



## Provincial Grand Lodge of Forfarshire



*From the Minute Book of The Operative Mason Lodge of Dundee No. 47 (1800 – 1827)*

10<sup>th</sup> September 1823

At a General Meeting of the Operative Lodge

### Foundation Stone of Tay Ferry Pier at Newport

This being the day appointed for laying the foundation stone of the Harbour about to be built at Newport, the preparations for that interesting ceremony were conducted in the following manner. At eleven o'clock the Provincial Grand Lodge of Angus was opened in the Sailors Hall – it was composed of the P. Grand Master and his Wardens, and the Masters and Wardens of the following Lodges: -

<b>Montrose Kilwinning</b>	Montrose
<b>St Thomas Operative</b>	Arbroath
<b>Ancient</b>	Dundee
<b>St Ninians</b>	Dundee
<b>St Davids</b>	Brechin
<b>Forfar Kilwinning</b>	Dundee
<b>Glamis</b>	Forfar
<b>St Vigeans</b>	Glamis
<b>St James</b>	Arbroath
<b>Thistle Operative</b>	Brechin
<b>Montrose Kilwinning Incorporated</b>	Dundee
<b>Forfar &amp; Kincardine Militia</b>	Dundee
<b>Caledonian</b>	Dundee
<b>St Andrew</b>	Lochlee
<b>Airly</b>	Kirriemuir
<b>Panmure</b>	Arbroath

Together with a deputation from Mary's Chapel, Edinburgh.

At half past eleven the Lodge who were to attend the procession in a body, formed a lane along the West Protection Wall of the Harbour at the eastern extremity of which the embarkation was to take place. A little before one o'clock the Grand Lodge moved off from the Sailor's Hall, and having passed through the Masonic line embarked on board the 'Union Steam Boat' after which the Brethren of the other Lodges embarked in the 'George the Fourth' steam Boat and both vessels proceeded to the shore of Fife. In the meantime the Grand Lodge of Fife had been opened in a chapel about half way between Newport and Woodhaven. It was composed of the Provincial Grand Master with his Wardens and office bearers and the Masters and Wardens of the following Lodges: -

<b>St John's</b>	<b>Cupar</b>
<b>St Andrews</b>	St Andrews
<b>St Andrews</b>	Crail



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<b>Ceres</b>	
<b>Lindores</b>	Newburgh
<b>Eden Operative</b>	Strathmiglo
<b>St Michaels</b>	Leuchars
<b>Thane of Fife</b>	
<b>Tay Union</b>	Ferry Port on Craig
<b>St Regulus</b>	Cupar

When the front of the procession reached its destination, which it did a little after three o' clock, the column halted. The Pro Grand Master of Fife then proceeded with the work by commencing the ceremony. The Band performed "The King's Anthem" and "Hail Masonry", after which the Rev Mr Gillespie of Cults, the Grand Chaplain offered up an impressive prayer. The Grand Treasurer and Grand Secretary then placed in the cavity of the stone, bottles hermetically sealed containing the coins, newspapers of the day and copies of the Ferry Acts with a plate bearing the following inscription.

*" At a time when peace, plenty and increasing commerce blessed the land – When knowledge and virtue flourished among the people – when philosophy and the arts unite to beautify and gladden all the ways of life and man has obtained a new dominion over the sea, by the use of the steam engine, in place of the oar and the sail.*

*This pier one of the works authorised by Statues of the British Parliament, passed for the improvement of the Tay Ferries was founded on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of September in the year of Christ 1823, and in the fourth year of the reign of George the Fourth. By which improvements carried by public opinion and spirit against many obstacles, all former inconvenience and danger of the passage were removed and the two shores of the Tay at Dundee and Newport joined together as by a Bridge."*

The bottles and plates being properly adjusted, the foundation stone was first raised by a crane and then lowered down into its proper position, the Band performing "Great Light Will Shine". Corn Wine and Oil were then poured over the stone and the Grand Master implored the Architect of the Universe to prosper the useful work. The Grand Master then delivered an animated address and announced to the surrounding multitudes that the stone had been laid in due form which was answered by the brethren with cheers both long and loud. When the duty was done the Grand Lodges returned through the Masonic lane – that of Fife to the Chapel where it had been opened, and that of Angus accompanied by the other brethren crossed the river to the Sailor's Hall.

The Brethren of the Operative Lodge then marched off to their own Lodge, where they spent in harmony the evening of this memorable day. The following brethren were made honorary members of the Operative Lodge.

<b>Alexander Baillie</b>	<b>Kilwinning Montrose</b>
<b>William Wilkie</b>	Thistle Operative, Dundee
<b>George Ritchie.</b>	Forfar & Kincardine, Dundee
<b>Alexander Lees</b>	Tay Union, South Ferry