

St. Catharines, Ontario

The

# Brock Broadcaster



***A newsletter for the Brethren of Brock Daylight Lodge No. 745, Niagara "A" District, All Members of the Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario and Beyond.***

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MARCH 2021

## **"THE NEXT WORD PLEASE!"**

If you consider the situation of prompting the anxious or apprehensive person (performer) who is probably performing for the first time, this could be a bit of an experience for the *prompter*. As the performer is doing his work, an unexpected hesitation followed by a panic appearance and a frozen stance can be troublesome, as the performer's mind seems to be in a complete blank stage for some seconds, but he usually struggles out of it and humbly progresses on. Occasionally, this occurrence happens when the *prompter* least expects it; consequently, many members will witness the *prompter* frantically looking in his book, trying to locate the appropriate words or phrase to assist the struggling performer. Naturally, in these situations one can hear a high level of

whispering, as many brothers are anxious to help the performer.

Many confident performers with considerable practice in recital work, may experience an unexplained stoppage in their performance and a word or phrase from the *prompter* is more often than not accepted with grace. And there are others within this group who simply on their own violation insert words, phrases or sentences when the need arises thus maintaining the rhythm and flow of the recital. Unfortunately, there is that stubborn or contrary performer, who when mentally searching for that word, becomes vexed and occasionally stammers and might even be incoherent when the *prompter* tries to assist him.

An extra-ordinary recital was recently witnessed at a Second-Degree ceremony. The person (performer) giving the Charge in this Degree was reciting it with grammatical precision accompanied with a polished voice. This recital, which was captivating the attendees, caught everyone off guard when about midway through, he suddenly stopped and turned slightly towards the *prompter*, and said "the next word please". When the word was announced by the *prompter*, he continued to recite with the same precision and command through to the end of the Second Degree's Charge. Later in the evening, the idea that this break was planned became a haunting theme. When one reviews the occurrence, the request simply shifted everyone's attention to the *prompter*. This shift may have purposely allowed the performer for a few seconds to do whatever he wished to do. Succinctly, success was the outcome for this artifice.

These are just a sampling of the trials witnessed by a *prompter*. However, the ideal scenario would be to have all the performers do their recitals with a resonant voice that is commanded with style and *grace-without the assistance of a prompter*. Unfortunately, having witnessed all sorts of intriguing exchanges between performers and *prompters*, one might

be convinced that the *prompter* is the keystone for the four ritual ceremonies (the three degrees and the Installation and Investiture).

**CONSIDERATIONS:** Changing the traditional concepts of the *prompter* toward the idea of him being the keystone for the ceremonies would no doubt pose problems but could be interesting. Maybe some of the following comments might assist in altering a portion of the present tradition.

*Rehearsal:* The custom has been to hold rehearsals that dealt primarily with the performers and are held as frequently as necessary. The suggestion here would be to have the performers practice with the *prompter* in simulating sudden stoppages and clearly stating to the *prompter* "the next word please". The purpose is to eliminate doubts and create a relaxed style, during these ceremonies, when dealing with the *prompter*.

*Setting Plan:* A performer's setting-plan should be developed. If set up properly the staging continuity would be effective as the performers would be able to shorten the time between recitals. This approach would reduce time loss and enhance rhythm or flow of the ceremony.

*Extra Prompters:* Another consideration for reducing the *prompter* voice projection, would be the appointment of a *second prompter* who would be seated at the opposite end of the Lodge room and he could easily handle any prompting that may be needed at that portion of the Lodge room.

*Candidate Influencing:* What the candidate hears and observes during the ceremony is important. The words will have a small impact; however, the voice and voice quality will have a pronounced impression; meanwhile, the performer's physiology (posture, breathing patterns, facial expressions, hand and foot motion, and eye contact) stays with the candidate for a long time. Listening to a smooth

and polite exchange between the performer and the *prompter* can have a positive or marginal outcome, whereas an awkward exchange may raise doubts about future participation. (With the average age increasing within Masonry, there are many Masons who feel that they cannot do the recital work as well as they could some years ago. Thus, they are reluctant to participate in these ceremonies. Many circumstances are attributed to this reluctance; often it is declining health such as, poor hearing or poor memory.)

*Mobile Prompters:* As for that performer who has hearing difficulties the possible solution would be to have a *second prompter* located at the opposite end of the Lodge room and when the performer with hearing difficulty is about to start his recital then the *prompter* could easily move to a position immediately behind the candidate and be ready to assist the performer if needed.

*The Challenge:* The reported successes of dementia in California should be of interest to Masonry, as this success was attributed to participation in memory work classes. Participating seems to delay the disease's development. Maybe! Masonic ceremonial work can present similar effects. If so, all senior members should be encouraged to take part in their Lodge's ceremonies.

*Senior Ceremonial Team (SCT):* The idea of creating a Senior Ceremonial Team within the Lodge warrants consideration. As the average age in Masonry is creeping upwards, it is recognized that many of the senior members in the Lodge are stepping back from ceremonial work because they fear that their memory is not as good as it used to be. This questionable fear can be easily dispelled if the verbal interplay between the performer and the *prompter* was encouraged. This interplay could be developed further with a senior group because some unusual techniques would have to be produced in order to support some of the handicapped members. The basic criteria for a senior group

could be that they must be no younger than seventy years and are willing to co-operate with the *prompter(s)*.

SUMMARY: Finally, as *prompters* mean different tasks to different people, they are subject to the ravages of time in the form of slow erosions due possibly to the poor interest and limited guidance. An aimless drift serves neither the performer nor the *prompter*. The intention of this article is to stimulate the brethren to consider the possible shift from the remain-intact-prompting-approach towards examining and trying a new prompting-approach. *The Lodge might create a Prompter's team, composed of at least two prompters, preferably four.* Furthermore, there is no prompting documentation that might suggest the 'right way'. Presently, the appointment is nebulous, and the style is anticipating the situation and responding accordingly. This style determines whether the interaction between the *prompter* and the performer is effective or ineffective. Naturally, the object within any Lodge should be a cooperative and sound understanding of the many *Performer-Prompter* situations.

*Reflections Newsletter – Volume 19, Issue 1*

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*The lectures you deliver  
May be wise and true,  
But I would rather get my lesson  
By observing what you do.*

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## **A MUSKOKA LEGEND... A PROVINCIAL BUREAUCRAT... AND A GRAND MASTER**

**\*\*\*Many thanks to Bro. Ken C Veitch and RW Bro. Iain Wates for providing an extensive amount of documentation and photos for this article.\*\*\***

One of the earliest pioneer settlers in the Upper Canada community of North Falls, (later to become Bracebridge, Ontario), in 1860 was a man by the name of Alexander Bailey. He decided to settle in "North Falls" because he possessed an entrepreneurial and adventuresome spirit and recognized the great economic opportunity available in the numerous waterfalls and huge stand of trees in Bracebridge and Muskoka. He developed a number of enterprises including a hotel, sawmill, grist mill, and of special note for the purpose of this article, a general store, no doubt one that provided only the considerably basic of necessities to meet the needs of the settlers of the day.

With his numerous operations he obviously needed staff and the person he chose to be assistant in his general store was a lad by the name of Aubrey White. He had no idea that he was starting the young man on an incredibly successful career in business and public service.

Aubrey White was born in Ireland on March 19, 1845 and at the young age of 17 immigrated to Canada. Like Bailey, he must have had an incredibly determined and adventuresome spirit to take on the challenge of a new country where he knew he would be facing an uncertain future containing many difficult and unknown obstacles. He arrived in "North Falls" in 1862. Why he chose "North Falls" is not known; perhaps he sensed the great opportunities the north offered in its various attributes-dense forests, rivers, waterfalls and

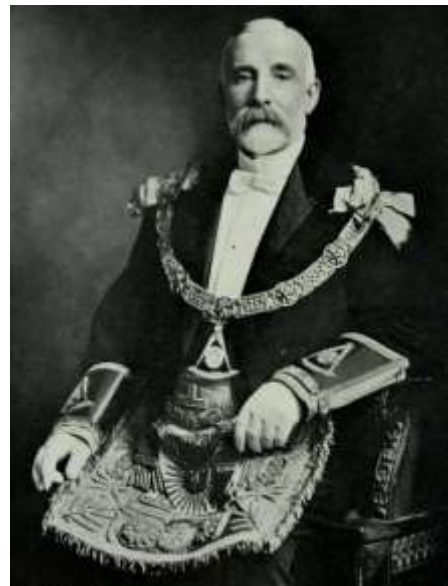
wildlife that was the inspiration for many of the pioneers who came to settle in Muskoka.

White was not destined to stay awfully long in the position of “assistant” in Bailey’s general store. His character and ability were obvious, and he was spotted by AP Cockburn, who was in the process of creating a fleet of large steamships for his new venture, the Muskoka Navigation Company, which for many years, would provide transportation services for passengers, freight and pleasure cruises on Lake Muskoka, Rosseau and Joseph. Aubrey White was one of Cockburn’s first employees in 1866 and rose quickly to the position of Captain, piloting the huge vessels on their voyages in the unchartered waters of these large Muskoka waterways. He would have been 21 years old.

From there he joined the AP Dodge Company of New York, USA when they commenced operations in Muskoka harvesting the huge stands of white pine for distribution to world markets. It was in 1878 however, that he assumed a position that would lead him into a long, interesting and influential lifelong career. He succeeded George Lount as Crown Land Agent for Muskoka. It was a perfect fit for White. He knew the water and wilderness of Muskoka well; the people and the problems new settlers would face as they struggled to carve a homestead out of dense bush on their Free Grant Land Act properties. He received applications for land acquisition, directed each settler to the location of their property and approved final patents for deeds once the settlers proved they had fulfilled the conditions set out in the purchase agreement under the Act. During these years, long before the introduction of the federal income tax system, it was a municipal responsibility to levy a tax on their residents based on their income. In the 1879 assessment role he was shown to have an enormous salary of \$200.00 per year.

Aside from his work, he was very socially active during his years in Bracebridge. He served as an officer for the Mechanics Institute (the

predecessor of the public library system), Superintendent of Algonquin Park, Warden of St. Thomas Church, assisted in the production of the important promotional and historical book “*Guide-Book and Atlas of Muskoka and Parry Sound Districts 1879*”, a member of the Agricultural Society and in 1880 became a member of the Masonic Lodge where, several years later, was elected to the lofty position of Grand Master for all of Ontario. Robert J Boyer in his book “*A Good Town Grew Here*”, quotes WE Hamilton as noting that Aubrey White was “gifted with a phenomenal memory and could tell the names of all the sitting members of all the parliaments, great and small, of Canada, their antecedents and their constituencies, together with the dates of the various by-elections since Confederation”.



GLCPOO PHOTO

He married Emily Agnes Bridgland, and after her death in 1880 married her sister Mary Bridgland, daughters of a prominent Bracebridge family. Aubrey Street in Bracebridge is named in his honor.

Aubrey White was Crown Land Agent for Muskoka until 1882. His success in that position must have impressed his superiors because he was asked to transfer to a more prominent assignment in Queens Park. It was unclear what

his duties were immediately following the move but clearly, they were of significant importance because within five years he was appointed Assistant Commissioner of Crown Lands and Deputy Minister of Lands, Forests and Mines; a position he held until 1915.

White is distinguished by a number of achievements during his term as Deputy Minister in that Ministry. His succinct definition of the jurisdiction of authority over road allowances along navigable waters, in a letter dated October 15, 1896 to Monck Township in Muskoka, is a good example of his clear view on such matters when he said "...although the freehold of all roads is in Her Majesty, yet the jurisdiction is in the Municipal Council and it is conceived that the Municipality has the same powers as to preventing trespasses upon the particular road reservations...". Another example of his authority and respect is shown when he dealt with the serious conflict between the Navigation Company and the logging industry regarding the use of the Muskoka River for moving logs cut far upstream down to the mills concentrated in other areas along the shore of Muskoka Lake.

Since the beginning the Muskoka River has served as a transportation route, especially important in pioneer days for getting people upstream to work in the logging camps and for floating the resulting cut logs down to the mills. To say the river was taken for granted would be an understatement. As Muskoka developed and the Muskoka Navigation Company added more and more steamships to Muskoka Lake and the Muskoka River upstream to the growing village of Bracebridge, conflicts ensued. The logging companies were of the determined opinion that they had absolute domination over the use of the river. Not so, said Mr. Cockburn; he knew 'the times they are a changin' long before the popular song made that prophecy, no doubt because he saw how the logging companies were rapidly decimating the great Muskoka forests.

The river was increasingly used by his large boats and with logs clogging the route,

colliding with and even smashing holes in the hulls of his expensive crafts, the river was in fact prevented from being a navigable waterway. In 1913 the local MPP, former Mayor and Bracebridge resident Sam Armstrong, met with HJ Foy, Attorney General of Ontario to discuss the matter of logs blocking the river for navigation and Deputy Minister White was dispatched to resolve the problem.

Into this lengthy dispute waded Aubrey White. He knew the river, he knew the lakes, he knew the log run, he knew the people and he knew the boats; he had done it all. He met with representatives of the logging industry, the Bracebridge Council and Board of Trade and, in spite of industry representatives declaring it impossible, ruled that all logs in the river had to be tied together and towed downstream from Bracebridge to the mills safely. To accommodate those involved, the logging companies were given until the end of July that year to remove their logs in this manner and leave that part of the river clear thereafter.

Aubrey White's greatest achievement though came from another direction. His experience in Bracebridge had taught him the importance of the massive stands of forest that blanketed Ontario and the numerous economic opportunities it provided. But they were of no value if a wildfire swept through them and left in its wake blackened stubs and decimated landscape. Forest fires were the enemy in the rapidly developing Province. Aubrey White set about developing a fire fighting plan for Crown forests for all of Ontario where he recommended appointing fire rangers and building fire towers. In 1885 the Hon. TB Pardee approved his plan, and thirty-seven fire rangers were placed on duty. White's advantage in setting up the system was that he was a skilled navigator, no doubt learned scaling the wilderness of Muskoka and driving big steamboats on Muskoka Lake, so he was at ease venturing into unsurveyed and unknown territory in association with his work.

Aubrey White was Deputy Minister until his death on July 14, 1915. He never severed his ties with Muskoka, and it was at his cottage on Chief Island on Lake Muskoka, after enjoying a day of rowing, swimming and fishing that he passed away. He is buried in the St. Thomas Cemetery in Bracebridge.

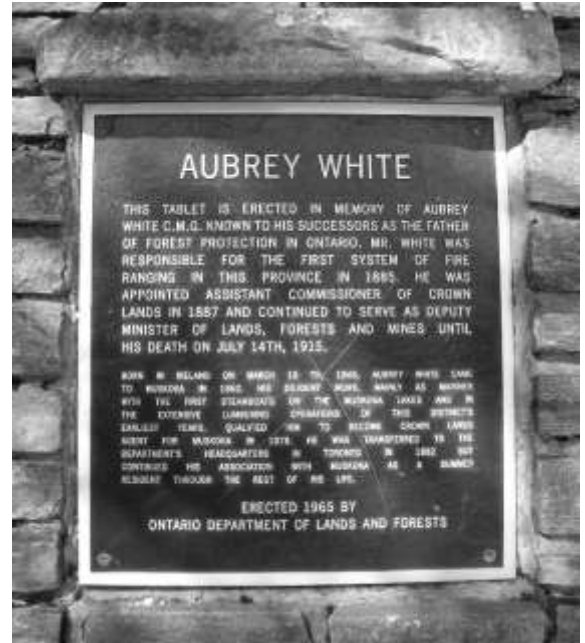


*Ken Veitch photo*

MW Bro. Aubrey White was initiated into Masonry at Muskoka Lodge No. 360, GRC on August 22, 1880. After his removal to Toronto, he affiliated with King Solomon's Lodge No. 22, GRC and served as WM in 1895. He was elected DDGM of Toronto District in 1896, Deputy Grand Master in 1909 and Grand Master in 1912. He was also a member of the Royal Arch Masons, Scottish Rite Masons, Royal Order of Scotland and Rameses Shrine Temple.

On the fiftieth anniversary of his death, the Ontario Ministry erected a cairn in his honor at High Falls Park in Bracebridge. Over one hundred people from the Provincial Government and across Muskoka attended the unveiling ceremony on July 14, 1965. Deputy Minister of Lands and Forest, Frank A MacDougall, spoke at the ceremony, noting that since Confederation, Ontario has had seventeen Prime Ministers and forty-two Minister's of Lands and Forest but only six Deputy Ministers; citing that Aubrey White

served the longest in that office and was one of the most distinguished.



He mentioned in particular his abilities as an aviator which enabled him to travel extensively over the Province to carry out his important work. Incredibly, after more than one hundred years, the Ontario Provincial Ministry of Natural Resources still consider Aubrey White as the founder of their forest fire fighting system.



*Ken Veitch photo*

[www.realmuskoka.com/aubrey-white/](http://www.realmuskoka.com/aubrey-white/)  
 Reflections Newsletter-Volume 25, issue 3  
[www.biographi.ca/en/bio/white-aubrey](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/white-aubrey)

On the evenings of February 6<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>, the Grand Lodge Education Committee conducted virtual presentations and welcomed MW Bro. Donald H Mumby, PGM, and Custodian of the Work as their guest speaker.



EFD photo

MW Bro. Mumby spoke to over three hundred and forty brethren from across the jurisdiction regarding the history and duties of this office and the format dealing with the selection process of the Custodian. Thanks again to those who attended.

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*RITUAL...*

*EDUCATION...*

*MENTORING*

*Before we proceed with plans for the future...*

*We must first understand, learn and appreciate events from the past.*

## “OH CANADA”

In this Grand Jurisdiction, Masonic events typically conclude with the singing of our National Anthem, “O Canada”. Brethren are reminded that the proper etiquette to follow while this is taking place is to stand motionless on the floor of the Lodge, facing the Canadian flag. If you choose not to participate in the singing, do not talk or interact with others.

As good citizens of the world, Freemasons should remember all National flags and National Anthems are important symbols deserving of our respect.

Just as importantly, whatever your personal feelings about such a gesture may be, if you do not stand quietly while a National Anthem is being sung, you are disrespecting those who do believe in showing proper etiquette.

The Canadian flag is the ultimate symbol of the values of peace, democracy, freedom and justice that define and unite us as Canadians.



Our flag symbolizes everything the proud history and traditions of this nation, and, in particular, the men and women who fought and died for this country to preserve the freedom we all enjoy. Show your pride to be a Canadian and thereby set an example for others to emulate.

*P and E Essentials – Issue 38, May 2016*

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Hope you enjoyed the read. And by all means, please share. Until next time, take care and stay safe.

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