



RAY DONALD STEWART
PGP of New Brunswick 1930-1932
Most Worthy Grand Patron 1946-1949

Brother Stewart was born on May 23rd, 1893 at Victoria, PEI the first child of Murdoch John Stewart (b. May 1861) & Catherine I. (Nicholson) Stewart. Three years later on August 28, 1896 he was baptized. In 1911, at age 18 we next find him living at York St., Cape Breton South, in Nova Scotia with his father, now aged 50, mother Thelma Thomas (Bella) age 48, a brother: Louse Abe (B. Sep 1894) and sister: Mary K. (B. Feb 1897).

Fast forward to 1921, Donald is now 29 and married; living at 25 Alexander, New Glasgow, Pictou, NS. His spouse, our Sister Jean W. (Whitman) Stewart, PGM 1945-1946 was born in 1893 and died only one year before him. Brother Donald was injured in an auto accident Dec 14th and died on Dec 31st, 1969 in the town of ST. Petersburg, Fla. He is buried there with his beloved Jean in Greenwood Cemetery, Hartland, Carleton Co., NB. < *Compiled from Ancestry.ca /DEW*

OES Magazine May 1987: The magazine has been asked if it would be possible to publish a thumbnail sketch of the brother who contributed so much to the advancement of our Order in the province of N.B. We are pleased to do so at this time. Bro. R. Donald Stewart was born in Victoria, P.E.I. When still a young man he moved to Nova Scotia and lived in Sydney and New Glasgow. Later he moved with his wife, Jean, to New Brunswick in 1924, and became keenly involved in the community life of Hartland, serving on the Town Council and as Mayor of the town.

His Masonic background included membership in Hartland Lodge No. 46, F. & A.M., of which he was a Past Master. He also held office in the Grand Lodge of New Brunswick. Early interest and activity in Eastern Star work began with Friendship Chapter No. 6, O.E.S., Hartland, and he served as Worthy Patron of that Chapter. Sadly, Friendship Chapter does not exist today except in memory as in later years the Chapter was unable to carry on and the dreams of those early years faded away.

Bro. Donald Stewart became the first Worthy Grand Patron of the Grand Chapter of New Brunswick when it was constituted in 1930 by Bro. Philip A. Jerguson, Most Worthy Grand Patron of the General Grand Chapter. The name of Bro. Philip A. Jerguson is perpetuated in that of the West Saint John, Philip A. Jerguson Chapter No. 18.

In 1943 Bro. Stewart was elected Rt. Worthy Assoc. Grand Patron of the General Grand Chapter and in 1946 became its Most Worthy Grand Patron. He instituted and constituted the Grand Chapter of Nova Scotia with jurisdiction over Prince Edward Island in 1947 and was the first Chairman of the Peace Garden Fund. The Chapel was donated by the members of the O.E.S., and was built in the International Peace Garden located on the international boundary between the U.S., State of North Dakota and the Canadian province of Manitoba.



Then returning from an Eastern Star meeting in Tampa, Florida, to St. Petersburg, Dec. 13, 1969, the car in which he was riding was involved in a two car collision at a road intersection. Bro. Donald was critically injured in the accident and died on Dec. 31, 1969, just before the arrival of the New Year.

Editor's Note: The foregoing article was compiled from information provided by Bro. Joseph A. Potter, PGP;

NOTE:—*the following excerpt is from the sermon preached at the funeral of R. Donald Stewart in Trinity United Church, Hartland, N. B. on January 6th, 1970 by Rev. John M. Sheen, B.A.*

“It was with sadness that the town of Hartland learned of the accident to Donald Stewart, when the car in which he was a passenger collided with another at an intersection in St. Petersburg, Florida, on Sunday, December the 14th. We understood at that time that this was a serious accident but we hoped and prayed for the best. However at a late hour on New Year’s Eve Donald was called home to join the redeemed of God, in Christ Jesus, in the fair land of Heaven. And you and I will miss him, and his place will be empty. Donald held a large place in our hearts.

Born in Victoria, P.E.I. He held business positions in Sydney and New Glasgow, and for the last 45 years, he was a resident of the town of Hartland. Here he was highly regarded, and held the position of Mayor of Hartland, 1942- 1943. Along with his insurance business, he was police magistrate for the town.

Mr. Stewart was long active in the Masonic Order and the Order of the Eastern Star. He was Worthy Grand Patron of the Eastern Star in New Brunswick in 1930-1931. In 1946 in Miami, Florida, he was elected as Most Worthy Grand Patron of the Star’s General Grand Chapter, a post he held for three years. He was the only Canadian ever named to that position and during his term of office officiated at the opening of Eastern Star Chapters in Honolulu, Hawaii, and several places in the United States.

Among many of his Christian qualities I will just mention two or three. First— faithfulness, and Donald was faithful. It was a very rare Sunday indeed that he was not in the house of God to worship. Donald was a faithful member of Trinity United Church, our Presbytery elder. Second his humility. A great man with a humble heart, a man of prayer, Donald was a great believer. Donald ever remained a humble man though at times he held very high public offices. Thirdly, he was a man of prayer. He served God in the church as an elder; as a member of Presbytery and in his generosity in giving to the church.

It was our privilege to know Donald, through the sickness of his wife, and her passing; in the church, and through meetings of Session and in Presbytery, he was a fine Christian gentleman. This community will miss him. This church will miss him.”

NOTE:—*the following tribute to Bro. Stewart was published in the February 1970 issue of the OES Magazine. And presented at the Grand Chapter Session held in Newcastle, New Brunswick, June, 1961. Sister Ruth Lewis, Worthy Grand Matron and Brother W. T. F. Johnston, Worthy Grand Patron presided in the Grand East. It was Sister Ruth's wish that Brother Donald Stewart be honored in this way at her Session and asked Saint John Chapter No. 14, to prepare the tribute which follows:*

TRIBUTE TO R. DONALD STEWART, P.M.W.G.P.

Presented by

SAINT JOHN CHAPTER No. 14

Directed by

SISTER HELEN BREEN, P.M.

Script Compiled and Written by

SISTER FLORENCE E. JOHNSTON

THOSE TAKING PART IN NATIVE COSTUME

Nova Scotia Sister Myrtle Watts, P.M.

Bermuda Sister Juanita Seely, P.M.

Mexico Sister Pearl Nelson, W.M.

Guam Sis. Kathleen MacKenzie, Warder Philippines Sis. Mildred Porter, P.G.M.

Japan Sister Helen Breen, P.M.

Hawaii Sis. Phyllis Sprague, Cond.

TRIBUTE TO BROTHER R. DONALD STEWART

*“Grand Chapter — the highlight of each Eastern Star year,
Was first constituted in Fredericton a few miles from here.
Two Officers who travelled the first golden mile
Were R. Donald Stewart and Lottie L. Kyle.
It is with great pleasure we honour today
Our Past Most Worthy Grand Patron — in this unusual way,
By costume and verse and other fine art,
For you see Brother Donald was here from the start.
The Officer who installed Brother Donald we are told
Was Philip A. Jerguson — and the story unfolds
To tell of the Chapters which Donald formed in the Star
In New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Islands afar.”*

We would continue our narration by recalling that there were eleven Chapters at this time and Brother Donald with Sister Lottie Kyle visited all the Chapters in the jurisdiction. Brother Donald has not missed attending any Grand Chapter Session since the formation of Grand Chapter. He has attended many Triennial Assemblies of General Grand Chapter. In 1940 at San Francisco he was appointed Worthy Grand Sentinel of General Grand Chapter. In 1943 at the Triennial Assembly at Chicago Brother Donald was elected Right Worthy Associate Grand Patron. During the latter part of that term the Most Worthy Grand Patron Brother Harold Lander became ill and Brother Donald assisted Mamie Lander Most Worthy Grand Matron of Orlando, Florida in presiding at the Tampa Assembly in 1946. At the Tampa Assembly Mrs. Olga Philip of Hayes, Kansas was elected Most Worthy Grand Matron, and Brother Stewart was elected Most Worthy Grand Patron, becoming the only Canadian to hold the office of Most Worthy Grand Patron of General Grand Chapter.

An interesting sidelight follows. In May 1947 Sister Olga Philip passed away and as provided in the Constitution the Right Worthy Associate Grand Matron, Sister Eva Holland Hamilton of Chicago succeeded to the office of Most Worthy Grand Matron. Thus Brother Donald had the honour of holding office with three Most Worthy Grand Matrons — an enviable distinction for any man.

In August 1949 Sister Hamilton and Brother Stewart presided at the Triennial Assembly at Maple Leaf Gardens in Toronto, and that large Arena was filled to capacity on opening and closing nights. It was the largest assembly which had been held up to that time. New Brunswick was well represented and came into prominence by providing a Canadian breakfast which was a highlight of the occasion.

We light a candle to Brother R. Donald Stewart, Past Most Worthy Grand Patron, in recognition of his untiring efforts, love and devotion to the Order of the Eastern Star.

SISTER JEAN, P.G.M.

*“As we honour Brother Donald we think of Sister Jean,
For her wifely help and loyalty and every inch a queen.
With her kind and friendly manner and always gay at heart
She too has brought us honour for her supporting part.”*

Sister Jean, Past Grand Matron we feel has been a real helpmate in the true sense of the word. She accompanied Brother Donald as he visited many Annual Grand Chapter Sessions. In the ceremonies of inaugurating new chapters she usually served as Acting Worthy Grand Chaplain.

Sister Jean has travelled many miles with Brother Donald visiting Chapters in other countries — also in her beloved Province of Nova Scotia. We light a candle for Sister Jean for her devotion to her husband and the Order of the Eastern Star.

NOVA SCOTIA

Represented by Sister Myrtle Watts, P.M.

Nova Scotia, New Scotland of the Maritimes, noted for its scenery and hospitality. It was here that four Chapters were chartered by Brother Donald, at Amherst, Pictou, Sydney Mines and Baddeck. Chapters were instituted and later constituted by him in Dartmouth, Truro, Windsor and Sheet Harbour.

A history making event took place September 1947 at New Glasgow when Brother Donald constituted 23 Chapters with one from Charlottetown into the Grand Chapter, Order of the Eastern Star of Nova Scotia with jurisdiction over Prince Edward Island. Sister Eva Holland Hamilton, Most Worthy Grand Matron and Sister Mamie Lander, Right Worthy Grand Secretary, Washington attended this session. A. Herman MacMillan, Most Worshipful Grand Master of Masons in Nova Scotia also attended, accompanied by a retinue of Grand Lodge Officers and gave a congratulatory address.

We light a candle to honour these Chapters mentioned and the Grand Chapter of Nova Scotia, Order of the Eastern Star. We are proud of the work Brother Donald has done in Nova Scotia and wish for the Order much happiness and success.

BERMUDA

Represented by Juanita Seely, P.M.

Brother Donald's work did not end at home for it was at this time he looked far afield and became interested in organizing Chapters in other countries. Bermuda, the land of pleasant scenery and luxuriant vegetation, visited by many holiday makers.

The Institution of Electa Chapter took place in Hamilton. In 1948 Brother Donald, accompanied by Sister Jean, Sister Hamilton, Most Worthy Grand Matron and Sister Mamie Lander, Right Worthy Grand Secretary, presented the Charter and installed the officers.

We light a candle to Electa Chapter in Bermuda, Order of the Eastern Star, and trust by now the interest there has increased one hundred fold.

MEXICO

Represented by Sister Pearl Nelson, W.M.

And now to Mexico, where kindly people are known for their hospitality and entertainment. It was here in Delicias Brother Donald accompanied by Sister Jean and Sister Hamilton, Most Worthy Grand Matron and other Grand Officers, presented the Charter and installed the Officers in Minerva Chapter No. 4. The Chapters here work in the Spanish ritual but many of the members speak English.

We light a candle to the Order of the Eastern Star in Mexico, and may the light in all Chapters never grow dim in the coming years.

GUAM

Represented by Sister Kathleen (Kit) Mackenzie, Warder Important as a cable and Radio Station and as a stopping place for the Transpacific Airlines. It was here that Brother Stewart was instrumental through the assistance of Brother Neal Madson, a Past Patron of Vacaville Chapter No. 28 Vacaville, California, who was stationed in Guam, in preparing a complete set of officers to confer degrees and take the parts of General Grand Chapter Officers for the Institution

Ceremony. Later, Brother Stewart, while in California, met Brother and Sister Madson, and made arrangements with them for the Constitution of this Chapter, Veronica No. 1.

We light a candle to the Order of the Eastern Star in Guam and may it continue to prosper.

PHILIPPINES

Represented by Sister Mildred Porter, P.G.M.

Philippine Islands where manila hemp is grown extensively. Islanders receive several million dollars a year for it. The Order of the Eastern Star was introduced here as early as 1905, a Chapter being formed at Manila. During those terrible years of the Japanese occupation the acts of courage and loyalty shown by members were outstanding. By the heroic and faithful work of the Worthy Matron and Worthy Patron, Sister and Brother Schoening the Chapter was re-opened in 1946.

Rosario Villaruel Chapter was instituted in 1948, Brother Schoening acting as deputy under Brother Donald's appointment and commissioned again for its constituting in 1949. In 1949, Brother David Innis of Manila was commissioned to institute Sampaguita Chapter in Manila. Thus Brother Donald had the honour of bringing into being two new Chapters in the Philippines.

We light a candle for the Chapters of the Eastern Star in the Philippine Islands, and may their influence for good be felt and their good works increase.

JAPAN

Represented by Sister Helen Breen, P.M.

This oriental country, noted for many things, such as their courteous greetings and salutations, the kimono as their distinctive dress, silk weaving and their great love of flowers, all are sources of continual charm and delight. Living in Japan there were a relatively large number of Eastern Star members who had been meeting for the purpose of study, and, having felt the loss of active membership, petitioned Brother Donald for the institution of Chapters.

After some preliminary work it was discovered that there were sufficient members to form Chapters at Yokosuka and Yokohama. Subsequently, Brother Dan T. Marberry of Gilman, Illinois was deputized by Brother Donald to organize the necessary degree personnel, and on January 31st, 1949 Yokosuka Chapter was instituted, and on February 28th, 1949, Star of the Orient Chapter was instituted at Yokohama. On June 1st and 2nd Brother Marberry on behalf of Brother Donald constituted both these Chapters.

We light a candle for the Chapters of the Eastern Star in Japan with the hope that the glow of the star shall always be seen in that land of the Rising Sun.

HAWAII

Represented by Sister Phyllis Sprague, Conductress

What do we associate first with Hawaii? Music, of course! Hawaiian music, so different and fascinating, so full of melody and romance accounts for its great popularity the world over. It was to this enchanting country Brother Donald and Sister Jean went by plane, arriving in Honolulu to be accorded a wonderful reception by the members of the Order, spending 11 days in a round of never-to-be-forgotten activities. Prior to their arrival, Brother Harry G. Soria, P.P. of Lei Aloha Chapter No.3, Honolulu had been appointed Deputy for the institution of Kailua-Lanikai Chapter of Lailua, Oahu June 14th, 1948 and Mid-Pacific Chapter of CHA 3, Oahu June 15th, 1948. On January 5th, 1949 Brother Stewart had the honour of constituting these two Chapters in the Scottish Rite Temple, Honolulu. He also installed the officers' for both occasions.

We light a candle to the Chapters of the Order of the Eastern Star of Hawaii and salute them for their splendid work and accomplishments.

*“And now we have told of the Chapters
Brother Donald formed in the Star
In New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Islands afar.”*