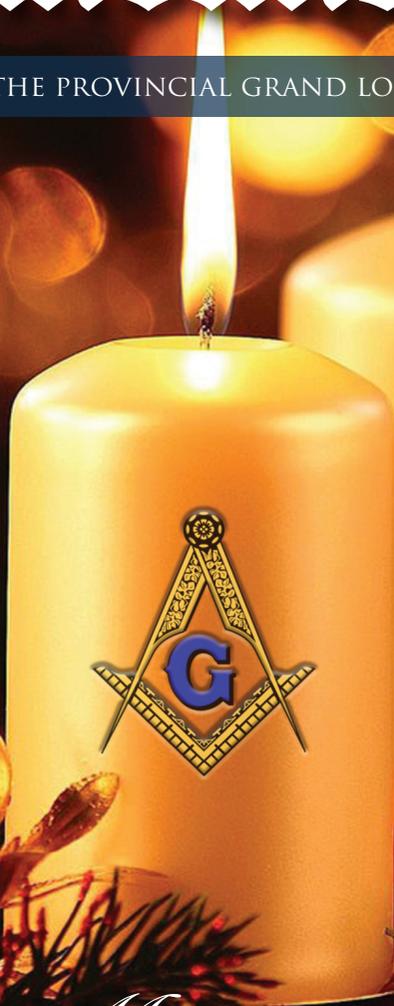


The Plumblin

DECEMBER 2020



NEWSLETTER OF THE PROVINCIAL GRAND LODGE OF MUNSTER



*Merry
Christmas*

Provincial Grand Lodge of Munster



December 2020

Dear Brethren

I hope you and your families are safe and well in these difficult times. As I sit down to write these notes in early November it's difficult to imagine what Christmas will be like in these trying times. We have not been able to hold any Masonic meetings since early March with the Covid 19 restrictions. However, members in the Province are keeping in touch with each other on different online platforms and by telephone. This has to be encouraged as we go forward. We published The Plumblin in May and circulated it by post, and you will be receiving this, the fifth edition, again by post.

We are all in uncertain times as the second wave of Covid 19 has new restrictions imposed upon us. I would encourage you to keep in contact with members and their families as they may have lost their job, or a family member may be ill. In these trying times, each member now more than ever has to be aware of the needs of others in their Lodge.

On the first Wednesday in October we had a very successful Provincial Zoom get-together. It was encouraging to have all thirteen Lodges taking part along with the different Provincial Officers reporting. It is hoped to hold this get-together again in early January. This will be open to all members and family if they wish to join in.

Over the Summer the Supper Room in Tuckey St. was refurbished. Our thanks to **Derek Dunne** and all those involved with this work.

When you receive this edition, we would normally have just had the Christmas lunch at Tuckey Street. however due to the Covid 19 restrictions it was not possible to hold the lunch this year. Instead it was decided to send a small hamper to all Lodge widows which I know they will appreciate. Our thanks to **Stuart Brownlow** for organizing the hampers and to all Lodge almoners for assisting with the raising of funds and distribution.

You will be reading this edition of The Plumblin in what are unprecedented times for us all. We all react in different ways; we all rely on our friends and family more as we try and get through the difficult times Covid 19 has brought to our lives. But as a very good friend said to me once "it's always darkest before the dawn"

I would like to wish you and your families every good wish for Christmas and a bright, happy New Year.

Yours sincerely & fraternally


Leslie Deane
PGM Munster



Refurbishment of Tuckey Street Supper Room

Writes R.W Derek Dunne

2015 saw the first major construction work undertaken on the ground floor of 27, Tuckey Street since the mid 1970's. It was felt that, with the opening up of the building to the public for events such as Heritage Day, Culture Night, Cork Choral Festival, Lodge 555's Music Miscellany amongst others, the entrance should better reflect the improvements that had already taken place on the upper floors. To this end the House Committee decided to embark on a phased upgrading of the ground floor starting with the entrance hall and the rather outdated toilets.

In 2018, as finances allowed, the kitchen was embarked upon and the refurbishment, including the installation of a fan extraction system, was completed. No more the wafting of tempting aromas of diners cooking to distract Brethren at labour in the Lodge Room above during Installation season!

During 2019, with House Committee fabric funds again in a healthy state and in keeping with the ethos of continually improving and upgrading the building, it was decided that the next phase would be to tackle the Supper Room. Rather than purely cosmetic alterations the brave decision to strip back to bare wall and utilise the 'dead' space, concealed by the false ceiling installed over 40 years before,



was taken. This revealed nearly 18 inches of extra head room once various services were accommodated. The opportunity to enhance the ventilation system, to bring the electrical and fire detection systems into compliance with current health and safety requirements and to install state of the art lighting with audio visual capability was greatly welcomed.

The overarching consideration when undertaking this project was that whilst enhancing the present we should not lose sight of the past and I feel that this has been achieved and hope that the photographs of the room as it now stands reflect this. A considerable amount of work remains to be done to 'populate' the walls with our Masonic heritage but I should like to thank the members of the Tuckey Street House Committee and, in particular, the members of the fabric sub-committee who were able to



meet within the limitations of pandemic restrictions to complete on this worthy project. It should be mentioned that the sanding and varnishing of the floor was undertaken by **W. Bro. Peter Farrell**, Lodge 67, and he is deserving of our grateful thanks.

As the Supper Room was coming to completion the Third Lodge of Ireland informed the House Committee that, in consequence of a generous bequest from a past member, they wished to underwrite a considerable portion of the cost of the refurbishment and I am pleased to report that the Board of General Purposes has kindly granted permission for the Supper Room to be renamed the '**Bill Macgahy Room**' in grateful recognition.

It is very much hoped that, Covid19 restrictions allowing, we will be able to make full use of our new Supper Room in the not too distant future.

Hibernian Lodge No.95's First Installation Dinner 1927

Writes **W.Bro David O' Leary**

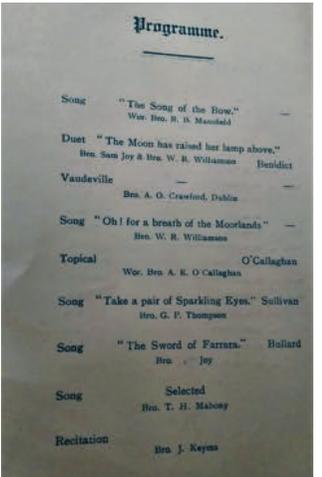
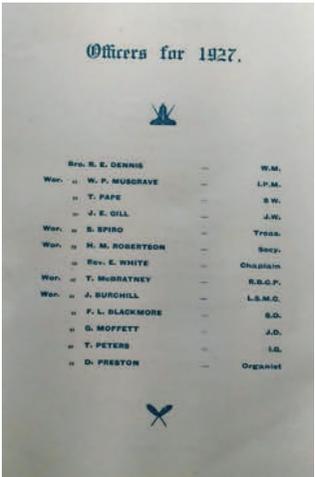
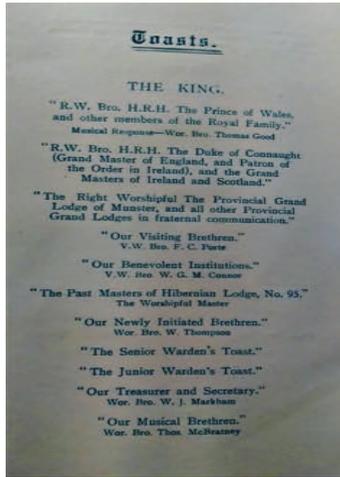
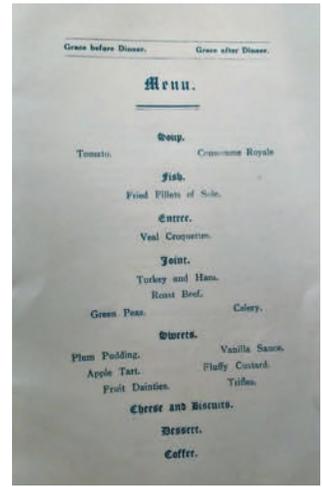
We were fortunate that most Lodges managed to hold their Installation Dinners this year before restrictions hit. It is the highlight of the Masonic season, and enjoyed immensely by the Brethren, inviting guests, and visiting other Lodges.

As many will know, the House Committee are at advanced stages in renovating the Supper Room at Tuckey Street, and during the tidying and sorting, we were reminded of one of the earliest Dinners at Tuckey Street from as far back as Wednesday, 26th January 1927 (all city Lodges moved into the hall in January 1926).

Here we can see the menu of Hibernian Lodge No.95's first Installation dinner at Tuckey St. It's great to see that those dining

at '95' always had a good spread to look forward to! Noticing too the programme including several songs - a long standing feature of our dinners have been a toast to the Musical Brethren and it is a boast amongst our Lodge that we still entertain our

guests with some song and recitals! I hope you've enjoyed seeing this little piece of history from 93 years ago! Once we're able to meet again, we can look forward to many more fine menus and songs in a beautiful renovated setting!





GRAND LODGE OF IRELAND

My Dear Brethren,

Firstly I sincerely hope that you and your families are keeping safe and well. I think that it is fair to say that we are all feeling bad at being unable to meet and share our brotherhood but hopefully in early 2021 or earlier if possible. At Grand Lodge we had begun to plan as to how we might resume meetings under the Governments' regulation level 3 when the very next day it was announced "no more than five people to meet indoors" which scuppered our plans. Since then we have gone to level 5 and so nothing can happen until the end of November. Be assured that Grand Lodge are continuously reviewing the situation with a view to resuming meetings.

We have had many Zoom Meetings with our Provincial Grand Masters both here and throughout the world which have been successful and I can confirm that we are all in the same boat unfortunately but the meetings were very positive.

At present we are preparing for our Remembrance Event on 11th November which will be available live and later via the web site freemason.ie. Already in October, instead of our usual Grand Lodge Communication, we reported via a webinar on our Charities which I think was successful and we hope to continue to use this medium while the current situation lasts. Positively, it has demonstrated how the "electronic age" can enhance our communication with all members who have access to the internet.

Thank you to all those Brethren who have been looking after Brethren in need and also many



M. W. Bro. Douglas T Grey

within our communities by Zoom, calling etc. Lots of information is available through the web site freemason.ie and you can also register through it to the various other branches of our Order and any committee of which you are a member.

Meantime, may I wish you and your families a Happy and Blessed Christmas, a good new year and please stay safe and positive!

Sincerely,
Douglas T Grey
Grand Master

R. W Bro Ted Rea loses his head (of hair)

Report by Bro. Mark O’Sullivan

Good tidings and fraternal greetings to each and every Brother reading this fine publication.

Through all of the craziness of this year, and multiple restrictions or postponed plans, some good came out of the lock down from brethren of Harmony Lodge 67, under the watchful eye of our Worshipful Master, Worshipful Brother **Martin Mason**.

Through the restrictions and cocooning one of the fine upstanding Past Masters, Right Worshipful Brother **Ted Rea** grew out his silver locks with the goal of raising money for Vision 2020 and our Lodge charities.

His last hedge trim was in January 2020, and on September 21st, the Silver Fox sheared his lengthy mane on video with the expertise of Worshipful Brother **Kevin Ryan** manning the Clippers. A Go-Fund-me page was set up to provide a conduit for digital donations. The total collected was

€4,301 of Ireland’s finest euros, of which 90% was donated to Vision 2020 while 10% went to our Lodge charity collection.

Credit must be given to the Right Worshipful Brother Ted Rea for the arduous task of growing the hair, Brother **George Bolster**, Harmony Lodge 67’s Inner Guard and Steward of Charities for his internet skills, Worshipful Brother **Uwe Schiller** for the video production (as seen in various zoom meetings and also posted to the Masonic Facebook pages), and of course to Worshipful Brother Kevin Ryan for taming the Barnett beast.

We hope, dear readers, that you are in good health and standing in these difficult times, and hopefully when lodge resumes, we will reconnect in person, share ritual and lodge, smiles and laughter.

Happiness and good health for the remainder of 2020, and a happy and healthy 2021 for you all, from all the brethren of Harmony Lodge 67.



Before



Mid-shave



After

Warmest Greetings from The District Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Munster I hope and trust that all readers of this are keeping safe and well. What extraordinary times we are living in, but they will pass and hopefully we will be back and able to meet again when the promised vaccines are available, and we can all feel safe again. To all those on the front line who are doing invaluable work to keep us all safe, and within Masonry those who are keeping our annuitants looked after, we extend a big Thank You, your work is hugely appreciated. To those who are in a position to do so I would encourage you to reach out to those who are living alone and feeling isolated, it is amazing what a kind word or a phone call can do to lift the spirits of the recipients. Perhaps your New Year's resolution could be to phone one person per day who you do not usually contact and ask them how they are, it just might make all the difference.



Wishing you all a Happy, Healthy and Safe Christmas and New Year.

District Grand King
Yours Sincerely and Fraternally
Robin E.W. Newenham

Sad Passing of W. Bro. Eric Sayers

Eric Sayers 1959—2020

Writes

V. W. Bro. Malcolm Tyrrell

It was with great regret we heard on the 23rd September of the passing to the Grand Lodge above of our friend Eric Sayers. Eric joined Lodge 27 receiving his EA Degree in November 1983. This was just 7 years after Lodge 27 had been reformed with just 14 Brethern and he was there as the Lodge grew through the 80's to be one of the strongest numerically in the Province of Munster. One could also say that he was there as much vocally as physically as Eric was not one to keep quiet on any subject- he always had an opinion and was always prepared to voice it. Eric received his MM Degree in September 1984 and then due to the success and expansion of



W. Bro. Eric Sayers

the Lodge had to wait until 1995 to become WM. Those years were great fun with lots of visiting around the Province

and also with the knowledge that with Eric with us it would not be a dull evening. He particularly enjoyed our Installation Dinner every year. This was pre curfew and pre smoking ban and was a high point of every year. Eric moved to Manchester in '002 to be part of a larger Jewish community which had all but disappeared in Cork. Eric unfortunately was diagnosed with cancer early this year and despite a valiant fight passed away on the 23rd September 2020. Our deepest sympathy goes to his wife Andrea and his children Rachele and Elliot. Eric will be greatly missed by those of us who remember him from those early days of Lodge 27.

The Masonic Female Orphan Asylum, Cork

R.W.Bro Alan Campbell writes:

During the lockdown period some excellent reconstruction work has been done in the dining room at Tuckey Street. I personally can't wait to see it finished and to enjoy a Festive Board there once again. I am sure you will all echo this comment.

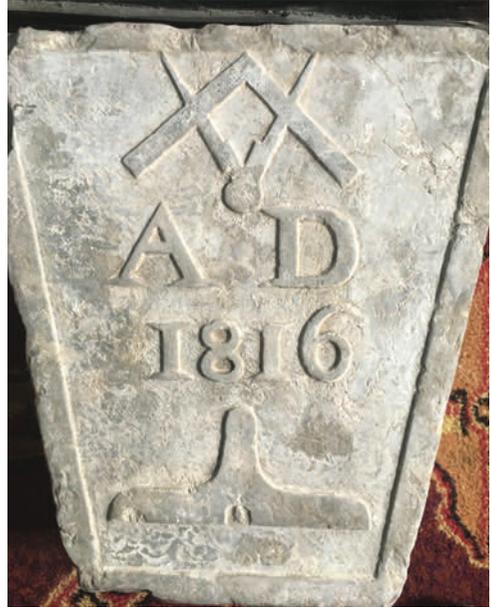
During the work an old keystone which had been embedded in the north wall, as far as I know since the room was reconstructed after the fire in 1970, was removed.

I have attached a photo of it and I am sure you will all recognise it. I was asked if I knew it's origin but unfortunately, I don't. In fact, I wondered about it for a long time and some 40 years ago asked R.W. Bro **Alec Day** if he knew. He had no idea either which, I would think meant, nobody knew in living memory since the late R.W.Bro Day was a keen student of the history of the Order in Munster.

Discussion started during zoom conversations and Bro **Robert Bashford**, Secretary to the Irish Lodge of Research, pointed out that 1816, the date on the keystone, was a significant one being the "year without a summer" or the "poverty year".

In 1815 there was a massive volcanic eruption of Mount Tambora in Indonesia. It was recorded as the largest in 1,300 years and caused severe climatic abnormalities. Summer temperatures were the coldest on record which resulted in major food shortages in the Northern Hemisphere due to the non-existent harvest.

In Cork there was particular depression. The Napoleonic wars ended abruptly with the defeat of the French under Napoleon at Waterloo by Bro. **Arthur Wellesley**, Duke of Wellington on 18th June 1815. The rations for the hugely enlarged British army were mostly sourced in Cork and so merchants here became very prosperous and so, of course, did those they employed. Suddenly there was no further need to have such a huge army and the bottom fell out of the business causing immense difficulties in Cork. This was at a time when there was no social welfare so you worked and got paid



or you starved!

You may well ask, at this stage, what has the title of this little piece got to do with all this?

Well, it was wondered if the keystone could have been in the building that housed the Asylum. It was suggested by Bro Bashford that the position of the square & compasses is unusual and he thought it could be a sign of distress.

I searched all my reference books and found nothing to suggest this and W.Bro **Kevin Ryan** told me he had seen the emblems in this position over several Masonic Halls in Continental Europe.

I turned to researching the Masonic Female Orphan Asylum. It was founded in 1820 according to its surviving annual reports. Now it is, of course, possible that it worked for a few years before this date but was only formally set up in 1820. It is very difficult to know now and the keystone may have been over a pub in Barrack Street just as easily but it is interesting to have a look at what we can find out about the Institution.

The Asylum was at 27, Mary Street which runs from George's Quay to Douglas Street. It was under the patronage of the Provincial Grand Master and was managed by a Board of Governors who met at the Asylum on a monthly basis.

Finance was provided entirely by the Masons of the Province. It was recorded in The Freemason's Quarterly Review of 30th June, 1835 that: "There is a flourishing school in the city of Cork, in which are 20 orphan daughters of deceased Freemasons. This establishment reflects the greatest credit on the Right Hon. The Earl of Shannon, Prov. G.M., and the Freemasons of Munster, whose contributions are its exclusive support" The rules of the establishment make for some interesting reading, particularly, to my mind rules VII & VIII.

Rule VII reads "The children to be permitted without religious distinction, to attend their respective places of worship, and to be Catechised by their respective Clergy at the Parish Church or Chapel, but the Bible to be read daily in the school without note or comment"

I think you will agree that this was extremely broadminded in days when people would have been very denominational and shows true Masonic respect for the religious denomination of each child's family.

Rule VIII reads "The children may be visited by their friends between the hours of ten o'clock in the forenoon, and three o'clock in the afternoon, daily. No visitor can be allowed at any hour, except by special order, and no child can be permitted to sleep out of the house, or be otherwise absent without leave"

I think this is such a humanitarian rule. The Home was for orphan girls or girls whose fathers had fallen on hard times (described in Victorian times as being decayed!). They were no younger than 8 and no older than 15.

Just think of a child of 8 who had recently lost her father and therefore her mother couldn't afford to keep her. She had to leave her home and go into a strange house to be cared for by a Matron in the company of 19 or so other children whom she may not have known at all. How much easier would her life be if her friends could come in for a while each day to play with her. Maybe even to bring a little treat from their mother's

kitchen.

I have to say I was impressed by the thoughtful care shown by our Brethren all those years ago in 1820.

The Lodges and individual Brethren made subscriptions to maintain the institution and in passing I noticed that a ball held by the First Lodge in 1866 raised £70 which was a great boost to the funds. Also when Queen Victoria visited Cork in 1849 she reviewed the fleet in the harbour. An engraving of this event was made and prints were sold in aid of the school. One still hangs on the stairs in Tuckey Street.



Ticket To A Ball Held By First Lodge In 1890



Queen Victoria Reviewing The Fleet In Cork Harbour

Also I noticed a subscription came under the heading of Lodge 84 Bandon from Bro. General **Garibaldi** who lived in Bandon for a period. He contributed hugely to the unification of Italy and was described as one of Italy's "fathers of the fatherland". There is hardly an Italian city or town which does not have a street or piazza named after him.

By the 1860s it seemed to become apparent that it would be much to the benefit of the girls if the school could be amalgamated with the larger school in Dublin. Discussions were had by a committee from each institution and despite initial problems agreement was reached in 1869 and amalgamation achieved. This gave the girls a much better education as was pointed out by the author of the arrangement, Bro. **Anderson Cooper** who had been treasurer to the Cork institution.

You may feel you have heard of this Brother's name and that will be because the secretary's desk in the Lodge Room has a brass plaque advising that it was his gift and a very fine portrait of him by **Walter Osborne** hangs over the entrance door to the room.

Part of the amalgamation arrangements were that the capital held by the Cork institution being £110 (€14,720 at today's values) would be transferred to Dublin and that the Cork Brethren would fundraise and subscribe to the Masonic Girl's School in Dublin.

Star of the West Lodge no 130, Kerry contributed £12 (€1,300 in today's values) and "many articles of fancy work to the Munster Stall at the Centenary Bazaar" In 1892.

This they did, as you can see from the examples above, for the following 103 years until free education, particularly in Northern Ireland made it too difficult to provide a school any more.

Instead the property was sold in 1972, the proceeds invested and the needs of the daughters of deceased Freemasons or those who had fallen on

hard times were catered for. The Masonic Boy's School was also closed a few years later and a similar arrangement was agreed by the High Court by way of a Cy Pres scheme meaning "as near as possible".

In 2019, these funds assisted over 400 applicants including 11 daughters of Freemasons of the Province of Munster.

I think we can be very proud of 200 years of caring from 1820 to 2020.

Here is a picture of 27, Mary Street, Cork today. I think greatly altered from the 19th century. The question is – did the keystone once feature over the entrance? – I will leave you to decide.



27, Mary Street, Cork

I am grateful for the assistance afforded by **Rebecca Hayes**, Archivist to the Grand Lodge of Ireland in my research for this article.

THE MUNSTER MASONIC SWORDS COLLECTION

II: Halls in the Provincial Towns

As a follow-on to the survey of swords in Freemasons' Hall, Cork, published in the previous issue of *The Plumline* (May 2020), this second article in the series focuses on the halls of the provincial towns of Skibbereen (15), Youghal (68), Bandon (84), and Cobh (190), with further hall surveys to follow next issue.

Covid-19 restrictions interfered with planned excursions to some of these lodge rooms and my thanks are due to V.W. Bro. Dermod O'Brien (Skibbereen), W. Bro. David J. Butler (Youghal and Bandon) and V.W. Bro. Pat Mahony (Cobh) for providing photographs to accompany these notes.

Many of the observations made in relation to the swords in Tuckey Street, Cork in the last issue, apply also to the swords in these halls. In the past, varnish was applied to the Tuckey Street swords as a preservative following the post-fire water damage of the building in 1970-71 and I suspect the other lodges followed suit. Removing the varnish would be possible, but only recommended for the higher quality swords.

FIFTEENTH LODGE OF IRELAND, SKIBBEREEN

There are seven items in total in the Skibbereen collection, including two bayonets, and these are pictured here, 1 – 7, left to right, numerically.

1. *French Gras pattern bayonet cr 1874, in scabbard.* These very distinctive weapons were made for the French Gras pattern rifle and were adopted by some other European armies. When decommissioned, quite a few were adapted as Fire Irons, ornamental candle sconces or simply kept as useful intruder deterrents! This is why so many survive.

2. and 3. Two *Masonic Knights*

Templar swords. One, without scabbard, with leather grip covering is early



twentieth century; the other, with scabbard, and sharkskin grip is Victorian. Blades are well worn.

4. *Infantry (probably Flank or rifle company) officers' sword, ca 1800.* An attractive sword with a Brass P shaped stirrup hilt and ribbed leather covered grip. Very curved single edged blade. These extra curved blades were more a stylistic affectation than practical. Scabbard (presumed leather) missing.

5. and 6. *Light Cavalry troopers' swords of British Army 1796 pattern.* An almost identical pair. Both have had their leather covered grips replaced and are quite worn and pitted. This pattern is one of the most iconic and popular swords of the period. It was adapted from the scimitars used in Persia and Eastern Europe and copied widely by other European armies, particularly the Prussians (Blucher Model, 1811). Most famously used in the Napoleonic Wars and at Waterloo, it was superseded in 1821, but continued in use by local Militias for many years after.



7. *Bayonet currently unidentified, WWI era,* known to be of German origin. This item has an interesting history and was donated by Bro. Jan Linzel, a Dutch national who retired to West Cork in 1978 and became a member of the Fifteenth Lodge in 1983.

On 1 December 1983, following the completion of his three degrees that year, Bro. Linzel (who was born in 1915 and served as a pilot in the Dutch Air Force from 1939 and, from 1944, with the RAF) presented this bayonet for the reception of new candidates, which he had unearthed on 26 August 1944 at Caen airfield, in Normandy, France, while digging a tentpole hole, setting up camp!

YOUGHAL LODGE 68

Youghal Lodge 68 has five swords, all of the 1822/1853 type and later 'Gothic' Hilt pattern for Infantry officers, so called because the bars of the hilt resembled the tracery of Gothic style Church windows. This pattern is one of the most enduring, as it was in use from 1822 until 1897 and consequently is probably the most commonly encountered sword. Condition is variable as they were frequently over polished, resulting in loss of gilding and wear to the soft brass metal. All have fishskin covered grips, some with partial losses.



1. *Brass 'Gothic' hilt*, with folding inner guard, pipe backed blade. *VR* cypher to the guard

2. *Brass 'Gothic' hilt*, with folding inner guard. The backstrap is warped and separated from the grip. *WRIV* cypher to the guard and the hilt appears to have the top piece missing.

3. *Brass 'Gothic' hilt*, similar sword.



4. *Brass 'Gothic' hilt*, similar to Nos 1 & 2, but of later date, with fixed inner guard. Slender, post-1854, slightly curved single fullered blade with inset



brass proof pellet. This appears to be from the maker Robert Mole of Birmingham, then amalgamated with Wilkinson Sword. In its steel scabbard with two hanging rings, and mottled black paint (pictured above).

5. *Brass 'Gothic' hilt*, late Victorian, as indicated by the straighter grip and backpiece. The latter with partially worn inscription (see left): *'Presented to Youghal Lodge 68, by Bro. B.R. Goren, South Lancashire Regt, 17 March 1896.'* The donor was visiting from Tullamore Lodge 321.

ANTIEN BANDON LODGE 84, BRINNY

Bandon 84 seems originally to have had just two swords – one for the Inner Guard and a dirk or dagger for the Tyler, as confirmed by the lodge inventory of 1838 and historical researches for the lodge history, compiled for its 275th year (2013); however, the 1913 inventory records six swords and a dirk: all of which were lost on 11 August 1922, in a raid during the Civil War period.

The present collection was acquired by donation: the first for the Inner Guard in the 1920s; the second in the last decade. The dagger, surplus to requirements in Shamrock 27, Tuckey Street (upon Lodge 27 re-engaging use of the heritage collection of its parent lodge, Concord 71, in storage since that lodge closed during 1976), was acquired for Lodge 84 in 2013 by W. Bro. David J. Butler.



1. *Pattern 1822 Gothic Hilt infantry officer in its brass scabbard.* Dating to about 1860-70, it still has the folding inner guard, which is unusual for that period. Retailed by Johnston, Sackville (O'Connell) St., Dublin, the inset brass proof pellet is that of Charles Reeves, Birmingham. The blade stained and worn. Used by the Inner Guard at the Hall.

2. *Masonic Knight Templar Preceptory type sword.* Brass cruciform hilt in its correct leather and brass scabbard; the blade worn and stained. Attractive hilt with Trefoil shaped quillon tips and pommel and a grip that appears to be ivory, but is possibly artificial ivorine or plastic. Appears of early twentieth century origin.





3. *Masonic Knight Templar type dagger or poignard.* Used for Entered Apprentice degree candidate reception. Brass hilted in its matching scabbard. This dagger has attractively ornate

Fleur de Lys quillon tips and pommel. The blade is somewhat worn and stained, but could be rescued. Originally donated to Shamrock Lodge 27, Cork, in 1976.

NEPTUNE LODGE 190, COBH

Cobh (Neptune Lodge) has four swords. I had not the opportunity to examine



them close up, rather only from photographs, but they are as I would have expected in terms of condition and style. The East India Company sword appears very interesting indeed.

1. *British East India Company Officer sword of 1822 'Gothic' Pattern,* probably dating to about 1830. It has a distinctive pipe back, single edged blade and folding brass gilded guard: both ceased use by 1850.

The very distinctive badge of a Lion bearing a Crown, is of The Honourable East India

Company, founded 31 December 1600, ceased trading 1 June 1874, as a monopolistic trading body to open up the East Indian Spice trade and compete with the Dutch, Portuguese and French. For much of its existence, it essentially ruled the Indian sub-continent and had its own army, ships, and oversaw India as part of the British Empire. A good and scarce sword, with good gilding and scarce leather hilt liner still remaining. Scabbard not present.

2. *British Army Infantry officer sword of 1822 pattern, with a VR cypher to the guard, now damaged.*

3. *Rifles Officer sword, mid-to-late 1800s. Steel hilt, with characteristic strung bugle badge and post-1854 steel single edge blade. Inset brass proof mark pellet. I do not know if the blade has regimental etching.*

4. *Naval Officer sword for a mid-ranking*



officer, probably Lieutenant. Straight blade, pitted and worn with a brass stirrup hilt, bearing a Fouled Anchor badge on the Langet. Wirebound sharkskin grip.

STAR OF THE WEST LODGE 130 / BEZALEEL LODGE 234

Of the Country Lodges, Bezaleel 234 Kinsale possibly has the most eclectic and interesting swords. The collection was to have been the focus of a second, more thorough visit this year, but Covid-19 restrictions prevented it.

In addition, following outreach to the Worshipful Master and Secretary of Star of the West 130, Kenmare, photos of their sword collection is still anticipated, in order to enable interpretation and inclusion in this series.

For these respective reasons, and subject to material being to hand, these two lodges will feature in a future edition of *The Plumblin*, where an article will also follow on *The Chatterton Sword*, the most valuable in the entire Munster collection, which is on display at Freemasons' Hall, Cork and provided for the use of the Preceptor of Mourne Knights Templar Preceptory.

*W. Bro. Henry Brennan, Secretary,
Ormonde Lodge 201, North Munster*

Youghal 68 Zoom Series Raises For Three Local Charities

Writes **W. Bro. Brendan Cronin**

As many may be aware, the level of and reported incidents of domestic violence dramatically escalated during the Public Health restrictions imposed on the entire Irish population during the first wave of the Coronavirus COVID-19 in March and April 2020. This matter was raised during our Youghal 68 Zoom weekly member gatherings, initially by the Worshipful Master, and it was agreed that a few members identify an organisation in the East Cork/West Waterford locality that would benefit from support that could be provided. A noticeable absence of domestic violence support charities or groups in the East Cork locality was noted at the outset. It was agreed our Worshipful Master's wife, **Mrs Paulette Cronin**, would use her community support contacts network, to ascertain a suitable charity or group that met this requirement. In doing so, she discovered that a Cork based domestic violence registered charity, YANA – 'You Are Not Alone' – had just acquired premises locally in Youghal and would be most grateful for financial and practical support.

The contact details being passed to our Steward of Charities, **W. Bro. Alex Brown** made contact with **June Murphy**, YANA's local Youghal coordinator. He discussed their requirements and discovered they would use any donations for purchasing the furniture necessary to equip a reception area, manager office and counselling room, since the space provided was completely unfurnished.

W. Bro. Brown brought this information back to Youghal 68 members, whereupon **W. Bro. Cronin** was able to suggest that, in addition to any financial support we could provide, that all the furniture necessary to fully equip the YANA reception area, office and counselling room – desks, storage units, drawer units, ergonomic workstation chairs, meeting chairs, comfy counselling chairs – were at his disposal as an additional donation. This would free up our



June Murphy, local Youghal YANA coordinator; W. Bro. Brendan Cronin, W.M., W. Bro. Alex Brown, S. of C., Ruth Lehane, YANA Cork Manager, pictured in the newly refurbished YANA offices, Youghal.

financial contribution to directly support victims of domestic violence.

The above being agreed and acceptable to all concerned, the furniture was transported and installed by **W. Bros. Brown and Cronin** and a cheque for €250 handed over to **June Murphy and Ruth Lehane** of YANA on Saturday 22nd August, about the same time that identical cheques were delivered to Youghal Community Hospital and Cois Abhainn Residential Home. The ongoing generosity of the Youghal brethren allowed these same three charities to each benefit, in mid-November, from a further €300 donation, ahead of their Christmas requirements. Thus, a combined €1,650 has been placed at the disposal of these essential charitable entities of the Youghal local community, in recent months, by the Youghal brethren, in addition to their ongoing support of our Masonic charities.

Conservation of The Junior Warden Chair

The Oldest in the Munster Collection

Canopied chairs, originally bespoke of sedan chair and coach building firms in provincial towns and cities of these islands during the eighteenth century, are comparatively rare finds today. In the province of Munster, we are fortunate to have perhaps the greatest concentration – six, even the majority! – on the island of Ireland, given our Bristol and south-west of England antient linkages. The largest concentration is in Freemasons' Hall, Cork (three – namely, this Junior Warden chair; that of the Senior Warden, somewhat later eighteenth century (used by First Lodge and, from 1845 by the Provincial Grand Lodge, prior to the 1872 commissioning of the present throne); and that of the Senior Warden (Mark Lodge) in the Chapter Room,



(dated perhaps turn of the nineteenth century, associated with the 1810s arrival in Cork of The Third Lodge of Ireland, at Maylor Street Hall by the 1860s; and in storage as surplus to requirements from 1926 until its late 1980s repurposing).

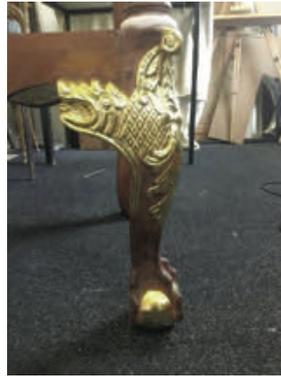
A further three fine examples exist in the province: one each, at Youghal (used by the W.M., dated 1762, passed between successive lodges of that town); at Skibbereen (used by the J.W., likely came of a Cork city masonic inheritance (warrant 15 met in the city, 1807-17 and a handful of city lodges handed in warrants in this period), via Rosscarbery (1817-42), to Skibbereen, where Fifteenth Lodge has met (1842-); also one in private hands at Castletownsend, (emblazoned 'Shamrock Lodge No. 27', where that lodge met, 1835-58: it is likely the chair from when '27' was a city of Cork lodge (1734-1823), amalgamated with First Lodge of Ireland in the latter year, before being revived, twelve years later, in West Cork; however, as the chair canopy discreetly carries the number 167 (its predecessor lodge in Castletownsend, 1830-35), it may also have had a city inheritance through that warrant (meeting in Cork from 1747, before removing to Bandon, 1805-25: from 1817 as warrant number 155). It may even be the chair of the historic old Cork Lodge 28 (warrant cancelled 2 July 1818), which a minute of Grand Lodge complained, 3 April 1823, 'has removed from Cork and is spuriously meeting in

Castletownsend or Skibbereen'. Such is the typical vagueness and mystery surrounding ownership and transfer of use of these antient chairs.



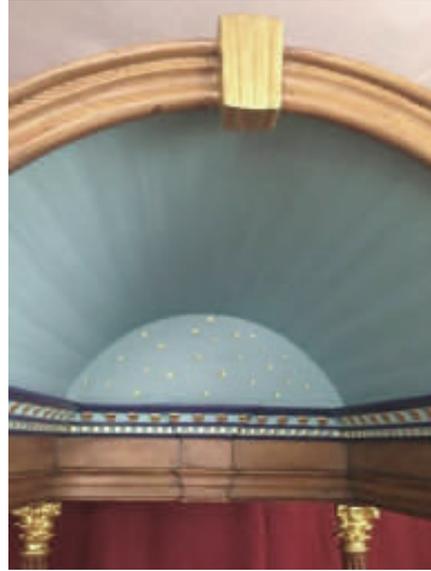
The Junior Warden Chair of Freemasons' Hall lodge room, in Cork – the subject of the remainder of this article – is said to have been used by The Honourable Elizabeth Aldworth (*nee* St Leger), The Lady Freemason (1693-1772) during her lifetime. Research into the historical ownership trail outlined by Bro. John Day, in his first edition *Memoir of The Lady Freemason* (published in 1914, when the chair was also photographed) demonstrates that if indeed the case, this would likely have occurred in her last two decades of life; for the chair seems to have belonged successively to The Most Worshipful and Right Honourable Brother, Sir Robert King, 4th Baronet of Boyle Abbey, County Roscommon and

1st Baron Kingsborough (1724-55), Grand Master of The Grand Lodge of Ireland, (1749-51); whereupon it passed to his younger brother, The Most Worshipful and Right Honourable Brother, Sir Edward King, 5th Baronet, 1st Baron, Viscount and Earl of Kingston, *P.C.*, (1726-97), Grand Master of The Grand Lodge of Ireland, (1761-63; 1769-70). The last named presented it to W. Bro. Hayes St Leger, 2nd Viscount Doneraile (1755-1819) for use by Lodges 44 and 742, meeting in Doneraile who, in his turn, presented it to Lodge 25, meeting in Cork, 1809-39 (from 1823, as a military warrant in The 25TH (The King's Own Scottish Borderers) Foot Regiment, in lieu of No. 250).



On the dissolution of Lodge 25, with the regiment posted to South Africa, the chair remained locally in Cork in the possession of Right Worshipful Master (as Worshipful Masters of lodges in Scotland are termed) Bro. Thomas Aldworth Cocker, until presented by him to his affiliate lodge, The Third Lodge of Ireland, at their meeting held in Maylor Street Hall on 6 December 1864. The chair was subsequently used by all lodges meeting there, from 1864, until the coming together of all city lodges at Freemasons' Hall, Tuckey Street, in 1926, where it has been in common use ever since. Fortunately, recognised as the oldest canopied chair in the Munster collection and on account of The Lady

Freemason connexion, it was placed in our first-floor lodge room, unlike the majority of the Maylor Street Hall furnishings, which were sadly lost in the fire of September 1970, being displayed in the Royal Arch chapter room.



This eighteenth-century chair is being conserved and restored to its original condition and appearance, in a gradual process which commenced in March 2020 and is nearing completion. On stripping the several layers of paint back to the original carvings, it was discovered the chair is of cedarwood, which accounts for its light weight. This is very appropriate, with important symbolism stretching back to King Solomon's Temple of Jerusalem and the cedars of Lebanon; the wood was imported in its entirety, as cedar was first grown in Ireland from about 1730.



The photo series here commences with the chair on location in the first floor lodge room at Freemasons' Hall, prior to restoration; continues mid-restoration, after removal of the several paint layers, an interesting view without the detachable canopy; then featuring a trio of photos, detailing richly carved mythical figures on the front legs stripped to the bare wood, then, following application of gesso, the glorious application of twenty-four carat gold leaf; the next photo features the restored canopy interior, with navy, sky blue and gilt frieze alternating, the

keystone of the arch, and the heads of the four supporting Corinthian columns also gilt, with the classical addition of some celestial effects, as is the practice on early surviving examples; then follows a detail of one of the arm rests, each culminating in a finely carved and feathered Rukh (the Roc or Rukk being the bird of prey that delivered the beam of cedar to Solomon to complete the Temple) ebonized; finally, a photo of the chair, nearing completion and in readiness for upholstering, with a special blend of nutritive oils applied to the cedarwood.

This initiative is being entirely funded by The Third Lodge of Ireland, in memory of their deceased Junior Warden, Bro. Timothy Kelleher, who was mid-office at the time of his untimely death and who was the subject of an article in the previous issue of *The Plumblin*.

David J. Butler



Vision 2020

The ongoing global fall-out resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic has seriously affected how we're all living our lives. We're all feeling the limiting effects of the restrictions that have been put in place to curb the pandemic. How we go about our daily lives - socially, professionally, Masonically... Every aspect of how we live - has changed, and seems set to remain so for the foreseeable future! We're all learning to cope, with varying degrees of success, at different times. But, for some, the effects are catastrophic! The "Charities/Fundraising" sector, all over the world, is not immune, and has suffered immeasurably. We've become aware, and totally accepting of the dependence of many service-providers on voluntary fundraising. Without it, many couldn't survive, let alone provide the stunning services they do. Fundraising has always been challenging, and thankfully, Freemasons have never been found wanting in this area. Alas, the whole business of fundraising, event-organising - even our normal monthly charity collection at a Lodge meeting - has now ceased as we've known it! Our members are no-less immune to the effects of pandemic than the rest of the world. Many of our members are beleaguered by the phenomena of illness, bereavement, isolation and unemployment. Scarce resources, unemployment, social distancing, and a myriad of other limitations, as well as having "put a stop to our gallop" Masonically, have made traditional fundraising very challenging, and virtually non-existent. COVID-19 has challenged us all to explore different ways of communicating.

Technology and social-media platforms have been invaluable in alleviating some of the isolation we'd otherwise inevitably experience. Many of our "tech-savvy" Freemasons have made communication easier between members. Some of the really creative ones have taken this a stage further, and have managed to organise fundraising events, made possible only by modern technology. Some Lodges, and individuals, have continued to make significant contributions to our "Vision 2020" appeal, for which our charities will be forever grateful. I appeal to you all to please continue to remember "Vision 2020" in the same manner as you have been doing - our "**Small Change Initiative**", "**The Blue Bin Appeal**", or indeed, by making a donation to the "Vision 2020" account, as an individual.

Bank Details: Grand Mastersfestival
IBAN: IE24 AIBK 9312 2501 2720 58
BIC: AIBKIE2D

Since our last edition of "The Plumblin", a few events have taken place, supported by, or run entirely "on-line". I mention these, in a spirit of gratitude of course, but also as an example of what is possible - even in a restricted world!

In July, V.W.Bro. **Joe Patterson**, on behalf of The Provincial Grand Lodge of Munster, ran a most entertaining and lucrative "Bingo Night"... all on-line, raising a handsome €600 for "Vision 2020"

Hibernian Lodge 95 recently organised an on-line Quiz, which raised a significant sum for "Vision 2020". Bro. **Hugo Beasse** was a formidable quizmaster... unfortunately, very few contenders for "Mastermind" emerged!

Who has not heard about R.W. Bro. **Ted Rea's** Head-shave? The usually-impeccably-shorn Ted resisted the temptation to engage in tonsorial activity (a haircut to the rest of us!) ... all in the cause of charity.

Six months' hair growth culminated in a "public shearing" on September 21st last. Ted's head-shave was filmed, the screening being "premiered" at the end of the Provincial Grand Lodges "Zoom" meeting in October.

(If anybody hasn't seen it, I'm sharing the YouTube link is: <https://youtu.be/bW47JZUC30>)

As well as being hugely entertaining, this event was a great financial success. The initiative on the part of Ted and Lodge 67 raised a staggering amount ... in excess of €4,000.

I know that there are definite plans afoot for some fundraising "events" between now and Christmas - First Lodge of Ireland and Shamrock Lodge 27 have definite plans in the pipeline. Stay in touch with your

Lodge/WhatsApp etc. for further details! It's a difficult time for everybody. However, compared with those who will benefit from our "Vision 2020" fundraising, even the neediest of us are relatively well-off! We are very familiar with the wonderful work being done continually by the **Simon Communities** and by the **R.N.L.I.**, none of which would be possible without voluntary contributions. It's more than coincidental that, as I write this, a supplement, featuring the work of "**Medecins Sans Frontieres**" arrived with my copy of "The Irish Examiner". Allow me share with you a figure it quotes:

"€11 per month over a year could pay for lifesaving blood transfusions for three people"

Brethren, I urge you to continue to be as creative as you have been, and as generous as your means allow! Whatever you give, "... will be thankfully received, and faithfully applied".

It's Good To Talk

Writes W. Bro. Aidan McDonad

Since the start of the lockdown in April, I have been running an online Zoom meeting, every second night. It is open to any Brother to join in and have a chat about many different sub-

jects. Over the past 9 months, we have been joined by Brethren from all over the world, including Brazil, the United states, Australia, Barbados, Spain, Germany, France, England, Wales, Scotland, as well as Brethren from all over Ireland.

Any Brother who would like to join us can use the link below: Aidan McDonald is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Aidan McDonald Hands On The Square

Time: This is a recurring meeting 8.45pm (Irish Time).

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6013212894?pwd=OE5WSUVmWDJyRmhma0lSRUpCeFl6UT09>
Meeting ID: 601 321 2894 Passcode: 1234

Fifteenth Lodge of Ireland

Eventful And Busy 2020 For The Brethren In The West (Cork)

Writes **W. Bro Denis O'Driscoll**

Whilst 2020 will long be remembered as the year of Coronavirus 'lockdown', the Fifteenth Lodge of Ireland has had a busy year of out-reach activities emphasising its connectedness to the local West Cork community. In May, following a novel 'postal ballot', the brethren donated €5,000 to local frontline volunteer services helping those most at need in the local community from coronavirus pandemic including SVP, Skibbereen Geriatric Society/ Meals-on-Wheels and West Cork Cancer Connect. In September, the lodge participated in Culture Night 2020 by way of an online 'virtual' open night which featured a professional video commissioned by the brethren through voluntary contributions. The impressive video, filmed and edited by **Martin Nevin** of

Bluewire Media, featured engaging presentations from VWB **Dermod O'Brien** and WB **David Butler** and has been permanently uploaded to YouTube. We also had a feature article published in the West Cork People newspaper with the shamefully engaging title: "The Secrets of Skibbereen's Masonic Lodge"!

Finally, the lodge also launched its Twitter page (@lodge_15) which has clocked up thousands of views and comments. As under 40's source their news and information online, Lodge 15's initiative in establishing an online presence will create an awareness of freemasonry in West Cork and, hopefully, result in potential candidates coming forward. So all-in-all it has been a pretty eventful and busy 2020 for the brethren in the West (Cork).



V.W. Bro. Dermod O'Brien and Martin Nevin of Bluewire Media taken during filming in the Lodge room.

*To submit articles for May 2021 issue please email W. Bro. Vincent O'Donovan
vincent@carrigdhoun.com*