

William Benjamin Simpson

Grand Master (1864 – 1866) of the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons
of Canada in the Province of Ontario



Photo from the Grand Lodge

(1818 – 1883)

This biography starts with a summary prepared by V.W. Bro. Marshall Kern and concludes with a paper by R.W. Bro. J. Max Laushway; presented May 28, 1994, with two reviews. Published in the Proceedings of The Heritage Lodge No. 730, Volume 17, for 1993 – 1994. Reproduced by permission of The Heritage Lodge No. 730.



Ontario Masons

Summary prepared by V.W. Bro. Marshall Kern

William Benjamin Simpson was born of English parents at Augusta, Upper Canada (now Augusta Township located between Prescott and Brockville, Ontario), on July 26, 1818. His schooling and early life are not known. He became a Collector of Customs at Brockville under his father. He took the same position at Kingston and, in 1876, was moved to Montreal where he was Collector of Her Majesty's Customs for the Port of Montreal until retirement in 1882. In 1877 he also received an appointment as a commissioner of the peace; the role now is called a Justice of the Peace.

In 1849, William Benjamin Simpson married Mary Louisa Wilson (1827 – 1897). They had a son, John Arthur Dix Simpson (1852 – 1924).

He was a devoted and dedicated member of the Anglican Church, both in Kingston and Montreal.

M.W. Bro. Simpson died on June 3, 1883, at the age of 64 years, at his residence at Coteau Landing, Quebec. On June 6, 1883, he was buried with Masonic Honors. The funeral service was conducted by the Grand Lodge of Quebec which records that M.W. Bro. E.R. Johnson, then-Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Quebec, paid a lengthy and well-merited tribute to the memory of M.W. Bro. W. B. Simpson, Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Canada, who was buried with Masonic honors at an Emergent Communication of the Grand Lodge of Quebec, held at Coteau Landing on June 6, 1883. There was many Masons attending, including other Past Grand Masters, representatives of Royal Arch Masons, and Scottish Rite, as well as many Masons who had travelled to attend the ceremonies.

A portrait of M.W. Bro. Simpson was displayed at Simpson Lodge No. 157, which was named to honour him. It was delivered to the Grand Lodge Archives when the lodge surrendered its Warrant on March 5, 2024.

He and his wife are interred at Coteau-du-Lac Anglican Cemetery. If a gravestone was originally put in place for the late Grand Master, it has sadly long since disappeared.

Masonic Career

Mr. William B. Simpson was initiated in Sussex Lodge in Brockville Ontario, on March 2, 1853. As background regarding his Mother Lodge, it should be noted that during the Grand Masonic Convention at Kingston in 1817, Sussex Lodge appears to have been incorrectly registered as Sussex Lodge, No. 3, Brockville, showing an early adoption of its eventual name, which was chosen to honour HRH The Duke of Sussex, Grand Master of United Grand Lodge of England.

By resolution of the Lodge, he was elected on June 27, 1855, as a voting delegate to attend the meeting of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Canada West, held on July 19, 1855, at Hamilton. Discontent with the working of the Provincial Grand Lodge was evident at the meeting and in an informal meeting he presented a resolution – which was passed unanimously – that a meeting be called for October 10, 1855, in Hamilton, to discuss the advisability of establishing an independent Grand Lodge. W. Bro. Simpson attended that Hamilton meeting of October 10, 1855, when the Grand Lodge of Canada was formed. At that meeting he was elected as the first District Deputy Grand Master for the newly formed Central District; covering the area from Montreal in the east to the Trent River in the west. He held the office until July 11, 1860. It should be noted that during this period he was still Worshipful Master of Sussex Lodge.

In his reports as District Deputy Grand Master, he expressed concern regarding the poor advancement of Masonry in his District. R.W. Bro. Simpson noted that the Work practiced in his District was that known as Ancient York Ritual. He expressed his opinion that the English Ritual should become the standard. This is a concern he carried forward to his time as Grand Master.

As DDGM he found it necessary to censure two lodges for errors in their practice and used these instances as support in a call for consistency in lodge Bylaws, and an updating of the Constitution of Grand Lodge. He was able to act on these concerns during his term as Grand Master.

In Capitular Masonry he was exalted in Ancient Frontenac (now Ancient Frontenac and Cataraqui) Chapter, No. 1 GRC, Kingston, in 1856. He was elected and installed as First Principal of the Chapter for 1861-1862 and, later, he served as Grand Superintendent of the Central District.

In Knights Templary he was consecrated as a Knight Templar in 1857 in Hugh de Payens Premier Preceptory, No. 1 KT, Kingston. He was elected as Eminent Commander (now Presiding Preceptor) for the 1864-1865 term. In Sovereign Great Priory he was Provincial Grand Prior of Quebec District (1874-1875, 1875-1876, 1876-1877 and 1877-1878) and was concurrently Chairman of the Grand Council. In 1878 he was elected as Grand Sub-Prior.

Details of his Scottish Rite membership and activities are incomplete, but he was Chancellor of the Supreme Council, A.&A.S.R. for Canada from 1880 through 1882.

As Grand Master

During his term as the third Grand Master, M. W. Bro. Simpson ruled the Craft on a steady course, made a steady progress in formulating and updating the Constitution of the new Grand Lodge; in developing standards for Lodge By-Laws; in establishing the Benevolent Fund and the set of operating rules, particularly that only the interest from the investments of the fund should be used. He recommended the appointment

of two Grand Lecturers to give instructions to lodges and that they receive adequate remuneration for their services; this idea failed due to the lack of available funds. He was also active in public events, such as the laying of the cornerstones of the Masonic Hall in Kingston and in Montreal.

In 1865 the Grand Lodge had completed its first ten years of existence and exhibited a most encouraging statement both as regards funds and membership. In the following year Grand Master Simpson was invited to install the Grand Master of a newly formed Grand Lodge of Nova Scotia, but declined on the ground that its preliminaries were irregular. Three years later Grand Master Stevenson reported that he had installed the Nova Scotia Grand Master.

The *Proceedings* of the Annual Communication July 12, 1866, contain the first ever synopsis of the returns of Lodges: there were 180 Lodges within the jurisdiction. This is a fitting indicator of the growth of the fraternity of which M. W. Bro. Simpson had been a hard-working member. At this Communication he installed his successor, M. W. Bro. William Mercer Wilson, as Grand Master.

At the Eleventh Annual Communication held in Montreal in July 1866, M.W. Bro. W.B. Simpson looked forward to Confederation. He bade the brethren to consider the formation of a "Grand Lodge of Canada for the whole of British North America with a Provincial Grand Lodge in each Province." This appears to be an echo of the sentiment of the day as Confederation drew near – to have a central and federal government with provinces providing more regional government.

The alternative was to have an independent Grand Lodge in each Province. The committee considering the merits of each case was deeply divided. M.W. Bro. Harington chaired the committee and broke a tie with his vote in favour of the status quo. The situation was not immediately resolved, leaving Grand Master Simpson to state that "The solution to this great question must be left to time."

Although M.W. Bro. Wilson, and M.W. Bro. Harington strove to standardize the Ritual within the Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario, this proved to be very difficult. In 1866 M.W. Bro. Simpson suggested that Grand Lodge "should compel every Worshipful Master to pass an examination as to his qualifications to fill the chair before he is installed into that high and responsible office." This has become the practice and now the Worshipful Master-elect is examined before the ceremony of Installation to confirm that he knows the Ritual well enough to rule the lodge.

Charity and benevolence are significant to every Mason, but the efforts of Grand Lodge to provide assistance in its early years were fraught with difficulties. To reinforce the fundamental principle of benevolence, R.W. Bro. Simpson moved at the 1863 Grand Lodge Communication to form a fund for benevolence from which the interest could be used for charitable purposes. This was accepted and \$6000 was

used to launch the fund. While at that time the funds were dispersed by a Committee of Grand Lodge, that fund is the precursor to what is now the Masonic Foundation of Ontario which has millions of dollars under administration and an active program of supporting charities.

During the two years that M.W. Bro. Simpson was Grand Master there was steady progress in the administrative side of the operation of lodges with the more general use of uniform Bylaws for lodges. The entire Constitution was revised and printed for distribution to members. M.W. Bro. Simpson also ruled that all officers of a lodge, except the Chaplain, must be dues-paying members of the lodge and not honorary members.

M.W. Bro. Simpson left a lasting legacy of charitable practices, attention to our Ritual, and the foundations of our governance, that continue today.

As Past Grand Master

Simpson Lodge No. 157 GRC, Newboro, was granted a dispensation in 1863 and named in honour of our third Grand Master. The lodge was Instituted and received its Warrant in 1867. Simpson Lodge No. 157 surrendered its warrant on March 5, 2024.

M.W. Bro. Simpson continued his active involvement and leadership in Royal Arch Masonry, and Scottish Rite Masonry.

A paper by R.W. Bro. J. Max Laushway; presented May 28, 1994, with two reviews. Published in the Proceedings of The Heritage Lodge No. 730, Volume 17, for 1993 – 1994.

Personal Life

William B. Simpson was born of English parentage, on July 26, 1818, at Augusta, Upper Canada. He became a Collector of Customs, serving at Brockville, Kingston and in 1876 he was moved to Montreal, where he worked until his retirement in 1882.

M.W. Bro. William B. Simpson died at his residence, Homewood, Coteau du Lac, Quebec, on Sunday, 3rd of June 1883. He was buried with all the honours which Masonry can bestow. The Funeral was conducted by the Grand Lodge of Quebec, attended largely by the members of our Fraternity.

Masonic Career

William B. Simpson was initiated in Sussex Lodge in Brockville Ontario, on March 2, 1853. He received the 2nd degree on March 23, 1853, and raised to the M.M. degree on May 18, 1853. While he was not invested into an office until Jan. 11, 1854, when he was invested as Senior Warden. He assumed many offices prior to that investiture. He was

installed as Worshipful Master, on Feb. 8, 1854. His keen interest in Masonry was readily apparent from the very start of his Masonic Career and during his two years as W.M. Sussex Lodge held some forty meetings at which he presided. This was a substantial increase in the number of meetings normally held by this Lodge.

By a resolution on June 27, 1855, W. Bro. Simpson was voted as the delegate to represent Sussex Lodge at the Provincial Grand Lodge meeting that was held in Hamilton on July 19, 1855. It was at this meeting that the seeds of discontent became very strong and as a result, a large number of delegates attended an informal meeting to express their views. W. Bro. Simpson presented a resolution which was passed unanimously that a meeting be called for Oct. 10, 1855, in Hamilton to take into consideration the advisability of establishing an independent Grand Lodge of Canada. This was the start of our Grand Lodge.

Bro. Simpson was given the responsibility of serving as the D.D.G.M. of Central District at that October meeting and remained in that office from Oct. 1855, until Oct. 1860, at which time he was installed as D.G.M., and presided in this office from 1860 to 1863. He was elected and installed as Grand Master, in 1863 and was our Grand Master for two years.

Other Branches

Bro. Simpson was exalted in Ancient Frontenac Chapter, Royal Arch Masonry at Kingston in 1856, and was installed a Knight Templar in High de Payens Preceptory at Kingston in 1857. He was elected and installed their Em. Commander in 1864.

He served in a number of different offices in the Great Priory of Canada. In 1877 he held the offices of Provincial Prior of Quebec as well as the Chairman of the Grand Council. In 1878 he was elected and installed as the Grand Sub-Prior as well as President.

Character

The written material in the minutes and reports indicate that M.W. Bro. Simpson was an adherent student of Masonry and when there was a need to discharge censure, he was most forceful in doing so. Even though he may not have agreed with the policy, he carried out his responsibility in accordance with the Grand Lodge's interpretation of the Constitution. He had absolutely no sense of guilt or remorse in conveying his feeling as well as his opinion of the difference in interpretation, to his Superiors in office.

It is very apparent that he was a firm advocate of that which was written about him. One of our Masonic Historians stated, "He was an unflinching exponent of whatever he believed to be right and never yielded to expediency to gain a little temporary popularity".

Concerns

Bro. Simpson was very forth-right in his opinions and expressed those opinions in the various reports he made to Grand Lodge. In some of these reports he expressed concerns on various subjects, such as the poor advancement of Masonry in his jurisdiction. He cited conditions in his own Lodge as an example. On another occasion he indicated that the progress of the Order in his District may not have been as great as in other Districts. He believed that it was favourable, considering that many of the old Masons were adherents of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Canada West. He indicated that as time advances much of the rancorous feelings which hereafter existed would soften down.

His reports indicate that the work practised in this District with limited exception, is that formerly known as Ancient York or Athol, but now better known as the United States Work. Even though he believed that it was the oldest of the two, he did not think it could be compared in all parts to the English Work, and expressed his opinion that the English or Modern Work should become the standard.

There was an occasion when there was a need to censure two Lodges, one for balloting on a candidate that had just previously been rejected by another Lodge, and second for opening and conducting general business in the 3rd degree. He used these instances to point out the need for by-laws and a constitution to be updated. To add credence to this, he cited that some by-laws infringed on a brother's rights. He also pointed out that the committee never met, thus indicating the need to revise that Constitution of Grand Lodge.

Recommendations

In the reports prepared by Bro. Simpson, recommendations were offered that, when used, could be of assistance in remedying some of the short-comings that he felt existed in the Grand Lodge. He offered that while the D.D.G.M.'s did all that was in their power to instruct the Lodges. Many were engaged in professional or mercantile pursuits. It would be utterly impossible for them, without detriment to their private affairs, to devote the time and attention to their Masonic duties which the instruction of the Craft required. He went on to strongly recommend, to appoint one or two Grand Lecturers. This would be the best means of doing so, and that some adequate plan be arranged for their remuneration. The shortage of finances prohibited this from being acceptable.

Bro. Simpson recommended that a committee be appointed by the Grand Body to draw up and offer guidance to all Craft Lodges as to that which would be proper to be in their by-laws. He also indicated that the Constitution be revised and made available to the Craft.

While it was not a recommendation, Bro. Simpson expressed a hope that a Grand Lodge of North America could be formed with Provincial Grand Lodges in each province.



Achievements

As M.W. Bro. Simpson was a very strong and active member of our Grand Lodge during the first eleven years after it was formed, five years as D.D.G.M., four as D.G.M. and two as G.M., it is natural that his achievements could be many.

As the delegate for Sussex Lodge at a Provincial Grand Lodge meeting at Hamilton, he offered a suggestion that a convention should be called for Ont. 10, 1855 for the purpose of considering the propriety of forming a Grand Lodge. This resulted in the Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario.

During his tour of duty many Lodges forwarded their by-laws to Grand Lodge for approval. The entire Constitution was revised, printed and made available for the Craft.

In 1863 it was moved and resolved that the sum of fifteen hundred pounds of the general funds of Grand Lodge be specially set apart for the purpose of forming a fund for benevolence, and that only interest accrued, to be available for charitable purposes, and this to be distributed by a Committee to be appointed by Grand Lodge. The sum actually deposited was \$6,000.00, but because the interest earned proved to be inadequate, it was augmented as early as 1865 by a transfer from the General Fund. The actual sum expended that year was \$340.00.

As M.W. Bro. Simpson was called on to make many rulings during his term as G.M. he deemed it appropriate to convey these rulings to all Lodges so they could have the benefit of the Grand Master's rulings.

M.W. Bro. Simpson achieved the distinction of having a group of brethren present a prayer that they might be allowed to form a Lodge and the name of the Lodge be Simpson Lodge, and that it hold its meetings in Newboro. It is now No. 157 on the registry of Grand Lodge. (NOTE: Simpson Lodge No. 157 surrendered their Warrant on March 5, 2024.)

During his tour as G.M. he achieved the honour of laying a Cornerstone. The building being one that was built by a member of one of the concordant bodies that he belonged to. Part of this building was set apart as a meeting place for the Masonic and concordant bodies in Kingston Ont. If any Mason desires to see this building, go to the market square in Kingston and look to the West, you will observe the words MASONIC BUILDING, at the top of one of the buildings on the west side of the street. The Kingston Masons no longer meet there.

Testimonial

His personality and leadership ability had to be beyond reproach as the testimonial given to him by M.W. Bro. Daniel Spry, G.M. in 1883, indicates the high esteem that was held for M.W. Bro. Simpson by the officers of Grand Lodge.

"Our late brother's management of the affairs of the Grand Lodge during his term of office was marked by the highest regard for the principles of the Craft, and a firm adherence to what is considered right. As a Freemason he was respected, as a citizen he was honoured for his upright character and personal worth, and in Grand Lodge he will be remembered with his respected predecessors, M.W. Bros. W.M. Wilson, W.H. Weller, and T. Douglas Harington".

Reference sources

History of the Grand Lodge of Canada; 115-116
Whence Come We?; 210
Papers of the C.M.R.A.; 226
Old Minutes of Sussex Lodge #5
Grand Lodge Proceedings: 1858, page 29; 1859, page 58-59; 1861, pages 151-152; 1864, pages 540-541; 1865, pages 27-33; 1866, pages 129-131.
Proceedings of the Grand Priory of Canada

REVIEWS OF WILLIAM B. SIMPSON OUR 3rd GRAND MASTER

Review #1 by Donald R. Thornton (Kingston Ont.)

Wor. Master, members and visitors to Heritage Lodge:

I thank R. W. Bro. Robert Throop for the invitation to review R. W. Bro. J. M. Laushway's paper on William Benjamin Simpson. I approach this task with trepidation, not being a scholar nor having the benefit of formal training in this type of work. Fortunately guidelines were published in past Proceedings of this Lodge. The report Masonic Papers – A Real Concern by R.W. Bro. Jack Pos (Vol. 13, 1989-1990, pages 112 – 123) provide an overview of the process and standards expected in papers presented to this lodge. Bro. Pos's comments led to an article by R.W. Bro. Wallace McLeod Preparing a Paper for presentation in the Heritage Lodge, (Vol. 7, 1983-1984, pages 4-19). Bro. Prof McLeod provides a detailed map for us amateurs to follow in preparing research papers. This review of R.W. Bro. J.M. Laushway's paper is made keeping their learned comments in mind.

R.W. Bro. J.M. Laushway must be thanked for his efforts in preparing and presenting this paper. It fulfills the simple rule, recounted by McLeod, regarding the presentation of such papers, "that it pleases and instructs."

In his final address as Grand Master to Grand Lodge, (Proceedings of 11th Communications, July 12, 1866, pages 125 – 132) M.W. Bro. Simpson made special mention of "the eventful times we live in". He did indeed live in and guide Freemasonry through eventful times. He began his Masonic career near the end of the Morgan affair and the devastating Anti-Masonic period. Many years of neglect by the Grand Lodge of England had caused frustration, indecision, discontent, ineffective management and conflict in Lodges throughout British North America. Not only were Freemasons cutting

their apron strings from the Mother Grand Lodge of England, but political leaders in North America were also negotiating independence from England. A year after his term as Grand Master, Confederation was proclaimed with Bro. Sir John A. MacDonald as the first Prime Minister. Simpson is listed as living in Kingston, Canada West during his term as D.G.M. (8th Communication, pg. 370) and most likely would have met MacDonald at (The Ancient) St. John's Lodge (#3).

It was also eventful timing for society as a whole. The temperance movement was beginning - though Sir John A. would not have been a part of it. Transportation was by horse power, as well as lake and river steamer. In 1856 The Grand Trunk Railway was completed between Montreal and Toronto thus making Simpson's trips to Grand Lodge meetings quicker and easier. Simpson deplored the Fenian Raids of 1866 which carried the Irish problem to Canada (and 128 years later it is still a problem). Relations with the United States were not good and he expressed great concern regarding the American Civil War (1861 - 1865) then raging south of the border. Queen Victoria was on the throne in England. In Europe Napoleon III, Bismark, The Tsar of Russia and Various other courts kept Europe in a constant state of war. The Indian mutiny and the opening of Japan were in the news.

The Lodge now known as Sussex #5 had been in darkness, with no meeting recorded, from Dec. 5, 1827, to August 25, 1852 (St. Lawrence District - Then and Now 1787 - 1987, pages 42 - 43). This situation was likely the result of the "Morgan Affair" and the wide spread Anti-Masonic movement throughout North America (The Great William Morgan Mystery - R.V. Harris, Papers of the Canadian Masonic Research Assoc, Vol. 2, pg. 799). A few months after reopening in 1853, the year Bro. Simpson was initiated, the Lodge moved into rented facilities and 2 years later, in 1855, during his second term as Master, he led a second move to rented rooms in a newly erected building in Brockville.

William B. Simpson joined Sussex #9 (5) at the age of 34 and advanced from Entered Apprentice to the chair of Grand Master in a period of eleven (11) years. What were the circumstances or conditions which existed in his Lodge, the community and Grand Lodge during those times - conditions which might explain his rapid progress in Freemasonry? Unfortunately, there is little information regarding his family background, education, early employment, religious affiliation, financial status or social standing other than he succeeded his father as Collector of Customs upon his father's death. He notes in his 1859 Report as D.D.G.M. that - "I was summoned to New York in May and detained there until the 6th of June attending to my sick father." {Proceedings of Grand Lodge of Canada, 1859, pg. 306}.

W.B. Simpson was invested as Senior Warden in January 1854, eight months after being initiated, and "after having served in a number of offices"?! and less than one month later was installed as W.M. on Feb. 8, 1854, and served for 2 years. Did the Lodge have him serve as Warden to fulfill the requirements that a Master must have served as Warden? Wm. Mercer Wilson, as Grand Master, issued to Simpson, as Wor. Master, the

Warrant to Sussex No. 3 granted by Wm. Jarvis, Deputy Grand Master of Upper Canada, under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of England.

R.W. Bro. Laushway notes the laying of the Corner Stone of an early Masonic Building in Kingston. The Proceedings of Saturday, June 24, 1865 (pg. 1-5) record as especial communication of Grand Lodge in Montreal at which M.W. Bro. Simpson officiated at the laying of the Corner Stone of the new Masonic Building on the corner of Notre Dame St. and Place D'Arms, it being the Festival of St. John the Baptiste. His speech that day, to a general audience, dwelt on the nature of the craft and promoted its principles and high ideas, not unlike Masonic public relations talks we hear 130 years later.

R.W. Bro. Laushway briefly mentions Simpson's involvement with the formation of Simpson Lodge at Newboro on the Rideau Canal. The Warrant for Simpson Lodge, 157 was issued on July 14, 1863, and signed by R.W. Bro. Simpson as D.G.M. and it is assumed that the Lodge was named in his honour. The first meeting of the Lodge was not held until four years later, on July 14, 1867. At its meeting in Newboro in November of 1867 the Lodge adopted the By-Laws of Sussex #5, Brockville as the By-Laws of Simpson Lodge. Considering R.W. Bro. Simpson's campaign for uniformity in Lodge By-Laws (as recorded in the Proceedings of Grand Lodge) it is assumed that he played a leading role in writing the By-Laws of his Mother Lodge and considered them a fine model for all Lodges. M.W. Bro. was made an honorary member of Simpson Lodge in 1868. M.W. Bro. Howard O. Polk is also a member of this Lodge (History of Simpson Lodge, 157, 1967 and 1992). Simpson Lodge still has a fondness for Grand Lodge and holds a popular "Grand Lodge Night" each spring to honour both local and visiting G.L. Officers.

It is hoped that, in time, we may add to the biography of this man, find out what made him special. After all, he was special. From the old Proceedings it can be seen that he had a direct involvement in developing much of the material and procedures still used in our Lodges and in Grand Lodge. We are indebted to R.W. Bro. Laushway for shedding light in this important Freemason.

NOTE: Much of the information presented in this review is taken from a beautifully bound copy of the Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Canada, A.F. & A.M., 1855 to 1866, belonging to the Masonic Collection of John Ross Robertson, P.G.M. given as a gift to the Toronto Public Library and now housed in the library at the Masonic Temple in the City of Kingston.

Review #2 by R.W. Bro. A. Glenn L. Blanchard

It is indeed a rare privilege for me to have the opportunity to review this outstanding paper by R.W. Bro. J.M. Laushway and I express my deep appreciation to R.W. Bro. Robert S. Throop for asking me to do so.



Ontario Masons

The fact that M.W. Bro. Simpson was a member of Sussex Lodge in Brockville awakens a kindred spirit within me because my late father was a faithful member of Sussex Lodge and my two brothers are long time members of that same lodge.

It is interesting to note that in those early days it did not take long for newly initiated Freemasons to advance through the offices of a lodge. William B. Simpson was initiated on March 2, 1853, and less than one year later, on Feb. 8, 1854, he was installed as W. Master. Then in October 1855 he was "given the responsibility of serving as the D.D.G.M. of Central District". This speeding advancement indicates his eagerness to serve, his outstanding ability and the confidence and respect that his brethren had for him.

The difficult years of bringing Canada together as a nation are also reflected in some of the problems faced by our brethren in the jurisdictional disputes that M.W. Bro. Simpson had to address. It would be interesting to know how he ever found the time outside of his work and family life to devote so much of his time and energy to Masonry.

We are fortunate indeed that Simpson Lodge #157 at Newboro in Eastern Ontario was named after him, to commemorate his memory. It would certainly be interesting to learn more about his own family life. Was he married? Did he have any children? Are there any surviving relatives living in the area? Simpson remains a very familiar family name in and around Augusta Township.

R.W. Bro. Laushway's paper is both timely and appropriate for presentation at this time as we look back and reflect on our heritage and pay homage to those who worked so hard to promote and preserve our fraternity during difficult times before our modern day methods of transportation, communications and technology.

We must never forget those who have gone before and gain as much information about them as possible. It would, therefore, be interesting to know the exact place where M.W. Bro. Simpson is buried in order that those who might be interested could visit his grave site.

(Editor's Note; These are the same sentiments echoed in Bro. Ralph 's talk.)

In this paper we are reminded of the debt of gratitude that we owe to former loyal and dedicated brethren like M.W. Bro. W.B. Simpson and we express our appreciation to R.W. Bro. W.J. Laushway for enriching our knowledge and making us aware of our glorious past as we look forward to an uncertain and challenging future.

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- (12) *Proceedings of the Sovereign Great Priory of Canada*.
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- (14) Jenkyns, Michael (2021) *History of Sussex Lodge No. 5*
- (15) Family information confirmed on Ancestry.com and Find-A-Grave.com
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