

# Eastern Star Unit Aids Negroes

## Runs Service Program

BY ROI OTTLEY

Hazel Stillwell, worthy grand matron of Eureka Grand chapter, Order of the Eastern Star, heads one of the oldest fraternal organizations in Illinois which offers charitable services to the Negro community. The order recently convened in Chicago.

The group, affiliated with the Prince Hall Masons, a Negro order, was started in 1889 in Chicago with single chapters representing Jacksonville, Lovejoy, Springfield, and four chapters in Chicago. The total membership was less than 100.

### Maintains Home

Today the Order of the Eastern Star has 4,700 members in 76 chapters in 37 Illinois cities. There are 40 chapters in Cook county. The group conducts a broad program of social service including awarding scholarships to needy youngsters who wish to attend college.

The Eastern Star also helps to maintain a home for the aged in Rock Island. It keeps



MRS. HAZEL STILLWELL

up the building's furnishings and annually contributes \$8,000, a sum which represents a tax on each individual member.

The organization aids the sick, maintains a blood donation fund for members who are hospitalized and need blood, contributes to other charity funds, and comes to the aid of its own members in distress.

Mrs. Stillwell, who has been a member of Eastern Star 17 years, was elected worthy grand matron of the

grand chapter in 1957. She was born in Durant, Miss., Jan. 13, 1908, one of seven children. Her father, James Laws, was a laborer.

### Moves to Chicago

During her infancy her father settled the family in Memphis, Tenn., where she attended elementary and high school. She entered Le Moyne College, Memphis, graduating in 1928, and later attended a business school.

Mrs. Stillwell came to Chicago in 1929, and obtained clerical employment. She has worked for the selective service system for 19 years, and is supervisor of Chicago area office number 12.

She is a former president of the George L. Giles unit of the American Legion auxiliary which conducts programs for south side widows and orphans. She also is a past president of the Fine Arts guild of the Order of the Eastern Star, which organized the educational department of the grand chapter.

The Negro fraternal leader is the wife of Curtis S. Stillwell, a retired customs clerk and past commander of the George L. Giles post of the American Legion.