Then and there I had a recommendation all ready to eliminate that doctrine from our constitution. There were those

who frowned upon the scheme at that time, and I realizing that it was a radical step to take, abandoned my well-considered purpose. But I have never ceased to believe that it would be a wise step to take and thereby strengthen our position against the time when some white Grand Lodge takes it into its head to oust us. The principle of exclusive territorial jurisdiction may be expedient for some purposes, but being acquiesced in by Prince Hall Grand Lodges, it should never be anything more than an unwritten understanding.

I have nothing from either Oklahoma or New York. I think, though, the fact that a Grand Lodge severs fraternal relations because of something said by the C.F.C. is an unheard of incident, since no Grand Lodge will assume official responsibility for its opinions and pronouncements. I may have that copy of Fraternal Review around somewhere; shall make a search before I ask to borrow yours.

Much obliged to you for your confidence in my ability to defend Iowa. I shall do as well as I know how on this job as I have tried to do in every other department, not alone in Masonry, but in the great game of life.

You do well to conserve your strength for the meeting of the Grand Chapter, for I suspect it will sorely tax your energy to be everywhere all the "handsome ladies" are all the time, as you will be expected to be and as you will want to be. Then I suppose it will be alright for me to take full charge of Mrs. Clark.

As ever,

Of course there would have to be a P.S. I have a Texas proceeding, but there appears to be no work from the C.F.C.

G.