

Ravensworth Lodge of Mark Master Masons no. 718

‘One Hundred Years Ago’

The idea of a petition for a new Lodge, to be known as the Ravensworth Lodge of Mark Master Masons number 718 was first proposed at a meeting in North Bridge Street Masonic Hall on the 5th March 1920. (Home of the Bede Lodge of Mark Master Masons number 605). Brother Mathew Wrangham proposed the name Ravensworth Mark Lodge, subject to Lord Ravensworth's approval. It was also proposed that Lord Ravensworth would be invited to be the first Worshipful Master of the Lodge.

The founder's fee would be 3 Guineas, and an annual fee of 1 Guinea. There were 26 founding Brethren, and it was the wish of the founders, that the consecration of the new Lodge would be held in the Phoenix Lodge Room, Queen Street East, Sunderland.

Two further meetings of founders were held at the Palatine Hotel in Sunderland, in June and August 1920. At these meetings the details of the new Lodge, and its officers were agreed upon, as well as the idea of commissioning a founding jewel for the Ravensworth Lodge of Mark Master Masons number 718. (Proposed by Brother Rowntree, seconded by Bro. Sanders). A list of Lodge furniture had also been presented to the new Lodge by the founding Brethren, which greatly assisted the move to the Queen Street East temple.

The Right Honourable Lord Ravensworth, D.L P.G.W (ENG), was the first Provincial Grand Master of the Province of Durham after the division in 1920 of Northumberland and Durham into two separate Provinces. The first Lodge consecrated in the new Province of Durham was the Ravensworth Lodge no. 718, with Lord Ravensworth as its first Worshipful Master. Thus, we have two centenaries to celebrate. The Lodge warrant is dated 20th September 1920.

On the 29th September 1920, a Lodge of Mark Master Masons of the Province of Durham was held at the Freemasons Hall, Queen Street East, Sunderland. Presided over by Worshipful Bro. R. Peacock, P.P.G.R. appointing W. Bro. Dixon, Deputy Master of the Union Lodge no. 124, as Senior Warden, and W.Bro. G.W. Tait, Worshipful Master of Bede Lodge no. 605 as Junior Warden. The Deputy Provincial Grand Master, W.Bro. John Redhead J.P., and officers of Provincial Grand Lodge were admitted.

W.Bro. John Redhead J.P. Deputy P.G.M. of Durham, was the consecrating officer, and he was assisted by officers of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Durham. The consecration ceremony commenced with the presentation of the Deputy Master designate W.Bro. Peacock to the consecrating officer.

Lord Ravensworth considered it a great compliment that the Brethren wished him to go in as Master of their Lodge. He was unfortunately unable to attend the ceremony in person, but indicated by letter that he had the fraternal pleasure in appointing as Deputy Master, W.Bro. R. Peacock, P.P.G.R. for the ensuing year, and wished all, and the Lodge every success.

The Lodge assembled at 3pm, and the consecration ceremony was at 3.30pm. Dinner was provided at the Palatine Hotel at 6.30pm, tickets at 10/6d each.

The festive board menu was:

Hors d'oeuvres, Clear Portugais or Thick Oxtail soup

Turbot, Sauce Hollandaise

Supreme of Veal ala Royal

Sirloin of Beef, Saddle of Mutton red currant jelly

Game Pudding (pheasant, rabbit, partridge, grouse, etc)

Pouding ala Ravensworth (chef's choice, named for the occasion)

Tourtes aux Pommes (apple pie)

Gehee au Vin (wine jelly)

Pailles de Parmesan (pastry with Parmesan cheese – cheese straws)

Desert Coffee

Today, the Lodge has 20 dedicated members, with a good mix of ages and experience and is going strong despite the difficulties the modern world presents its members. We had hoped to celebrate our ceremony at our September meeting in 2020, but that proved impossible owing to the Covid19 pandemic. Here we are today, to mark our centenary, and look to the future with positivity.

Presented by:

W.Bro Christopher Robert Mullaney

Worshipful Master