
SHANKLIN MASONIC EXHIBITION.

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THE CATALOGUE,
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The reception tendered by the York and Eboracum Lodges, Nos. 236 and 1611, to the visiting brethren who were members of the British Association holding its jubilee meeting "within the walls of the ancient capital of the North," inaugurated the series of exhibitions of *ancient documents and relics*, which have made York famous, Masonically as well as archæologically. Bros. A. Buckle, B.A., and J. S. Cumberland were the energetic Secretaries, and Bro. T. B. Whytehead the efficient Director of Ceremonies throughout the proceedings. This was a remarkable gathering in many respects: the distinguished savants on September 5th, 1881, laying aside for the time their scientific studies, and "aprons put on," to take part in the Masonic duties of the evening. Bro. J. Todd read an interesting paper on the records, &c., preserved by the York Lodge, No. 236; Bro. Thomas W. Tew (now Prov. Grand Master of West Yorkshire) delivered an address—"A Parallelism between Science and Freemasonry"—appropriate to the occasion; Dr. J. Pearson Bell (the veteran Deputy Prov. Grand Master) gave an excellent sketch of the rise and progress of the Yorkshire Craft; followed by Bro. Hyde Clarke, who descanted on the relation between Freemasonry and Druidism, &c.; and Bro. T. B. Whytehead concluded the rich fare by referring to the position of the ancient city of York as a Masonic centre of activity during the last century.

The Exhibition comprised 180 lots sent by some of collectors, some being of considerable value; and a racy account of the meeting, with particulars of the various exhibits, was published by Bro. Whytehead, who was assisted by Bro. Cumberland.

The second Exhibition was held by the members of the "Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia" (York College) on February 20th, 1884. Frater Charles L. Mason, V., was then the Celebrant, and the collection was admirably arranged in the Masonic Hall, Duncombe-place, the catalogue being edited by the Chief Adept, Frater T. B. Whytehead, 'X'. This was a much more ambitious and important gathering, a capital account of which was written by the Chief Adept in the *Freemason* for May and June, 1884. There were 36 exhibitors and some 400 lots, the variety and value of which more than repaid the brethren who worked so hard to ensure the success of the undertaking.

Then came the great Masonic Exhibition (the third of the series), held at Worcester on August 27th, 1884 and following days, under most distinguished auspices. The Rev. Bro. Sir Edmund A. H. Lechmere, Bart., M.P., the Prov. Grand Master, and the Worshipful the Mayor of Worcester were most lavish in their hospitality, and the houses of many of the residents in the city were thrown open for the entertainment of numerous Craftsmen. The Masonic soiree was a great success, the address of welcome being delivered by the Prov. Grand Master, and the Dean of York (the Rev. P. Purefoy, Past Grand Chaplain), explained to the brilliant assemblage of ladies and gentlemen, the principles and aims of the Fraternity. The reception was in the Guildhall, kindly lent for the occasion, and other rooms were utilised in that grand building for the numerous exhibits. The Hon. Secretary was Bro. George Taylor, assisted by Bro. J. Randel Buck. The catalogue was edited most efficiently by Bro. Taylor, who also arranged the vast collection, and worked with such determination and vigour, that the extent and importance of the collection was a pleasant surprise to many. I had the duty of supplying a few notes, so as to draw attention to those of a special character, and have great pleasure in testifying to the zeal and general Masonic knowledge of the gifted Editor. There were 144 exhibitors, the lots running to the surprisingly large number of 1172. A special medal was struck to commemorate the event, the design exhibiting the Municipal and Masonic support of the City and Province respectively. However subsequent exhibitions may possibly excel the Worcester, as respects the extent and value of the collections, it is not likely that the generous and hearty reception extended by the Prov. Grand Master, the Mayor, and the province, as well as the inhabitants of the city, to the numerous and distinguished visitors, will ever be excelled. It was in every sense the complete success that it deserved to be, thanks mainly to Bro. Taylor and to certain Past Masters of the Worcester Lodge, who did their utmost for the welfare and comfort of all concerned; and from that remarkable gathering may be dated the great interest that is now taken in Masonic history and Antiquities.

The heavy expenses were contributed chiefly by the Prov. G. Master, the Mayor of Worcester (Bro. W. B. Williamson), and a pro rata voluntary levy on the lodges, in the form of a guarantee. Other provinces would do well to follow the example of York and Worcester, just as Shanklin has so ably done.

The quartette was completed on the 9th September, 1886, under the immediate patronage and support of the R.W. Bro. W. W. B. Beach, M.P., Prov. G.M., and Bro. J. E. Le Feuvre, P.G.D., the Dep. Prov. G.M., by the holding of the largest Exhibition yet, at "The Chalet," Shanklin, kindly lent for the occasion. The moving spirit from beginning to end has been Bro. Alfred Greenham, W.M. of the "Chine Lodge," No. 1884, on whose behalf the effort is made to liquidate the debt on the Masonic Hall, which is a building worthy of the Craft in the Isle of Wight. It is the first thrown open to the public, a moderate charge being made for admission, and the catalogue being sold as at York and Worcester. The Exhibition from a Masonic point of view has proved successful beyond the sanguine anticipations of Bro. Greenham's older confreres, who congratulated him most warmly on his triumphant management. Bro. Greenham, as Editor of the bulky catalogue, wisely took the one of Worcester as his model, and I had again the pleasure of adding a few explanatory notes, though as a rule, the articles have been so ably described that my part of the work has been comparatively light. The number of exhibitors show a considerable decrease as compared with Worcester (1703), but the lots are much more numerous, there being the extraordinary total of 1471, so that what with the late arrival of lists, the exigencies of printing, and the utter impossibility of examining the majority of the exhibits prior to publication, the wonder is not that there are a few errors to be found in the catalogue, but that considering the circumstances the Editor has been able to compile such an interesting volume, with the hearty co-operation of Bro. George Taylor, G. L. Shackles, and other large collectors. The aid rendered by Bro. Taylor has been most helpful, not only as respects the catalogue, but particularly in the arrangements of the enormous collection of Masonic works, medals, clothing, and other objects of great worth and importance. In magnitude, value and interest the Masonic Exhibition at Shanklin is by far the superior of the quartette, though in some aspects the third (Worcester) has undoubtedly the prior claim. Were the fourth, however, *all round*, it will be difficult to beat, which is all the more extraordinary because of the geographical position of the Isle of Wight. We may well, therefore, maintain that if Shanklin can succeed, any of our large centres of population in the provinces might surely hope for at least a similar triumph, and even a still larger display of Masonic antiquities.

The Metallic portion of the Exhibition, *thanks to Brothers Taylor and Shackles chiefly* (not forgetting Brothers Newton and Lamb-Smith), far exceeds in rarity and extent any other collection in the world. Of the known medals about 500 are represented, and several will be found in the Catalogue which are entirely unknown to writers on the subject, so that whether as respects scarcity or novelty, value or importance, the Shanklin Cabinet of Medals is without a rival. A cursory examination even of the Catalogue will make this quite clear, but in order to illustrate the point, I will allude to a few of the British class. 289 (Robinson) and 845 (Taylor) represent the Medal of the *Royal Alfred Lodge* (extinct) of Oxford, of which only three others are known, one being in possession of the Apollo University Lodge, Oxford, formerly in Bro. Marvin's collection. 407 (Royal Cumberland Lodge, No. 41, Bath), 1207 (Enoch Lodge, No. 11), and 841 (Taylor) are specimens of the valuable Freemasons' Hail Medal, the latter having been used as a personal decoration. I have given a history of it in my "Masonic Register," 1878. 128 (C. Williams) and 317 (Newton) were quite unknown to us as collectors in England until recently, and I believe were struck in 1836 to commemorate the Centenary of the Grand Lodge of Scotland. Unknown to Merzdorf, and but one chronicled by Marvin. In view of the sesqui-centennial celebration this year, these souvenirs of the earlier celebration by the Grand Lodge of Scotland are curious and valuable.

The jewel of the "Nine Worthies" is also most noteworthy. None of the official impressions of 1802 are in the Exhibition. There are, however, seven out of the original nine in the museum of the Grand Lodge of England. Those exhibited are earlier specimens of a design, evidently adapted later on by the "Atholl" Grand Lodge. Brothers Newton (326), Lamb-Smith (359), and Cumberland (1350) have sent one each, that of Brother Cumberland being a special variety.

The medal shown by the "Royal Cumberland Lodge," No. 41, Bath, and myself, of 1819, is very rarely met with, and had quite been lost sight

of until my recognition of it in Marvin's "Masonic Medals," there being no indication of its connection with the City of the Baths, save the date of the opening of the Freemasons' Hall.

There are, of course, a great variety of edges of the "Masonic Half-penny," they being "plentiful as blackberries," Masonically speaking. The die was struck in 1794; the "Penny" form, however, is scarce.

The engraved jewel, 352, of 1780, and the fine Chelsea enamel, 354 (Lamb-Smith), are reproductions of older forms, especially the former, which I have traced back to 1730, for which see No. 1462 (Hughan).

The *pierced* jewels are exceedingly fine, among them being some rare and choice specimens, especially those of Bros. Taylor, Lamb-Smith, Le Feuvre, Francis, Cox, Robinson, Cumberland (1340), and Collingridge. The beautiful specimen in silver (56) of Bro. Le Feuvre's, and one similar in design, No. 1470 (Major McGachen), are especially noteworthy. Some exhibited are of the style of the noted "Price" medal, which made 18 dollars a piece at a Masonic sale on June 21st, 1881. Several of the engraved jewels were in a very good state, and of beautiful designs, those of Bros. Shackles, Cumberland, Robinson, and Francis calling for special mention.

The medal No. 379 (Lamb-Smith), noted and illustrated in Bro. Francis' "History of Sussex," is to be seen in fine form wide No. 1203, sent by Bro. Lloyd. Bro. Newton's, 328, is the only one of the kind I have ever seen, and is particularly valuable. (In copper.) The lodge jewels of the "Musselburgh Kilwinning," exhibited by Bro. Lamb-Smith (362-4), of Scottish design, are worth particular attention, as also 387, "a Freemason formed out of the materials of his lodge," which design in a circle is well known, but not in the medallion form. 651 (Shackles), the "Prince Mason's Medal" of Dublin (Smith *delin.*, Mossop *sculp.*), is a capital representative of the Emerald Isle, and K.T. badges and jewels are well cared for by Bros. F. H. Goldney and G. P. Brockbank.

Some of the grandest medals in the collection, are in the English class of Bro. Taylor's magnificent contribution. 842-4 are three gems, representing the old, modern and ceremonial styles of the Grand Stewards' Lodge, 848 introducing possibly the gem of the exhibition, viz.: The *Country Stewards' Lodge* jewel, sparkling with brilliants, massive in character, and until described so interestingly by Bro. Taylor, was practically unknown to the Craft.

The Special Ceremonial jewels of lodges, 46, 71, 96 (Taylor), 120, 3 bis (Glasgow)—Cumberland—368 extinct (Newton), 85 (Dr. Drury), and others, should be carefully examined, as also the Special Lodge Jewels or Medals of Nos. 16, 259, and the "Polish National" (Bros. Kenning, Taylor, and Lamb-Smith). The medal commemorative of the installation of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales in 1875, forwarded by Bro. Shackles, is a capital souvenir of that never to be forgotten ceremony, and I understand impressions are still to be had, struck by Bro. George Kenning. The miniatures, ordinary and special Masonic medals sent by Bro. Kenning will doubtless attract attention, but are too many to be particularised by me, as also others of undoubted interest, exhibited by Bros. Humphris (especially his 82), Cox (*note de*), Goldney (*vide* 100-4), Milledge (149, 150), Laughton (163), Law (607-6), Lincoln (180, Battersea enamel, 1772), Dickinson (184), Neilson, Palmer, and Lane (specially 1389, 1390-2, the impressions being extra sharp and probably proofs).

The "Samaritan" Jewel 285 (Robinson), I believe is issued, under certain regulations by the "Louisiana Relief Lodge, No. 1," New Orleans; the members of which do no Masonic work, save to relieve the needy and the afflicted, without regard to jurisdictions or countries.

The foreign medals exhibited by Bro. George Taylor and Bro. G. L. Shackles, much as I should like to allude to them, must be passed over, for a whole *Freemason* would be required to do them justice, and, fortunately, they are all so well described by these indefatigable collectors, that they tell their own tale. I can state, without hesitation, that such a combination of scarce and valuable, as well as deeply interesting and historical medals has never been exhibited before, and many are not only unique, but most choice impressions.

The *old* and *new* forms of the celebrated Masonic Veterans' medals (Shackles and Hughan) should be noted.

So numerous are the certificates from Bro. J. H. Neilson and others, that but few can be particularized, those exhibited by me, originally owned by Bro. Benjamin Plummer, who was at one time or other connected with the "Modern," and "Ancient," Craft and Arch, unauthorized French lodges in England (to which Bro. Speth has drawn attention) and the Baldwin Encpt. (1450-5) almost deserve a little prominence, as also the

warrant of the Athol Grand Lodge of 1764 (No. 1401 of Catalogue). The engraved lists are a splendid help to the value of the Exhibition, Bro. Taylor having kindly sent one of 1763 (unique), 1766 (unique), 1770, 1776 and 1778. R. Cumb. Lodge, Bath, 1764 (unique), Bro. Francis (Havant) 1767 (with plate of 1766), and Bro. John E. Le Feuvre, one of 1770. *Eight copies in all.*

The facsimilé (exact size) of the rare 1725, of which only one copy is known, sent by me, is a choice specimen, and the reduced facsimilé of the same issue, exhibited by Bro. John Lane is to form an attractive feature of his "Masonic Records" of lodges 1717—1886, to be issued in a few weeks. The quarterly proceedings of Grand Lodges from Bros. Neilson and Tracy are valuable for reference, and are simply unobtainable in the ordinary way, the few that ever occur for sale being eagerly bought up. No. 123, sent by the veteran Mason, Bro. Wilson, of Darlington, I should like to have by me for a few hours examination. (The note under the applies to Bro. Wilson, who, I believe, is the oldest subscribing Mason in England).

In MSS. besides facsimilés sent by Bro. Kelly and others, particularly the one exhibited by Bro. Greenham, W.M. 1884 (1276), the two volumes in Bro. Taylor's collection deserve particular attention, as they form one of the most distinctive groups in the Exhibition (1034-5), Cole's MSS. in the editions of 1729, 1731, and 1751 are notable exhibits. To render the set complete there should be 1762 and 1794 (in the Freemasons Magazine). The complete set of "Books of Constitutions," Grand Lodge of England, and the "Atholl" Grand Lodge are special features in Bro. Taylor's library, and have never been exhibited in such a state before. Indeed, I am not aware of any other brother having the whole of the editions from 1723 to 1886, regular and unauthorised, Bro. Le Feuvre being only one short in the series of the Grand Lodge of England, and that the small copy of 1865. Beyond question, this complete set of the Regulations of both Grand Lodges will render the *Staffordshire* Exhibition remarkable in Masonic bibliography. Bro. Taylor's copies of Plot's "Staffordshire," 1686 (one of the earliest typographical accounts of Freemasonry known), "Long Liver," 1722 (remarkable only for its Masonic dedication), Kloss' "Bibliography," 1844 (the authority for Masonic works, to be used with the later one by Bro. Taylor, exhibited by me), Bode's Almanacks, 1776-7 (lacking 1778-9), the "Blue Blanket," 1722, and the quarto edition of the Scottish Constitutions, 1848, are all valuable books, costly to procure, and of great and abiding interest. The more modern works I must pass over, save to fraternally mention the "History of the Craft" by E. C. Coult, and Dr. Rob Morris's fine volume of poems, the last work by that veteran Masonic author.

Bro. Kenning sends a copy of the very rare "Multa Paucis" of 1763, as does also Bro. Francis, the curious "Pocket Companion" of 1735 being on the lists of Bro. Le Feuvre and Bro. Taylor, the scarce list of lodges (Ancient, &c.) of 1802 being sent by Lodge 41, Bath. Eboracum Lodge, No. 1033, York, pro Bro. Whytehead (the originator of these Masonic Exhibitions), sends the Bible used by the "Grand Lodge of all England," a terrific relic of *golden tyme*. The same flourishing lodge has sent photographs of the "Lodge B," St. John's Lodge, Philadelphia, U.S.A., which is a very valuable exhibit. The full contents of that remarkable book, 1731-7, will be found in my list (1412). Several of the by-laws in my lot are curious and of considerable historical value, such as those containing histories by Bro. Meyer and other examples of American Masonic customs. Calendars of the Grand Lodge of England are remarkable books for consultation, from Bro. Le Feuvre's library, and cannot be met with now, as a rule, "for love or money." The unrivalled collection of Masonic seals from Bro. J. Ramsden Riley's prolific store call for special notice, being so difficult to obtain, and yet so useful for historical purposes. The MSS. sent by No. 41, Bath, are invaluable, and as that ancient lodge possesses all their records from 1733, they may well be proud of their origin and continuity. Those also sent by Bro. F. H. Goldney ought to be particularised; but what can I do when there is yet so much undone? The MS. record of the Province of Wilts, 1777, sent by him to Worcester, and now exhibited—89—was the means of the Grand Lodge acknowledging that province of greater antiquity by many years than they had evidence of before. The Royal Arch Records of the Chapter at Southampton are of great value, and so are many other exhibits about which I must say nothing, or, at all events, not at present, having to stay my pen from sheer inability to hold it longer for the time. Bro. Kelly's interesting exhibits I must reserve for another opportunity.