

100 Guests Help John Clagett Proctors Mark 60th Anniversary of Wedding in District

President of Oldest Inhabitants Started Career as Printer

By George Kennedy

Mr. and Mrs. John Clagett Proctor celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary yesterday. The president, chronicler and poet laureate of the Association of Oldest Inhabitants, whose articles in the Sunday Star for the last 20 years have kept the old Washington alive, was at home with Mrs. Proctor at 1605 Jonquil street N.W., to more than 100 guests.

Nineteen-year-old John Clagett Proctor was married to 20-year-old Maud Crown on October 5, 1887, at the Church of the Epiphany. It was the year of the Philadelphia Constitution Centennial celebration, and the Haymarket executions. Grover Cleveland, who also had just married, was in his first administration. The Utes were on the rampage in Colorado and the Sioux in Montana. Charles Stewart Parnell had parliament tied up with his Home Rule fight and a young man named Clemenceau had just toppled the French government.

While awaiting the arrival of his guests last night, Mr. Proctor showed this reporter his albums. A true antiquarian, he has preserved everything. There was the letter of recommendation given his father by Crosby S. Noyes, editor of The Star, on January 20, 1865, three months before the Lincoln assassination. J. C. Proctor, sr., a reporter, was leaving to become city editor of the National Republican. Mr. Noyes' letter was not on printed stationery. He merely wrote "The Star Office" at the top of a lined sheet similar to that in a student's notebook. But the selection and economy of words would be the envy of an editor today. "I very cheerfully recommend him," Mr. Noyes wrote, for several reasons, among them, "he is indefatigable in the interests of his employer."

Boy Lost Father at 8.

His father was out covering "a meteoric shower," during John's birth on November 15, 1867, in the 500 block of New York avenue N.W., the album showed. Had not his father died when he was eight, John Clagett Proctor undoubtedly would have started work as a newspaperman. But with his father dead, he



John Clagett Proctor and Mrs. Proctor are shown as they celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary last night at their home. —Star Staff Photo.

had no entree and he became a printer.

There was a picture of his brother, a handsome tall young man looking like a tailor's ad in his cutaway and stovepipe hat.

"He was a printer too," said John. "He used to wear that outfit to work at times, put the beaver hat on the case and start setting type."

There were pictures of John, a portly middle-aged man in his printing office at the Smithsonian Institution, and later pictures of the man familiar today, still strong but with the size 17 collar becoming larger and larger as he lost both weight and height.

And there was a volume entitled "Maud." There she was a slender thing in the loose clothes of the '80s. The picture was entitled "Sweet Seventeen." "That was when I met her," said John.

"She happened to have been born in Philadelphia," said John as if it was something that had to be

explained away. "But her father was born here as mine was and the family returned here when she was a small girl."

There was an 1898 picture of Mrs. Proctor in a hat with four huge ostrich plumes rising from it, two white and two black.

"I paid \$17 for that hat," said John.

And there was a picture of her of 1901 in a black-spangled dress of the Gibson-girl silhouette.

Every merit card from her school days was there and, further on, was her certificate of membership in the Daughters of the Revolution.

"They were too slow for Maud," said Mr. Proctor. "She decided she was busy enough in the Eastern Star."

There were mementoes of their two trips to Europe, a Mediterranean cruise in 1932 and a Scandinavian cruise in 1933.

We went downstairs and Mr. Proctor took his place to accept the

congratulations of the line of guests that was forming. He was wearing white tie, a white gardenia and tails. Mrs. Proctor was wearing a black satin gown with embroidered sleeves and an orchid.

Unlike many long-lived couples the Proctors have not been saddened by children predeceasing them. They have two children, a son and a daughter. Both were there last night.

The son, Francis E. Proctor, who lives in Landover, Md., and works at the Bureau of Engraving, has two daughters. One of them made the elder Proctors great-grandparents three month ago with a baby boy.

The daughter, Mrs. Louis E. Callis and her husband, live in the house in Jonquil street.

Space does not permit listing all those who turned out to congratulate the Proctors. His cronies from the Old Union Firehouse, the meeting place of the Oldest Inhabitants, were there, Charles Bates, Fred Emery and A. J. Driscoll. Members of The Star's staff were there. Mrs. Proctor's niece, Mrs. Mary E. Youse of Seattle, Wash., delayed her return to the West Coast to attend.

Perhaps the most devoted friends were a younger couple, born after the Proctors were married. Mr. and Mrs. Harry A. Sanderson of Providence, R. I., met the Proctors at Atlantic City at a Shrine convention in 1923. They have seen them every year since. At the 50th wedding anniversary they promised to come down for the 60th. The Sandersons came down with their son and his wife and four grandchildren, three boys and a girl of three, all dressed up for the party.