

## A PAPER PREPARED BY W. BRO. E.P. DONNISON – 9<sup>th</sup> May 1989

W. Master, W. Bro. & Brethren, I rise to my feet with some feeling of trepidation as to the complexity, solemnity and distinction of having the honour to submit this time honoured toast. Many worthy brethren have had this honour before me and so many of you here assembled must have heard the contents of my address before so I will say at the outset be patient and think of yester-year and in particular of the events of 1827. Yes, Brethren we meet this evening to celebrate the 162<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the laying of the foundation stone of the Humber Lodge premises in Anne Street, Hull. A building that was to stand the test of time for 114 years but could not withstand the onslaught of that dreadful night of 7/8<sup>th</sup> March, 1941, when it was destroyed by enemy action during World War II.

The time span of 114 years is too long to detail this evening suffice it to say our records for this period are intact and only point out that minute book and written histories are so an important part of freemasonry and must be never taken lightly, flippantly as our heritage for the future is contained therein.

I must by necessity mention that glorious day in 1827 when the foundation stone was laid by the Deputy P.G.M. W. Bro. Robert McKenzie Beverley in the presence of some 38 brethren. It is worth repeating to you brethren the writings of events of that day. The procession was 7<sup>th</sup> May, 1827, a band of music, the Foundation Stone carried by 4 Master Masons, the Banner of the Humber Lodge, The Bible, Square and Compasses on a crimson velvet cushion. The Ark of the Covenant, the Wardens with their Pillars, The W.M. of the Humber Lodge, The Globes carried by 2 Master Masons, The Prov. Great Architect with plan of the Building, The D.P.G.M. in full regalia under a canopy of silk borne by 6 Master Masons attended on either side by 2 sword bearers, W. Bro. the Rev. G. Oliver, P.G. Chaplain for Lincolnshire in robes attended by 4 Master Masons with wands. Indeed a day to remember.

We also honour this evening the toast to our founders and I would like you to think of their thoughts of the events I have just related on that glorious day. I must digress at this point to perhaps answer the questions of the younger brethren how can we equate the event of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when we know our history goes back over 200 years to the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Yes, it is correct that our warrant No. 53 1756 was issued in Liverpool and yes, it is correct that in 1775 the same document was confirmed and later transferred to Hull by endorsement in 1809 under the title of Ancient Knight Templar Lodge No. 53 and July 1810 the name was changed to Humber a more "Local Title". A centenary warrant was issued by Grand Lodge on 11<sup>th</sup> June 1877. The Humber meetings were first held at local taverns in Hull in particular the Fleece Inn, Black Swan and Turks Head all within hailing distance of where we meet to-night! It is interesting to note that our lodge No. 57 has had the numbers 53, 73, 65, but there lies another history. Suffice it to say 1756 No. 53, 1813 No. 73, 1832 No. 65. July 6<sup>th</sup> 1863 No. 57 not 65.

You will now realise brethren we have important dates in our origins 1756 warrant 53, 1809 the new lodge in Hull and the transfer of the warrant and 1827 foundation stone was laid for a new temple all these dates to be linked forever. Whereas one could argue that the founders of a lodge are those who acquire the warrant in which case Bros. Patrick Vaughan, Edward Ledward and Thomas Griffiths . as the real founders ones thoughts would really turn to those brethren from Hull in 1809 but there again the fortunes of Humber Lodge during that decade had a precarious existence, was numerically small in number the harmony appears to be non-existent. We then look to 1824 when a certain Bro. Lt. William Crow became a joining member of Humber Lodge followed almost immediately

by Bro. Thomas Feetham both of these brethren being very active members of Minerva Lodge. At the same time the Rodney Lodge which if not actually defunct at the time was rapidly becoming so, provided Humber with many new active masons and it was those brethren along with a certain Bro. Joseph Eglin that created a new purpose for the Humber Lodge. Indeed the first task appears to have been to find land to build a temple.

So now you see, my brethren, the significance of our three dates, and that is why we regard Bro. Lt. William Crow, Bro. Thomas Feetham and Bro. Joseph Eglin as the founders of Humber Lodge. It is through their devotion and enthusiasm that the Humber Lodge flourished and developed into one of the greatest lodges in our county, numbering over 300 brethren in the 1950's.

It is interesting to mention that during the life span of our Founders, we honour, Lt. Crow became Master in 1825 and Bro. Feetham Master in 1827 and Bro. Eglin in 1928. Furthermore the Benevolent Fund was instigated and finally started by Bro. Crow and supported by Bro. Eglin by donations of £15. To-night Brethren we have seen the final act of termination of this Fund due to economic realities of this enlighten age we live in.

Studying the minute books of the 1800's some interesting comments have been noted. Comments made during the life span of our founders are:- 1843 Election of the Master & Officers altered from June to December. The Installation being on St. John, the Even. day. 1861. Our Lodge Meetings were altered to the 1st & 3rd Tuesday each month, 1879 Our Lodge Meetings were altered to the 1st & 3rd Thursday each month and yet again in 1988, we have changed our meetings to Tuesday, such my Brethren is the way of life, each and every event governed by necessity. Let us remember in retrospect the first five years of the Laying of the Foundation Stone, and I quote further from the minutes of the 7th, 1832, "Five Years this day have elapsed since the Foundation Stone was laid and when the Founders look back and consider the difficulties they had to contend with, what from false and treacherous brethren within and avowed enemies without, they feel astonished at its having arrived at that exalted pre-eminence which it now holds in the Masonic World. The present members can fully appreciate the splendid achievement of that little band of Brothers who exhibited in 1827 such enthusiasm and zeal. The three great Founders of the Lodge Bros. Crow, Feetham and Eglin, who have long ago exchanged the turmoil of workaday life for, we hope, the never fading sunshine of an endless hereafter, are not allowed to be forgotten by the members. Every year the Lodge celebrates that Ceremonial and the Toast of the "Founders of the Humber Lodge" is proposed.

Brethren, the changing fortunes of the Humber Lodge seem yet again to have settled on a steady course and we claim our home only a cable away from Our humble beginnings. Masonry and its precepts remain our anchor pin and I earnestly hope that all the Members will continue to live within its due bounds. We are proud to be Masons and Members of this respected Lodge No. 57.

Worshipful Brethren and Brethren, Rise and in darkness and in silence honour this Noble Toast:-

To Brothers - Lt. William Crow

Thomas Feetham

Joseph Eglin

and all Founders of the Humber Lodge No. 57.