



YORK HOUSE
ST. JAMES'S PALACE
LONDON S.W.1

20th November, 1973.

Dear Mr Simes,

The Grand Master has asked me to write to you now that you have laid down your duties as Grand Registrar. His Royal Highness is extremely conscious of the many years' service you have given to Grand Lodge and wishes me to thank you very much indeed for all you have done for Freemasonry. The Duke knows that in spite of a very busy life in the legal profession, you always found time to help and advise at the deliberations of the Board of General Purposes and Grand Lodge. He knows that your presence will be greatly missed, both in the Councils of the Craft and Royal Arch.

His Royal Highness wishes you a long and happy retirement.

Yours sincerely,
Richard Buckley

Private Secretary

Erskine Simes, Esq., QC.

TELEPHONE:
01-405 3633

TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESS:
"LETCHEWORTH, LONDON, WC2B 5AZ"

UNITED GRAND LODGE OF ENGLAND

KINDLY MARK ENVELOPE
PERSONAL

FREEMASONS' HALL,
GREAT QUEEN STREET,
LONDON, WC2B 5AZ

24.8.73

My dear Erskine,

I am glad to know that you are completely settled: it is a good thing to be within easy reach of friends and relations for not night in their pockets. I am also convinced that in almost everyone there is an urge, even if it is buried very deep, to find their way back to their native soil.

We have been associated for longer I think than I have been with any one else in the Masonic hierarchy - with the possible exception of Bobbie Lloyd though that was never so close. You looked after me at the Jubilee of the Midland and Oxford Bar Lodge in 1948: I read your name out as Deputy Grand Registrar a couple of years later in Sydney's absence in Australia, and so it has gone on ever since in the most amiable and

equable Venus of friendship -

We shall miss you very much in all sorts of ways, but I am certain that you are right to want to give up now, and not try to run the Registrarship by remote control: there are some, that you and I know well, who would try to do just that.

John Pondburn is in New Zealand and will not be back till after Grand Lodge: he seems to be the obvious choice as successor, but I have never discussed the question of a new Deputy Grand Registrar with anyone at all, certainly not with him of course at all. In the circumstances I think it would be desirable that your own resignation over till December, by which time he will be back, & the situation will be a bit clearer. The Member Council can deal with it: Bill is not coming September Grand Lodge or Council, and he and Janie be away all October.

I will find a couple of jewels for you in due course, and for the record your full dress Mark is here in your desk. It was lying about when I went through

UNITED GRAND LODGE OF ENGLAND

KINDLY MARK ENVELOPE
PERSONAL

FREEMASONS' HALL,
GREAT QUEEN STREET,
LONDON, WC2B 5AZ

This week to Arthur's logi room, and I feel it has
better be put out of sight.

This letter has rammed in far too long
already in my handwriting, I have been in holiday, but
I cannot end without saying how very much you
are going to be missed both here at the Hall and in
London generally.

There has been a long line of great Grand
Registrars, but none who has combined greatness and
humanity as well as you have done.

Yours ever

James.