

HUMBER LODGE - FOUNDERS TOAST – 11th MAY 2010

Presented by W. Bro. G.T. Whitfield

WM/Brethren

Tonight we celebrate the 183rd Anniversary of the laying of the Foundation Stone of the H.L premises in Anne Street, a building which stood proud in the heart of the City for 114 years, until that dreadful night of 7/8th May 1941 when it was destroyed by enemy action during WW II.

It is also our tradition this evening to submit a toast to the Founders of the HL, Bros. Lt William Crow, Thomas Feetham and Joseph Eglin - *who were actually NOT founders at all* This meeting provides us with a unique opportunity:

To look back with pride - To remind ourselves of our rich heritage and to consider, albeit it briefly, the dedication of many freemasons who have preceded us as members of the HL.

The proceedings tonight enable newer members to learn something of our history - so - let us go back briefly to the beginning and look at what at first view appears a paradox!!

It is well documented that a Warrant of Constitution was issued to Lodge No. 53 in Liverpool on 19 May 1756. That warrant became dormant after a few years and was re-issued with the same number to another Liverpool Lodge in 1775. In 1804 that Lodge was censured for unmasonic conduct, the Warrant was withdrawn and returned to London.

A petition to form a new Lodge in Hull was made in 1809 by 10 members of the 2 Military Lodges meeting in the City. That application was successful, and in the margin of the petition is written

"Let the petitioners have Warrant No 53 lately held at Liverpool"so on 24 February 1809 Warrant No. 53 was again issued but this time to the Ancient Knight Templars Lodge in Hull.

Sixteen months later it was resolved to change the name to The Humber Lodge No. 53.

The period between 1810 and 1824 was an interesting and somewhat turbulent time for the Humber Lodge, holding meetings in various premises, declining membership and having to sell certain items of Lodge furniture to pay debts. It was during this period, 1813 to be precise, that Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth finally prevailed and the 2 Grand Lodges - the Ancients and the Moderns became the United Grand Lodge of England. Consequently some renumbering took place and we became Lodge No. 73 until 1832, when, for reasons which are not entirely clear, we were allocated No. 65. Then in 1863 following a further adjustment we finally became Humber Lodge No. 57

Now to return to our Founders.....Bro. Lt William Crowe was accepted as a joining member from the Minerva Lodge on 6 October 1824. He was quickly followed by Bro Thomas Feetham also from the Minerva Lodge. From that moment there was a dramatic turnaround in the fortunes of the HL. Their enthusiasm and financial assistance enabled land to be bought and plans for a new building in Osborne Street to be drawn up.

3 years later on 7th May 1827 the Foundation Stone was laid by the Dep. PGM of Yorkshire. The following month, on 6th June to be exact, another Minerva member, Joseph Eglin became a joining member of HL, He must have been well known and respected because 10 days later he was elected Senior Warden. The 3 former Minerva members worked tirelessly and on 3rd October 1827, 5 months after the Foundation stone was laid, the new Lodge building was 'officially opened'. With Bros. Crowe, Feetham and Eglin at the helm the prosperity of the HL continued to grow and 13 years later (in 1840) the mortgage debt was paid off and with over 300 members - Humber Lodge had the highest number of subscribing members in the country.

Historically we toast these Brethren as our Founders, but in many ways they were our 'Saviours'. Since 1827 we have celebrated the laying of the Foundation stone and coupled the celebration with the names of those 3

masons who are generally regarded as being our Founders but let us never forget that from the laying of the Foundation stone, the members of our fine Lodge have raised a superstructure perfect in its parts (well nearly) and honourable to the builder.

Brethren, be upstanding - In darkness and in silence we honour the toast to

Bros. Lt Wm Crowe,

Thomas Feetham, Joseph Eglin and all our Founders.

Brethren - our Founders