

Consecration of the Cheselden Lodge No. 2870.

The consecration of the above lodge took place in the Governors' Hall of St. Thomas's Hospital on Monday November 4th. The Most Worshipful Grand Master, the Duke of Connaught and Strathearn, KG., who is the President of St. Thomas's Hospital, had signified his intention of being present at the ceremony of consecration and of performing a most important part of the ceremony himself. Most unfortunately, however for the founders of the lodge and their guests, a dense fog prevailed, which rendered it impossible for the Duke of Connaught to reach the place of meeting, and a message by telephone was received to say that he could not come. In his regrettable but unavoidable absence the ceremony of consecration was most impressively carried out by V.W. Bro. E Letchworth, F.S.A., Grand Secretary, assisted by the following Grand Officers:- W. Bro. Clement Godson, M.D., P.G.D., as S.W.; W.Bro. Alfred Cooper, F.R.C.S., P.G.D., as J.W.; V.W. Bro. Sir Borradaile Savory Bart., Grand Chaplain; V.W. Bro. W.C.R. Bedford, Grand Chaplain; V.W. Bro. Frank Richardson, P. Dep. G. Registrar, as acting DC., assisted by W.Bro. Fitzroy Tower; W.Bro. Woodhouse Braine, F.R.C.S. S.G.D., as I.G.; and W.Bro. W. Walmsley-Little, Mus. Doc., Grand Organist.

There was a very large and distinguished gathering, both of Grand Officers and of well known members of the medical profession and others interested in hospitals in general and St. Thomas's Hospital in particular, including R.W. Bro. the Lord Mayor, P.G.W., R.W. Bro. the Earl of Templetown, S.G.W.; R.W. Bro. F.S.W. Cornwallis, J.G.W.; R.W. Bro. G. Richards, District G. Master Transvaal; R.W. Bro. Colonel John Davis, Prov. G.M. Surrey; Bro. Sir William MacCormac, Bart., P.G.W.; the Ven Archdeacon Sinclair, P.G. Chaplain; and J Strachan K.C.; G. Registrar. Doubtless the fog was responsible for keeping many others away, but despite the weather the attendance was very large.



The Officers of the lodge are as follows:-

W.Bro. Thomas Wakely, Jun., L.R.C.P. Lond., P.P.G.D. Surrey, W.M.; V.W. Bro. Alderman W. Vaughan Morgan, P.G.Treas.; I.P.M.; Bro. H.H. Clutton, F.R.C.S.; S.W.; W. Bro. G. Crawford Thomson, M.D., J.W.; Bro. Sydney Phillips (Steward of St. Thomas's Hospital), Treasurer; Bro. Charles R. Box, M.D., F.R.C.S., Secretary; Bro. W.S. Colman, M.D., F.R.C.P., S.D.; Bro. T.G. Nicholson, M.D., J.D.; W.Bro. Samuel Hague, M.D., P.P.G.D.C. Middlesex, D.C. W.Bro. L. A. Bidwell, F.R.C.S., I.G.; and W.Bro. H.J. Prangley, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P. Lond., and W.Bro. W.H. Copeland, M.D., Stewards.

At the conclusion of the ceremony the brethren made their way as speedily as the fog permitted to the Trocadero Restaurant where the banquet was held, the number of members and their guests amounting to about 120.

V.W. Bro. E. Letchworth, in responding to the toast of "The Consecrating Officers," mentioned that he had that morning seen the M.W. Grand Master, who had said that he was looking forward with pleasure to the meeting that evening; and it was most unfortunate that the density of the fog had rendered it impossible for his Royal Highness to reach St. Thomas's Hospital in order to carry out his intention of being present.

The Worshipful Master in replying to the toast of his health, which was proposed by V.W. Bro. Vaughan Morgan, gave a few particulars concerning the name of the lodge. The hospital lodges which preceded it had, he said followed no uniform plan with respect to their names. Some - St. Mary's practically and classically, and Middlesex and London absolutely in the vernacular - had very naturally adopted the names of the hospitals. They had been precluded from following such a course, for they had found that there was already a St Thomas's Lodge in existence - a St. Thomas's lodge, moreover, which was very closely connected with St. Thomas's hospital. This lodge held its meetings at Tibshelf in Derbyshire, on an estate (in a Colliery district) which was one of the hospitals most valuable properties, the hospital authorities being Lords of the Manor, and the greater part of their possessions there having been derived under the Charter of Edward VI., and having belonged to the ancient hospital of the Savoy. St. Bartholomew's, the pioneers of modern Hospital Lodges, had taken the name of their great founder Rahere, and Charing Cross had taken the very appropriate and pleasing name of "Chère Reine" in double allusion to Queen Eleanor, one of whose Crosses was erected at the village of Charing, and to our late beloved Queen Victoria, who was their patroness. The Founders of the lodge, which had been that day consecrated, had called their lodge after the name of an illustrious anatomist and surgeon, William Cheselden, the introducer of the operation of lateral lithotomy, who was a member of the medical staff of St. Thomas's Hospital from 1718 to 1738. He (the W.M.) had been endeavouring to discover whether Cheselden was a Freemason, but was unable to at any definite conclusion. He had, however, in the course of his enquiries, had his attention directed to a trustworthy record of Sir Robert Clayton, who was President of the hospital in 1691, having summoned a lodge of his brother Masters to meet at St. Thomas's Hospital in 1693, to advise the Governors as to the best design for rebuilding the hospital, and of a lodge in connection with the hospital having continued long afterwards. So they had done no new thing that day in holding a Masonic lodge in St. Thomas's Hospital. They had but renewed an association after the lapse of 200 years. Although Cheselden, perhaps, had not been associated with Freemasonry in the past, he hoped that they would be able to win for the Cheselden Lodge - and for his name - a reputation as honourable in Freemasonry as he won for himself in Surgery and anatomy.

The Worshipful Master, in proposing the toast of "The Officers," took the opportunity, having previously referred to the great assistance that had so willingly given by the Immediate Past Master, V.W. Bro. Vaughan Morgan, of calling attention to the invaluable services that had been rendered in the foundation of the lodge by Bros. Clutton, Crawford Thomson, Sydney Phillips, C.R. Box, Colman, and Nicholson, the work of the Secretary being particularly arduous and responsible, though all had lent themselves devotedly to the work.