

## **Fermor Hesketh Lodge No 1350** 1350 1871 – 1996

The Petition for a charter to form the Fermor Hesketh Lodge was sponsored by Brethren mainly from the Mersey Lodge No 477 and was granted on 9 February, 1871 to the following brethren: John Higson Johnston, James Ridley, Joseph Dawson Crawford, Edward Harbord, William P. Colebom, Samuel Jones, Robert Henry Harbord and Peter Talbot Peterson,

The consecration ceremony took place at the Masonic Hall, Hope Street. Liverpool on Tuesday 4 July. 1871 at 2pm. The consecration officer was WBro Robert Wylie, PrGDC who later became Deputy Provincial Grand Master and he was accompanied by WBro Thomas Wylie, Provincial Grand Registrar WBro James Higson Johnston was then duly installed as the first worshipful master of the lodge with the following brethren as officers:

WBro James Higson Johnston, WM

WBro Dr James Ridley, SW

WBro Dr Joseph D. Crawford, JW

WBro William P. Coleborn, Treasurer

WBro Edward Harbord, Secretary

Bro R Rochefort Rae, DC

Bro Samuel Jones, SD

Bro Dr Arthur Samuels, JD

Bro Martin Browne, IG

Bro Peter T Peterson, Steward

Bro John Williams, Steward

Bro W H Ball, Tyler

The name of the lodge was taken from the name of the then Provincial Grand Master, Sir Thomas G Fermor-Hesketh, Baronet.

The first minute book was lost and it was fortunate however, that the tylers book remains as it provided the evidence which was necessary in claiming the centenary warrant. From the records many of the original members were from the medical and seafaring professions, and that the lodge met in every month of the year, plus an average of five emergency meetings, and that at nearly every meeting in those days brethren from other lodges were either passed or raised. It appears it was usual for brethren of other lodges to visit and make a personal appeal to our members for assistance in cases of distress of members of their lodges and it is recorded that amounts ranging from 2/6 to £2 were given.

The following is the introduction which was printed in the first bye-laws in 1872, and as it was then, still applies today.

Order is Heaven's first law, and no society can be conducted without order; but we must at all times remember that laws, without observance, are worse than useless.

We must endeavour to avoid, as much as possible introducing into our mysteries any person addicted to strife, or contaminated by profaneness or dishonesty; and thereby show to the world that our principles rest on the firm basis of virtue and honor, and not on mere forms and ceremonies.

Masonry comprehends within its circle every branch of useful learning, and stamps an indelible mark of pre-eminence on all its Genuine professors, which chance, power or fortune cannot bestow.

When its principles are strictly observed, it is a sure source of tranquility among the various disappointments of life; it cheers the mind in the hour of affliction, paves the way to peace, and promotes domestic happiness; it is company in solitude, and gives variety, vivacity, and energy to social conversation.

The universal principles of the art unite in one indissoluble bond of affection men of the most opposite tenets, of the most distant countries, of the most contradictory opinions, – so that a Mason, FINDS, IN EVERY NATION, A FRIEND, AND IN EVERY COUNTRY, A HOME.

Many of our pastmasters have been honoured by appointment to rank in Provincial Grand Lodge, and also three pastmasters have received Grand Lodge honours.

Six sons of pastmasters of the lodge have also occupied the master's chair of the lodge.

The centenary meeting in November 1971 proved to be to a most happy one. The lodge was honoured by the presence of many distinguished guests, who made it a really prestige occasion. These included The Provincial Grand Master, The PrDG Chap, The APrGM, also the complete Provincial Grand Lodge team. The centenary warrant was read by The Provincial Grand Secretary, and duly presented to the WM.

Ever since its foundations, the lodge funds and the purses of its members have also been open to any deserving object, and generous donations have been given to the five West Lancashire Charities, as well as to the festivals of the RMI for Boys, the RMI for Girls, the Royal Masonic Benevolent Institution, the Million Memorial Fund, Liverpool Cathedral, the Grand Charity, the Samaritans Fund and the Tithebarn.

We have now completed 125 years of endeavour and progress, and whilst feeling proud of those who have preceded them, the brethren of the Lodge must realise that they cannot bask in the reflected glory of the past, but we must also contribute to the foundations which have been well and truly laid, by seeing that our dear old Lodge continues to prosper, and that the members play their part in the maintenance of Masonry in general and Fermor Hesketh Lodge No 1350 in particular.