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**STAR OF KILWARLIN  
MASONIC LODGE No. 66**

**READ BY W. Bro  
BEFORE THE MOST WORSHIPFULL  
GRAND MASTER of the  
MOST WORSHIPFULL GRAND LODGE OF IRELAND**

**TO MARK MASONIC LODGE No 66  
STAR OF KILWARLIN  
150<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY IN 2017**

*This paper was read first on the 25<sup>th</sup> November 2017 at Hillsborough Masonic Hall at the meeting held by the Lodge of Research 200. Then on the 7<sup>th</sup> December 2017 by a Member of the Lodge before the Most Worshipful Grand Master to mark the Lodge's 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*

### **Introduction**

Star of Kilwarlin Lodge No. 66 is celebrating its one hundred and fiftieth anniversary this year and it is understandable that the Brethren of the Lodge would want to cast an eye over what it has achieved during the years of its existence and, at the same time, take stock before moving on to the next fifty years.

Anyone interested in the history of the Lodge would be well advised to look to the account of its first one hundred years (1867–1967) written by the late Worshipful Brother J McGilton, as updated by an account of the next twenty-five years (1967– 1992) by the late Very Worshipful Brother Bob Maxwell PPJGW. I will draw on those two accounts in this presentation.

### **The Warrant**

A reading of these accounts would show that the early history of the Warrant is unclear. It is likely that the Warrant was first issued in the eighteenth century but to whom we are unsure. What the record does show, however, is that the Warrant was issued in April 1810 for the purpose of forming a lodge in the Tralee and Kerry Militia. The Warrant was, however, subsequently surrendered in November 1856.

The Warrant was then issued to Archdeacon Walter B Mant (Ark Lodge No. 10), Dr Boyd (Lisburn Lodge No. 178) and William Sands (Lisburn Lodge No. 178) of Hillsborough on 7<sup>th</sup> December 1867. The Lodge was consecrated on 10<sup>th</sup> December 1867 and held its first meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> December, probably in the hotel known as the Corporation Arms which was located on Main Street, at the head of the hill, in Hillsborough, near the Court House.

It should be noted that, at this stage, Lodge 66 was a subordinate lodge in the Masonic Province of Belfast and North Down. The first meeting of Lodge 66 occurred almost exactly a year before the creation of the Masonic Province of Down which took place on 10<sup>th</sup> November 1868.

### **The First Meeting**

There were eight Brethren present at the first meeting, namely Archdeacon Mant, Dr Boyd, William Sands, S W Lutton (both of whom were employed in the office of Lord Downshire), the Reverend St George (Rector of St John's), Lieutenant Henry (surveyor), Dr W Greene and Mr W J McGifford (the cess collector). A bible signed by Archdeacon Mant, Dr Boyd and William Sands is still in the possession of the Lodge.

Before moving on it will be of interest to note a little about one of the Lodge's founding fathers, namely Right Worshipful Brother the Venerable Walter B Mant who was also its first Worshipful Master. Walter Mant, the son of Bishop Richard Mant (bishop of the diocese of Down and Connor), was born in Hampshire in 1807 and was introduced to freemasonry while a student at Oxford University. He was the Rector of Hillsborough parish church (St Malachi's) from 1834 to his death in 1869. The record shows that in 1848 by Letters Patent from the Grand Master he had been appointed Provincial Grand Master of the Lodges in the Masonic Province of Belfast and North Down. When the Masonic Province of South Down was established in 1852 Archdeacon Mant led the proceedings and went on to install its first Provincial Grand Master, Right Worshipful Brother Colonel William Brownlow DL. Right Worshipful Brother Brownlow later became the first Provincial Grand Master of the Masonic Province of Down. Archdeacon Mant was also an antiquarian and published poet.

### The Hillsborough Masonic Hall

The Lodge met in different places in its formative years but moved to its current hall in Lisburn Street in 1882. The hall was paid for by Lord Arthur Hill and opened by him on 11<sup>th</sup> July 1882 in his capacity as the Right Worshipful Provincial Grand Master of the Masonic Province of Down. The architect was Brother William Batty. After the opening ceremony brethren from Lodge 66 and guests from over forty lodges retired to Hillsborough Castle for a formal photograph which we still have on display in the lodge room. After the photograph was taken the Brethren of Lodge 66 entertained their guests in the Corporation Arms.

Lord Arthur William Hill, one-time MP, Privy Counsellor and Comptroller of the (Royal) Household, was initiated into the Lodge in 1871, made Master of the Lodge in 1878, and installed as Grand Master of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Down on 13<sup>th</sup> May 1879. He subsequently presented his masonic jewels to the Lodge in 1931 (the year of his death) and these are on display in the lodge room. A close examination will show that Lord Arthur was a freemason in England (Sussex) as well as Ireland. His Provincial Grand Master's jewel, separately displayed, was returned to the Lodge by Ballymacarrett House Committee in 2005.

Lord Arthur's older brother, Lord Arthur Wills Hill, the Fifth Marquess of Downshire, had joined Lodge 66 in September 1868 but was to die in 1874 at the age of 29. A touching sculpted memorial to him is to be found in the north transept of the parish church. Brethren keen on Irish masonic history on a broader scale will have noted that the Fifth Marquess of Downshire was the great grandson of the Second Marquess of Downshire who was Grand Master in 1785 – 86.

The Lodge Minutes also show that Francis Charles Needham, Third Earl of Kilmorey, joined Lodge 66 in December 1880. Unfortunately, they do not show when he received his degrees, and he may have affiliated from another lodge.

For the record, the masonic hall in Hillsborough is also the meeting place of Star of Kilwarlin Royal Arch Chapter No. 66 (founded in 1874), Anahilt True Blues Masonic Lodge No. 683 (founded in 1788 but moved to Hillsborough in 1886) and Kilwarlin Chapter of Prince Masons No. 24 (founded in 1974).

### Two Interesting Items of Furniture

At the centre of any masonic lodge room in the Irish Constitution is the altar upon which rests the open Volume of the Sacred Law, and the altar in the Hillsborough lodge room is particularly interesting. It bears a plaque, now well worn, which states

***THIS ALTAR WAS PRESENTED TO LODGE 66, BY THE LATE BRO. THOMAS BRADSHAW  
IT WAS MADE IN THE EARLY 1930s FROM A VERY OLD CEDAR TREE WHICH HAD BEEN  
GROWING IN THE GARDENS OF GOVERNMENT HOUSE. THIS TREE WAS REPORTED  
TO HAVE BEEN GROWN FROM A SEED OR SAPLING BROUGHT BACK FROM LEBANON  
AT THE TIME OF THE CRUSADES BY ONE OF THE CLAN OF MAGINESS.***

A visitor to the lodge room might also note the organ sitting in the corner. This was acquired in 1901 and was first played by Very Worshipful Brother William Harty (Provincial Grand Lodge Organist, 1897 - 1899), organist and choir master in Hillsborough parish church and father of Sir Hamilton Harty, composer, arranger, accompanist and conductor.

### The Twentieth Century

Attendance at the lodge in its early years was sporadic and records often incomplete. Indeed, the Warrant was surrendered in 1904 but, thankfully, re-issued in 1905. The Lodge experienced an upsurge in interest in the following years largely, it is believed, through the enthusiasm of Worshipful Brother W G Maginess who held the post of Secretary/Treasurer from 1907 to 1920.

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The name Maginess crops up on another occasion in the context of the Lodge's twentieth century history.

The Lodge records for the twentieth century show largely what one might expect, namely the initiation of new members, the working of degrees, the conviviality of the festive board, the 'Irish Nights', the contribution to charities (masonic and otherwise), masonic church services, visits by distinguished masonic officers, Ladies Nights, the ongoing attention to the needs of the Lodge's widows, and the hard work of the permanent officers of the Lodge. So attractive was the Lodge at one stage that it had to impose an informal limit of sixty-six on the number of members.

A letter dated 27<sup>th</sup> November 1943 from the Lodge's Secretary (Worshipful Brother George C Bell) merits special mention for its reference to his commitment to the Order on the part of the Worshipful Master (Worshipful Brother David Hunter). A member of the Lodge, Captain William A Pantridge who was serving with the Royal Army Ordinance Corps in London had been wounded in the course of duty. Worshipful Brother Bell was instructed by the Lodge to write to Brother Pantridge wishing him a speedy recovery. In his letter Worshipful Brother Bell went on to give him news of the Lodge and noted that the Worshipful Master had missed only one meeting that season. This was a considerable achievement bearing in mind that, on each occasion, the Worshipful Master *cycled* to the Lodge from Finaghy (a round trip of something like twenty miles *and* during the 'blackout')!

The work of a number of Lodge 66 members has been acknowledged at Provincial level and the names of those officers who have been awarded Provincial honours are given in the Appendix. The list obviously includes Lord Arthur Hill who was Provincial Grand Master between 1879 and 1905 and as well as Right Worshipful Brother Ivan Boreland who was appointed Provincial Assistant Grand Master in 2011.

The Lodge has always drawn its membership from all walks of life and all are equal before the compass and square. Our membership has included clerics and solicitors, lords, labourers, doctors, farmers, builders, business men (including an undertaker), tradesmen, accountants and public servants. Nevertheless, a paper dealing with the history of Lodge 66 would be failing in its calling if it did not mention Worshipful Brother W Brian Maginess who had affiliated from Good Counsel Lodge No. 553 in 1927 and was Worshipful Master of the Lodge in 1935. A memorial tablet in Hillsborough parish church best describes his career:

**In memory of the Right Honourable Brian Maginess Born 10<sup>th</sup> July 1901**

**Scholar of Trinity College, Dublin, Queen's Counsel,  
Doctor of Laws,  
Member of Parliament for Iveagh 1938 – 63  
Minister of Labour, Commerce  
Home Affairs and Finance  
Attorney General  
County Court Judge of Down  
Died 16<sup>th</sup> April 1967  
*Sola salus servire Deo***

### **More Recently**

In the quarter century since Very Worshipful Brother Bob Maxwell completed his addendum (to the history of the Lodge's first one hundred years) the Lodge has continued to make its contribution to the great work of Irish Freemasonry. At a time when all voluntary organisations are having difficulty maintaining their numbers, Lodge 66 has been able to sustain its membership and, currently, has 64 members on the roll. In the last five years the Lodge has welcomed eight new Brethren and seven affiliates and, in the same time, it has conferred eight Entered Apprentice degrees, nine Fellow Craft degrees and nine Master Mason degrees. In the last twenty-five years it has had twenty-five different Worshipful Masters – a record with which, I would respectfully suggest, few Lodges in the Irish Constitution can compete. A list of the Worshipful Masters since 1968 is given in Appendix 2. A list of the Lodge's officers in this anniversary year is given in Appendix 3

Through its members Lodge 66 has also continued to provide a template of quiet unobtrusive leadership and social responsibility. Like freemasons throughout Ireland, Brethren from Lodge 66 go to their work, pay their taxes and look after their families. But Free Masons go beyond what is required of ordinary citizens. This might best be evidenced in the contribution freemasons make to other good causes, to church, sporting and professional organisations and, most importantly, in individual acts of charity throughout our community. An example of Lodge 66 members going beyond what is expected is the annual distribution of Christmas hampers to the Lodge's widows, initiated in 1994. The resulting letters of thanks are an indication of how much the widows of our departed Brethren appreciate the continuing care shown by the Lodge.

### **The Next Fifty Years?**

As for the future, who knows what tomorrow will bring? We live in times of unbelievable upheaval and uncertainty. At the end of his addendum Very Worshipful Brother Bob Maxwell was able to state that 'the future of the Lodge appears to be secure'. In light of recent events on the continent and in Great Britain who, today, would feel completely happy making such a statement – though, despite this, it is worthwhile pointing out that in its one hundred and fifty years of existence the Lodge has survived the end of empires, two world wars (and numerous smaller conflicts), the partition of Ireland, the recent 'troubles' and unbelievable social, political, economic and technological change.

What we can say for certain is that, as long as Lodge 66 is in existence, its members will continue to carry out their social and personal duties while undertaking the great work of the Temple, all in a spirit of brotherly love and goodwill.

### **A BROTHER OF THE LODGE**

#### **Acknowledgements**

The author wishes to acknowledge the help and assistance provided by the following in the preparation of this paper:

Right Worshipful Brother W Ivan Boreland  
Worshipful Brother John Kelso (Secretary, Lodge 66)  
Worshipful Brother Andy Magill (Provincial Assistant Grand Secretary, Down)  
Rebecca Hayes (Archivist, Grand Lodge of Ireland)

Needless to say, any errors or omissions found in the text are the responsibility of the author.

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### Appendix 1

#### Members of Lodge 66 Appointed to Provincial Grand Lodge Office *(by date order)*

Date	Name	Office
1895	W T Henry	PGL Superintendant of Works
1897 - 1899	William Harty	PGL Organist
1879 - 1905	Lord Arthur William Hill	P Grand Master
1910	Dr Richard McCandless	P G Steward
1919	John S McLeavy	PGL Inner Guard
1936	Thomas J Walker	PGL Inner Guard
1946	George C Bell	PGL Inner Guard
1960	John S Cummins	PJG Deacon
1977	Robert Maxwell	PJG Warden
1988	William Fullerton	PGL Inspector
1993	Leslie Bell	P G Steward
1996	David Donnan	Hon Past PJGW
2003 - 2011	W Ivan Boreland	PGL Inspector
2010	Dale Myles	P G Steward
2011 -	W Ivan Boreland	PA Grand Master
2012	William Henry Dunlop	PSG Warden
2015	Norman Smyth	Hon Past PJGW
2017	Roy J C McNeill	P G Steward

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### Appendix 2

#### Lodge 66: Past Masters (1993 - 2017)

1993	K Bell	1994	R J Vennard
1995	J N Anderson	1996	I R Walker
1997	W I Boreland	1998	DTC Workman
1999	G Hull	2000	D L R Myles
2001	C R Lee	2002	B C McKibben
2003	V E Reaney	2004	J E Cumins
2005	R N Boreland	2006	J P Reaney
2007	W J Kelso	2008	S J Stewart
2009	P Cathcart	2010	A J H Maze
2011	R T Girvan	2012	N M Dunlop
2013	A A Ferris	2014	K J Baird
2015	P C Graham	2016	C Stewart
2017	A J Gilmore		

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### Appendix 3

#### Lodge 66 Officers 2017

Worshipful Master	W Bro A J Gilmore
Senior Warden	Bro H F Megarry
Junior Warden	Bro S B McCullough
Treasurer	W Bro D L R Myles
Secretary	W Bro W J Kelso
Director of Ceremonies	W Bro R J C McNeill
Steward of Charities	W Bro S J Stewart
Almoner	V W Bro W H Dunlop
Chaplain	V W Bro W N Smyth
Senior Deacon	Bro D Payne
Junior Deacon	Bro S P Martin
Inner Guard	Bro G Tsoutsas
Auditors	W Bro S J Stewart W Bro R T Girvan

#### Representatives

Banbridge Inspection Committee	W Bro D L R Myles
Banbridge Charity Committee	W Bro S J Stewart W Bro T C Stewart
Down Masonic Widows Fund	W Bro S J Stewart
House Committee	V W Bro W N Smyth V W Bro W H Dunlop
Hall Trustees	W Bro S J Stewart W Bro I R Walker W Bro N M Dunlop

#### References

1. McGilton, J, Maxwell, R, *Star of Kilwarlin Lodge No 66. A brief history of 125 years of Freemasonry in Hillsborough* (1992, published privately by Star of Kilwarlin Masonic Lodge No 66).
2. *Beloved of My Heart. Little Hillsborough Town* (published privately by the Hillsborough Old Guard).
3. Lodge 66 Records.
4. PGL Down Records
5. Cochrane, K, *The First 150 Years of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Down etc.* (published by the author, 2013)
6. A number of web sites.

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