

VICTORIA LODGE OF EDUCATION AND RESEARCH
650 Fisgard Street, Victoria, B.C. V8w 1R6
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HISTORY OF THE VICTORIA LODGE OF EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

Part I: 1931-38

An Address by Rev. Bro. J. T. Burchill
Historian of the Lodge 16th October 1973

The word "history": has two meanings; it may mean either the record of events the events themselves. We speak of kings and statesmen as makers of history and that historians record the history that they make. In my effort I may unfortunately make indiscriminate use of the double meaning of the

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word. Since we have come especially in this twentieth century to regard nothing as static, all things which happen are history in the broadest sense of the word. The word "history" comes from the Greek word "historia" which in the widest sense was a search for truth. It did not mean narrative as it generally does today. It was not until the fourth century B.C. that the "historicus", the reciter of stories of battles and deeds of doughty men of old - like the wandering bard of border minstrelsy superseded the "historeoi", the seekers after knowledge, more or less philosophical. Unfortunately the epic tales of the historicus were only too often tinged by the bard's prejudices. So what happening today may be reported in a distorted fashion by the historians of tomorrow

To do justice to my task. of preparing a history of the Victoria Lodge of Education and Research it will be necessary for me to go back more than seven years before the actual formation of the Lodge to discover its parentage and the type of soil which furthered its growth and gave it the bent which it eventually took. The records the real beginnings are entombed in the records of Victoria-Columbia Lodge No. 1 are now immured somewhere in the Provincial Archives.

It does not require much imagination to picture the debates and discussions Victoria-Columbia No. 1 on the necessity for a Lodge of Instruction, as it was a called. Doubtless there were the good brethren, who because they had been raise the sublime degree, decided that they knew it all and saw no necessity for a refresher course in masonic ritual and general masonic information. We still have their descendants in every lodge today; but there were other brethren with a thirst for further masonic knowledge.

The outcome of the discussions was that an inaugural meeting of members of Victoria-next meeting was held in Room 223, Sayward Building at 8 p.m. 13th Columbia Lodge No, 1 was held on 20th April 1951 at 419 Chester Street to discuss the advisability of forming a Lodge of Instruction. They were R. W. Bro. W.H.F. Richdale, W. Bro. W.H. Bland, and Bros. D.C. Robertson, C.M. Parrott, C.E. Hopper, J.T. Marshall, and W.O. Cockett. The chair was taken by R. W. Bro. Richdale and with Bro. J.T. Marshall formed a committee to prepare a resume requesting permission of Victoria-Columbia Lodge No. 1 to hold a Lodge of Instruction under Warrant an0d to bring this matter before the Lodge at its next Communication. W. Bro. Bland and Bro. D.C. Robertson were deputed to wait upon the Masonic Association to arrange the rental of the hall.

The next meeting was held in Room 223 , Sayward Building at 8 p.m. 13th

May. Eight members were present. R. W. Bro. Richdale reported that at the regular meeting Victoria-Columbia Lodge No. 1 on 7th May the Worshipful Master and brethren graciously and unanimously granted permission for a Lodge of Instruction to be held under their Warrant. W. Bro. Bland reported that the monthly rental might be \$5.00. W. Bro. F. A. Willis and Bro. Robertson were appointed to draft a schedule of the necessary liabilities likely to be incurred in forming the Lodge. A letter from Grand Secretary could give them no information re the

formation of a Lodge of Instruction beyond the fact that there were two Lodges of Instruction in British Columbia - one in Kelowna and another in Terrace. Although there was no warranted lodge in Terrace at that time, the master masons there met for masonic fellowship and talked masonry

The next meeting was held at 426 Michigan Street on 27th May. W. Bro. Bland reported that the rental was definitely \$5.00 a night. Bro. Marshall offered to provide free of cost application forms for membership and a porch book.

A General Meeting of Victoria-Columbia Lodge No. 1 was held in the Masonic Temple on Friday, 5th June at 8 p.m. for the purpose of inaugurating a Lodge of Instruction. The Worshipful Master of Victoria-Columbia explained the purpose of a Lodge of Instruction quoting from Mackey's "Lexicon of Freemasonry" that "a Lodge of Instruction was an assembly of Brethren congregated under the direction of a skillful Brother (usually called a Preceptor) for the purpose of improvement in Masonry; which

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is accomplished by the frequent rehearsals of work and Lectures of each Degree. "Forty brethren of Victoria-Columbia Lodge No. 1 had already completed applications for membership (three of whom are present tonight: R. W. Bros. T. Atkinson, J. T. Marshall and C. M. Parrott) W. Bro. Bland then appointed W. Bro. Willis and W. Bro. Exham as Preceptors. Their appointment was for one year and their duty was to see that all things were done decently and in order and to offer advice and criticism of the work of the evening. Bro. Cockett was unanimously elected Secretary-Treasurer. Bros. C. E. Hopper, J. T. Marshall, C. K. Morison and S. H. Shaw were elected to the Board of Control. Their duty was to select from the membership a slate of officers to occupy the chairs for the two ensuing months. The Master for the 10th evening was to be addressed "Bro. Master." It was decided that the meetings should be held at 7.30 p.m. on the third Friday of each month; the Lodge year was to begin in September and recess in July and August. One of the Preceptors was to act as Immediate Past Master.

The first meeting of the Board of Control was held in Room 223, Sayward Building on 16th June at 8 p.m. It was decided to select brethren to fill the various offices absolutely and entirely in order of seniority of their being raised or affiliated to the Mother Lodge. Bros. J. T. Marshall and C. T. Hopper kindly offered to supply a minute book and a cash book. The Secretary was ordered to procure the necessary stationery. Bros. Morison and Shaw were appointed to attend to the regalia and furnishings of the Lodge. The preceptors were requested to draw up a set of By-Laws and present them for discussion at the next meeting. Moved by Bro. Marshall and seconded by Bro. Hopper that Bro. A. H. Crocker be made an honorary member of the Lodge.

Another meeting of the Board of Control was held in Room 223, Sayward Building on 11th August at 8 p.m. Bro. Morison reported progress in obtaining regalia and furnishings and all would be in readiness for the first meeting on 18th September with the exception of four tables. Bro. C. M. Parrott offered to

supply them in time for the first meeting. The notice calling the meeting for 18th September 1931 was approved. Bro. Marshall kindly offered to supply these notices free of charge plus the cost of the stencil and paper.

The first regular meeting of the Lodge of Instruction was held in the Mason Temple on 18th September 1931 at 7:30 p.m. W. Bro. W.E. Bland was in the chair and read this letter:

Victoria-Columbia Lodge No. 1

This is to certify that a regular meeting of the above Lodge held on Thursday, May 7th 1931 permission was granted to form a Lodge of Instruction according to Section 187 of the Constitutions of the Grand Lodge of British Columbia.

Yours fraternally,

R.J. Saunders Secretary

and the following letter addressed to W. Bro. F. A. Willis:

Dear Sir and Wor. Bro:

This is to inform you that the Wor. Master has been pleased to appoint Wor. Bro. F.R. Exham and yourself as Preceptors of Victoria-Columbia Lodge of Instruction.

Yours fraternally,

R.J. Saunders Secretary

The officers of the evening were presented with their collars of office by W. Bro. F.A. Willis. Bro. A. Curtin was placed in the East as Bro. Master. The Lodge was opened in the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Degrees. W. Bro. Willis reported that he and W. Bro. Exham had carefully gone into the matter of

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the By-Laws and had endeavoured to make them as simple as possible. The Secretary, Bro Cockett, then read each of the thirteen clauses which were approved and adopted as read. A unanimous ballot was cast for Bro. Cookett as Secretary-Treasurer On a ballot being spread and taken up for four members for the Board of Control, Bros. C.E. Hopper, J.T. Marshall, G.K. Morison, and S.H Shaw were declared elected. Bros. C.E. Hopper and A.M.MacAulay were unanimously elected as auditors by open vote. The Lodge was lowered from the 3rd Degree to the 1st Degree and called off for Refreshment. On resuming labour Bro. W.R. Freethy was admitted and the 1st Degree exemplified. The Lodge was then raised to the 3rd Degree. W. Bro. Willis gave his criticism of the work which he said was very satisfactory. He did, however, urge the brethren not to hurry in the performance of their duties and to try to make the work as impressive as possible. R.W.Bro W. Bro. Richdale congratulated the Lodge of Instruction on its formation and institution and said that he felt it would not only be of benefit to Victoria-Columbia Lodge No. 1 but also to the whole of District No.1 He complimented the brethren very highly on their work, especially Bro. T. Atkinson for delivering the First Tracing Board Lecture in a praise worthy manner at very short notice. The Lodge was then lowered to the 1st Degree and closed in due and ancient form.

I have given a rather full account of the first meeting of the Lodge of Instruction because it set the pattern for ensuing meetings for some time to come.

The second monthly meeting, held on 16th October, was similar to the

first. Bro. Hooper was Bro. Master and W. Bro. Exham acted as I.P.M. After the ordinary business had been transacted, Bro. W.J. Yates was examined in his proficiency in the 1st Degree, the questions being asked by Bro. Cockett. Thereafter the 2nd Degree was exemplified following which R. W. Bro. S.W. McClure gave an address on "The Symbolism of the Second Degree". Thanks were tendered to Bros. Parrott and McAulay for providing the materials and painting the tables for the three principal Officers. Finally W. Bro. Willis gave his usual kindly and constructive evaluation of the evening's work.

The third regular meeting was held 20th November. Bro. Hopper in the East as Bro. Master and W. Bro. Willis as I.P.M. Bro. F. Varon Smith acted as the candidate and the 3rd Degree was exemplified, the Traditional History being delivered by Bro. B.E. LeFevre. W. Bro. W.J. Robinson then delivered a lecture on "The Three Distinguishing Characteristics of a Freemason". W. Bro. Willis congratulated Bro. Master and his officers on their excellent work which ranked as high as the work done in some of the regular Lodges.

On 18th December, with Bro. Robertson as Bro. Master and W. Bro. Exham as I.P.M. Bro. H.J.W. Phillips presented himself for examination in the Master Mason Degree which was conducted by Bro. Jewkes. W. Bro. Exham gave an exemplification of the examination of a visitor. W. Bro. Butterfield, W.M. of Vancouver & Quadra Lodge No. 2 gave a demonstration of the questions, steps, signs and the examination of a visitor as practised in his Lodge., Bro. J.C. Sparks acting as candidate and visitor.

This was the type of work being performed by the Lodge of Instruction. Occasionally the expected speaker was unable to be present and the Lodge was thrown open for discussion and questions regarding ritual and procedure, which were answered by one of the Preceptors.

On the 18th March, 1932, R.W. Bro. Manuel read an account from the Bulletin of the Masonic Relief Association of the United States and Canada, stating that Louisiana Relief Lodge No. 1 received its Charter from Grand Lodge in 1854. Its functions are to administer relief to indigent sojourning masons, this is the only Chartered Relief Lodge in the world. The Lodge was opened in 1854 and has never been closed their wives, widows and families, to bury the dead and care for anything coming under the heading of Masonic Relief. It being called from labour to refreshment and vice-versa so that it is continually open and is always ready for any duty that may become apparent. W. Bro. Ira Weingrun was elected Worshipful Master in 1911 and has been re-elected annually for 21 years in succession.

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On 20th May, 1932, W. Bro. E.P. Allen brought to the attention of the Lodge that that day was the 116th Anniversary of the meeting of the United Grand Lodge of England, assembled to witness the form of ritual submitted by the Lodge of Reconciliation for its approval, the Most Worshipful the Grand Master, His Royal Highness, the Duke of Sussex presiding. The three degrees were worked. At the next meeting of the Grand Lodge held on 5th June 1816, this work was approved and confirmed on behalf of the whole English fraternity. The Lodge of Reconciliation having fulfilled the purpose for which it was formed, ceased to exist. In the same year Lodges of Instruction were formed, one of the first and most prominent being the United Lodge of Perseverance, nine of whose members became founders of the Emulation Lodge of Improvement in 1823 which has had an uninterrupted existence to date, meeting every Friday at 6 p.m. (except July and August) at Freemasons' Hall, Great Queen Street, London.

So ended the first year of the Lodge of Instruction. Beginning with forty members it received one resignation and six new members. Average attendance during the year was 75%. There were 61 visiting Brethren from every Lodge in the District. except one and also Lodges in Vancouver, Prince Rupert, Alberni and Cleveland, U.S.A. Financially their income was \$148.25 (\$50.00 of which was a loan from Victoria Columbia Lodge No.1). Expenses amounted to \$93.87, leaving a balance of \$54.28. During the year a special gift to the Lodge was the Tyler's sword donated by R.W. Bro. Stewart M. Manuel. The electric star used in the East in the 3rd Degree and three gavels made from yew trees grown on Vancouver Island were presented by Bro. E.S. Gilbert. The Board of Control met regularly, appointed officers for each Regular Meeting and also selected members of the Lodge to give ten minute talks on various topics.

In the second year the work continued with the officers showing more proficiency in the work and more confidence in themselves than in the previous year. So much so that on more than one occasion the Preceptor had. to admit that there was nothing to criticize in their work. During the year 3 new members were admitted, 4 resigned and 4 were erased from the roll for non attendance and non-payment of dues, leaving the membership at 40. On the financial side the income was \$148.68, expenditure \$81.45 leaving a balance of \$67.23.

At the first meeting of the new year W. Bro. W.O. Cockett resigned from the post of Secretary-Treasurer because of ill health and Bro. J.T. Marshall was elected to fill the vacancy. Bro. Cockett was made an Honorary Member with full privileges. The type of programme was changed for the ensuing year. On alternate months no degree would be exemplified but four brethren would be chosen to prepare a paper of about ten minutes' duration on different portions of the ritual. For the November meeting the subject was: "The Significance of the Preparation of the Candidate and the Preparation Room." The four brethren chosen to give the addresses were Bros. J.T. Bass, A.H. Crocker, F.Scott Mason and G.H. Slate. On 18th May 1934 application for membership was made by a young member of Victoria Columbia Lodge No. 1, named Bro. Kenneth Reid who is now the Most Worshipful Grand Master of the Grand L of British Columbia and Secretary of Victoria Columbia Lodge No. 1. His vast knowledge of masonic procedure and of all things pertaining to masonry undoubtedly had its origin in the Lodge of Instruction

At the opening meeting of 1935 -36, on 26th September 1935 it was resolved that copies of the lectures delivered in the Lodge during the last two years be bound at the expense of the Lodge and presented to the Library of Victoria Columbia Lodge No. 1. At the same meeting Bro. Marshall resigned as Secretary-Treasurer as he had been notified by the Government that he would be transferred to Ottawa, an event which happily did not take place until 1941. Bro. Ken Reid was elected to fill the vacancy.

At the meeting on 17th October the Secretary read a letter from W. Bro. J.R. Saunders, Secretary, Victoria Columbia Lodge No. 1 inviting the Lodge of Instruction to confer the Fellowcraft Degree on two of their candidates at their next regular Communication on 7th November. The Secretary was instructed to write thanking the Worshipful Master, W. Bro. F.W. Bartholomew for his kind invitation. The following slate of officers was chosen for this occasion:

Master	Bro. Ken Reid	
Senior Deacon	Bro. W. R. Freethy	
Senior Warden	Bro. F Scott Mason	Junior Deacon
Bro.. T. Atkinson		

Junior Warden Bro. G. Stancombe Inner Guard
Bro. S.E. Neville
Chaplain Bro. J.T. Bass
Senior Steward Bro. G. Parfitt
 Junior Steward Bro. W. McCague

Bros. James Rowan Smith and James Augustus Sullivan were the candidates passed to the Fellowcraft Degree. The lecture on the Second Tracing Board was delivered by Bro. G. Parfitt. At the conclusion of the Degree work Bro. Master Ken Reid extended to W. Bro. Bartholomew the sincere thanks and appreciation of the Lodge of Instruction for the privilege of conferring the Degree. W. Bro. Bartholomew congratulated the Bro. Master and his Officers on their work and said that the Degree had been exemplified in a very able and dignified manner.

The meeting of 19th March 1936 saw a new departure: the presentation of part of the 1st Degree Lecture, Bro. Slater taking the Master's chair and Bro. Cockett the Senior Warden's. As the whole lecture would have occupied nearly two hours, it was decided to give the 1st, 2nd, and 7th sections only.

On 27th November, 1937 a letter was read from the Secretary of Victoria-Columbia Lodge No. 1 thanking the Lodge of Instruction for the return of the \$50.00 grant made by the Mother Lodge at the inception of the Lodge of Instruction.

At a meeting of the Board of Control on 5th January 1938 there was a lengthy discussion on the Grand Lodge Educational Programme and the part this Lodge should play in it. The Board seriously considered the advisability of the formation of a joint District Lodge of Instruction to carry out this work. It was resolved "That W. Bro. Jones be authorized to negotiate with the Masters' and Wardens' Club and with R.W. Bro.. Bro. P. H. Hughes with a view to the possible formation of some form of District Lodge of Education and Research wherewith this Lodge of Instruction could amalgamate." This resolution was to be read at the next meeting of the Lodge of Instruction to ascertain the opinion of the members and W. Bro. Jones was to report back at the next meeting of the Board of Control. This matter was brought up at the regular meeting of the Lodge on 26th January and after considerable discussion it was moved by Bro. Maunsell, seconded by Bro. Neville and carried unanimously that W. Bro. Jones be appointed a committee of one to enquire into the feasibility of the suggestion and to report back to the next meeting of the Lodge.

On 25th February W. Bro. Jones reported to the Lodge that a meeting of the representatives of the Educational Committees of the Lodges in the District had been held on 21st February at which it was resolved that:

1. It would be in the interests of the Grand Master's Educational Scheme to form such a Lodge because the individual Lodges who are sufficiently occupied with Degree work cannot spare the required time for the reading of papers and listening to lectures.

2. A Lodge of Research would hold meetings solely for research and education, thus attracting those who are really interested along these lines.

3. The membership be drawn from all the Lodges in the District with the privilege extended to every Master Mason wishing to visit.

It was pointed out that since similar Lodges were in existence in various parts of the Old

Country, Eastern Canada, and the United States, the nearest being in Seattle and Portland, it would be wise to procure from Seattle and Portland information which would be a guide to the formation of such a local Lodge. R. W. Bro. Hughes said it would be wise to wait for the experiences of other groups before passing the resolution. During the discussion that followed it was pointed out that it would be necessary to alter the By-Laws of the Lodge of to the proposed Lodge of Research and referred them to the Instruction to cover the changes necessary for the formation of such a group. It was moved, seconded and carried unanimously that: "This Lodge of Instruction go on record as being in favour of so extending the facilities

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of the Lodge until such a Lodge of Research is formed or the idea abandoned.

At the meeting of the Lodge on 25th March R.W. Bro. Hughes read a letter from the Grand Secretary, Wor. Bro. Frank McKay, relating outlet for the expression of their ideas at the forthcoming Communication of Grand Lodge in June.

On 29th April W. Bro. A.W. Trevett and W. Bro. A. B. Ford treated the Lodge to a debate on the following "Resolved that we approve of the admission of physically maimed candidates." There is no further information as to the outcome of the debate.

On the 20th May a special meeting of the Chairmen and Representatives of the Victoria District Educational Committees was held under the auspices of the Board of Control of the Lodge of Instruction, at which R. W. Bro. Hughes read a letter from the Grand Secretary regarding the proposal to form a Research Group. He also read extracts from a letter from Bro. Lowe of the Lodge of Research in Seattle, outlining the procedure and financial arrangements of such a Lodge. He then noted that the Book of Constitutions of the Grand Lodge of British Columbia contained no instructions regarding such a Lodge, and drew attention to Section 187 which stated, "No General Lodge of Instruction shall be held unless under the sanction of a regularly warranted Lodge or by special license or authority of the Grand Master". After much discussion it was approved unanimously to apply to the Grand Master for such a special license and that R.W. Bro. Hughes be given copies of this resolution to be given to Dr. J. G. Brown, Chairman of the Grand Lodge Educational Committee, and to the Grand Secretary. It was also passed that a petition to the Grand Master be drawn up, circulated and signed by interested members. This petition was to be held by R. W. Bro. Hughes and at his discretion to be presented to the Grand Master at the Grand Lodge Communication if found advisable.

At the meeting on 27th May during Refreshment the brethren retired to the main Lodge Room where Bros. J. T. Marshall and Ken Reid presented a paper on "The Symbolism of the Carpet on the Floor of the Lodge Room" the carpet being identical to that on the floor of the Mother Grand Lodge in Great Queen Street, London. (1. The Lodge has always held its meetings in the Library.)

At the meeting on 24th June 1938 the Bro. Master informed the Lodge that he had received from R. W. Bro. Hughes attending the Grand Lodge Communication in Nelson a telegram which read: "Our petition presented and licence granted.

At a meeting of the Board of Control on 14th September the Secretary was instructed to request the Worshipful Master of Victoria Columbia Lodge No. 1 to direct that the Annual Meeting of the Lodge of Instruction be held on 30th September. It was decided to open the Lodge for annual business and to elect an

independent chairman to preside over the election of officers for the new Lodge of Education and Research.

The final meeting of the Victoria-Columbia Lodge of Instruction was held in the Masonic Temple on the 30th September 1938 at 7:30 p.m. M. W. Bro. Dr. Kerr being unable to take the chair Bro. Maunsell was invited to preside. It was resolved that in virtue of its being an organizational meeting all visitors be given the right to vote. R. W. Bro. P. H. Hughes was elected the first Master of the Victoria District Lodge of Education and Research, Bro. G. F. Hobart the first Senior Warden and Bro. Helgesen the first Junior Warden. The election of a Secretary-Treasurer was held over until the next regular meeting. All present were invited to be present at the next meeting and to take out membership at \$2.00 per year. It was moved by Bro. J. T. Marshall, seconded by Bro. Jewkes and carried that the minute book, porch book, account book, regalia and other property of the Lodge of Instruction be donated to the new Lodge and that the Secretary request Bro. Ted Gilbert who donated the three gavels for his consent to turn them over with the rest of the property.

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Several very interesting and instructive papers were read and lectures delivered during the seven years of the existence of the Lodge of Instruction. Time and space fail me to mention them all; a few samples must suffice for now.

1. What and how much should be told a candidate before Initiation?
2. The Significance of the Physical Preparation of the Candidate.
3. The Significance of the Preparation Room.
4. The Symbolism of the First Degree.
5. The third, last, and grand reason of the First Degree.
6. Symbols.
7. The Perfect Points of Entrance.
8. Where are the Cardinal Virtues depicted on the Floor of the Lodge & their meaning?
 9. The Apron.
 10. The Rough Ashlar.
 11. The Perfect Ashlar.
 12. Attend the Great Lights.
 13. The Altar.
 14. The Moral and Spiritual teaching of the Flight of Winding Stairs.
 15. The Symbolism of the Second Degree.
 16. The Trowel.
 17. From Darkness to Light.
 18. Rituals.
 19. Can Masonry every be considered a Religion?
 20. Why are we called Freemasons?
 21. Masonic Forgeries and Frauds.
 22. Ancient York Masonic Rolls.
 23. The Examination of a Visitor.