

History of

Maguindanaw Lodge No. 40, F. A. M.

By *Wor. Bro. Antonio C. Cosin, P. M.*

The man who had the initiative and chief responsibility for the founding of Maguindanaw Lodge No. 40 was Fulgencio F. Pangan, then a member of Nilad Lodge No. 144.

He was employed with the U.S. Geodetic Survey in Manila with a salary of ₱200.00 a month. Unfortunately, he was desperately addicted to gambling which was rampant there. With the hope that he might rid himself of the evil, he sought transfer to Cagayan as clerk of the court of first instance; knowing beforehand that the salary attached to this office was only ₱150.00. However, this self-imposed reduction of ₱50.00 in salary was a sacrifice he was willing and glad to make, if only to attain his desire for a change of atmosphere.

On his first trip to Cagayan in December 1910, we were fellow passengers on the "S.S. Robert Poizat" and we happened to occupy the same cabin. This was how he came to explain to me his predicament and, also, his plan to found a masonic lodge here.

Soon after his arrival, he discovered that there were three master masons residing in Cagayan; namely, Nicolas Capistrano, Isidro Vamenta, and Emilio Pineda, all of Nilad Lodge. Armed with the necessary authority, he organized a so-called "Triangulo" and started initiating, passing and raising applicants. By July 14, 1911, incidentally a date coinciding with the fall of the Bastille, an event so mo-

mentous in the cause of liberty, a lodge under dispensation held its first formal meeting. Present were: F.F. Pangan, Emilio Pineda, Isidro Vamenta, and Nicolas Capistrano, master masons; Apolinar Velez, Uldarico Akut and J. Roa Valdeconcha, fellowcrafts; Ricardo Reyes and Celedonio Abellañosa, apprentices. A third apprentice, Nemesio Chavez failed to attend due to illness.

The need to establish a masonic lodge in Cagayan was discussed at this meeting. Let us listen to Brother Isidro Vamenta speak on the proposition in his florid Spanish: "*Yo creo que hasta es inutil que se pregunte todavia a los queridos hermanos aqui presentes, porque supongo que todos estan muy dispuestos a llevar al terreno de la realidad tan hermosa idea; I believe that it is even unnecessary to ask yet the beloved brethren here present, for I presume that all are determined that such a brilliant idea be brought into concrete form.*" The proposal was approved.

The name of the proposed lodge was taken up next. Pineda proposed "Nicuban" the name of a native non-conformist of Butuan; Vamenta proposed "Minda", seconded by Apolinar Velez; Roa Valdeconcha suggested that instead of Minda it be Mindanao; and Capistrano proposed "Bitoon". Except for one, all voted that the name be "Maguindanao". (Note: At a meeting held on August 17, it was decided that the name be written as "Maguindanaw").

At the meeting of July 16, the following were elected as the first officers of the lodge under dispensation: Fulgencio F. Pangan, Master; Isidro Vamenta, Senior Warden; Emilio Pineda, Junior Warden; Nicolas Capistrano, Orator; J. Roa Valdeconcha, Secretary; Nemesio Chavez, Treasurer; Uldarico Akut, "Expert"; Ricardo Reyes, Almoner; Apolinar Velez, Master of Ceremonies, and Celedonio Abellanosa, Tyler. They were installed on the following day.

Fulgencio Pangan was a perfect gentleman and a thorough mason who believed and practiced the principles of masonry, whom it was a privilege to know. Because of his kindly, amiable disposition, he was made to order for the task he had set his heart to accomplish. It is thus pathetic in the extreme to note in this truncated narrative that he did not live to see the lodge which he had so fondly and zealously striven to found chartered. He would indeed be a very happy man had he lived to know that the lodge of his creation branched out from Cagayan to Lanao and thence to Misamis Occidental, and that the institution so dear to his heart has taken root firmly throughout Mindanao, down to Basilan and Sulu. He presided for the last time at the lodge meeting held on March 26, 1912, and after that Apolinar Velez took over as acting master. But fully one year had elapsed before another meeting was held on March 26, 1913.

At this meeting, three important steps towards the constitution of the lodge were definitely taken. Agreeably to instructions from the Regional Grand Lodge, 1) Brothers Nemesio Chavez and Mariano Velez were raised to the degree of master mason; 2) Brother Apolinar Velez was elected

Worshipful Master; and the newly raised brothers, Nemesio Chavez and Mariano A. Velez, Senior and Junior Wardens; and 3) the lodge was lawfully installed by Ramon Vanta, Manuel Villavicencio and Simon Arlante, all of Sinukuan Lodge No. 272, who had been duly commissioned for the purpose, and was subsequently granted a charter as "Maguindanaw Lodge No. 334". After the Grand Lodge of the Philippines was constituted, following the fusion of the Philippine Lodges under the Grand Orient of Spain and the American Lodges here under the Grand Lodge of California, it was granted a new charter on February 13, 1917, to be known as Maguindanaw Lodge No. 40. It continued to work in the ritual of the Scottish Rite used by the Gran Orient of Spain until 1922 when the Grand Lodge sent Brother Francisco Gumila Carag, Grand Lodge Instructor, to instruct us in the York Rite, ("Cal") which it had previously adopted for use by the subordinate lodges.

From the time F. F. Pangan and the "Triangulo" started initiating, passing and raising affiliates in 1911 to the institution of the lodge on March 26, 1913, its membership was composed of the following: F. F. Pangan who presided at every meeting and was worshipful master of the lodge under dispensation, former employee of the U. S. Geodetic Survey and then clerk of the court of First Instance; Nicolas Capistrano, lawyer, founder and professor of the short-lived Colegio Cagayano, military governor and general of the revolution, assemblyman, senator, judge of first instance and land owner; Isidro Vamenta, lawyer, assistant fiscal province of Cebu, assemblyman, and secretary of the defunct Department of Mindanao and Sulu; Emilio Pineda,

lawyer, governor of the Province of Agusan, and land owner; Apolinar Velez, major in the Revolution, provincial secretary, twice provincial governor, and clerk of the court of first instance; Ricardo Reyes, provincial governor and land owner; Uldarico Akut, notary public, presidente municipal of Cagayan; C. T. Abellanosa, deputy, Office of the Provincial Treasurer, deputy governor, and farmer; Juan Roa Valdeconcha, lieutenant in the revolution, justice of the peace, member of the provincial board and provincial governor; Nemesio Chavez, prominent businessman and land owner; Manuel A. Roa, first and only personado from Misamis to the U. S., supervising teacher and acclaimed professor of mathematics in the College of Agriculture, U.P.; Cayetano Pacana, capitan municipal of Cagayan, major in the revolution, prominent businessman and land owner; Tirso Neri, biggest merchant in Cagayan, municipal president and liberal supporter of the revolution; Eutiquio Damilas, notary public and member of the provincial board; Victorino Chavez, businessman and land owner; Nemesio Yamomo, municipal treasurer, Cagayan, and Isabelo de Silva, provincial treasurer of Misamis and Pampanga provinces.



We are grateful to Wor. Bro. Eduardo L. Claudio for furnishing the materials for "Masons in the Constitutional Convention", January 1959, pp. 90 & 91. Wor. Bro. Claudio was Worshipful Master of Batangas Lodge No. 35 when the Constitutional Convention met. Through his initiative, the brethren in the Convention gathered for a fraternal banquet.

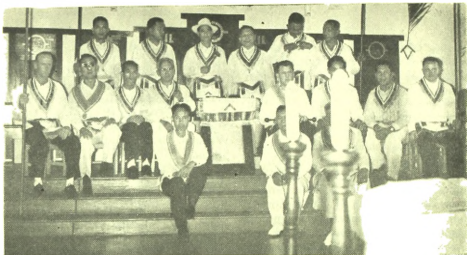
—Editor

WORTH KNOWING

In President Eisenhower's Cabinet are five Masonic brothers: Charles E. Wilson, Secretary of Defense; Wilbur Brucker, Secretary of the Army; Arthur Summerfield, Postmaster General; Fred Wheaton, Secretary of the Interior; and Sinclair Weeks, Secretary of Commerce. In the Supreme Court are Earl Warren, PGM; Chief Justice Tom Clark; and Harold Burton. In Congress, there are 96 senators, 54 of whom are Masons. In the House of Representatives are 212 Masons compared to 223 who are not. In the various States, 33, of the 50 governors are Masons. In House of Representatives of the State of Connecticut, Mrs. Ruth A. Jones is a Past Most Worthy Grand Matron of the General Grand Chapter of the Order of Eastern Star.



The year is 1717... the Mother Grand Lodge was formed in England... Anderson's Constitutions—first Masonic Book—was published six years later... Henry Price received authority as Provincial GM of Massachusetts in 1733... Catholic objections to our Fraternity began with a Papal Bull in 1738... Germany had its first Grand Lodge in 1741... Washington took his first degree in 1752... an Irish Grand Lodge certificate first used the words "Sublime Degree of Master Mason", in 1754... Mozart, who became Mason, composer of the Masonic Opera "The Magic Flute" was born in 1756... up in the highlands of Scotland, Robert Burns, a Mason, the poet who immortalized "The Mystic Tie" was born in 1759... Boston brethren recessed from lodge and put on the famous "Tea Party" in 1772... Paul Revere rode in 1775... America got her independence on July 4, 1776.



Officers of PINTONG BATO LODGE No. 51 F & AM of Buenavista, Cavite for the year 1950.
 Front row L-R W. B. Gregorio Ramoy (P.M.) — Custodian of Work, Avelino Balot, Bilde Baeer, W. B. Lario Idelfonso (P.M.) — Auditor, Second row L-R Charles C. Oakes-Jr. Steward, Luis Bantog-Chaplain, Arturo Felipe-Standard Bearer, W. B. Idelfonso Vergara (P.M.) — Tyler, Donald L. Buffman-Marshal, Brigido Surino-Almoner, Juan Battista-Organist, and Gen. Theo. Sinder-Sr. Seward. Third row L-R Evaristo del Mundo-Sr. Deacon, Ricardo Inocentes-Sr. Warden, W. B. Apolinario Barroca-Master, Melanio Alejandro-Jr. Warden, W. B. Mario C. Bulmaga (P.M.)-Sec., and Fortunato Magat-Jr. Brethren.



OFFICERS OF BALINTAWAK LODGE NO. 28, F & AM, GUMACA, QUEZON
 They are: (L-TO-R) Dionisio Barrera, J.S.; War. Bro. Eustacio I. Villafuente, Treas.; War. Bro. Vicente Tan, Master; War. Bro. Gregorio Defeo, Junior Grand Steward; Bro. Victor Mendoza, J.W.; War. Bro. Victoriano Tanafanaca, Sec.; War. Bro. Pedro Luna, Organist; Bro. Severino Pulan, S.S. Second row, same order; Bro. Resilito Tanoda; War. Bro. Gregorio Balencera, Almoner; War. Bro. Pio Martin, Marshal; War. Bro. Teofilo Olivera, Chaplain; Bro. Cu Bing Bon, Auditor; Bro. Serafin Duplos, S.D.; Bro. Meliton Tanada, Tyler. War. Bro. Laura Dixon installed the Officers of Balintawak Lodge No. 28 while War. Bro. Gregorio Defeo duly proclaimed them on January 18, 1959.