



MW Brother Martin Luther Grimmert

Grand Master 1920 - 1921

Martin Luther Grimmert was born in Bladon near Woodstock, Oxfordshire, England on May 22, 1862. The family came to America in 1871 and were in the United States for some years when they moved to Ontario and settled.

On December 26, 1898 Bro. M. L. Grimmert, now City Solicitor of Sandon, was installed as the first Senior Warden of Alta Lodge, No. 29. Although Alta Lodge is later referred to as his mother lodge, there are no available records of his initiation.

W Bro. Martin L. Grimmert later moved to Nicola to practice as a barrister. Described as a zealous freemason, on August 11, 1908 he was installed as the first Worshipful Master of Nicola Lodge No. 53.

When coal discoveries caused the business interest of the district to centre at Merritt, the lodge went with its members. In 1911 Grimmert refused further re-election as Worshipful Master. While interested in his lodge, and a regular attendant, he does not seem to have attended Grand Lodge while a member of Alta Lodge nor of Nicola Lodge until 1914, when he was immediately marked out by the members for advancement. In 1915 he was appointed DDGM for District 3 and his report to Grand Lodge shows how well he carried out his duties in that office.

RW Bro. Grimmert later assisted in writing a detailed account of Nicola lodge in 1916. The Grand Historian, RW Bro. William Burns cut it down to less than half a page for his report in the 1917 *Annual Proceedings* but according to the compiler of our centenary history, RW Bro. John T. Marshall: "Luckily, he kept the original document in full in his files." The current location of those files, if extant, is unknown.

In 1916 and 1917 he was on the Committee of Petitions and Grievances and in 1918 he was elected Senior Grand Warden, to replace W. Bro. C. A. Welsh of King Solomon Lodge No. 17 at New Westminster who had been elected Junior Grand Warden in the preceding year, but

whose business affairs would not permit him to accept further election. In 1919 Grimmitt was elected Deputy Grand Master, and in 1920 Grand Master. As such he presided at the Emergent Communication held on June 22, 1921 at Victoria to celebrate the semi-centennial of the founding of the Grand Lodge of British Columbia and the fiftieth Annual Communication of that organization on June 23rd of that year.

In his address to Grand Lodge he pointed out that he had realized that it would be impossible for him to visit all of the constituent lodges, and as many of the lodges in the interior of the province had not had the pleasure of meeting and hearing other Grand Masters, owing to the condition of things in wartime, he determined to devote the time at his disposal to visiting them. He made one exception to this, the installation of the officers of Victoria-Columbia Lodge No. 1, which ceremony by almost universal custom is performed by the Grand Master in office at the time. He had arranged five trips; the first, taking in the lodges at Quesnel, Barkerville and Prince George, the second, those at Sandon, New Denver, Kaslo and Nelson; the third at Creston, Cranbrook, Fernie and Arrowhead, the fourth at Greenwood, Grand Forks, Rossland and Trail; and the fifth at Salmon Arm, Enderby, Kelowna, Armstrong, Vernon and Kamloops. He also visited his own lodge, Nicola No. 53, Orion Lodge No. 51 at Penticton, Summerland Lodge No. 56 and Hedley Lodge No. 43.

He urged the good results of visits to outlying lodges and the great extent of the jurisdiction, and impressed on the brethren the expense incurred by the Grand Master in doing so, and suggested that some grant be made to cover same, as is done in other Canadian jurisdictions. He also suggested that an allowance should be made to cover the expenses of at least one delegate from each lodge. These suggestions were not approved by the Committee on his address, but on the report coming before Grand Lodge an honorarium of \$500 was voted the Grand Master.

He also pointed out that by reason of the mountainous nature of the province, that the distance between lodges should not be measured as the crow flies, but by the actual means of communication. The committee declined to make any change in the matter of jurisdiction at that time, as the aeroplane might very soon become a common means of transportation.

He also noticed and remarked upon the fact that in visiting a small lodge, that all the officers were in evening dress, and on enquiry he was advised that it was a settled practice of the lodge that the officers should be so clothed. He did not suggest that all lodges should have the same rule, but he did think that most of the brethren are too lax in their appearance at lodge. He says:

A freemason should have the same respect for his lodge as the devout churchman has for his church, and should in his dress contribute as much as he can, to the dignity and grace of the lodge meeting.

He also spoke of the necessity of admitting to our ranks only those who are moral and upright, and who will reflect credit on the Order; and points out that Freemasonry is not designed to make men good, that is the function of the Church, we only hope to make good men better.

He Passed to the Grand Lodge Above on December 5, 1940, having served his lodge for the previous thirteen years as Chaplain.