

A HISTORY OF PALATINE LODGE No 97
A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH
of
Bro Richard Spoor



Bro Richard Spoor, Mayor of Sunderland

Richard Spoor was born in Sunderland on 24th September 1794.

He was initiated into this lodge on 11th March 1819 and progressed to fill the office of Worshipful Master in 1830 and 1831.

He was Treasurer from 1832 to 1834 and attained the rank of Provincial Grand Registrar.

For many years he held the following offices:-

Magistrate for the County of Durham
Director of the York, Newcastle and Berwick Railway Company.
Director of the Newcastle and South Shields Railway Company.
Director of the Sunderland Docks, Gas, and Water Companies.
Director of the Newcastle Water Company.
Vice Chairman of the Northumberland Docks and Commissioner of the River Wear.

As senior Freeman of the ancient Borough of Sunderland he was elected the first Alderman of the new Borough which he proclaimed at the Town Hall on 29th December 1835

On the resignation of the first Mayor, Andrew White, on June 1837 Bro R Spoor was chosen as Mayor and in November was re-elected.

On the ascension of Queen Victoria to the Throne he presented the Address from the Borough to Her Majesty.

When the City of London gave a Grand Banquet in honour of the Queen on 9th November 1837 Bro Spoor was one of the selected guests and the only local Mayor present.

He had the honour of sitting at the principal table and having at his side the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress, the Duke of Norfolk, the Duke of Wellington and the Archbishop of Canterbury.

At Her Majesty's Coronation in Westminster Abbey on 28th June 1838 he represented Sunderland.

He was presented at Court to Her Majesty at her first Drawing Room and before leaving London had a Knighthood offered him, which he modestly declined.

Bro Alderman Spoor had the satisfaction of knowing that his labours for the benefit of the Town were greatly appreciated for in his Mayoralty year his portrait in oils was presented.

"Presented by the undersigned gentlemen on the 14th day of January 1837, to Richard Spoor Esq of Whitburn, this portrait by Mr Bewick, as a tribute of their most profound respect and esteem".

(26 signatures appended).
Alderman A White, MP made the presentation.

Bro Spoor married Maria Eliza only daughter and heiress of Richard Graydon Esq of Whitburn House and Warkworth Cottage.

Their eldest son, Nicholas Appleby Spoor was a Captain in the 25th Regiment and fought in the Kaffir war, 1848 – 52 receiving the medal.

He became Deputy Lieutenant of Durham.

In his private life Bro Spoors was fond of hunting, shooting and coursing and was associated with Sir Cuthbert Sharp, Dr Clanny, Dr Mordey, Sir Hedworth Williamson, Bart. And Philip Laing as fellow workers in the public weal – all household names and Palatine brethren.

In the political world he seconded the nomination of George Hudson, the Railway King, and despite the eloquence of Mr John Bright and Mr Richard Cobden in favour of Colonel Thompson the poll result was:-

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| Hudson | 626 |
| Thompson | 498 |

It was on this occasion that Mr Hudson and Alderman Spoor accomplished the memorable railway exploit of having the first special Newspaper Train on record. This train was sent to London after the result was declared and copies of the Times were in Sunderland by 11 o'clock the next morning.

The Party feeling of Whig and Tory during the early history of the Borough is shown in the following incident known as: -

The Cotton-Ball Duel
(See "A Skittish Poem" in Stories page 301)

Bro Richard Spoor Died in Newcastle on 2nd December 1851 aged 57 years
