

Sir Augustus Frederick Godson.

Augustus Frederick Godson was born on 18th. August 1835 in Tenbury Wells, Worcestershire. He was the eldest son of Septimus Holmes Godson, barrister-at-law, and a nephew of Richard Godson, who was, on and off, Member of Parliament for Kidderminster between 1832 and his death in 1849.

Augustus Frederick Godson was educated at King's College, London, matriculated and entered Queens College, Oxford, on 2nd. June 1853 at the age of 18 where he read Law. He obtained his B.A. degree in 1858 and M.A. in 1860. He entered the Inner Temple on the 5th. June 1854 and was called to the Bar on 17th. November 1859 and went on the Oxford circuit.

On the 16th. February 1869, at the age of ³³ 33, he married Jane Charlotte, youngest daughter of Edmund Boughton of Stoke, Coventry, and, in the same year, he was made a Justice of the Peace for the County of Worcester.

Apparently, like his uncle Richard, he had political ambitions, for, on the dissolution of the Liberal (Whig) Government under Gladstone in 1874, he contested Warwick but without success. He tried again in 1880, again without success. However, in 1885 the Government fell, actually on a defeat on an amendment to the Budget, but really due to Helston's mishandling of the Egyptian question which resulted in the death of General Gordon in Khartoum. This gave Godson an opportunity to contest Kidderminster on behalf of the Conservative Party which he won; he held the seat until his death in 1916. He lived at Westwood Park, a large red-brick edifice in his own grounds between Droitwich and Ombersley.

While on the Oxford circuit he became interested in Freemasonry and was initiated in the Royal Edward Lodge No.892 (2) on Thursday, 14th. March 1865. His proposer was the Senior Warden, Br. Elias Chalwick, and he was seconded by the Worshipful Master, Br. Henry Moore, who practised as a solicitor in Leominster (3)

From that day his progress in Freemasonry was meteoric, and in the same (1865) year he became a joining member of Worcester Lodge No.280 and a Founder (and first Junior Warden) of St. Michaels Lodge No.1097, Tenbury Wells, all in ^{just over 12} 12 months from his initiation! (4)

-
- (1) The origin of the word is obscure; probably a shorting of Whiggamore (O.E.D.); a name applied to members of one of the great English political parties who upheld ~~the~~ rights and were opposed to the King; after 1830 almost superseded by 'Liberal' (Chambers Dict.)
 - (2) Meeting at Leominster, Herefordshire, (Warrant dated 11th Nov. 1761.)
 - (3) "History of Royal Edward Lodge No.892" by W.Br. R.W. Darlington (P.P.S.G.W., Herefords.)
 - (4) Although not stipulated in the Book of Constitutions, no brother may become a founder of a Lodge unless he has been a Master Mason for, at least three years. The late W.Br. Percy James (P.M. of Quatuor Coronati Lodge) informed me that this stipulation is contained in a "Grand Master's Minute" but could not be more explicit.

On the 10th. December 1867, he tendered his resignation to his mother Lodge, Royal Edward No.892, in Leominster and, in doing so, eased his conscience by offering a donation of five guineas, to be applied to a Masonic Charity(5)

In 1868, he was installed into the Chair of St. Michaels Lodge No.1097 and, ten years later, Sir Edmund A.H. Lechmere, Provincial Grand Master, appointed him Senior Grand Warden of the Province.

Four years later (i.e. on 13th. September 1882) he succeeded the venerable William Masefield as Deputy Provincial Grand Master and on the death of Sir Edmund Lechmere (in December 1884) he achieved ^{at the age of 60,} ~~the highest office in the Province~~ and was installed by the Pro Grand Master, M.W. Br. the Earl of Lathen, G.C.B. at ^{on 21st. September 1895} and appointed W.Br. Col. Warner Ottley as his Deputy.

(5) Actually, it went to the Royal Masonic Institution for Boys.