



760

Issued to brethren in BENBURB, Dungannon, Co. Tyrone, 5 April 1792.

From the Minutes of Grand Lodge

Lodge 760

5 April, 1792 - Ordered a Warrant to Brs. Wingfield Delaval, Wm. Bloomer and Jno. Bloomer to hold a Lodge in the town of Benburb, Co. Tyrone

Volume 3 of the extant Grand Lodge Register Wingfield Delaval; Wm. B. Boomer and Jno. Bloomer registered 5 April, 1792.

No registration of Master or Wardens.

A further 21 brethren registered up to 6 January, 1808.

Vol. 4 of the extant Grand Lodge Registers shows:- Warrant No. 760 to Benburb, Moy, 5 April, 1792.

Wingfield Delaval; Wm. Bloomer and John Bloomer registered 5 April, 1792.

No indication as to Master or Wardens.

A total of 54 brethren either transcribed from a previous volume or registered here up to 6 November, 1816.

Crossle Vol. 1.p. 23. Vol. 2.p. 161.

"Free and Accepted Masons.

A Meeting of the General Committee of Free and Accepted Masons of the County of Tyrone, was held at their Committee Room at Dungannon, on Monday the 7th January 1793, in order to determine what conduct should be pursued by them as Masons and as Citizens, in this momentous crisis.

The Worshipful James Reynolds, Esq. MD. President.

Lodges represented

205	Moy	William Richardson	Master	Members	5
350	Cappagh	Robert Corry	Deputy	Members	23
318	Stewartstown	Robert Holmes, Esq.	Deputy	Members	22
396	Fintona	Robert McKnight	Delegate	Members	60
421	Dungannon	Henry Feams	Master	Members	70
461	Moy	Charles Mann	Master	Members	146
480	Coalisland	James Campbell	Master	Members	9
483	Aughnacloy	John Hadden	Master	Members	169
502	Aughnacloy	Geo. McWilliams, Esq.	Delegate	Members	100
547	Newtownstewart	Jno. Alexander, Esq.	Delegate	Members	106
557	Benburb	Wm. Richardson	Delegate	Members	36
576	Moy	Wm. Richardson	Delegate	Members	52
599	Aughnacloy	Wm. Fleming	Master	Members	70
630	Strabane	Robt. Cuthbertson	Delegate	Members	61
639	Ardstra	Robt. Barnwell	Master	Members	62
657	Carrenteel	James Wright	Delegate	Members	46
663	Dungannon	Rev. James Davidson	Delegate	Members	14
664	Killeter	William Caldwell	Master	Members	26
668	Cookstown	John Holbert	Master	Members	40
679	Ballygawley	James McDaniel	Master	Members	60
678	Stewartstown	J. Caldwell, Esq., MD.	Delegate	Members	21
708	Castlecaulfield	Thomas Higgans	Master	Members	17
717	Kilmore	Robert Barnwell	Delegate	Members	42
723	Ballygawley	Bryan Mackin	Delegate	Members	40
726	Bush House	James Campbell	Delegate	Members	36
727	Ballygawley	Lawrence Speer	Master	Members	20
740	Donaghmore	Alex. McKinsey	Delegate	Members	36
760	Benburb	Wm. Richardson, Esq.	Delegate	Members	22
765	Stewartstown	Samuel Sleator	Master	Members	12

"Mysteries being performed: Agreed, that the Wise Founder of our Glorious Institution, knowing the human Heart, and that men's sentiments, on some subject, would vary as much as their complexions: in days of old established, for the purpose of preserving that unity which should ever be among us a wise

Rule and Order:-

That tenets of religious or political parties should never be discussed in any Lodge; therefore the necessary mysteries being again performed according to ancient custom, they resolved themselves into an assembly of Masonic citizens, that they might take into consideration the important, purposes of their meeting; when the following Resolutions, Declaration, and Addresses were unanimously entered into, Resolved 1st. That we honour our King, George the IIIrd. and will zealously support his just prerogatives, as well as the hereditary succession of his family to the Crown.

2d. We wish to perpetuate the form of Government, consisting of the three branches, a King, Lords and Commons, but the latter must be freely and frequently chosen by the people and obedient to their instructions.

3d. We love our Brethren the Volunteers of Ireland, applaud their upright conduct, and will co-operate with them the Guardians of this Kingdom. - We equally detest the mendicant patriotism of the timid and interested, and the violence of the turbulent and licentious; - being determined like honest men, not only to support the prerogatives of the crown, but vindicate the rights of an injured People.

4th. We deprecate a Revolution, as both unnecessary and ineligible for our country, convinced that it should never be had recourse to, 'till all other means of escaping slavery have been tried in vain; and we are determined to use with spirited firmness every rational means for observing the universal Emancipation and adequate Representation of all our fellow subjects.

5th. Respecting the freedom of the press, as the palladium of liberty, we view with concern the many attacks of late made upon it, and with the utmost sensibility of mind regret, that the endeavours of the Sovereign of Belfast to mitigate the arbitrary exercise of legal corruption, against the spirited Proprietors of the Northern Star, persecuted on account of their exertions to promote the public good, should have been ineffectual.

The Declaration.

I solemnly promise and declare, that I will by all rational means, promote the universal emancipation and adequate representation of all the People of Ireland, and will not be satisfied until these objects shall have been unequivocally obtained, and I entertain no desire to subverting the present form of Government, consisting of King, Lords and Commons.

To the Free and Accepted Masons of Ireland;

Brethren - affected only by the sacred influence of those holy bonds which unite us to you and our fraternity encircling the Globe, we address you. Reluctantly do we speak on political subjects - convinced that "unanimity is the strength of society," we view with abhorrence the insidious attempts that have been in our native land made, to introduce discord, where harmony should reign, to call up the spirit of the first born Cain, and make Brother draw the murderous sword against Brother; "Divide and Govern," is a maxim as old as tyranny itself. - We will not be divided as Masons, for holding sacred the right of private judgement in all matters whatever: the virtuous Brother however he may differ from us in religious or political opinions, shall ever be received with the cordial embrace of fraternal fellowship. We will not be divided from our countrymen; our interests are in common with theirs.

Whilst we view with pleasure the rapid progress of Liberty in France, supported by reason and philosophy, and founded on the grand principles of our institution: Whilst we glory in the reflection that our Illustrious Brother Washington and the Masons of America, were the Saviours of their Country, and the first founders of the Temple of Liberty - are we to see Irish Masons made the Tools of Corruption? - are they to be instruments for oppressing their already borne down countrymen? Brethren, in embracing the duties of Masons, we have not relinquished any of our Rights as Men; we are from our souls sincerely loyal, but ours is not the loyalty of slaves, it is that of Masons - Masons who know their rights, and are determined to die or be free. We are no advocates for passive obedience and non-resistance, fealty to our Sovereign, does not require us to support corruption. So long as the vices of man render government necessary, it ought to be framed for the good of nations - not for oppression to the many, and the aggrandisement of a few. - Ah! how could any of you whose benevolence should be extensive as the habitations of man; behold two thirds of your countrymen, miserable, oppressed and naked, literally feeding on potatoes and points, labouring under sanguinary penal laws, taxed without being represented, unable in kindness to procure assistance, obliged in herds, annually to desert their hovels at the approaching ravages of the hearth collectors, who, merciless too often, rob their bed of heath of its only covering - could you behold these and lay the people are happy, rich and prosperous? Could you behold almost the whole of what are called the nations representatives, arbitrarily appointed by a few individuals, for a long number of years, and not accountable for their conduct: places and persons multiplied for the purpose of corruption, and often bestowed on men without principle, and women without virtue - the privileges of the Crown infringed, the honours of the Peerage sold, innumerable taxes wrung from the people, and the nation involved in debt for the purpose of corrupting Parliament, no responsibility required from the great Offices of State, the subject deprived of the Trial by Jury, in consequence of Game and Revenue Laws, Fiats and Attachments:- Could any of you generous Brethren, behold these and innumerable other grievances, and declare yourselves enemies to those who will attempt to reform the system of iniquity which occasions them! We believe that the people not having their due weight in the legislature, is the cause of all our grievances, and that a real radical reform in the representative branch thereof, can alone secure the interest, and preserve the peace of Ireland. To this object alone our views are directed, knowing that reform can alone prevent the horrors of a Revolution, the blame of which must fall on the heads of those who drive the people to despair. Brethren, equally contemning the high and low vulgar, we are taught to regard him alone, who is virtuous as exalted to the level of Man. The profane and vicious and are only savages - to be virtuous it is necessary to be Free, for slavery and vice are inseparably connected. Respecting those sacred truths, we wish we may be branded with infamy, if we do ever cease most strenuously to co-operate with all our fellow-subjects in their endeavours to eradicate vice and slavery from the land. Taking our wives and children in our hands, we feel all nature stirring within us, and the God of Nature's voice calling on us to save them. One word more, Brethren, "a People aspiring to be free, should be able to protect Liberty," - Be peaceable, but powerful - Let ever Lodge in the land become a company of citizen soldiers - Let every Volunteer Company, become a Lodge of Masons.

Countrymen of all denominations, we address you - Our Mysteries are not orgies held for plotting against your Liberties. - Among the Apostles there was one Judas: - The Slaves among us are few: - Join our Lodges:- - This will give you confidence in each other, and will secure you against private persecution, on account of your struggles for freedom - no one who dares to oppress the least among us, need ever expect support from the rest.

Signed by Order, Wm. Richardson, Sec.  
BNL 18-22 January 1793 NP. Vol. C.p. 178-183.

Attached to the page in Volume 3 of the extant Grand Lodge Register is a letter dated 13 October, 1794 enclosing dues amounting to £2. 9s. 10. {32.49}

County Tyrone General Masonic Committee, 1st July, 1799  
Aughnacloy Sub-Committee  
No. 760. Benburb, Arthur McGraddy, Master.  
Vol. 2.p. 161.

Compounded for arrears, 2 July 1812.

Died, on the 25th inst., Mr. Robert Nelson, of Blackwatertown, a very worthy man, and highly beloved in the county, by all ranks of people. He was accompanied to the grave, and buried with Masonic honours by all the members of the following Lodges, viz., Nos. 76 ... 760, Benburb ... 979.

An immense multitude of spectators, besides the members of the Masonic Craft, attended, through respect to the memory of the deceased. The procession extended about a mile. The funeral service was read by the Rev. John Young. The most perfect silence, decorum, and good order was preserved during the whole procession - and the Masonic Craft returned impressed with strong sensations of sorrow, for the loss of their worthy brother. NT 29 August, 1815 Vol. 1.p. 23

This was the second Lodge warranted to hold meetings in Benburb. The Warrant, which was issued to Wingfield Delaval, William Bloomer and John Bloomer, is dated 5th April, 1792.

Within a year of its constitution the Lodge took part in a meeting of the General Committee of Free and Accepted Masons of the County Tyrone, which was held in Dungannon on Monday, 7th January, 1793, "in order to determine what conduct should be pursued by them as Masons and as citizens at this momentous crisis." The "crisis" referred to was the political excitement of the day which ultimately culminated in the disastrous Rebellion of 1798. At that meeting, which was attended by the representatives of thirty Lodges from various parts of County Tyrone, resolutions, all of a political nature were adopted. These referred to "loving our Brethren the Irish Volunteers", wanting "Universal Emancipation of all our fellow subjects" and "regretting the arbitrary exercise of legal corruption against the spirited proprietor of the Northern Star." That newspaper was suppressed by the Government at a later date for its outspoken disloyalty. The two Benburb Lodges, Nos. 557 and 760, were represented at the meeting, not by any of their Officers, but by Bro. William Richardson, Moy, the President of the Moy Sub-Committee of which those Lodges formed a part. No. 760 was then stated to have a membership of twenty-two. At a further meeting of the County Tyrone General Masonic Committee held in Stewartstown on 1st July, 1799, the Lodge was represented by its Master, Arthur McGrady (or McCreedy).

The summer St. John's Festival was celebrated in 1810 on 25th June, the 24th having fallen upon a Sunday. The Brethren of the following Lodges walked in procession to Benburb, where a sermon was preached to them by the Revd. Mr. Howie:- 557 Benburb; 711 The Dyan; 722 Curran and 760 Benburb.

The members of this Lodge were invited by Lodge No. 557 on 28th March, 1811, to attend the funeral of Bro. John Gillespie, one of the earliest members of that Lodge. As was customary in those days, a large number of the Lodge members assembled and walked in the funeral procession wearing the special clothing enjoined for that ceremony.

Up to the year 1816 fifty-four members of Lodge No. 760 had been registered in the books of Grand Lodge from the date of the first meeting in 1792, a period of twenty-four years, but the initiations must have amounted to much more than that total.

George Bleeks, a member of the Lodge, was suspended in 1819 for the period of fifteen years "unless a further consideration takes place by the members". The charge preferred against him was one of "not doing his duty to Bro. James Scott". Bro. Scott had been Master in that year. This complaint is couched in rather vague terms, but the matter was regarded as so serious that the neighbouring Lodges were warned of the suspension having been imposed.

The Lodge never seemed to have been in a flourishing condition and as years rolled on matters did not improve. We find that in the years 1819 and 1820 no returns were made to Grand Lodge nor were the customary dues and fees paid.

The Grand Lodge made many efforts to bring the Lodge into proper working order, and eventually the Warrant was cancelled on 4th July, 1822, a little over thirty years from its issue. The sister Lodge No. 780 suffered a similar fate on the same day.

One member of this Lodge requires to be mentioned. One Dr. Isaac Wilson, son of John Wilson of Drumrusk near Benburb, he was Entered and Crafted 8 June 1815 and Raised a Master Mason 21 June 1815. He graduated MD., and became a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians Edinburgh, and served in the Royal Navy. To his medical skill was attributed the recovery, from a dangerous fever, of the Duke of Clarence, afterwards William IV. As physician to the Duke and Duchess of Kent, Isaac Wilson officiated at the birth of the Princess, afterwards Queen Victoria. On 21 February 1838 the Queen presented the old Physician with a portrait of herself, set in diamonds, he was the first Commoner to receive the honour of Knighthood at her hands.

H. 25

Cancelled, 4 July 1822.

**Warrant cancelled 7 July 1825.**

**Revived 5 June 1828.**

**Records indicate that the Lodge continued to meet after 1825 as usual.**

**December 1829 the brethren applied for a Royal Arch Warrant which was not granted, however the Companions continued to work the Degree.**

**Tried to exchange 557 for No. 16, not successful 21 May 1833.**

**1836 Twenty-five members on the Roll.**

**Lodge suddenly stopped working, no reason being given.**

**Warrant cancelled Feb. 1845**

**Look the Ref. The above may be for another Lodge. (46)**

Series three Vol. 10 of the extant Grand Lodge Registers shows:-

Warrant No. 760

Nothing shown in this Volume

Series four Vol. 15, shown as Volume 4, or Vol. 16 shown as Volume 4a of the extant Grand Lodge

Registers shows:-

Warrant No. 760

Nothing shown in this Volume

(A) Reissued to 'Felicitas Lodge' in Freemasons' Hall, ROSETTA, BELFAST, 4 December 1952.

From the Minutes of the G.L. Board of G.P.

Lodge 760

19 November, 1952 - Read Memorial from various brethren praying for a warrant to establish a Lodge in Rosetta in the County of Down to be called the Felicitas. The Memorial was recommended by Lodges Nos. 347, 457, 577 and by R.W. Bro. Sir William Robinson, JP., P.G.M. of Down. Recommended.

G.L.M. 4 December, 1952 - Confirmed

Series five Vol. 20 shown as Vol. 5 of the extant Grand Lodge Registers shows:- Warrant No. 760 to Rosetta, Belfast as "Felicitas Lodge" 4 Dec. 1952

Donald C. Catley, Librarian (577); Samuel J. Allen, Agent (577) and John W. Thomson, Contractor (577) registered along with seventeen others from various lodges, 4 Dec 1952 No indication as to Master or Wardens.

No other brethren registered.

An Occasional Communication of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Down was held in the Masonic Hall, Park Road, Belfast, on Tuesday, 29<sup>th</sup> May, 1953 at 6.30 o'clock p.m., for the purpose of Constituting and Dedicating the "Felicitas" Masonic Lodge No. 760.

The Prov. Grand Master, R. Wor. Bro. Sir William Robinson, JP., presided and was accompanied by R.W. Bro. Wm. Keith, FSAA., Assistant Provincial Deputy Grand Master.

Other Officers in attendance were:-

V.W. Bro. W.A. Shooter, P.S.G.W.

V.W. Bro. Frederick Ewing, P.J.G. W.

V.W. Bro. Sydney Hanna, MBE., P.G. Treasurer

V.W. Bro. R.S.C. Davison, P.G. Secretary

W. Bro. Glynne Davies, P.G. Chaplain

W. Bro. W. Clarke, P.S.G.D.

W. Bro. J.H. McGowan, P.G.J.D.

W. Bro. S. McIlveen, MR1A1., P.G. Supr. of Works

V.W. Bro. D.G. Wilson, P.G. Dir. of Cer.

V.W. Bro. E. Hodgett, JP., P.G. Dir. of Cer.

W. Bro. J.H. Towell, P.G. Dir. of Cer.

W. Bro. W.J. Mitchell, P.G. Junior Stwd.

W. Bro. J. Duff, P.G. Swd. Br.

W. Bro. G. Hulatt, P.G. Stwd. of Charities

W. Bro. James Shannon, P.G. Org.

W. Bro. A.V. Froggatt, JP., P.G. Org.

W. Bro. J. Copeland, P.G.M's St. Br.

W. Bro. Jos. Kelly, P.G.St. Br.

W. Bro. J.M. Davidson, P.G.I.G.

[Apologies were received from a number of P.G.L. Officers]

The roll of Officers was called and the attendance recorded.

The Provincial Grand Lodge was opened in due form on the First or Entered Apprentice Degree. Grand Honours were accorded to the Right Wor. Provincial Grand Master under the direction of V.W. Bro. D.G. Wilson, Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies.

The Circular convening the Meeting was read.

The ceremony of Constitution was carried out according to ancient usage.

At the request of the Provincial Grand Master, W. Bro. the Revd. Glynne Davies, Provincial Grand Chaplain, addressed the Brethren of the

new Lodge. He suggested that the first essentials in their new Lodge should be punctual and regular attendance and the correct carrying out of the Ritual of our Order, this would impress all those who attended the Lodge Meetings. He also emphasised that our Masonic Charities should be their constant care and should be well and continuously supported, in conclusion Br. Davies wished them all happiness and success in the future.

The Provincial Grand Master then Installed W. Bro. Donald C. Carley as Worshipful Master of Lodge 757, and he, in turn, Installed his own Officers.

A vote of thanks was proposed by Bro. S.J. Allen, S.W., seconded by Bro. J.W. Thompson, J. W. and conveyed to the Rt. Wor. Provincial Grand Master and Officers of the Provincial Grand Lodge for carrying out the Ceremony of Dedication.

In his reply the Provincial Grand Master said that it was a great pleasure for him to be present and to welcome the new Lodge to the Province. He commended to their earnest consideration, the remarks which had been addressed to them by the Rev. Bro. Davies, and added that they would benefit greatly in the correct carrying out of the Ritual by attendance at one of the Classes of Instruction, which were doing such good work in this sphere.

At the conclusion of the business of Lodge 760 the Provincial Grand Lodge Officers resumed their places and the Provincial Grand Lodge was then closed; Peace, Love and Harmony prevailing.

The Officers of the Provincial Grand Lodge were afterwards entertained at Dinner by the Members of the newly Constituted Lodge.

The Lodge had twenty-one Foundation Members and W. Bro. D.C. Carley was the first Master.

Bros. S.J. Allen and J.W. Thomson the Wardens, Bro. J. Ballentine the Treasurer and W. Bro. E. Saunders the Secretary. Thirteen of the Founder Members were members of Lodge No. 577.

Series six Vol. 23 of the extant Grand Lodge Registers shows:- Warrant No. 760 to Rosetta, Belfast as "Felicitas Lodge"

Register commences with the registration of Ralph Winsby, Manager, registered 17 October, 1953 A total of 110 brethren registered up to 20 October, 1984. In most cases the dates when the issue of certificates is shown, together with the occupation of the brother.

Warrant No. 760 to Rosetta, Belfast

From 1984 the registration of members is held, in alphabetical order, in a computerised register by Grand Lodge, Freemasons' Hall, 17 Molesworth Street, Dublin 2. The Registration of the Worshipful Master, Wardens and Secretary of Lodges are held in separate Registers, the first Volume covering the period 1983 to 1994 inclusive and the second Volume covering from 1995 to date.

CURRENT.

