

A HISTORY OF PALATINE LODGE, No 97
BIOGRAPHY
Of
Bro Benjamin Levy



Alderman Benjamin Levy

The inscription on the Jewel at the bottom of the picture reads: -

*Presented to Bro Benjamin Levy, P M
On his retirement from office
As Worshipful Master on 9th December 1858
By the Brethren of Palatine Lodge No 114
Sunderland
As a mark of esteem and fraternal regard
For his many valuable services to the Lodge
And Craft in general.*

Bro Benjamin Levy, son of Moses Levy a well-known ship owner of London' was born in 1827. On attaining his majority he commenced business as a Clothier and Draper in Holborn. He moved to Sunderland in 1850 and opened a shop at the foot of George Street where he remained for above 30 years.

He removed to the corner of Fawcett Street and later to 214 High Street West. So greatly did he prosper that he opened branch shops at Shields, Stockton, Middlesbrough, West Hartlepool and Barrow.

On 27th March 1851 he was Initiated in Palatine Lodge and in 1857 he was elected and Installed its Worshipful Master.

On 10th June 1858 he was deputed to represent the lodge at the ceremony of laying the foundation Stone of the Scottish Metropolitan Lodge in Edinburgh.

He was appointed PSGD in 185-, PGDC in 1862 and PGJW in 1867

In the Royal Arch Chapter he obtained the Provincial rank of J in 1866 and H in 1873 and also 1884.

At the time of his death he was senior PM of his lodge and of Chapter of Strict Benevolence. He was also an honorary member of Chapter No 949.

Bro Levy was a conspicuous worker throughout the Province and his services at the consecration of Lodges, Chapters and Installations were in great demand.

As a member of the Royal Arch he had the reputation of working it more thoroughly than anyone, with the possible exception of Bro E D Davis, PM.

It could be said that he was the founder of Mark Masonry in Sunderland and at the consecration on 9th January 1871 of the first Mark Lodge on – Union Mark Lodge No 124 he entertained Earl Percy, Sir John Conroy and Canon Trisham etc.

In addition to his business and masonic duties he found time to devote to public affairs and in 1861 he was elected to the Town Council.

In 1869 he was elected as an Alderman of Sunderland Ward and served in that capacity until his death.

He was Chairman of the Bridge and Ferries Committee and is credited with being one of the originators of the Steam Ferries Service between Bodlewell Lane and Monkwearmouth, which proved such a boon to the townspeople.

He was also a member of the Watch, Town Hall and Market and Baths Committees.

Although he was never Mayor he was approached on several occasions with that object in mind.

He died on 4th April 1894.