

## MASONIC PEACE MEMORIAL.

### GENERAL NOTES.

The Pro-Grand Master, Lord Ampthill, speaking for the M.W. Grand Master, announced that the motive which prompted the erection of this building was to create a perpetual memorial of its gratitude to Almighty God for special blessings He has been pleased to confer upon us, both as Englishmen and Masons, whereby we can render fitting honour to the many brethren who fell in the war, while the objective evidence of that motive should be to provide a Temple for the meetings of Grand Lodge, with entrances, cloakrooms, and approaches designed as far as possible as a self-contained unit.

It should be noted that those entitled to attend the meetings of Grand Lodge are the representatives of every Lodge on the Register, together with Grand Officers, past and present, and it was necessary to make provision for the accommodation of at least 1800 brethren by providing a Temple compact, dignified, adequate and appropriate for the conduct of the ceremonial and legislative proceedings of Grand Lodge without detriment to the convenient planning of other important sections of the building. Thus the Temple suite was designed by the architects, Bros. H. V. Ashley and Winton Newman, to be completely isolated from the remainder of the building, and the Temple itself occupies a position in the centre of the site, secure from being overlooked or disturbed by the traffic noises from outside, and having no other part of the building connected with its outer walls.

The main entrance from the street is in the great portal under the tower; two massive pillars flank the bronze double doors; above them, but not adjoining, are two globes. Beside these pillars are two panels commemorating the laying of the Foundation Stone (14th July 1927), and the opening of the building 19th July 1933 by the M.W. Grand Master Field Marshall H. R. H. The Duke of Comnaught, K. G. Over the lintel is the sculptured design of the Commemorative Jewel issued to brethren who contributed to the fund for the erection of the building.

The present building is on the site of the old Masonic Tavern (1775), one wall of which is still standing. Building depth (frontage) 300-feet in Great Queen Street, 212-feet in Wild Street. The tower 160-feet in height. The Hall contains 151 rooms, irrespective of cloakrooms and lavatories. There are 17 Lodge rooms of varied sizes and designs.

The largest Lodge room is No. 1 which contains paintings of Past Grand Masters. The woodwork is of Australian native timber.

No. 10 Lodge room is called the Eastern Temple, it being a gift from the Lodges of the East - India, etc; walls and ceilings are lined with "May" acoustic tiles, 1-inch thick, porous and made from pumice and cement, set in alternate colours of white and blue-grey.

The entrance vestibule is a square compartment with marble walls and floors, having three short flights of steps, those in front leading to a large cloakroom, and those on either side to the circular stairs which lead to the first floor on which the Temple is situated. The walls of these stairs are lined with marble simply in order to throw into relief the long windows of stained glass, six in

number, designed to represent the six days of creation. On the first floor are the three compartments which form the Approach to the Temple. They consist of the first vestibule at the head of the circular stairs on either side; the Registration Room, where the credentials of Lodge representatives are verified, and the third (or Assembly vestibule) giving access to the Temple. These three compartments are separated by two beautiful openwork bronze screens, the floors being of marble and mosaic, worked with geometrical designs and many pointed stars. The interior of all the compartments are full of richness in adornment with marble walls, floors and columns, and coffered ceilings decorated in blue, red, and gold.

In the first vestibule is seen the Memorial Window. In this design the Commemorative Jewel is the centre feature, with Soldiers, Sailors, and Airmen with others ascending the winding stairs on either side to signify the attainment of Peace by Sacrifice. Below this beautiful window is the Shrine, and, in form, the Shrine seeks to express the deep significance of the brethren's passing from life, through the most honourable of deaths to the realms of eternal rest and immortality. The Altar of the Shrine is carried on a boat to signify sacrifice and to typify the journey of the Soul along the River of Time to the Spiritual Home beyond mortal existence. The decorative flowers and shrubs on the panels include those from every country in which the brethren fought. The top of the Altar conveys the inscription "Live Thou for England, We for England Died". In the centre panel is a reminder that the Soul of Man rests in the Hand of the Almighty. The golden figures on the front of the Shrine portray Moses, the Law Giver; Joshua, the Warrior; Solomon in his Wisdom; and St. George of England, and at the corners of the body of the Altar stand the great winged Seraphims with their trumpets to herald the arrival of the valiant pilgrims into the realm of immortality. Guarding the centre opening through which the Roll of Honour is displayed are four kneeling figures; a Sailor, a Soldier, an Airman, and a Royal Marine, representing the four Fighting Services in all of which our brethren did their duty. The back of the Shrine is decorated with simple sprays of flowers which symbolised the intensity of our love. On the sides are twigs of sweet smelling acacia, the sacred wood of the Temple. On either side, and just in front, is a Pharos, or Lighthouse, enriched with symbols -

Wheat	...	...	...	...	Resurrection
Lotus	...	...	...	...	The Waters of Life
Tris	...	...	...	...	The Eternal Life.

At the foot of the Pharos is the Oak reminding us that just as the Oak of Marre appeared to Abraham, so is the Lord at hand to us.

On the walls of this vestibule are inscribed panels with the names of the Lodges whose support to the Grand Master's fund for the erection of the building gained them the distinction of being recorded as "Hall Stone" Lodges.

In the second vestibule the centres of the stars are formed of a panel of precious stones (Lapis Lazuli), associated with depth and mystery - the colour of these stones is deep blue and they are built up in mosaic pattern. The processional doorways to the Temple are particularly worthy of notice. The portal is of white statuary marble, surmounted by the Arms of the United Grand Lodge of England and enclosing the double doors of bronze bearing eight panels, descriptive of the building of King Solomon's Temple, with the

following dedication:-

CONCERNING THIS HOUSE WHICH THOU ART BUILDING, IF THOU WILT WALK IN MY STATUTES AND EXECUTE MY JUDGEMENTS AND KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS TO WALK IN THEM, THEN WILL I ESTABLISH MY WORD WITH THEE.

These large doors measuring 12-ft x 8-ft. are in two leaves each cast in one piece and weighing  $1\frac{1}{2}$ -tons, beautifully adjusted on their bearings - the gift of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Lancashire (East Divn.) and were specially donated in commemoration of the 35th year of Office of the Earl of Derby as their Provincial Grand Master. These panels are modelled in a conventional manner and depict various scenes. The artist, Bro. Walter Gilbert, who designed the doors and symbolism in conjunction with the architects, describes the panels thus:-

Left side, bottom to No. 3.

1. The stones hewn and squared in the underground quarries by the Gibrilites.
2. The stones being conveyed by oxen through the streets of Jerusalem to the Temple site.
3. Camels bringing gold and silver from beyond the desert.

Right side, bottom to No. 3.

1. The metals being cast in the furnaces of Meredath.
2. The timber being given by King Hiram, felled in Lebanon and brought by float from Tyre to Joppa.
3. The eastern loom with gifts from the weaving sheds beyond the great rivers.

The top two, left and right

A procession to the house of the Lord for thanksgiving and prayer carrying the Ark of the Covenant and seven-branched candle sticks.

The door posts are engaged columns of bronze formed hollow and decorated with ears of corn, the capitals being enriched with a lotus leaf design, and supporting a terrestrial sphere on the one side and a celestial sphere on the other. In the centre of the lintel is the Sacred Symbol, the architraves and lintel thus symbolising Life, Fruitfulness, and Eternity.

Within the bronze doors is the Grand Temple, 123-feet long, 90-feet wide, and  $52\frac{1}{2}$ -feet high and almost exactly orientated. The view from the Throne is of great architectural magnificence, marble and bronze and gold and silver ornamentation blending with the rich hues of the painted windows. To the visitor, the two most striking objects are the handsome Throne and Pedestal of the Grand Master. They are of gilt with coverings of silk damask of exquisite workmanship. They were the gift of the Provincial Grand Lodge, Kent. The Deputy Grand Master's chair was presented by the Provincial Grand Lodge, Middlesex. The Wardens' chairs of appropriate design complete a magnificent suite of furniture.

The colour scheme of the great room is mainly blue, gold, and cream. The wall linings and balcony fronts are of Botticino marble with a dado of dark Ashburton and black marble. The architraves and pediments to the front doorways in the splayed piers in each corner being of Alps Jade marble. Over all is the beautiful coved ceiling, a celestial pediment to the colours with its centre of blue silk

illuminated by heavenly bodies, and framed with a richly coloured surround, included with an indented or tassellated border, having at each corner the Arms of the Grand Lodge of England. Below this is the great mosaic cove illuminated by lights concealed behind the marble cornice. The design of the cove consists of a background of blue and gold, upon which are depicted four allegorical figures and angelic figures representing the four Cardinal Virtues:- TEMPERANCE, FORTITUDE, PRUDENCE AND JUSTICE, the whole being linked by the following inscription:-

HE SHALL BUILD ME AN HOUSE AND I WILL ESTABLISH HIS THRONE FOR EVER. I WILL BE HIS FATHER AND HE SHALL BE MY SON. I WILL SETTLE HIM IN MY HOUSE AND IN MY KINGDOM FOR EVER AND HIS THRONE SHALL BE ESTABLISHED FOR EVERMORE.

A description of the four allegorical figures on the respective sides are of great interest:

- EAST. To the irradiated symbol of the Most High ascends the seven runged ladder from the Tables of the Law. On the rungs of the ladder are placed a cross, an anchor, and a heart symbolising Faith, Hope, and Charity, the whole resting on the Ark of the Covenant with the divine Shekinah and Cherubim. On each side is a column of the Ionic, and upon pedestals to the right and to the left are depicted King Solomon and King Hiram with the seven-branched candlesticks.
- WEST. Beneath a representation of the moon is the 47th proposition of Euclid, the figure of Euclid and Pythagoras standing beside a burning brazier - the emblem of knowledge. There are two pillars of the Doric Order.
- SOUTH. The radiant All-seeing eye surmounts a pentelpha, placed between the Corinthian column of pedestals, joined by seven steps, while Helios the God of Light traverses the heavens with his chariot and horses.
- NORTH. St. George encountering the Dragon forms the background to a design consisting of a double triangle, Seal of Solomon, over the Coat of Arms of H. R. H. The Duke of Connaught, globe surmounted columns and ashlar, rough and smooth, complete the group. Below the cove and in groups of three are the twelve signs of the Zodiac.

The seating accommodation is arranged on the floors, balconies and dais, with tip-up seats. The floor is covered with dark-blue carpets, except the gangways which are of marble inlaid with rubber. The steps and borders of the dais are of rare white statuary marble. The curtains to the windows and door openings, and the three panels behind the dais are of English silk with gold and silver threads to tone with the decorative scheme, the patterns of these and chair covers being adaptations of old Florentine and Venetian designs. A three manual organ, electrically operated, is placed at the rear of the Grand Master's Throne, and on either side are the Pillars of Light, of gilt and of great beauty and workmanship. The illumination is partly by concealed lights behind panels of onyx on the ceilings and soffits, and these with the flood-lighting of the mosaic cove completes a scheme in which the whole interior is diffused with a soft glow in which no individual light is visible.

The ventilation scheme ensures a fresh supply of clean air

at a comfortable temperature, free from draughts and independent of the climatic conditions outside.

The legend on the inside panels of the doors are given by the architects, thus:-

- LEFT SERAPH. As an emblem of God's power, His goodness, the Sun is ordained to rise in the East to open the Day.
- RIGHT SERAPH. The Great Author of All hath given the Moon to govern the Night, a fit season for solemn meditation when the labours of the day are ended, and Man's mind is abstracted from the cares of life.
- THE OPEN LEFT HAND DOOR. The Soul of Man resting in the Hand of God, who, designing to bless man's estate on earth hath opened the Hand of His divine benevolence with good gifts.
- HAND ON RIGHT. Holding the Scales of Truth He will weigh in the balance every truth of every action, word, and thought.

Below these is the Starry Girdle of Prudence.

FIGURES ON INSIDE OF DOORS.

- |                  |                      |
|------------------|----------------------|
| ≠ Taciturnity    | ≠ Temperance         |
| ≠ Self-Sacrifice | ≠ Brotherly Love     |
| ≠ Hope           | ≠ Contemplation      |
| ≠ Fidelity       | ≠ Beauty             |
| ≠ Prudence       | ≠ Courage            |
| ≠ Labour         | ≠ Justice            |
|                  | ≠≠ Wisdom in Council |

The handles of the doors are in form of swords, one with a serpent, the other a lion, at the hilt denoting Wisdom and Courage.

Freemason Hall London.  
"Masonic Peace Memorial."

INTRODUCTORY.

Motive. Lord Ampthill (Speaker for M.W. Grand Master)  
"to create a perpetual memorial of gratitude to  
Almighty God for special blessings He has been pleased  
to confer upon us, both as Englishmen and Masons.  
Whichever we can render fitting homage to the  
many brethren who fell in the war."

Objective measure of that motive should be to provide  
a Temple for the meetings of Grand Lodge.

Attendance at Grand Lodge: representative of every  
Lodge on the Register. G. Officers past & present.  
So Accommodation for at least 1850.

Temple: i Completely isolated from remainder of the  
building

ii occupies a site in the centre of the pile  
iii no other part of the building connected  
with its outer walls

iv secure from being overlooked, & undisturbed  
by external traffic masses.

Site

on the old Masonic Tavern 1775. (one wall retained)

2nd building: F. Stone laid 1864. opened

Earl of Zetland. G. Master 1869

3rd building: F. Stone laid 14 July 1927. opened

D. O'Connell. G. Master. 19 July 1933.

[before 1775. G. Lodge met at City Halls & Taverns.]