

THE CONSECRATION of

THE SCOUT LODGE OF MARK MASTER MASONS No. 1907

An Oration given by W.Bro. A.C. Youell, Provincial Grand Chaplain

Right Worshipful Provincial Grand Master, Officers of Grand Mark Lodge, Officers of Provincial Grand Mark Lodge, Worshipful Brethren and Brethren.

It is our very great joy and delight in our assembly here today to consecrate a new Lodge within the degree of Mark Master Masons. As on all occasions such as this, the ceremony which we are about to witness is one of deep solemnity and meaning.

It marks the culmination of months of hard and exacting work by a group of our brethren, and for them in particular, the great desire of their hearts is to be fulfilled. Congratulations on their work, their foresight and their deepening thoughts for the needs of Masonic advancement in Mark Masonry in the Province of Derbyshire. No undertaking such as this can be achieved without thought and a real sense and desire to further the influence of Masonry, and in particular, through the Mark Degree.

We have just heard read the Warrant from the Grand Master, the instrument of consecration, without which, this meeting could not take place. It is the authority for this meeting, indicating his will and desire that this new Lodge, The Scout Lodge of Mark Master Masons Number 1907 be consecrated. This we are now anxious to implement so bringing to fruition the ambition of a Lodge constituted of those who have been members of the Scout Movement or associated with its organization.

The Scout Movement as we know it began with twenty-two boys from differing backgrounds taking part in an experimental encampment on Brownsea Island near Poole, Dorset, to try out ideas formulated in the book 'Aids to Scouting' by Robert Baden-Powell. The camp was run under his leadership and was a great success and proved that the ideas and methods appealed to young people. His organizational method, now known as the Patrol System, allowed boys to organize themselves into small groups with an elected patrol leader.

The Scout Movement swiftly established itself throughout the British Empire and many other countries. At the present time there are more than twenty-eight million members in over two hundred countries. Many of us in this temple today will have had some happy memories of our youth spent within the influence of a Scout Troop. The uniform we were proud to wear and who could forget the hat with a brim of sufficient width to protect against wind and rain.

Badge work was important as we strived to acquire proficiency in a variety of survival skills and pursuits, ending the day with the traditional sing-song round the blazing camp fire.

The activities were important to our young lives but behind all the pursuits was a hidden discipline which was to shape our characters for the future. We learned our Scouts Law and the value of being trusty, loyal, helpful, courteous and kind. To do our duty cheerfully and in the spirit of co-operation.

Is there any wonder that we find ourselves in our assembly today consecrating a new Masonic Lodge. We know many of our Masonic principles embrace those characteristics which contributed so much to our learning process which gave us the necessary values and discipline in preparation for our years in Freemasonry.

Freemasonry is a service and a discipline. Its teachings, founded on the principles of piety and virtue, are not to be laid aside at the close of our ceremonies but are to be put into action as we fulfill our daily avocations. Freemasonry embraces equally, men of every race, religion and ethnic background. It teaches us reverence for the highest and compassion for the lowest and to be charitable in thought and actions.

Freemasonry is a great university where men come together on a common ground of mutual esteem, respect and brotherhood, where differences in creed and politics are forgotten.

These ideals and designs we are taught, particularly through the Mark Degree, seem at times unattainable in our modern world when technology and change leads to a pace of life which is quite bewildering. Therefore let us be thankful that by our membership and fellowship in the Mark Degree we stand firm and unshaken, ever striving to complete the sacred arch of our lives and indeed of others by the keystone cut and fashioned by the hands and dedicated workmen.

The high ideals are laid down in this ceremony today. Let us then, all gathered in this temple on this joyous occasion, go out into the world with a new resolve, a new endeavour, a new challenge to foster plenteousness, joy, peace and friendship. This is the great challenge which our fraternity offers to each and everyone of us, and may The Scout Lodge of Mark Master Masons Number 1907 be infused with the high ideals of the great fraternity to which you all belong.

Towards the end of his life Robert Baden-Powell prepared a farewell message to his Scout Movement for publication after his death. The final paragraph reads:

"But the real way to get happiness is to give out happiness to other people. Try to leave this world a little better than you found it and when your turn comes to die, you can die happy in feeling that at any rate you have not wasted your time but have done your best. 'Be Prepared' in this way, to live happy and die happy - stick to your Scout Promise always - even after you have ceased to be a boy - and God help you to do it".

S.M.I.B.