

PROVINCIAL GRAND LODGE OF WORCESTERSHIRELIBRARY AND MUSEUM.MASONIC TREASURES AT WORCESTERORIGIN:

Our Ancient Brethren displayed great ingenuity in finding opportunities of displaying in visible form their love of the Craft and Masonic emblems may be found on an almost endless series of articles from the more strictly Masonic items such as Aprons, and Lodge and Private Jewels through to a variety of forms of Glass, China, Furniture, Paintings, Engravings, Medals down to such forms as Snuff Boxes, Watches and Swords, and in order that they should be remembered by brethren passing by, after their passing to the Grand Lodge above, they caused Masonic emblems to be carved on their Tomb-stones some of a most elaborate nature. We in the Province of Worcestershire are very fortunate in having so many of these items for Brethren to come along and see. This is due to the forethought of Brethren who have gone before us, for in 1884 Bro. George Taylor P.M. of Leamore Lodge No. 1874 organised a Masonic Exhibition, which was held at the Guild Hall in Worcester. Brethren from all over the country loaned books, medals, jewels and curios, W. Bro. Taylor compiled a catalogue, the archaeological notes were written by W. Bro. W.J. Hughs. Over 1000 items were on show of which over 100 came from W. Bro. Taylor's own collection. There were other prominent helpers, and the list in fact included every prominent collector at the time. The Worcester Lodge No. 280 exhibited an interesting series of prints.

The Exhibition the first of its kind in this part of the country, must have led many local brethren to appreciate, as they never had before, the wealth of interesting material available, and so much of it came from Masons in the Province itself, that the Provincial authorities realised the possibilities of forming their own Library and Museum. W. Bro. Taylor's collections were purchased at cost by the Provincial Grand Lodge, and so the Library and Museum was formed.

With the object of bringing this most interesting collection more prominently before the Province, a Committee was formed in 1912, and on this ~~representative~~ representatives are elected annually by Lodges, Chapters etc. Since those early days

The Library has come along way, we now have approx 6000 Books and Pamphlets etc. on our shelves, one section of which is a lending library to the Brethren of the Province. One collection of jewels alone (The Shackles Collection) totals 1700 and we have a full collection of Centenary jewels (42 authorised and three of the four unauthorised) we are still looking for the unauthorised jewel of the Strong Man Lodge.

I think I should first make reference to the 'Old (Manuscript) Charges,' which have been aptly described as the 'Title deeds of the Order'; we in Worcestershire posses four such Manuscripts, and is considered one of the best collections in the Provinces. The four comprise;-

'The Wood M.S.	A.D. 1600
'The Lechmere M.S.	A.D. (late 17th Century).
'The Inigo Jones M.S.	Circa. 1720
'The Woodcock M.S.	Circa. 1715

There are numerous others (in the Library and Museum at Grand Lodge and elsewhere) many of which seem to have been copied from similar documents some of which have been lost. Two of them date to about the 14th century and throw much light upon the ~~traditio~~ traditions, and usages and customs of the medieval operative masons. 'The charges of a Freemason' printed as preface to the book of Constitutions of the United Grand Lodge of England, have been largely based on the 'Old Charges' and happily preserve many of their more important 'Articles and Points'.

As previously stated, it is certain that there have been many valuable M.S. lost or destroyed. It is known, for example, that the London Company of Freemasons had in its records of 1616 the item - 'Book of the Constitutions of the Accepted Masons; but, unhappily, this book has disappeared.

Dr. Anderson in his first book 'Constitutions of Grand Lodge' stated that valuable manuscripts had been burned by '(over) scrupulous Brothers' to prevent their falling into strange hands, and one or two Masonic commentators have expressed their belief that on this occasion Anderson was reciting simple fact; These Old Charges were read in Operative Lodges, and the practice was continued in the Speculative Lodges for sometime after 1717.

The Wood M.S.	Belonged to the G.L. Family (Sundry versions.)
Lechmere M.S.	" " " Sloane Branch b.
Inigo Jones M.S.	" " " Spencer family.
Woodcock M.S.	" " " Sloane family.

ENGRAVED LISTS.

The 'Engraved List' was actually a list of Lodges done up in a booklet form. It indicated where each Lodge met and the days of the meeting. As you are no doubt aware Lodges of the 18th Century mostly met in Taverns and / or Inns, and in early years had no names as now, but ~~names~~ only a number, and was therefore distinguished by the name or sign of the Tavern. Thus the four old Lodges which combined to form -or reive - Grand Lodge in 1717 where those which habitually met at:-

The Goose and Gridiron, St. Pauls Churchyard.
 The Crown Ale House, Dury Lane.
 The Apple Tree Tavern, Covent Garden.
 The Rummer and Grapes, Westminster.

The earliest reference to a Lodge in S.W. West. Div. is the one which met at 'The Bunch of Grapes' in Camarthen It was No. 34 and was constituted approx. 1724, ~~from~~ and it would appear that it was erased in 1754. There was also the following Lodges No. 121 Three Swans at Haverford West, Constituted April 14th 1741 This Lodge also met at I believe the Castle and Ship, High St. Haverford West, No. 189 The Bear Con Bridge Glamorganshire, Sept. 1754 and 337 which met at the Bell Bre con on the 1st and 3rd Mon. Constituted 1754.

The 'Engraved Lists' were thus the forerunner of the Masonic Year Book. The engraved List printed and sold by Benj. Cole for the year 1763 from which I abstracted a number of the above Lodges is very rare, only two copies are known to exist, one in Grand Lodge Library and the other at Worcester.

THE Constitutions as distinct from the Old Charges.

It is generally thought that the first book of Constitutions published in 1723 and written by Dr. James Anderson. D.D., was issued with the full authority of Grand Lodge. This is not quite correct for there is a Minute in the Minute book of Grand Lodge for June 24th. 1723, which states that the Constitutions had before being approved in manuscript form by G.L. and had already been produced in print and approved. Then occurred something (possibly as a result of debate) that qualified this approval of the manuscript of Anderson. The minute states, "The question was moved - that the General Regulations be confirmed so far as they are consistant with the Ancient Rules of Masonry." The previous question was moved and put whether the words above quoted 'be part of the Question', Resolved in the affirmative, but the Main Question was not put.

In 1756 the Rev. John Entick, M.A. revised the whole of Anderson's Constitutions with the full authority of G.L. Nevertheless, Anderson's Constitutions formed the basis of the Irish (1730), and the American (1735) Constitutions, and exerted immense influence throughout the world in the Transmission of the principles and tenets of the Craft.

Another rare copy of the Book of Constitutions is that of 1784,

which is that revised under W. Bro. Northook, by the time the Book was printed Northook had become a very embittered man, and wrote the following about G.L. I quote here from his own copy which resides in Worcester. He was also the cause of the split up of the Lodge of Antiquity No.1. but this is another interesting story which concerns William Preston.

In talking about 'Constitutions' some reference must be made to Ahiman Rezon, copies of all editions of which, repose in the bookcases at Worcester. Ahiman Rezon was, as most of you will probably know, the name given by the 'Antient' or 'Athol' Masons to their version of the Constitutions. On July 17th 1751, the 'Antient Grand Lodge was formed and styled itself 'The Most Antient and Honourable Society of Free and Accepted Masons', in opposition to the Premier Grand Lodge, formed as previously stated, in 1717. This Grand Lodge came into being for a variety of reasons. In 1723 there was printed in three issues of 'The Flying Post' or 'Postman' - an article entitled 'A Masons Examination' which purported to lay bare ~~the~~ to the general public the secret workings of the Freemasons. Then in 1730 Samuel Pritchard published his notorious so called expose 'Masonry Deseected', which ultimately ran into many editions in England, Ireland, America and the Continent of Europe. (Further reference to our collection of 'Exposures' will be made later.).

By 1730 Freemasonry had spread widely and a number of unaffiliated masons from Ireland, Scotland and France were claiming admission to Lodges in England, bringing with them different modes of working. These visitors were a source of anxiety to G.L., and because of this, (and possibly on account of the so called exposures) the Premier G.L. resorted to drastic measures. Therefore, in order to make things difficult or impossible for these clandestine brethren, Grand Lodge decided in 1730 to transpose the modes of recognition in the first and second degrees; the object being to detect and debar those who did not owe allegiance to the G.L. of England.

This was regarded by many of its members, and of course by those outside its jurisdiction, as an unwarrantable interference with one of the Ancient landmarks of the Order, and for the next 20 years considerable unrest was rife among the Lodges. To curb a long story short the dissident brethren, lead by (that now famous) Irish Mason, Lawrence Dermott, formed a separate Grand Lodge, and retained the old modes of recognition. On this account, they styled themselves 'Antients' and dubbed the Premier Grand Lodge, 'Moderns'

These two Lodges were to exist side by side for over sixty years, until in 1813 the two Jurisdictions were combined in the 'United Grand Lodge of Antient Free and Accepted Masons of England.' (now to the)

EXPOSURES;

Much has been written on the subject of the so called Masonic Exposures - documents, pamphlets, books and prints were issued purporting to disclose to the curious and unenlightened public, the secrets of the Freemasons. Following the

formation of Grand Lodge in 1717 the number of Lodges and Brethren increased considerably. Members of the nobility began to join which thereby gave prominence and publicity to the Order.

a) The selection and Installation on the 24th June, 1721, of the first noble Grand Master in the person of John, Duke of Montague, undoubtedly gave the Fraternity a great filip.

b) The inveterate habit of our brethren in those days, of walking in public procession clothed with the badges of the order was another factor.

c) The connection between certain members of the nobility and the theatre too, was so strong, that the initiation of a nobleman (and of course wealthy gentlemen) may well have begun in a Lodge belonging to, or associated with one of the theatres; in the opinion of one authority, W. Bro. Bernard Jones, Prestonian Lecturer for 1952, the introduction of 'bespeaks' may well have been a theatrical rather than a masonic origin.

d) The Church of Rome also contributed to the publicising of Masonry when Pope Clement XII in 1738, and Benedict XIV in 1751 issued their bulls denouncing Freemasonry.

In the early 18th Century (as in 1952) the journalist and writer is constantly on the lookout for news. The general public was intrigued, they wanted to know more and, due to the causes mentioned, Masonry became news. Pamphleteers and artists quickly obliged. The information, purporting to rip open and expose to the light of day, the dark secrets of Masonry, was vouched for in such books as 'The Grand Mystery of Freemasons 1724' or 'The Beginning and First Foundation of the most worthy craft of Masonry' 1739. Then of course there was Richard Carlile's 'Manual of Freemasonry', Samuel Pritchards 'Masonry Deseected' (already referred to) and a number of others, all of which can be seen at, the Provincial Museum.

CHINA AND GLASS:

There is an excellent and most interesting collection of Glass, china and earthenware pieces on view, all of which, for varying reasons claim the attention of the expert and inexpert alike. Among the china are two pairs of figures ornaments. They represent the male and female characters in 18th century dress, and at the foot of the figure is a german pug dog. These ornaments were related to a Society formed in Austria by a Duke of Bavaria styled the 'Mopses'. 'Mops' is German for pug-dog, and the society adopted the effigy of the 'Mops' as its emblem of Love and Fidelity. As previously stated, in 1738 the Pope had issued a Bull condemning and forbidding the practice of the rites and Ceremonies of Freemasonry. Several brethren in the Catholic States of Germany, unwilling to renounce the order and yet fearful of offending the ecclesiastical authority, formed in 1740 the 'Society of Mopses¹'. It pretended to be a new association, devoted to the Papal hierarchy, but was in truth nothing else than Freemasonry under a less offensive appellation. It was patronised

by the most illustrious persons in the land, and many Princes of the Empire became its Grand Master. In 1776 the Mopses became an androgynous order, and admitted females to all the offices except that of Grand Master (was held for Life). There was however a Grand Mistress, and the male and female heads of the order assumed alternately six months each, the supreme authority. Apart from these, there are in the Museum numerous examples of Sunderland, Worcester, Delft, Wedgewood, Leeds and Chelsea ware, all of which have some Masonic significance. As to the glassware this must be seen to be appreciated.

PRINTS AND PLAY & BILLS, etc.:

Reference has already been made to the books and pamphlets written and issued with the object of pouring scorn on the craft and with the (suspected) hope that they would be the means of purging money into the pockets of the authors. The engravers did not lag far behind the authors, and there is a good example of this in a framed engraving by A. Benoist, hanging in the Museum, which has the following caption:-

"A Geometrical View of the Grand Procession of Scald** Miserable Masons, designed as they were drawn up against Somerset House in the Strand on 27th April 1742. (price 2/6)

** (dict) - Scabby, scurvy, pauper, poor.

It is a panoramic view of the oddest assortment of characters passing down the strand lined by the populace. The various sections of the procession are described by means of the following key

- 1) 'The Grand Sword-Bearer of Tylor' (mounted on a horse leading procession) 'carrying ye sword of state, a present of Ishmael Abiff, King of Saracens, to His Grace of Wartin, Grand Master of ye Holy Lodge of St. John of Jerusalem in Clerkenwell.
- 2) Tylers of Guards.
- 3) 'Grand chorus of instruments' (i.e. nine men blowing wind - instruments - they were preceded by :-)
- 4) 'The stewards in three Gutt Carts' (two in each) 'drawn by Asses' (each appears to be wearing a square appended to a collar)
- 5) 'The Famous Pillars'.
- 6) The Three Great Lights, the Sun, Heiroglyphical to rule the day, the Moon emblamatical to rule the night, a Master, Political to rule his Lodge.
- 7) The Entered Prentices Token (Two clasped hands)
- 8) 'The letter G famous in Masonry for differencing the fellowcrafts Lodge from that of the prentices'
- 9) 'The funeral of a Grand Master according to ye rites of the Order with 15 brethren' (all with hankerchiefs to eyes, crying), (shows large farm cart drawn by ^{six} asses).
- 10) 'A Master Mason's Lodge' (engraving depicts T.B. 3dg. on two long poles).
- 11) 'Grand Band of Music' - (Drummer on horseback, followed by eight children with wind instruments) - (these are preceded by :-)

- 12) 'Two Trophies', one being that of a black Shoe-boy and Link-boy, the other that of a chimney sweeper (Tools of calling mounted on Long poles.
- 13) 'The Equipage of the Grand Master, all ye attendants wearing mystical jewels' (four figures seated in a large farm cart - one with ~~asses~~ an asses head, ~~and~~ one with a sheeps head drawn by six asses with postillions.

Turning to other prints, there is a most interesting set engraved by Palser between the years 1809 and 1812. The set consists of 7 prints, 2 depicting the "Apprentice Degree", and five the "Master's " (M.M.) degree.

Notice:-

- a) The tracing Cloth on the floor.
- b) Others waiting covered
- c) Two Ps - J.l. Br. (reversal).

These are copies of some French prints done about 1738, the originals of which are in the Museum. In comparing the French prints with the English, it is intiguing to note that the latter show the scenes reversed.

Times does not permit reference to many other engraved items, and a paersonal inspection in the Museum will repay amply those who are interested in this branch of Masonic Study.

Now a few words on: Masonic Medals and Jewels;

Here of necessity, this subject can only be but lightly touched upon in this address. In fact the collection has a catalogue all of its own, consisting of over 100 pages, and treating more than 1400 items. At the end of this catalogue are 48 plates illustrating medal items described in the preceding pages.

The very earliest known piece relating to British Freemasonry - the Sackville medal, struck in Florence in 1733, - places on record the probability, otherwise unsuspected that Charles Sackville, later Duke of Dorset, became Master of a Lodge during his stay in Florence in that year.

Among the none Masonic Medals is one issued by the Order of Gormorgons. It is thought that the specimen at Worcester was issued about 1795. Of this strange Society A.E. Waite in his Great Work writes

The Gormorgons were first heard of in 1724 by a flambuoyant announcement in the "Daily Post", which made known to all concerned:-

- a) The Aintient and Noble Order was founded by the first Emperor of China many thousands of years before Adam. That its O.V. was the great philosopher Confucious.
 - b) That it had been brought recently to England by a Mandarin.
 - c) That he proposed to hold a Chapter at the Castle Tavern in Fleet Street, at the request of some persons of quality.
 - d) That he had already admitted to its Mysteries several gentlemen of honour.
- ((O.V.) = Oecumenical Volgee, presumably head of the Order).

The condition of entry on the part of any Mason was to renounce his "Novel Order". For the rest, the advertisement or proclomation registered - as a point of fact - that the Grand Mogul and the CZAR of Russia had already been received into this Honourable Society, and - as a point of intention - that the Manderin would set out presently for Rome to initiate His Holiness, when it was believed that the Sacred College of Cardinals would come bodily within the ranks.

One would have said the announcement was only a heavy jest - and typical of the period. This, however, was not the case. The Society was either established in due course, and that quickly, or it had come into previous existance previously. In the following month other newspapers reported that eminent Freemasons had renounced or 'degraded themselves' from their Order, and had become Gormorgons.

In December several journals printed as news of the day that at the Castle Tavern "A peer of the first Rank, a noted member of the Society of Freemasons, hath suffered himself to be degraded as a member of that Society, and his leather apron and gloves to be burnt, and thereupon entered himself as a member of the Society of Gormorgons".

It is of general consent that this peer was the notorious Duke of Wharton, who for a brief period had figured as Grand Master of Masons and had done what lay in his power to compromise the Order.

The Gormorgons were still meeting - how frequently or occasionally there is no knowing - in the year 1731, according to the press of that day, while an extant medal of the Society suggests by its inscription that it had not passed utterly out of being in the year 1797'.

The Rev. Poole suggests that the Society may have had some connection with the Jacobite movement.

Mention however, brief, must be made to the Shackles Collection of which the Province of Worcester is justly proud. Bro. Poole in his introduction to the Catalogue, says 'But the Crowning glory of the Worcester Museum is the collection brought together during some forty years, by the late George L, Shackles of Hull. This enthusiastic collector spared neither trouble nor expense in his interesting hobby; with the help of correspondents in various parts of Europe and America, succeeded in massing some 1700 medals, nearly all in superb condition. The result of his efforts must have been the finest private collection ever gathered together, and this collection was secured for the Worcester Museum shortly after his death in 1926.

There is a medal struck to commemorate the erection of Freemasons Hall in 1780, which each brother who subscribed to the building fund received. It was thus the forerunner of the 'Million Memorial Jewel'.

There are also examples of copper tokens which were struck in Birmingham, due to the shortage of coins from the Mint. Bro. Sketchley who was at one time Prov. G. Sec. of Warwickshire, was responsible for these. There are also some beautiful examples of pierced jewels.

Show Slides.

CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, Brethren, may I hope that these brief references to the treasurers in our Provincial Library and Museum, have stimulated some interest, and that we shall on some future date have the pleasure of a visit from you to Worcester.

There is much more in Freemasonry than merely memorising the ritual and in making a regular attendance at ones' Lodge. To the brother with an enquiring mind there are many avenues of profitable study, and the brethren of Worcestershire are indeed fortunate to have the means ready at hand.

W. M. as one of the reasons of an Installed Masters Lodge is to stimulate interest in to the study of our order, I have great pleasure in asking you to accept these two catalogues which you will find of interest for the members of Kensington Lodge.