

THE CRAFTSMAN, HAMILTON, 15th MAY, 1869.

THE BARTON LODGE SEVENTY YEARS AGO.

Continued.

The rules adopted at the first meeting are most interesting, but they are too lengthy to be reproduced here in full, and I am reluctantly compelled to attempt a condensation of them. They are substantially the same as those which were adopted in other Canadian Lodges at that time, and were evidently derived from the same common source.

Fifty-seven names are signed to these rules, amongst which are the names of Brothers Richard Beasley, George Chisholm, Ephraim Land, and Captain Joseph Birney, who, in 1836, aided in re-opening the Lodge after it had ceased working for twenty-six years. Brother Beasley was Worshipful Master of the Barton Lodge prior to its ceasing to work in 1810, and he took the Chair at one of the first meetings in 1836.

Brother Ephraim Land's name re-appears on the minutes, Oct. 31st, 1836, with this note: "First visit, and from whom we had received the jewels." Brother Captain Joseph Birney, who was initiated in our Lodge on February 11th, 1803—over sixty-six years ago, and was one of the signers of the memorial in March, 1844, to Grand Lodge of England for a new charter, still lives. He resides on the other side of the Bay; and, at the time the question of our Gold Jewels was recently before Grand Lodge, some of the then officers of our Lodge waited upon him on that business, in which he was of some service to us. He is, so far as I know, the sole living memorial of that Barton Lodge of seventy years ago about which I am speaking, the sole survivor of our elder brethren who have gone before, and the sole living link between them and us. If I may venture to hint so much, I have been thinking that if we could secure his portrait to adorn our walls, it would form an interesting memento of the most interesting period of our past; and it would be a graceful and grateful act on our part, and a pleasing one to him, to elect him an honorary member of our Lodge, and if possible, to have him at least once more amongst us, not in name only, but in fact.

From the first meeting, January 31st, 1796, till February 9th, 1810, inclusive; there were held 154 regular meetings, and 25 emergencies. At first the regular meetings were held on the first Monday of each month. Then, from February 3rd, 1798, on the first Saturday of each month, and from September 3rd, 1799, on the second Friday of each month. Sometimes a month passes without any meetings being held, and during 1808 and 1809, they were not held regularly, and from May 16th, 1809, to February 9th, 1810, the date of the last meeting, no meeting appears to have been held. The election of officers took place every six months prior to the festivals of St. John the Baptist, and St. John the Evangelist, and these festivals appear to have been well observed. The attendance, which at the first meeting was 12 members and 4 visitors, and at the last meeting was 15 members and 2 visitors, rose at one time, December 13th, 1799, to 30 members and one visitor. From March 7th, 1796, to April 9th, 1798, inclusive, the initiations were 27, which was more than one for each night of meeting, emergen-

cies included. The initiations, during the period which occupies our attention to night, were:

1796.....12	1804..... 3
1797..... 7	1805..... 3
1798.....11	1806..... 2
1799..... 4	1807..... 0
1800..... 0	1808..... 1
1801..... 1	1809..... 0
1802..... 1	1810..... 0
1803..... 3	

I have made tabular statements of the meetings. These statements cover twelve pages of foolscap, and show the day of the week, day of the month, and the year of each meeting, the place of meeting, the consecutive number of the meeting, whether regular or emergency, in what degrees the Lodge was open, the number of initiations, passings, raisings and affiliations, the number of members and also of visitors present, and a synopsis of business done. These statements form an index to the contents of the early Minute Books, and will be handed over to the Lodge if it be thought desirable.

With respect to the places at which the Lodge was held, I avail myself of an interesting paragraph from my able predecessors in the work of our history:

"The locality of Smith's tavern, at which the Lodge held its first meetings, is not very definitely established; but is believed to have been near what is at present the north-west corner of King and Wellington Streets. Here the Lodge probably met up to 6th November, 1797, when it was removed to the house of Brother John Aikman, situated on the site of the present residence of Michael Aikman, Esq., a short distance outside the present eastern limits of the city. Meetings were held here up to the 12th March, 1802, at which time the Lodge was removed to the house of Bro. Dexter, on the present site of Bro. Robert J. Hamilton's residence, upper John Street. On the 12th August, 1803, another removal placed the Lodge at the house of Brother Beasley. This house, with but few alterations, forms the present western wing of Dundurn Castle. On the 13th November, 1805, the brethren found another resting place for their Lodge at the house of Brother Wm. Wedge, near the site of the present military hospital, formerly the residence of the late Peter Hamilton. In this place the Lodge met till the 9th February, 1810."

Nothing like a consecutive history can be attempted in the brief space to which I must limit myself. Without regard to continuity of dates, I shall venture to extract at random from about fifty foolscap pages of notes of my readings of our minutes, such passages as strike me as being of more than ordinary interest to us as Masons; and as being singular, or amusing, or instructive, or as throwing a gleam of light on the ways of our brethren in days gone by, or on the customs and peculiar environments of an age and place which were almost newspaperless, and which had neither telegraphs, steamboats, nor railroads. I feel that I am altogether incapable of communicating to you all that these records seem, in some subtle sympathetic way, to have communicated to me; but if I can give you, though never so dim an idea of Masonry and Hamilton society seventy years ago,