



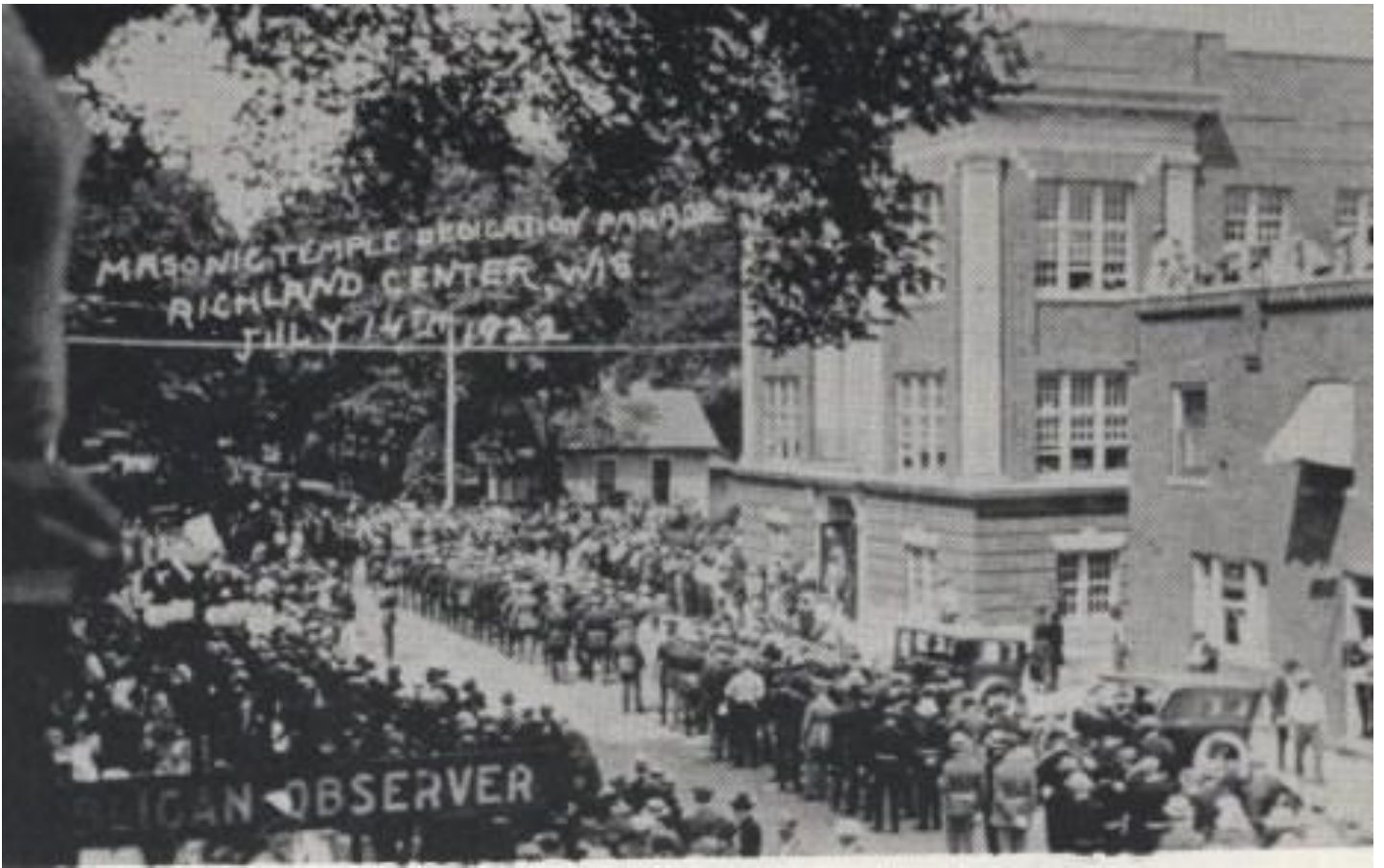
Photos provided by Richland County History Room.

Masonic Temple, 189 North Central Avenue, 1920 - 1921.

Richland Center has a long history of social and fraternal organizations and clubs. Most often rooms were rented or social halls were constructed on the second floors of large commercial buildings such as the H.T. Bailey Store at 194 East Court Street that was originally designed to house the Masonic Lodge on its second floor in 1883. The most elaborate building specifically designed to address the needs and activities of a social organization; the present Masonic Temple is an architecturally significant example of the Beaux-Arts style, as well as a significant example of a type of architecture, the Social building.

The most elaborate and best preserved example of Beaux-Arts Classicism in Richland Center, the Masonic Temple was built in 1920. Designed by Madison architect Edward Tough in a monumental Classical style, the brick Masonic Temple exhibits colossal columns with a pedimented entablature, an arched window with articulated keystone, a balustrade sill, and stained glass in the center bay, associated with the Beaux Arts manner. Influenced by a mixture of classic styles, the exceptionally well preserved, dark mottled brick Masonic Temple displays a rather plain entablature visually supported by white Bedford stone Greek Ionic columns and end piers placed on a rusticated elevated foundation in the manner of a Roman Temple. A rather simplified interpretation of the Beaux-Arts style designed without the exuberance of moldings and statuary often found in the style, the Masonic Temple originally featured a bowling alley on the ground floor and the Masonic Lodge on the upper floors.





Masonic Temple dedication July 14, 1922