

Mercia Lodge,

No. 3995.

Held at the Masonic Hall, Walsall

BRO. E. J. DUDSON,

Worshipful Master.



Founders.

WOR. BRO. FRANK JAMES,
P.G.D., P.D.P.G.M., P.M., 538.

WOR. BRO. J. CARVER,
P.P.G.W., P.M., 2474.

WOR. BRO. C. A. LOXTON,
LL.B., P.A.G.D.C., P.P.G.W., P.M. 1520, 3995.

WOR. BRO. S B. WHEWAY,
P.G.Std.B., P.M. 539.

WOR. BRO. THOS. JONES,
P.P.G.P., P.M., 696, 3995.

WOR. BRO. E. J. PARKES,
P.P.G.W., P.M. 539, 2474, 2848, 3995.

WOR. BRO. R. J. SMITH,
P.P.G.S.B., P.M., 539.

WOR. BRO. H. J. NICKLIN,
P.M. 539.

WOR. BRO. C. F. NIGHTINGALE,
P.P.G.W., P.M. 539, 1520, 3995.

WOR. BRO. H. WILLIS,
P.P.G.W., P.M. 39.

WOR. BRO. M. E. RANOFF,
P.P.G.W., P.M. 1520.

WOR. BRO. G. B. NICHOLS,
P.A.G.D.C., P.M. 1520, 3995.

WOR. BRO. J. H. HICKTON,
P.P.G.D., P.M. 539.

V. WOR. BRO. REV. A. T. S. TALBOT,
M.A., P.G.Chap., P.P.G.W., P.M. 1520, 3995.

BRO. H. BURR-HIGGS,
539.

WOR. BRO. C. L. HODGKINSON,
P.P.G.D., P.M. 3995.

BRO. T. HARRISON,
539.

"Borain,"

TELEPHONE:
WALSALL 2259

Stafford Road,

Bloxwich,

2nd DECEMBER, 1948.

Dear Sir and Bro,

By the desire of the Worshipful Master, you are hereby
summoned to attend a regular meeting of your Lodge at the

MASONIC HALL, HIGH STREET, WALSALL, on

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 21st, 1948, at 5-0 p.m. prompt.

Yours fraternally,

M. J. SOMERFIELD, P.M.,

Secretary

Dark Morning Dress with White Collar, Black Tie and Shoes or Uniform.

PREAMBLE TO BY-LAWS.—The Lodge being formed for the instruction and improvement of the brethren in Freemasonry, its members are expected to give special attention to this and to the study of the meaning and symbolism of the Craft. Regard should be paid to this in all proceedings and business of the Lodge, and in the election of every candidate, whether for initiation or as a joining member.

Agenda.

1. To Open the Lodge at 5-0 p.m. precisely.
2. To read the Summons convening the Meeting.
3. To read and (if approved) confirm the Minutes of the last regular Meeting of the Lodge, held October 26th, 1948.
4. The W.M. will invest Officers absent at Installation:—
W. Bro. S. G. WHEWAY, P.P.G.Org., as Organist.
Bro. G. G. EVANS, as S.D.
5. To Ballot for, as a Candidate for Initiation and Membership of the Lodge:—
Mr. JOHN BABBAGE PRISCOTT, Cost Accountant, aged 35, residing at 92, Delves Crescent, Walsall. Proposed by W. Bro. M. J. Somerfield, seconded by Bro. G. H. Bayliss, at the Meeting held on 26th October, 1948.
6. To Initiate (if elected) Mr. JOHN BABBAGE PRISCOTT.
7. **W. Bro. C. T. TAYLOR, P.P.G.W. (Worcs.) will read a Paper entitled, "A TALK WITH THE INITIATE."**
8. To report Communications from Grand Lodge.
9. To receive Propositions.
10. To Close the Lodge.

To Collect Alms.

**A PRACTICE MEETING will be held on MONDAY, 20th DECEMBER, 1948,
at 6-30 p.m. All Brethren are invited. (Tea at 6-0 p.m.)**

**Regular Meetings in 1949: February 22nd; April 26th; May 17th;
October 25th;; December 20th.**

N.B.—The Librarian would be glad if Brethren who have Books on loan, would return them as early as possible, for the use of other Brethren.

P.S.—Owing to the difficulties of catering, refreshments will be provided only for those who return postcard by the 17th inst. at the latest.

~~23th~~ October, 1948.

21 December

A Talk with the Initiate.

You have discovered for yourself a new world, and, quite naturally most things appear to you as "strange", excepting maybe the faces of your several friends: and those friends have a "new look" because of their regalia. All human beings are more or less responsive: women possess a certain faculty of a much keener order than the male; but most of us have had the peculiar experience of sensing that we are "wanted" or "not wanted". There is what we term an "atmosphere", and it communicates itself to us in a very subtle way. We know if we are not welcome, and there is no need for us to be told. We also know if we are welcome. It is useless to argue with your wife, if, after bringing Bill Smith to your home for the first time, she remarks on his departure that she has no wish to see him again. Her intuition has told her sufficient about Bill Smith, and very much more than you had supposed.

I feel quite sure that you have sensed a peculiarly friendly sphere or atmosphere this evening, and that you feel "at home", if not quite fully at your ease in these new surroundings. Your brethren have done something more than grip you by the hand; they have opened their hearts to you, and have received you into this masonic lodge, and also into the wider, the world wide masonic circle. We particularly wish you to feel that fact. Had there been but one member who had no wish to welcome you, then you would not have been here. Hence there is unanimous sincerity in the welcome extended to you.

Truly, you are an apprentice, and have much to learn. Have no fear; and do not feel discouraged because you fail at present to understand much of what you have heard and seen so far. Everything is very carefully planned in simple and easy form for your instruction, and every brother is ready and willing to help you. Think out your questions, which will be received gladly and dealt with carefully. Remember that each and every one of us started along the road at exactly the same place where you began - that is, both outside and inside the lodge room.

If we compare the birth of a baby into this world with your masonic birth into this lodge there are many similar phases to be observed. It is possible to make interesting comparisons from conception to delivery, and onwards to education and upbringing: but you will profit greatly by observing the masonic progress of the brother who follows you. This comparison will become more apparent when you have passed through two further stages, and I must be careful not to anticipate. Nevertheless, you will have observed the wonderful transformation from darkness to light - from complete utter darkness to that most welcome light when you were shown that which must be your daily guide through life, and certain tools to symbolise how you are to act. You may have made already a mental note that you have passed, symbolically and actually, from the darkness of ignorance to the light of truth. Previous to

this evening, your actual knowledge of freemasonry was nil, and you were in a state of mental darkness. Now your eyes have been opened; and although "the light" is all around you it will take a little time for your eyes to become accustomed to the light, and you will pick out things gradually. Be patient, just as we shall endeavour to be patient with you.

Your general charter is contained in the final "charge" delivered to you, and I strongly advise you to commence to learn and understand every word of that charge. The more positively you make it your own, the more surely will you find a still greater interest in all your masonic work. It will not fail to take you further, day by day, week by week, month by month, and year by year; and no matter how few or how many may be the years ahead, (may there be many happy years for you) problems and points of great interest will arise, and you will have fitted yourself to pass on to others that which you have made your own.

Masonry is most freely illustrated by symbols. When you get down to work, you will find how many of these symbols crop up daily in your ordinary life. Our very language is full of them. How often do we ask "Do you see?". The question does not always refer to our physical eyesight, but to our mental comprehension. Similar questions and phrases are very common, and you will have no difficulty in thinking out specimens for yourself. Quite outside masonry,

you have been taught to live an upright life, to keep on the level, and to act on the square. Take a look at the jewels worn by J.W., S.W., and W.M. The W.M. has already directed your attention to other most interesting symbols, and I am quite sure that you will profit by making a study of these in due course.

The V.S.L. is full of symbolisms, and the book of Psalms in particular. In Ps.146 you will find the words "The Lord openeth the eyes of the blind". That saying can be applied both physically and mentally, as we have appreciated this very evening. Ps.1, v.1, the opening words of the book are:

"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful."

How can we so walk, stand, or sit? Obviously there is a hidden meaning, but not difficult to discover.

Ps.15, v.2. mentions "He that walketh uprightly". Take another look at the J.W.'s jewel.

Ps.5, v.3. asks "make thy way straight before my face". The S.W.'s jewel will help you here.

In the book of the prophet Amos, chapter 7, vv.7 and 8, will be found a reference to the plumbline, which again has relationship to the J.W.'s jewel.

Ps.119, v.105 - "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path". That should help us to walk uprightly, on the level, and act on the square.

I feel sure that your experiences this evening will induce you to make still greater use of the V.S.L., bearing in mind that there is no need to apologise for referring to it here. ^A We have the V.S.L. in our lodges as a sign that

^A Indeed, one of the most important parts of the (change, book to (probably the most important part) recommends to your most serious contemplation (as a freemason) the V.S.L., charging you to consider it as the unchanging standard of truth and justice, and to regulate your actions by the divine precepts it contains. So do that you must study the V.S.L. to be taught the important duties you owe to God, to your neighbour, and to yourself. I would assure you of the sincerity and wisdom of your reception and of the ready willingness of your brethren to afford you help and assistance of every kind. But, please do not overlook the fact that you must not only yourself, take an intelligent interest in your domestic surroundings, make yourself not only receptive, but also prepare yourself to be helpful to those who follow you as initiates, as well as fully co-operative in every way. Here it is a grand case of "all for each and each for all"; hence happiness all round. Learn to offer and to give as well as to ask for and to receive, and so will time pass on golden wings.