



**Bi-Centenary of the
Constitutional Lodge**

No. 55



Installation Meeting

THURSDAY, 20TH FEBRUARY, 1936

**Bi-Centenary of the
Constitutional Lodge**

No. 55

1736 - - 1936

Installation Meeting

HELD AT

Southern House,

Cannon Street Station, E.C.4

Thursday, 20th February, 1936

Worshipful Master :

Bro. A. F. COREY, P.M., L.R.

Officers 1936-37



W. Bro.	A. F. CORLEY, P.M., L.R.	W.M.
" "	EDWARD HOLT, P.M.	I.P.M.
" "	ALFRED SANDLAND, P.M., L.R.	S.V.
" "	SAMUEL DARGAVEL, P.M., L.R.	J.W.
" "	S. A. HORNE, P.M.	Treasurer
" "	W. HONEYMAN BROWN, P.M., L.R.	Secretary
" "	LEONARD G. BUNGARD, P.M.	D.C.
" "	J. SHERROTT, P.M.	S.D.
" "	E. A. WARD, P.M.	J.D.
" "	H. J. HUTCHINSON, P.M.	I.G.
" "	C. T. CARTON, P.M.	Steward
" "	STANLEY W. RAE, P.M.	Steward
" "	J. C. F. LANCE, L.R. ... ..	... Tyler



Acting Organist Bro. JACK UPSON

Toasts



THE KING AND THE CRAFT.

THE MOST WORSHIPFUL THE GRAND MASTER,
H.R.H. THE DUKE OF CONNAUGHT AND STRATHEARN, K.G.

THE MOST WORSHIPFUL THE PRO GRAND MASTER,
RT. HON. EARL OF HAREWOOD, K.G.

THE RIGHT WORSHIPFUL THE DEPUTY GRAND MASTER,
GENERAL SIR FRANCIS J. DAVIES, K.C.B.

and the rest of the
GRAND OFFICERS PRESENT AND PAST.

THE LODGE.

THE VISITORS.

THE TYLER'S TOAST.

Vins

Le Menu

APERITIFS

—

SHERRY

—

Amontillado—Pale Dry

—

HOCK

Liebfraumilch—1929

—

BURGUNDY

Volnay 1926

—

CHAMPAGNE

Clicquot Veuve, Dry England

Bollinger, Special Cuvee

—

BRANDY

Normandy,

Grande Fine Champagne, 1893

Huitres de Whitstable
Hors d'Œuvre Lucullus

—

Tortue Claire au Marsala
Creme de Volaille

—

Darne de Saumon Doria

—

Carre d'Agneau roti
Sauce Maitre
Haricots Verts
Pommes Nouvelles Rissoles

—

Sorbet au Maraschino

—

Carbon d'York Blaise au Epinards

—

Poussin de Printemps Grille Vert-Pre

Salade de Laitue

—

Mandarin Glace Maison

Petits Fours

—

Dessert

—

Cafe

THE CONCORD SINGERS

WOR. BRO. HARRY MAY, L.R., and BRO. MOUNTFORD SCOTT

WOR. BRO. GEORGE WEBBER and BRO. ALEXANDER HENDERSON

will give Selections during the Evening.

CONSTITUTIONAL LODGE

No. 55

“Happy is the Nation which has no History” and this proverbial utterance, slightly adapted by substituting Lodge for Nation, might with justification be held to apply to this Lodge—at least to the mind of one Member of it who has spent some odd half hours in browsing amongst the records of the past enshrined in its Minute Books.

Doubtless some of the readers of these notes have had the experience of happening on a Lodge which has been rich in traditions, either in the personnel of its Members, or the happenings of particular meetings.

The writer recalls visiting a Lodge, an honourable and honoured one, which boasted of the fact that, in its remote past, it rejoiced in a Member who paid the last penalty on the scaffold, being hanged for sheep stealing, if memory serves.

Other Lodges have claimed belted Earls and Knights who had earned their spurs for valour, Poets or Statesmen whose names had adorned the Lodge lists in the past. Nothing so heroic or so magnificent has ever befallen this Lodge so far as scrutiny of its records has revealed. Its Miltons, if any, have been mute, we will not add inglorious. No Village Hampden has emerged from its ranks to withstand oppression from the Civil power. Possibly the nearest approach was that of an old Member who could tell a thrilling tale of the Chartist riots, when, as a fugitive from Justice, with a price upon his head, he found strange hiding places, sleeping in barns and ditches before he evaded pursuit successfully, and in due time returned to reputable Citizenship, giving freely of his time and substance in the interests of his fellow men, serving as an Alderman of the first London County Council—and at his death, full of riches and honour, plunging the London Borough, of which he was a prominent Burgess, into sorrow and grief for his loss.

While it may be conceded that no extravagant claims to fame can be advanced in respect of this Lodge, it may be urged with equal force, that this does not dispose of the matter entirely, and that there are other aspects which merit consideration—and here and now it can be asserted that—prosaic as the records of the Lodge may be deemed to be, they afford a long and moving record of patient and consistent endeavour, upon the part of worthy Brethren, to uphold those principles upon which the Order is founded—to maintain, in full, the trust reposed in them and, when the time came to relinquish it, to look to it that it was passed to their successors to carry it on worthily in their turn.

Perhaps this can be best substantiated by a few references to the Books and here the opening page of the first Minute Book extant is illuminating. Glance for a moment at this record of a Meeting held at the Old Crown and Cushion, Lambeth, on Monday, the 27th December, 1789—which sets forth the names of those present, consisting of R.W. Brother Thiselton, M. Brother Lindsay, of the Lodge of Liberty as S.W. Brother Guest, Senr., of No. 251 as J.W. and a list of Brethren with the names and/or numbers of their Lodges. One fact emerges, as those of us who are used to recording proceedings will have realised—that word “as” betrayed the fact that, with the solitary exception

of the Master, no Member of the Lodge was present, as is borne out by the Minute which follows and is here given verbatim:—

“The Lodge being opened in due form the R.W. Master acquainted the Visitors that in consequence of a Debt which the Lodge had laboured under for a considerable time he found himself the only subscribing Member of the Lodge and that as he had been given to understand from Brother Lindsay that a Removal to this house would be the certain consequence of supporting the Constitution and of reducing the debt he had requested Brother Lindsay to issue the Summonses in his own name to those Brethren to whom he was personally known, the effect of which was the present respectable and numerous attendance.”

“The R.W. Master caused the Bye Laws of the Lodge to be read and declared it to be his intention to meet at this house in future and further requested that the Brethren present would favour him with their names to be admitted Members of this Lodge.

“Upon which the subsequent Brethren obligingly consented.”

(Here follows a list of names and the appointment and investiture of Wardens, Treasurer and Secretary.)

“The R.W. Master on account of his peculiar situation dispensed for this night with the Bye Law respecting the admission of Members and declared them to be such and they accordingly signed the Bye Laws.

“The First Lecture was worked and the Lodge was closed with Harmony and Good Fellowship and the pleasing prospect of its being emancipated from its ‘Incumbrances.’”

Turning over the leaves of the Book one reads that on another occasion a Candidate received the first and second Degrees and by unanimous consent of the Lodge was admitted a Member.

In 1790 there is a Motion carried that as the S.W. had advanced £17 15s. 0d. the Treasurer be authorised to pay him “after the rate of Five per cent. for that or any sum he should be out of pocket on account of Ye Lodge.”

In 1791 the Lodge was evidently in full activity as there were meetings in each month of the year and at the June Meeting a Candidate was Initiated, Passed and Raised on one night.

At a Second Meeting in June a Motion was duly carried that the J.W. shall keep an account of all liquors received during Lodge Hours from which it may be inferred that on occasion at any rate—Labour and Refreshment were united.

In 1793 a proposal was carried that Initiates should pay 5/- “towards the better support of the Royal Cumberland Freemason’s School,” an early indication of the inculcation of the lesson of Brotherly Love.

In 1795 there is a Motion for “Ye annual denonation (sic) to Ye Servants of Ye House” indicative of the goodwill which characterised our antient Brethren. Then follows a proposal for the Meetings to be held as near to Full Moon as was possible—pointing as it does to the difficulty of returning home at night when the roads were indifferently lighted and not, as the popular world might surmise, to the potency of their potations.

In 1797 another example occurs of a Candidate receiving the three Degrees in one night.

While yet another instance occurs in 1805 of a Candidate receiving the three Degrees in one night and thereupon being appointed J.W.

Passing on, one finds in 1809 the W.M. informed Brethren that Brother Francis Dance was raised to the sublime degree at the Lodge of Instruction (by emergency) on Sunday, the (—) day of July, 1809.

In 1815 the Lodge changed its Quarters, and this is worthy of mention because there is an entry under the hand of the then G.S. that the foregoing Minute was examined and the removal registered. The date added is some eighteen months after the removal so that no one can be accused of acting precipitately.

It is hardly necessary to give extracts from the Minute Books which follow. The initiation of Candidates of various avocations, their subsequent passing and raising, grants to necessitous Brethren or their Widows, presentations of jewels to outgoing Masters and, on occasion, pieces of plate to the Treasurer or Secretary and subscriptions to the Charities—follow with regularity, and so it has gone on through the years—but all testifying to continuance in effort to prove useful in their day and generation and happily free from dissension or strife. Perhaps it may be mentioned that the solitary instance of unseemly conduct recorded occurs more than a hundred years ago when, in an unguarded moment, a Brother insulted the S.W. in the discharge of his duty, by stigmatising him as a proud fool. The Chronicler regrets to add that, although called upon then and there and also subsequently to apologise, it must be inferred that the offending Brother proved obstinate in his unseemly conduct, as no record of compliance can be found; but as the S.W. was shortly afterwards installed as W.M. we must hope that the difference was arranged and harmony restored.

If testimony be needed as to the sober habits of the Brethren it may be found in a Minute of 1806 when removal of the Meeting place was changed on the representation that "Mrs. Howell was not satisfied in having the Lodge continue at her House not answering her expectations."

In 1865 amongst those initiated in the Lodge was one Walter Thomas Farthing, at that time a young Architect in practice in the Strand. He was destined to become one of the most distinguished Members of the Lodge and one of its greatest ornaments, as will be subsequently revealed.

In 1867 the Brethren became alive to the fact that the Lodge had been in existence for considerably over one hundred years, and accordingly petitioned for permission to wear a Centenary Jewel. The M.W. Grand Master graciously sanctioned the prayer of the Petition and a Warrant empowering it was issued from Grand Lodge. It is to be regretted that this Warrant no longer exists amongst the Lodge Records. According to the Minutes a Brother then present offered to have the Warrant suitably framed, which was accepted. Unfortunately no record of its return exists, and one can only conjecture that it must have been lost, when as happened more than once—the place of meeting was changed.

Those Brethren who are R.A. Masons will be interested to know that early in 1874—Notice of Motion for foundation of a Royal Arch Chapter in connection with the Lodge was given, and that the Prayer of the Petition subsequently presented—was granted by the Authorities so that shortly afterwards the Constitutional Chapter No. 55 came into existence.

In 1874 Brother Farthing, having served the various Offices, was installed in the Chair as Master of the Lodge and thence onward, until well within the memory of the older Members of to-day, he continued in the service of the Lodge as D.C., then Secretary and finally as Treasurer. He occupied one or other of the offices located at the Table for just over 30 years. His services to Freemasonry were recognised by the M.W. Grand Master in 1911 when he received Grand Rank, being appointed Past Assistant Grand Superintendent of Works.

In 1915, on the completion of Fifty years connection with the Lodge, the Brethren signalled the occasion by presenting him with a Silver Salver which bore an address in appropriate terms engraved upon it. Further recognition of this event would doubtless have been made had those times proved less strenuous.

Reference must, of course, be made to the effect of the Great War on the Lodge, and the latter's reactions to it. The younger Members joined the Colour, the elder ones rendered such services as their circumstances permitted and as opportunity offered. Mercifully the loss by death was not great, but the W.M. of 1915 left his Chair in the middle of his year to join up. He was grievously wounded but happily was restored to us, and a casual vacancy in a subsequent year enabled the Lodge to show its regard by electing him for a second year's service in the Chair.

The advent of the Masonic Memorial Fund afforded the Lodge an opportunity of exhibiting its consistent loyalty to the Rulers of the Craft and, in due time, the Lodge qualified as a Hall Stone Lodge.

So the years have passed until the Lodge's history enters on a new phase with the celebration of its Year of Jubilee.

There is one important branch of the Lodge's activities which has not been noticed hitherto, and its omission would create a serious defect, the more so as the practice of Charity or as it may preferably be termed, Brotherly Love, is strictly enjoined at the very commencement of one's Masonic career.

In giving the following details it would be well to say that they cannot be regarded as exhaustive. The task of collating the figures to arrive at complete accuracy would be insuperable. Thus while the Minute Books contain numberless responses on the part of Brethren to requests for Stewards for the Festivals of the respective Institutions accompanied with the vote of a contribution from the Lodge's Funds it is a rarity to find any further reference to each particular List and the failure "to condescend on particulars" in the balance sheets, cured in these later years, has not lightened the labour.

Application, however, to the respective Institutions has elicited the following particulars, and here perhaps acknowledgment should be made for the courteous, nay more, genial fashion in which the applications were met and for the ready responses which followed.

It may be doubted whether the returns so obtained are finally exhaustive, changes in their systems of keeping their books have been made from time to time—but it is abundantly clear that with the passing of the years the Lodge collectively, and its Members individually, have been faithful to the injunction before alluded to. Let the figures speak for themselves—*Place aux Dames*.

Royal Masonic Institution for Girls.

Between the years 1847 and 1885 the Lodge made contributions of One Guinea almost yearly—amounting in all to £37 16s. 0d.

In the period between 1868 and the present day the Lodge has made contributions either on Stewards' Lists, or otherwise, amounting to £336. During the same period Brethren of the Lodge have served as Stewards and taken up Lists—with sums amounting in all to £1,493 10s. 6d., exclusive of the Lodge's Contributions.

Royal Masonic Institution for Boys.

The Boys' Institution has also benefited. In 1865 and 1866 the Lodge made contributions of Ten and Forty Guineas respectively, and in 1879 a special donation of Twenty Guineas to the Bank Loss Restoration Fund.

From 1867 onwards Brethren have served as Stewards and taken up Lists which, with the Lodge's contributions included, amount in all to £3,077 1s. 0d. With the addition of the before mentioned subscriptions to the Building Fund to the final total is £5,151 5s. 0d.

Royal Masonic Benevolent Institution.

The return from the Royal Masonic Benevolent Institution speaks for the year 1877 and thence onwards. The Stewards' Lists amount to £1,576 9s. 6d., including the Lodge's donations which amount in all to £403.

So far as the Youngest Charity is concerned, the Lodge speedily recognised the obligation upon it to take its share in establishing the Royal Masonic Hospital upon firm foundations and in 1921 by the combination of a grant from its Benevolent Fund and a modest "per capita" subscription from its Members became a Founding Lodge. Later when the Building Appeal was issued a further sum of £105 was voted from the Benevolent Fund.

The Installation Meeting in February, 1923, marked a fresh development when it was decided to devote the proceeds of the Charity Box to the Samaritan Fund of the Hospital. These proved to amount to £10 15s. 0d., and after a small balance of capital in hand, due to a change of investment, had been added, the sum of £21 3s. 11d. was forwarded. The practice of earmarking the contents of the Installation Charity Box for the Samaritan Fund has continued ever since. The aggregate amount thus contributed from 1923 onwards is £164 2s. 5d.

In this respect the Lodge of Instruction has followed worthily the lead of the Parent Lodge—by accepting a Collecting Box for the Hospital whereby sums amounting to £52-odd have been forwarded. Dare one add that this amount would be considerably augmented if the Brethren availed themselves, to the full, of the advantages offered to them in this direction.

References have been made to the Benevolent Fund of the Lodge and perhaps a few words as to it may fittingly appear here. Incidentally the attitude of the Lodge during that crisis in the World's history—the Great War of 1914-1918 may be recounted. The true story has never, hitherto, been properly told.

Shortly before the October Meeting, in 1914, the first after the commencement of hostilities, it became evident that the Brethren were averse from indulgence in material pleasures what time others, near and dear to them, were facing discomfort, privation and the dread possibility of loss of limb, and even life itself, at their Country's Call.

Expressions of this feeling were so marked that those responsible, sharing it to the full, acted without hesitation and arranged for the service of a simple meal at the close of Labour in substitution for the more elaborate one customary and awaited the Meeting's verdict.

The departure from custom found ready acceptance from all concerned, Past Masters vied with their Juniors in commending it and so it continued. With some slight expansion on Installation Night—which, after all, was not unreasonable in recognition of that event in the incoming Masters' life—the period of the War was marked by a strict determination to observe the principle "To eat to live rather than to live to eat."

It is not extravagant to claim that the Lodge in its outlook was ahead of its contemporaries, to say nothing of the uninitiated or popular world where the cry of "Business as usual" prevailed and might have been supplemented by the addition of "Pleasure as well."

It should be stated that with one or two exceptions, where real hardship would have resulted, the Brethren continued to pay the usual fee, so that, as will readily be guessed, the Annual Balance Sheets regularly shewed a substantial surplus of receipts over expenditure, and, as the Country's calls for fresh money were constant and urgent, the balances were easily invested from time to time. Here the curious may enquire what became of the accumulated Funds. Before replying it is necessary to digress for a short space. Without enlarging upon it—mere mention being sufficient—a variety of causes had contributed to the unhappy fact that the Benevolent Fund, as such, had ceased to exist. The returns of the Charity Box only met current expenditure and sometimes failed at that, so that resort had to be made to the General Funds and it had long been felt that the Benevolent Fund must be revived and placed upon an enduring foundation.

To resume, with the cessation of War the long looked for opportunity had arrived. The investments were carried over to Benevolence and the Fund re-appeared. The observance of the sound rule that initiation and joining Fees partake of the nature of Capital, and are certainly not Income, has enabled the Fund to be reinforced so that it now stands at the figure disclosed by the latest Balance Sheet, viz: £965.

There is a wish that lies near the hearts of the Brethren who were responsible for the inception of the Scheme, as it lay near the hearts of some who shared their responsibility but have passed on, that it may be given to them to see the Fund attain to a four-figure total. May this prove so and that speedily.

The task is accomplished. Brethren and Guests alike have been placed in possession of some, at any rate, of the features of the Lodge. Nothing startling, not showy, but steady and straightforward and steadfast in the maintenance of the principles of the Order.

To the Brethren of the Lodge. Let us look to it that the Standards set for us by our Antient Brethren shall not suffer at our hands. May we hand on our traditions unimpaired and may our Lodge continue to flourish from generation to generation.

Constitutional

Lodge, No. 55.



Worshipful Master :
Bro. STANLEY W. RAE.

Master Elect :
Bro. A. F. CORLEY, P.M., J.R.

19, COLEMAN STREET.

E.C.2.

7th February, 1936.

DEAR SIR AND BROTHER,

You are requested to attend the duties of this Lodge at Southern House, Cannon Street Station, E.C.4., on Thursday, the 20th instant, at 5 o'clock precisely.

By command of the W.M.,
W. HONEYMAN BROWN, P.M.

Secretary.

EVENING DRESS AND MASONIC MOURNING

DINNER at conclusion of Business.

The Lodge is placed in mourning by the most lamented deaths of—:

His Late Most Gracious Majesty, King George V.

The Rt. Hon: The Lord Amphil, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., M.W. Pro G.M.

The Rt. Hon: The Lord Cornwallis, C.B.E., R.W. Deputy G.M.



Notices.



The Regular Meetings of the Lodge are held at Southern House, Cannon Street Station, E.C.4, on the **Third** Thursday in the months of October, November, January, February (Installation), and March.

The Lodge of Instruction meets at London Wall Restaurant, London Wall, E.C., on Tuesday evenings from first Tuesday in October to last Tuesday in March at 6.30 p.m.

Preceptor, W. Bro. S. DARGAVEL, P.M., L.R.

The Quarterly Communications of Grand Lodge are held on the **First** Wednesday in the months of March, June, September and December.

The Grand Festival is held on the last Wednesday in April.

The W.M., Past Masters and Wardens are requested to note all these dates.

The Constitutional Chapter No. 55 meets at the Café Monico, W.I, on the fourth Friday in February (Installation) and April, and on the second Friday in November. All Master Masons are eligible for Exaltation one month after taking their Third Degree. Members of Constitutional Lodge No. 55 will be cordially welcomed either as Joining Members or Exaltees.

NOTE.—Brethren desiring to nominate Candidates for Initiation or Joining must forward the requisite forms, duly completed, to the Master, through the Secretary, 21 days before the date of the Regular Meeting to which such proposition is to be made.

Agenda.



To Read and sign Minutes of last Regular Lodge Meeting.

To receive Report of the Audit Committee.

Installation of Master-Elect.

Appointment and Investiture of Officers.

To Receive Communications and propositions.

NOTE.—Officers of the Lodge and Candidates are particularly requested to be punctual.

Any Officer of the Lodge unable to be present is requested to advise the Secretary without fail.

Officers

1935-1936



W. BRO. STANLEY W. RAE	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	W.M.
" " C. T. CARTON	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	I.P.M.
" W. J. MUSTON	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	J.W.
" " A. F. CORLEY, P.M., L.R.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Treasurer
" " W. HONEYMAN BROWN, P.M., L.R.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Secretary
" " ALFRED SANDLAND, P.M., L.R.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	D.C.
" J. HUTCHINSON	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	S.D.
" H. HALL	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	J.D.
" P. J. SARD	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	I.G.
" E. W. CURTIS	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Steward
" R. L. HAYES	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Steward
" V. J. NICHOLS	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Steward
" J. C. F. LANCE, L.R.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Tyler

Acting Organist

Bro. JACK UPSON