

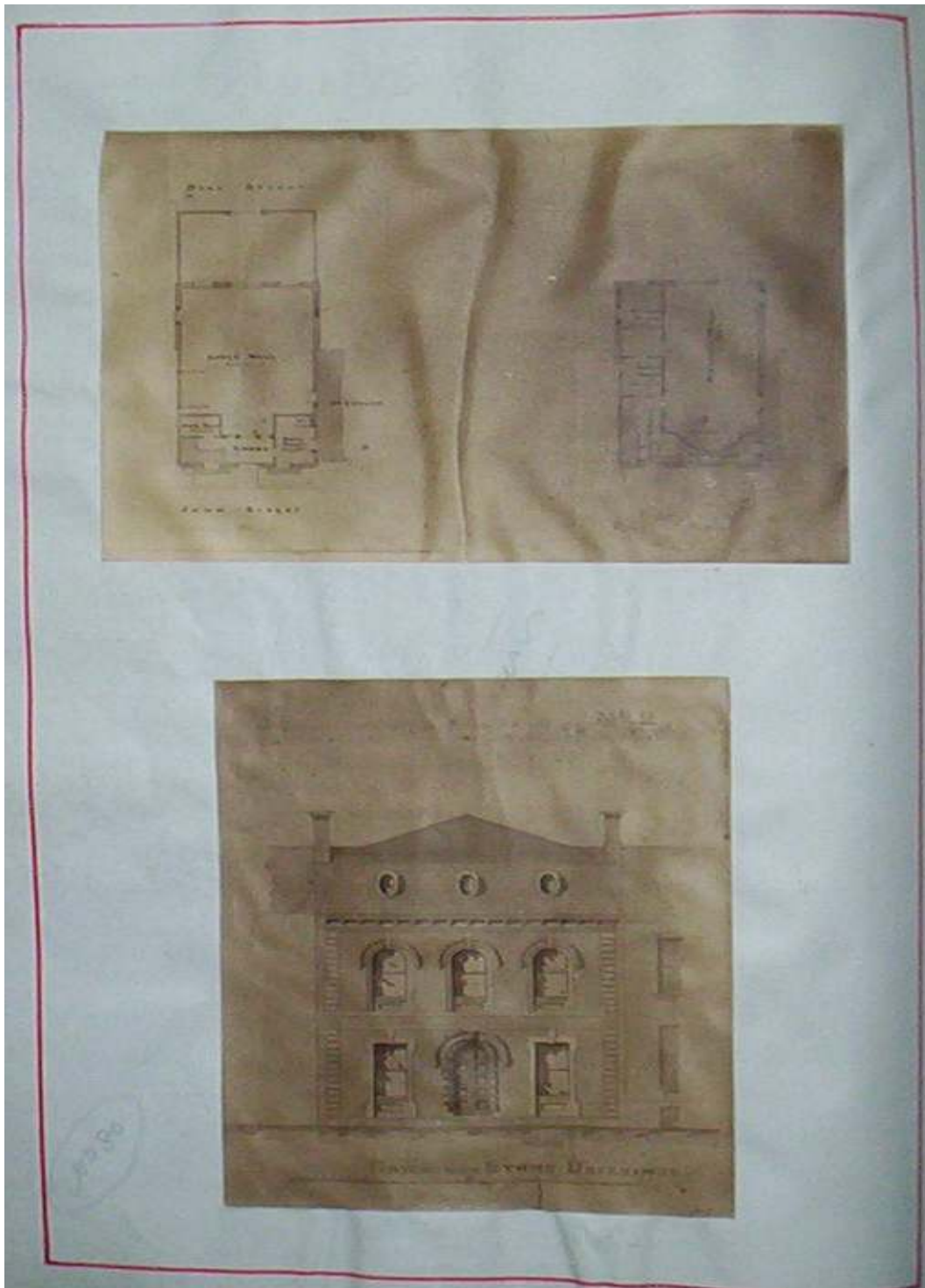
Policy of Lodge regarding new Masonic Hall

The best laid schemes o' Mice and Men gang oft a-gee"

Early in their history it was the natural and laudable desire of the members of this lodge to be able to conduct their meetings and festive boards in their own purpose built premises so that they would not be subjected to the whims of Innkeepers and others.

In 1797 a fund was established and a large sum of money placed in it and then shrewdly invested. Various sums were thereafter invested over a period of many years until in 1861 when it was decided that the time was ripe to fulfil their longstanding ambition.

The pages below will explain the opening quotation!



*Policy of Lodge in aspiring
to Build a MASONIC HALL,
with its Results.*

*"The Best laid Schemes o' mice & men
gang aft a' gley."*

THE LODGE
AND
ITS POLICY.

The Brethren from the earliest days were actuated by the laudable desire to secure a Masonic Hall of their own, and thereby end their having to remove from place to place with manifest disadvantages. Towards this end, a Fund was established, from which, in 1797, the sum of £100 was invested in the Public Roads Funds @ 5%; and in 1804, the sum of £80 @ 5% was lent on Mortgage to the Trustees of a Dissenting Meeting House in Robinson's Lane.

THE BYZTERIAN
CHURCHES
IN
SUNDERLAND.

[This Loan is of considerable interest, as it refers to the Robinson's Lane Presbyterian Mission, afterwards removed to Cullers Street, and there known as "St George's Presbyterian Church", and subsequently to its present site in Victoria Road. Associated with this Mission is the North Bridge Street Presbyterian Church, whose early members were amongst its worshippers; a distressing fireboat accident determining them to secure a meeting house in Monkwearmouth, which ultimately resulted in their magnificent structures facing Monkwearmouth Railway Station.

"On April 20, 1795, about 8 P.M., as the small Ferry Boat was

FERRY BOAT crossing from Sunderland to Monkwearmouth at an ebb tide, and the
DISASTER passage being much obstructed by Shipping, the Boat was set fast by a
IN THE rope, which the Boatmen went on board to loosen, when one of the
RIVER WEAR passengers, by imprudently attempting to push off, unfortunately
upset it. The number in the Boat was about 27, of whom but
4 were saved. Amongst those drowned was a Methodist preacher
named Hodgson, Mr Watson, a shoemaker, and his wife, Miss
of the Low Way, Mr Joseph Tobson, a Sheriff's Officer, and Mr
Brian Burlison. Mercer.]

BANK On Jan 20 1814, £60. was deposited in the Bank of Messrs
FAILURE. Cooke & Co, which resulted in a loss of £5. 17. 6 through its failure
in 1816.

MORTGAGE. In 1858 the sum of £100 @ 5% was lent on Mortgage on a
House in Zion Street.

PROPOSED In 1861, in consequence of increased Membership and consequent
NEW inadequacy of accommodation at the Bridge Hotel, the time
MASONIC HALL was deemed ripe to realize their ambition, and the question
FOR of erecting a Masonic Building for the Lodge and other purposes
LODGE. was considered. On Nov 14th 1861, it was unanimously decided

(1) - "That the MONIES now Invested, and in the Treasurer's
hands, to the amount of £300, be taken for such purpose
and the remainder to be raised by such means as the
Building Committee think most advantageous."

(2) - "That a Building Committee, consisting of the W.M.
Bro Evans, W.M. elec Bro Hanson, and P.M.s
J. Crosby, P. S. Hanson, E. Smith, Saville, Burt
and P. Levy, with Bro Hamilton & Young, be appointed

REPORT
OF
BUILDING
COMMITTEE

After a series of Committee Meetings, the following Report from the Building Committee was duly presented to the Lodge on March 13th 1862, and unanimously approved of:—

“Your Committee report:—

(1) — That they have had Plans & Specifications prepared for the New Masonic Hall, situate in John Street, and have selected those sent in by Bro. G. A. Middlemiss

ARCHITECT

[VIDE PP]
(2) — They have since advertised for, and received Tenders for the completion of the Work, but they find that the cost of the Building will exceed the Amount originally stated by about £150.

Your Committee now, in presenting this Report, ask Authority to enter into Contracts and to proceed with the work.”

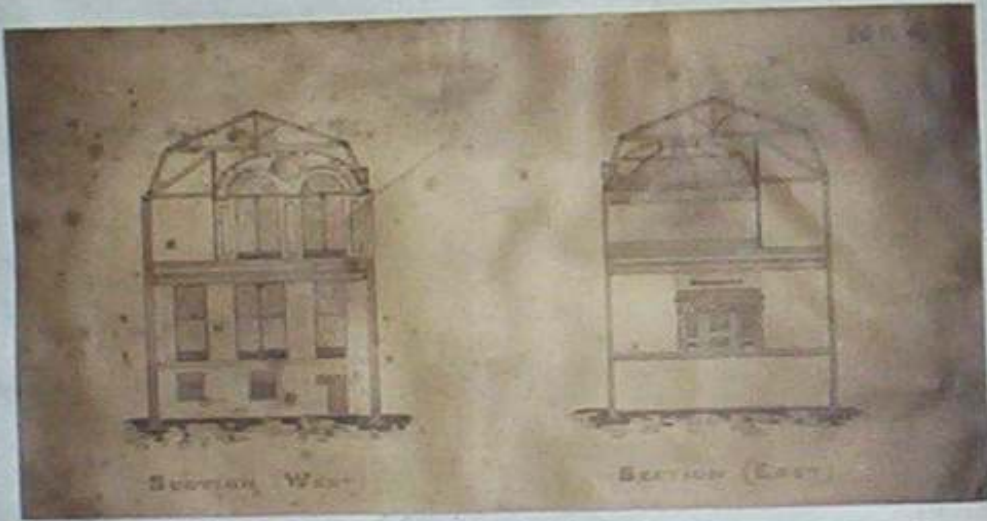
TENDER

The Lodge, having agreed to the above Report, accepted the Tender of Mr. John Hamilton, and appointed Bro. B. Levy, J. Crosby, and W. J. Young as Trustees.

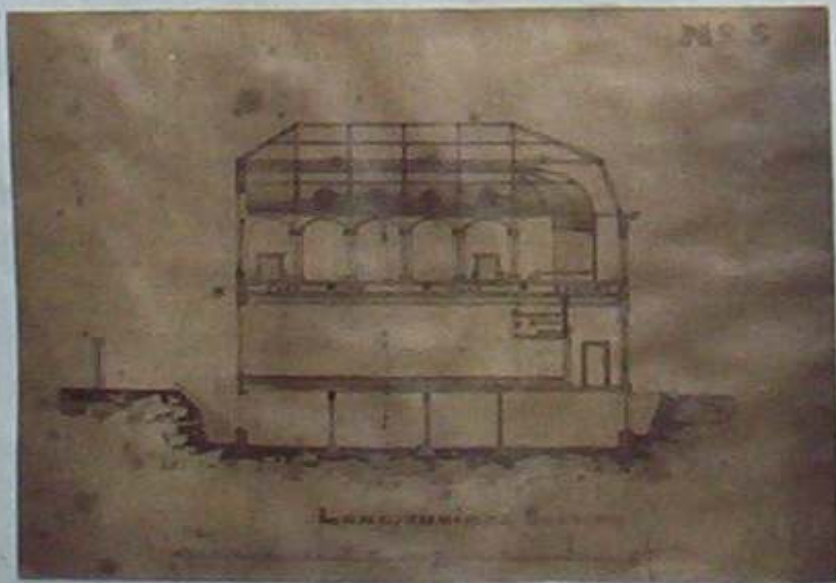
TRUSTEES

[Item in Cash Book:— Feb 2 1862. Paid Bro. Middlemiss his % £18. 0. 0.]

— From this point the Minutes of Lodge are silent on the Building —.



Plan 2



LOW WATER
MARK

From 1862 to 1872, the Finances of the Lodge present a sorry spectacle, rapidly decreasing from a supposed Balance of £286, including £195 lent out on mortgage in 1862, to the sum of 4/8 in 1872.

[VIDE PP.]

REPORT
BY

Concerning this "period of disaster," I simply submit a Report by the Permanent Committee and leave the solution of the abandonment of Building Scheme, to the imagination of my readers.

PERMANENT
COMMITTEE

MARCH: 9: 1869.

"That this Committee reports to the Lodge that a sum of £16.14 appears due on the 7th for last year from the late Treasurer but that sum is not in his hands, but a sum of £26.13.6 is due from the late Secretary, and it is recommended that a full statement of these affairs be laid before the Prov. G. M. for his advice in this most unpleasant business.

This Committee further reports that, on investigation of the Books and Papers handed over by the late Secretary it is discovered that beyond the £26.13.6 very many sums, supposed to be of considerable amount, have been unaccounted for in previous years."

REPORT
BY

MARCH: 25: 1869. After hearing the Report of Deputation appointed to wait upon the P. G. W., it was agreed:-

DEPUTATION

"That the W. W. be requested to write to the late Secretary for the immediate payment of £26.13.6, and to intimate to him that the Permanent Committee, with the sanction

of the R. W. P. G. M., considers it a duty that he owes to the Lodge, and the Craft in general, to tender his Resignation as a member of Palatine Lodge."

A Letter, in reply, authorising the erasure of his name from the Roll of Palatine Lodge, was tacitly agreed to close a most painful episode.

DIT
TINGE.

An important factor in this diminishing process were the Audit Meetings. Evidently the failure to realize their aspirations gave place to mutual extravagance at the expense of Lodge, as we notice the modest expenditure of 10/- annually on Refreshments give place to 5 guineas in 1862, and 9 guineas in 1865-6-7.

From 1869 the sumptuous Dinner gave place to a modest Refreshment ^{A/c} of 8/10, an example acted on to the present date.

"And thus the long cherished hope was doomed to disappointment."