Rt. Wor. Bro. JOHN THOMAS JENNINGS MHR

John T. Jennings was born on 19 December 1878 in Melbourne. His father, also John Jennings, came from Melbourne and his mother was of London birth. He was educated at Brunswick Public School. He entered the dental trade at seventeen years of age with the firm Mayer, Meltzer & Jackson, Surgical and Dental Suppliers, of Lonsdale Street Melbourne in 1896.

At the age of 20 years John Jennings enlisted in the 1st Victorian Contingent of Victorian Rifles, his regimental No being 15. He served in all the engagements in which his unit was involved during the Boer War between 1899 and 1901. On his return to Australia John Jennings joined the NSW Lancers and served a total of eight years' military service.

He was a prominent businessman and in 1924 founded the dental supply company, John T. Jennings Pty, Ltd. and remained managing director until his retirement in 1965. He married Ruth Lewis of Sydney on 24 August 1904 and they had two sons, Jack and Victor. John and Ruth celebrated their diamond wedding anniversary in 1964. Jennings attained a very high status in the dental trades of Australia with contacts throughout the world. He holds the record as being recognised as the first traveller in dental trade supplies in the world. He worked for over seventy years in the dental trade and served as both State and Federal President of the Dental Trade Association for over twenty-five years.

John T. Jennings was an alderman on Randwick Municipal Council for eleven years, the last two, 1929 & 1930 as Mayor. During these years he also gave great service to many community organisations including Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, Chairman of the Eastern District Ambulance and a Director of the Eastern Suburbs Hospital. He was a very active member of St. Martin's Anglican Church, Kensington, being Rector's Warden and a member of the Sydney Anglican Synod.

In 1931 John Jennings was elected as United Australia Party member of the Federal Electorate of Watson which he held until retiring in 1940. This is the only period that this seat has not been held by the Australian Labor Party. Whilst Member for Watson in 1937 he represented Australia at the Empire Parliamentary Conference in 1937.

John Thomas Jennings was initiated on 39th September 1909 in Lodge Prince Alfred No 94, passed on 28th November 1909 and raised on 25th April 1911. He called off from that lodge on 25 April 1911, Foundation Member of Lodge Kensington No. 270 on 21 February 1911, Worshipful Master 1918-19 , Foundation Immediate Past Master Lodge Port Jackson, No. 387 in 1921, Foundation Worshipful Master Lodge Kensington Lewis, No. 426 in 1922, this became Lodge John T. Jennings in 1931. He served as DGIW for the term 1924-1926. He affiliated with Lodge Benevolence, No. 775 on 15 September 1949 and with Lodge Honour and Friendship, No. 858 on 30 April 1953. The rank of PJGW was conferred on 13 June 1951 and that of PAGM on 13 September 1967.

John Thomas Jennings died on 20 December 1968, one day after his 90th birthday.
He was posthumously awarded the Medal of the British Empire for services to ex-servicemen
having been President of Eastern Suburbs RSL and President of the South War Veteran's
Association for the four years before his death.

Ref: Who's Who in Australia.
    NSW Freemason. 1969.
    UGL of NSW & ACT Records.
    Information from members of Lodge Kensington.

John Jennings at the age of 20, in his
uniform of the 1st Victorian Mounted
Rifles, Regimental No. 15, ready to leave
for the Boer War in 1899.

R.W. Bro. John T. Jennings, as Past
Asst. Grand Master, U.G.L. of N.S.W.
June, 1967, at the age of 89.