

The Dove Hunt

It was mid September and I thought about Brother Henry Grady as I walked through the bottom at his old home place. I can remember the two of us swinging on the vines at the creek, fishing for horny heads, and running barefoot to catch lightning bugs in his side yard. We were good friends who later became members of the DeMolay Chapter at Acacia Lodge 357.

Henry was a good athlete and won several track awards until his illness. Henry lost his leg to bone cancer his senior year in high school and died a couple of years later. He asked me to join DeMolay, and my membership in the chapter was one of the reasons I later petitioned my lodge. So I owe Henry a lot, and I owe DeMolay a lot. Youth organizations are so important for Freemasonry that every Mason ought to spend some of his time and money to ensure their success in his jurisdiction.

I hunted the whole afternoon, shot 12 shells, and only killed four birds — not too bad for me, however. I crossed the middle of the field on my way out and saw Brother Warren Thomas, a past grand master from Stone Bridge, sitting in the shade of a sassafras tree with a mound of birds in front of him.

“Wow, Most Worshipful,” I said, “You’ve really killed a mess of birds!”

“Yep,” said Warren, “I’ve almost got my limit — just two more to go, and I’ve only been here since 4:30 P.M.”

“Warren,” I said, “I didn’t hear any shooting — where’s your gun?”

“I never used a gun since I served as grand master. I just ugly them out of the sky.” “Do what?” I thought he was pulling my leg.

“Come sit down here, and I’ll show you,” said the PGM.

Two birds made their way across the bottom as the light of day faded. As they neared where we sat, Warren jumped out and made a “face.” They both fell graveyard dead, almost at his feet! I was astonished.

“I’ve never seen anything like that — and you’ve killed your limit in no time at all!!”

“Yeah,” said Warren, “and I used to kill a lot more when the grand secretary would hunt with me, but I don’t invite him any more.”

“Why not?” I said. “Why don’t you invite our grand secretary any more?”

“He just got to tearing up the birds too bad with that face of his — there wasn’t hardly nothing left after he finished with them!”