

Domatic



Lodge

No. 177

Consecrated February 7th 1786

## Domatic Lodge Working Tools

At our regular meeting in March 2012 our Tyler, W.Bro. Terry Whiteman pointed out that the black box that contained our set of Working Tools was in a sad state of repair and had deteriorated past the point of usefulness. Bro. David Edwards, our Senior Warden, and I took on the task of obtaining a replacement. A local craftsman in Peterborough, Mr Bruce West, was commissioned to build us a replacement. This was done and we now have a new custom made box in teak and mahogany.



The square and compasses that are placed on the VSL in the past were just laid loose in the box so the new box has had a draw incorporated in the build to accommodate them.



It was also noted that the original compasses appear to have been lost over the years and a brass set substituted in their place. These were sent away to Sheffield and silver plated. They are now a better match to the original tools.



There is no reference to the origin or date that the tools were acquired by the Lodge within its history and unfortunately the minute books for this period are missing.

Whilst I was cleaning them up I noticed that the 24 inch Gauge was in fact engraved in small letters down the edge with the maker's name "*Bro William Platt, Masonic Jeweller of 6 Beaufort Buildings, Strand, London*"



An example of William Platt's Trade Label

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**MASONIC WORKS.**  
**Established 1847.**

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**BROTHER**  
**WILLIAM PLATT,**  
*6, Beaufort Buildings, Strand,*  
**LONDON.**

PATRONISED AND RECOMMENDED BY

THE R.W. BRO. HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF ST. ALBAN'S,  
*Provincial GRAND-MASTER for Lincolnshire.*

THE R.W. BRO. LORD DE TABLEY,  
*Past Senior GRAND-WARDEN.*

THE R.W. BRO. AUGUSTUS SMITH, M.P.,  
*Provincial GRAND-MASTER for Cornwall.*

THE R.W. BRO. THE REV. JOHN HUYSHE, M.A., F.R.S., F.Z.S.,  
*Deputy Provincial GRAND-MASTER for Devon, and Provincial GRAND-  
COMMANDER of KNIGHT TEMPLARS for Devon and Cornwall.*

THE R.W. BRO. AENEAS J. M'INTYRE, P.G.S.D., P.G.P. of  
*B.G.P., and GRAND REGISTRAR for ENGLAND.*

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**Masonic Jeweller and Clothier.**

*Manufacturer and Designer of every description of Jewels, Gold  
Embroidered Clothing, Banners, Furniture, and Decorations  
for Private Lodges, Provincial Grand Lodges, Royal Arch  
Chapters, Knights Templars' Encampments, Rose Croix Chap-  
ters; also Costume for 30th, 31st, 32nd, and 33rd Degrees.*

**PAST-MASTERS' PRESENTATION JEWELS.**

**CENTENARY JEWELS OF APPROPRIATE DESIGNS.**

**MAKERS OF THE MEDALS FOR THE HON. SOCIETY**

**OF**  
**WANDERING MINSTRELS.**

Little appears to be known of Bro. William, but I have managed to put together the following.

He was born in 1821 in the City of London and shows up in the census record of 1841 as aged 20 living at 4 Buckingham Row, Westminster with his wife Louisa also aged 20 and their son also William 4 months.

In 1851 the census shows him as living at 16 Sloane Square, Chelsea, his occupation is given as a Jeweller. Louisa is now an embroiderer and the family has increased there now being a daughter Louisa (3) and George (5 months).

He entered his Silversmiths Mark at the London Assay Office on the 10<sup>th</sup> February 1851 from an address of 12 Sloane Street. The move to 6 Beaufort Building taking place in 1852.

The London Gazette records that “on the 10<sup>th</sup> December 1852 he entered a Indenture with George Simmons, a Gold and Silver Wire Drawer of 10 Little Britain in the City of London, giving him “all stock in trade, household furniture, goods, chattels, book debts and all other his personal estate for the benefit of the creditors of the said William Platt” He had in fact gone bankrupt. A further record dated the 8<sup>th</sup> January 1853 States “The Court of Relief for insolvent Debtors shows William Platt, late of No. 6, Beaufort Buildings, Strand, Middlesex, Working Jeweller. In the Debtors' Prison for London and Middlesex.” At that time the London and Middlesex Debtors Prison was located in Whitecross Street (on the corner of Fore Street) in Cripplegate, built on the site of the former Peacock's Brewhouse

*On Thursday the 24th February, 1853, at Eleven o'clock precisely, before Mr Commissioner Phillips A petition for the release from prison was made on behalf of William Platt, formerly of No. 8, Vincent-square, Westminster, then of King-street, Covent-garden, then of No 18, Little Newport-street, Leicester-square, Manufacturer of Masonic Jewels and Embroideries, then of Westbourne-street, Pimlico, and having a Workshop at No 19, Marshall-street, Golden-square, then of No. 12, Sloane-square, Chelsea, then and late of No. 6, Beaufort Buildings, Strand, all in Middlesex, Goldsmith, Jeweller, Manufacturer of Masonic Jewels and Embroideries, Jeweller, Dealer in Watches and Lodging-house Keeper. William becomes a freeman again.*

Now from Freeman to Freemason. He was initiated into Freemasonry in the St Luke Lodge 168 (now 144) at the Builders' Arms, Russell Street, Chelsea, London (now meets at Mansfield Bowling Club, Camden, Highgate, London) on the 6<sup>th</sup> November 1854, passed on the 4<sup>th</sup> December 1854 and Raised on the 5<sup>th</sup> December 1855. He became Master of the Lodge in 1860 and left the Lodge in 1863. He was Exalted into the Mount Sinai Chapter on the 15<sup>th</sup> April 1856, becoming its First Principle in 1864 and remained a member until his death in July 1882. (The Chapter still meets at Freemasons Hall, London.)

The 1861 census shows him living at 6 Beaufort Building. The family now consists of his wife and five children. His eldest son William is now also described as a jeweller. Things must have been going well as he has now taken an apprentice, Thomas Burns, also listed is a Housekeeper and a House Servant.

In 1863 he becomes a founder member of the Strawberry Hill Lodge No.946 in Twickenham meeting at the *Grotto Hotel*, Cross Deep, Twickenham, Middlesex and in 1865 he became a founder of the Strawberry Hill Chapter 946. He remained a member of both until his death. On the 11<sup>th</sup> of November 1863 his son William Platt Jnr. was initiated into the Lodge. He was passed on the 9<sup>th</sup> December 1863 and raised on the 8<sup>th</sup> March 1864 (in St James Union Lodge No. 180). Unlike his father William Jnr was not to become a lifelong Freemason there being no masonic record of him after 1866. (Both Strawberry Hill Lodge and Chapter are still in existence and meet at the TDMC Cole Court, 150 London Road, Twickenham)

Things must have continues to improve as William appears again in the London Gazette dated the 16<sup>th</sup> June 1865, this time recording his discharge from bankruptcy

after pledging to pay 20 shillings in the pound to his creditors in four quarterly payments.

However life always has a twist of fate as the following notice in the London Gazette of 26<sup>th</sup> October 1866 shows *“William Platt, of No. 6, Beaufort-buildings, Strand, in the county of Middlesex, previously of the same-place, and also of Buckingham-street, Strand, and previously of No. 6. Beaufort-buildings aforesaid and of Parsons Green Fulham, Working' Jeweller, all in the county of Middlesex, having been adjudged bankrupt under a Petition for adjudication of Bankruptcy, filed in Her Majesty's Court of Bankruptcy, in London, on the 24th day of October 1866, is hereby required to surrender himself to Henry Philip Roche, Esq., a Registrar of the said Court, at the first meeting of creditors to be held before the said Registrar, on the 14th of November next, at one o'clock in the afternoon precisely at the said Court.”* The good times were not long lasting.

The 1871 census shows him still at 6 Beaufort Buildings with his wife and family his two middle sons George and Frederick being shown as jeweller's apprentices.

A Livery badge engraved in cursive script on reverse engraved Henry Garrod admitted to the Livery 26th April 1877, in original box, maker named as Br. W Platt Masonic Jeweller, 6 Beaufort Buildings, Strand, London is the only other example of the work of William that I can trace. ( From Auction Catalogue )

Nothing then his heard of him until the 1881 census when William, Louisa, son Frederick (now a Masonic Jeweller) son Henry (an artist) and daughter Louisa (embroider) show as living at 4 Mona Villes Twickenham.

In July of 1882 William dies.

We do not know the exact date that the tools we obtained by the Lodge but we know it must have been somewhere between 1852 and 1881. Unless our missing minute books come to light then the precise date will remain another Masonic secret.



Researched by:- W.Bro. Ian R McLachlan LGR Domestic Lodge No.177

January 2013