

Our New Grand Master

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Mills was retired from the Army with the rank of Major.

In May, 1945, while still attached to the Army, but eager to help other veterans adjust to civilian life, he accepted an appointment as Veterans Service Officer for Cabarrus County, a position he filled with distinction for two years.

But Bill Mills had only begun to grow . . . now 31 years old, he had an itch to be a lawyer, but he was confronted with several obstacles. He had no college degree, was beyond the traditional Freshman age, and was still adjusting to a man-made leg. Two things were in his favor. He loved and WANTED to practice law, and he is a stubborn man. After two years at Charlotte College and two quarters at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, he entered law school in the fall of 1949 and in June, 1950, he received the Bachelor of Arts degree. During his second year in law school, he was appointed to the Board of Editors of the prestigious Law Review for 1951-52. In June, 1952, William Lee Mills, Jr., was awarded an LLB degree in law which was changed to a J.D. degree in 1967; in August, 1952, he passed the State Bar examinations; and in September, Bill Mills joined the late Past Grand Master Luther T. Hartsell, Jr., in the law firm of Hartsell & Hartsell in Concord.

These remarkable accomplishments were achieved at a time of deep personal tragedy. While he was still in law school, Mills' wife, Erin Morris Mills, died at 36.

Law and Bill Mills fit like a hand and glove. At present, he is senior partner in the law firm of Hartsell, Hartsell & Mills, P.A.; was State Bar Councilor for the 19th Judicial District, 1956-1962; member of the Board of Governors, North Carolina Bar Association, 1962-1965; member of the Board of Law Examiners for the State of North Carolina, 1962-1973, and Chairman of said Board, 1971-1973. In 1967, Mills was made a Fellow in the American College of Trial Lawyers.

Although highly successful in his profession, Bill Mills has also given generously of his talents to his community.

He is a Past Commander of American Legion, Post 145; former chef de Gar of the 40 & 8; has been President of the Concord Executives Club and the Cabarrus Rescue Squad, which he helped to found. He is immediate past President of the Concord Rotary Club. He has served as President of the Alumni Association of UNC at Charlotte, as a Trustee of Wingate College and is Cabarrus County Chairman of the Morehead Awards Selection Committee. Mills was Chairman of the Building Fund for the recently completed Concord Salvation Army headquarters and is presently Chairman of its Advisory Board. He also serves as Chairman of the Budget Committee for the United Way of Cabarrus County, Inc.

Religious life is important to Bill Mills. He teaches a Men's Bible Class at the First Baptist Church, where he has been Chairman of the Board of Deacons and Sunday School Superintendent. Mills has served on the Public Affairs Committee for the State Baptist Convention and at present is a Trustee of the Cabarrus Baptist Association and Chairman of the Building Committee of the First Baptist Church.

He was listed, in 1959, in "Who's Who in the South and Southeast" and the same year was



Charlotte—Friendship Lodge 700 invited members of the Eastern Star to join with them on February 9 at a "Hobo Supper" celebrating the attainment of a goal set last year, more than doubling contributions to the Orphanage and the Home. Pictured above, seated, left to right: J. B. Kizer, CL, Master; Jack D. Stallings, Senior Warden; Billy G. Burgess, Junior Warden; Herb Leviner, Senior Deacon. Standing, left to right: Hazel Price (WM), Wade Price (WP), Betty Whitley (AM) and Tommy Setzer (AP), all officers of the Eastern Star. Mrs. Raymond Kimball and Junior Warden Al Dellinger collaborated in the preparations of pintos, cornbread, fatback and apple pie. Melody Kimbell prepared the Orphanage and Home posters. Lodge officers and their wives handled work details and paid for the meal.

named "Senior Man of the Year" by the Concord Jaycees. There are few civic or cultural affairs in Concord which do not bear the stamp of Mills.

In 1953, Bill Mills was married to Mrs. Ruby Spainhour James, widowed in World War II, a native of Morganton and Lenoir. The Mills have one son, William Lee Mills, III, who is a Sophomore at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Aside from his family, the interest closest to Bill Mills' heart is his long association with Masonry. During his youth, he was an active member of DeMolay and in 1958 received the DeMolay Legion of Honor Award.

On October 14, 1946, Brother Mills was initiated an Entered Apprentice; on October 28, 1946, was passed to the degree of Fellow Craft; and on November 25, 1946, was raised a Master Mason in Stokes Lodge No. 32 at Concord, North Carolina. He served as Master of Stokes Lodge No. 32 during 1959.

Brother Mills is a member of the York Rite, holding membership in John C. Drewry Chapter No. 82, R.A.M.; Concord Council No. 25, R. & S. M.; Cannon Commandery No. 38, K.T.; Charlotte Council of Super Excellent Masters; and Robert The Bruce Council No. 4, Allied Masonic Degrees.

He is also a member of the Carolina Consistory, Charlotte, North Carolina, having received the 32nd degree in April, 1967. At the Bi-annual Communication in October, 1973, of the Supreme Council of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry for the Southern Jurisdiction, Brother Mills received the 33rd degree Inspector General Honorary.

Bill Mills is a Noble of the Mystic Shrine, holding membership in Oasis Temple, Charlotte, North Carolina. He is also a member of the North Carolina Societas Rosicruciana Civitatis Foederatis.

At the Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, in April, 1967, Most Worshipful Brother Arnold J. Koonce, Grand Master, appointed him Grand Steward, and Brother Mills advanced each year thereafter with distinction.

Being elected Grand Master is an honor which Bill does not accept lightly, but with humility and dedication that is the essence of the man; it is a responsibility for which he is trained and capable.

'76 Planning Goes Forward

Raleigh—The committee on 1976 Observance met here on March 8 in scheduled session. A number of activities planned for 1976, or earlier, were discussed.

It was decided to postpone announcement of distribution plans for the silver commemorative medallions until the committee is certain it has devised the most equitable plan possible. These medallions will be in limited edition, only one thousand are being minted, and they will be serially numbered. They will be sold for ten dollars each and the committee seeks to devise a plan of distribution which will give each North Carolina Mason equal opportunity to place his order. Purchases will be limited to one person.

Bronze medallions, identical in design to the silver ones, will be distributed as follows: One medallion will be given to each Mason attending the 1975 Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge who is entitled to vote therein, and one to each District Deputy Grand Lecturer and District Education Chairman attending that communication. The remaining bronze medallions will be sold for one dollar each on a first-come-first-served basis and it is not expected that these will be in short supply. This distribution plan represents a change from that announced in the February issue, a change which the committee feels will be more equitable and provide better Observance impetus than the earlier plan.

The history (of North Carolina Masonry during the late eighteenth century) being written by Dr. Tom Parramore also came up for additional discussion. Here again, a plan of distribution will be announced later.

The committee made tentative plans to procure and distribute commemorative seals which will be used by various Masonic Bodies on envelopes, letterheads and other items.

James Robert Webster, 100 years old on May 13, is a member of Ashler Lodge 373. He was made a Mason April 27, 1901. He received his 25-year award September 17, 1943, his 50-year award December 14, 1951, and the Diamond Jubilee Award November 16, 1962.