

Swindon Advertiser Sat, Nov 2, 1873

Consecration of the V.W.H. Lodge of Freemasons

On Thursday last the ceremony of consecrating and dedicating a new lodge of Freemasons, the Vale of White Horse Lodge, No 1770, took place at the Savings Bank, Faringdon, by the W. Bro James Terry, Pro J.G. Warden for Herts, assisted by Bro Rev C. Robertson Honey, PGC Berks & Bucks; Bro W. Clarke, PGDC Suffolk, acting as Director of Ceremonies; and Bro J.J. New, PM 477 and 1295, and Bro Henry C. Tombs as acting Senior Warden; and Bro Morland as Junior Warden.

The room was very handsomely fitted up, and had the appearance of a well established lodge. The brethren of the neighbourhood showed their interest in the event by attending in good numbers, nearly 80 being present at the ceremony, the following lodges being represented: Royal Sussex 355, Southern Star 1158, Lodge of Hope 574, Grey Friar 1101, Union 414, Abbey 945, Berkhamstead 504, Windrush 1703, Prince of Wales 951, Gooch 1295, Phoenix 331, Cotteswold 592, Silverian 471 and the Royal Albert 906. The lodge having been opened in the three degrees, the brethren of the new lodge were arranged in order and the Pro G. Secretary read the petition and warrant, the brethren signifying their approval in Masonic form. Then followed the oration by the Bro Rev C. Robertson Honey, PGC Berks & Bucks, on the nature and principles of the institution. He said the official discharge of the of the duties which were assigned to him it devolved upon him at that point of the ceremony to address the brethren assembled in reference to the principles of the Order. To those who were conversant with the conduct and ordering of a lodge it would be superfluous for him to offer any directions, but in a wise dispensation which provides for the speaking of a word in season on such an occasion as the present, it was his duty most solemnly and anxiously to solicit their consideration of those features which should adorn the Masonic character. He would, therefore, briefly impress upon them the necessity of observing not only when in lodge but in their avocations and employments of life those solemn charges which from time to time are delivered in their assemblies, and which directed them how they could best act upon the square with their fellow men, and how uprightness of conduct and level steps made the perfect and upright Mason. He would also strive to enforce the imperative duties of charity which they all knew were the cardinal precepts of their order, and which could only be beneficial in so far as it was largely diffused, and which, while it offered its benefits to the immediate institutions of their order could only be perfect in so far as it was extended throughout all the obligations of life. From Freemasonry, rightly appreciated, is derived instruction not only how they ought

to live but how they ought to die. From Freemasonry, rightly inculcated, was derived a knowledge of themselves, and whilst they learnt from its precepts that to a true and upright man death hath no terrors equal to the stain of falsehood and dishonour, it so directed them how to so keep within the compass as to prove what is continually affirmed, and what he and they ought constantly to hope for and day by day to pray for, that he who is a good Mason must necessarily be a good man.

The following Anthem was then sung by Bros Marriott, Dyson, Briggs and Strickland, Bro W. Dyson of the Royal Chapel of St George, Windsor, acting as director, and Bro Whitehead officiating at the harmonium:-

Behold how pleasant and how good,
For Brethren such as we,
Of the "Accepted" Brotherhood -
To dwell in unity.

'Tis like the oil on Aaron's head,
Which to his feet distils,
Like Herman's dew so richly shed
On Zion's sacred hills.

For there the Lord of light and love
A blessing sent with power,
Oh! May we all that blessing prove,
E'en live for evermore.

On friendship's altar rising here,
Our hands now plighted be,
To live in love, with hearts sincere
In peace, in unity.

The other ceremonies of consecration having been performed, the Presiding Officer dedicated and constituted the lodge. The following brothers were appointed to the various offices:- Bro J. Blandy-Jenkins, WM, Bro C. Luker, SW, Bro E. Belcher, JW, Bro A. Pocock, SD, Bro J. Tombs, JD, Bro W. Bacon, Sec, Bro R.B. Phillips, Treas, and Bro H. Godfrey, IG. Another Anthem having been sung, Bro H.C. Tombs, PGD England, PPSGW and PG Sec, Wilts, expressed on behalf of Lord Methuen and the VWDPGM Bro Goldney his hearty congratulations to the new WM and the other officers of the lodge.

An adjournment was then made for refreshment to the Crown Hotel, where a first-class dinner was placed on the table. WM J. Blandy-Jenkins, PM 945, presided, and was supported by Consecrating Master Bro I. Terry, PPGW Herts, and Secretary Benevolent Institute; Bro H.C. Tombs, PGD England, PPSGW, and PG Sec Wilts; Installing Master, Bro J.J. New, PM 477 and 1295, PAGDC Wilts & Cheshire; Bro C. Roberston Honey, PG Chaplain Berks & Bucks; Bro Bradley, PG Secretary Berks & Bucks; Bro Stephens, PG Treasurer Berks & Bucks; Bro Hare, Director of Ceremonies; Bro J. Chandler, PPSGW; Bro J. Toomer, PPJGW Wilts; Bro A. Plummer, Pass Dir of Cer; Bro Moreland, and about 50 other brothers. An abundant supply of wine was placed on the table by the new WM.

The toast of the "Queen and Craft" having been honoured the Chairman proposed, "The Grand Master, HRH the Prince of Wales," speaking of the good feeling he had always sought to establish between all classes of the community.

The "health of the Earl of Carnarvon, Provincial Grand Master; Lord Skelmersdale, DGM, and the rest of the grand officers" was coupled with the name of Bro H.C. Tombs, who, in reply, congratulated the MC on the happy and auspicious manner in which the inauguration had been carried out. He did this the more heartily, he said, because nearly all the new Masons were belonging to the province of Wilts, and owned the same mother as himself. From the careful manner in which he knew these children had been selected he could promise they would be good men and Masons. It made him glad to see the happy fraternization, and only feared that under Sir Daniel Gooch and Bro Blandy-Jenkins they would feel inclined to forget and forsake their old nest. Their plumage at present was only light blue, but he felt sure by-and-by as they increased in age and Masonic experience their colour would alter to purple and gold. He could only add that Wiltshire would be always rejoiced to co-operate with the province of Berks and Bucks in Masonic work.

The Chairman next gave the "health of Sir Daniel Gooch, RWPGM, Berks & Bucks, and the rest of the Provincial Grand Officers." Speaking of Sir Daniel Gooch the Chairman said they were thankful to have secured him in the province, even if it was at the expense of their brethren at Swindon, for he could perfectly understand the loss the removal of such a good man must have been to them.

Bro Bradley, PGS, replied on behalf of Sir Daniel, for whose absence he apologised. The province, he said, had great cause for congratulation at being presided over by such a man. Sir Daniel had done all the work of Craft Masonry and higher offices, and still his interest did not cease. It was he they had to thank for preventing the contemplated separation of their province, he being one of the

first to hold up his hand against it. He (Bro Bradley) congratulated the new lodge on the manner in which everything had been carried out up to then, and he counselled the brethren to remember the advice given to entered apprentices not to be too anxious to increase their numbers, but to wait and be particular in securing those only as brothers who they thought worthy of their esteem.

The health of "Bro J. Terry, PJGW for Herts," was proposed in flattering terms and heartily received.

Bro Terry, in reply, expressed his belief that there was a good opening and a wild field for the operation of a lodge in the district. He asked them to cherish the advice given by the PG Secretary, and be careful who they initiated as members, for it would be better in the end to have only one good addition yearly than four or five bad ones. He should, he said, be able to send an excellent report to the Grand Council of what he had seen that day, and in conclusion expressed a hope that it would not be long before he saw the VWH Lodge represented at the Benevolent Institution, which, looking at the excellent selection they had made in the WM, he did not think would be long first.

In proposing the health of "Bro J.J. New, the Installing Master," the Chairman said there were but few there who did not know his worth. Had it not been for his excellent coaching he doubted much if the Lodge No 1770 would ever have been in existence, for everything had been done with his kind assistance.

Bro New having replied, the Chairman proposed the health of "Bro C. Robertson-Honey." The chaplain, whose services, and those of his fellows, were highly spoken of.

Bro Honey said he felt if any area was covered by clerical work it was the Masonic area. Charity was the cardinal precept of the order, and there was no greater or finer precept in the Gospel. One of the strongest reasons that induced him to join the order was the great brotherly and Christian will, which existed among them all. He wished the VWH Lodge every success.

Bro New proposed the health of, "the WM," as that of a man of sterling worth - one who would do his duty in a manner to reflect credit on the order.

The WM replied, and said having been challenged by Bro Terry to accept a stewardship of one of the Masonic Charities he would accept one, and would promise in addition to what he could give himself to prepare a list for the lodge and raise a fund to be invested for the same purpose in the name of the lodge.

The toast of the "WM's, PM's, Officers and Brethren of the Approving Lodges," was responded to by Bro Sheppard, of the Abbey Lodge, Abingdon, and that of the Wardens and Officers of the VWH Lodge 1770, by Bro Luker, SW.

In replying to the toast of, "Success to the Masonic Charities," Bro Terry said there was £41,000 required every year to meet regular expenses, of which they received only £5000 from permanent sources, so members could by this fact form some idea of the work in the hands of the stewards. Upwards of 700 people were kept in comfort in their institutions, and he asked the young members to remember their motto, "Peace, charity, good will to all men." If they followed this out God would be sure to bless all their undertakings.

During the evening some excellent glees and songs were sung by brothers, Bro Whitehead presiding at the piano.