

Copy of letter re "Masters Light"

Freemasons Hall

Dec 7th 1839.

Dear Sir Brother,

In reply to your questions as to the propriety of extinguishing the Masters Light, & if extinguished, of introducing a Lanthorn with a Star, &c., I feel in difficulty of stating that such extinguishment is not only improper, but positively in violation of a most maturely considered & unequivocal direction of the Grand Lodge, & that the introduction of a Lanthorn &c. is equally against the order.

In the Lodge of Reconciliation, the extinguishment had been proposed, & occasioned much dissatisfaction in order, therefore, to settle that & some other points, or more properly speaking, to carry out the intention & direction of the det. Union, that there should be a Conf. with the W. King, &c., a Special Grand Lodge was convened on May 20th 1816 to witness the Ceremonies proposed by the Lodge of Reconciliation. These concluded, the several points were discussed - amongst others, the Lights in the Third Degree: & decisions were come to upon them. But to afford opportunity for the most mature consideration & to leave the Subject without a possibility of objection, another Special Grand Lodge was holden on June 5th following, to approve & confirm what had been done on May 20th. At these meetings, the M. W. G. Master presided, & the attendance of members was larger than at any other I recollect (ex

- cepting the day of Union)

The decision was, that the Master's Light was never to be extinguished while the Lodge was open, nor was it by any means to be shaded or obscured, that no Lanthorn or other device was to be permitted as a substitute.

One of the reasons is, that one of the Lights represent the Master, who is always present while the Lodge is open, if not actually, in his own person, yet by a Brother who represents him (and without the Master, or his representative the Lodge cannot be open), so his light cannot be extinguished until the Lodge is closed; the two other lights figuratively represent luminaries, which at periods, are visible - at other times not so.

As to the penalty with which the Grand Lodge might think fit to visit a Lodge acting in contravention of its positive order, I venture no opinion; you are as capable as myself to decide upon that point.

Yours truly

Dear Sir & Brother

(Signed)

Yours fraternally,
William A. White, G.S.
