

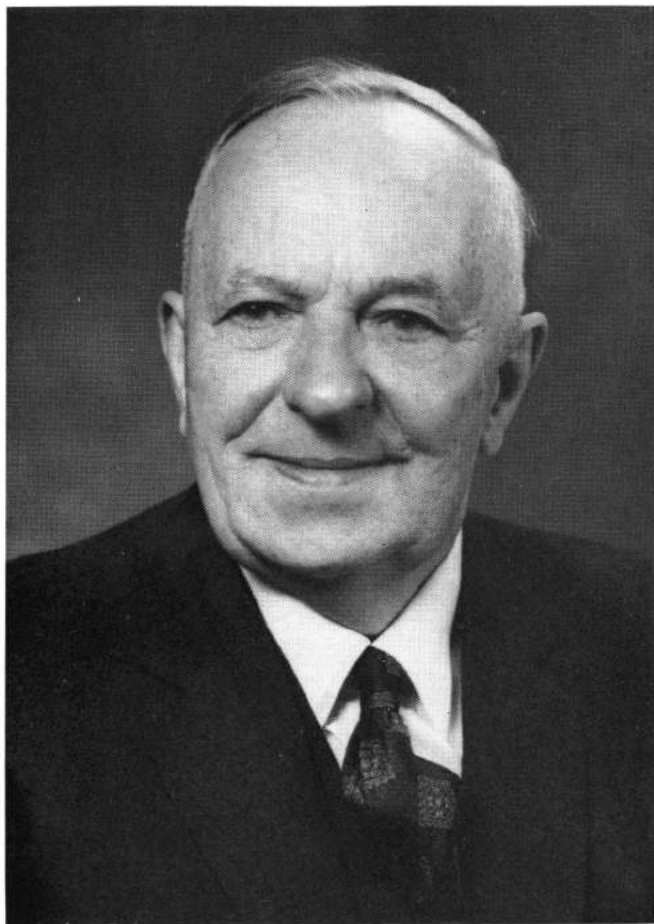
Leicester

The Lodge of Research

No. 2429

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W.BRO. CLAUDE E. NEALE
*P.P.J.G.W., P.P.G.S.N. (R.A.)
Leicestershire and Rutland
P.M. 6803.
Master*

EDITORIAL

In his inaugural address the Worshipful Master gave a thoughtful analysis of ideas about the Landmarks of Freemasonry; and the word 'landmark' recurred during the session. W.Bro. T. O. Haunch summed up the matter in the conclusion to his Prestonian Lecture in the words, ". . . at last we see that the real '*Body of Masonry*' is '*the ancient Landmarks of the Order*'—that corpus of the lore and custom of the Fraternity undefined and undefinable . . ." There is no doubt that the strength of the Craft lies in the fact that every thoughtful Brother comes to understand instinctively what Freemasonry stands for, and what is his own responsibility to it.

During a recent period of convalescence, W.Bro. Dr. G. Malcolm Dyson occupied his active brain in completing a study of Freemasonry in France, and in particular "La Loge des Neuf Soeurs", and it was good to hear him deliver his erudite Paper on this subject. We hope to follow this next year by printing a Paper by W.Bro. P. J. Dawson (Jersey) on the English 'Lodge of the Nine Muses'.

It was indeed a pleasure for the Lodge to welcome W.Bro. T. O. Haunch now the Grand Lodge Librarian, who, when he lived in Nottingham, was a regular visitor to the Lodge and a valued contributor to its work. He read a shortened version of his Prestonian Lecture, but we are pleased to print the whole lecture in this volume. In passing, we cannot refrain from expressing our appreciation of Brother Haunch's lucidity of composition and clarity of delivery, which are a pattern for all lecturers, whatever their subjects.

Our thanks are again given to our consistent and highly valued contributor, W.Bro. L. M. Sherwood (N.S.W.). Our references in Transactions to Royal Arch Masonry have been infrequent; but it is happily becoming more and more realised that the Supreme Order is an intrinsic part of '*pure Antient Masonry*'; and we welcome Brother Sherwood's timely article on its emergence and development.

We have no hesitation in publishing the addresses of the Provincial Grand Master and the Orations of the Provincial Grand Chaplain at the consecration of new Lodges in the Province, because we believe that they contain wise comment on the nature and principles of the Order which may be of interest to Freemasons generally.

Now, on a personal note, I welcome the acceptance of the duties of Assistant Editor by W.Bro. Henry Starmer, B.Sc., P.P.D.G.Swd.B., P.P.G.Sojr. (Leicestershire and Rutland). He is a keen student of Freemasonry; and the Lodge may now be assured of continuity in the editorial department.

July, 1973

O.F.

NOTE ON TRANSACTIONS

Each year we try to include in Transactions, in addition to the three addresses at the regular meetings, articles on topics of general masonic interest; and from time to time we have been able to add under the title of Miscellanea a section dealing with answers to questions submitted by the Brethren, short news items, and so on.

It will be appreciated that the continuation of this policy depends on the good will and enthusiasm of the members of the Lodge and of the Correspondence Circle, and we appeal for the co-operation of the Brethren in helping us to create a pool of material for future consideration.

While we cannot promise to publish every contribution, we have no doubt that any effort in this direction must add to a Brother's delight in engaging in lines of masonic research for which our Lodge was established, and possibly provide both pleasure and instruction for his fellow-members.

NOTE

The reproduction in whole or in part, of any of the items in this issue is strictly forbidden, unless written permission has been received from the Editor.

The Lodge of Research, No. 2429

1972-73

Worshipful Master

W.BRO. CLAUDE E. NEALE

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W.BRO. RAYMOND G. SMITH	<i>Junior Warden</i>
W.BRO. Revd. CANON JOHN R. H. PROPHET, <i>P.A.G.Ch.</i>	<i>Chaplain</i>
W.BRO. ERNEST V. HAZELL	<i>Treasurer</i>
W.BRO. CECIL M. R. SMITH, <i>P.A.G.D.C.</i>	<i>Secretary</i>
W.BRO. VERNON G. BEST	<i>Dir. of Cers.</i>
W.BRO. E. MILFORD WARD	<i>Senior Deacon</i>
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W.BRO. HUGH W. PECK	<i>Asst. Dir. of Cers.</i>
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W.BRO. BRUCE G. S. DONALD	<i>Steward</i>
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Historical Note

The Lodge of Research, No. 2429, was consecrated on 26th October, 1892; W.Bro. J. T. Thorp, a masonic historian of outstanding note, being installed as the first Master.

The Lodge seeks to exchange opinions with Freemasons throughout the world, and to attract and interest Brethren by means of Papers on the historical and symbolic aspects of Masonry.

(Revised By-Laws, 1962)

Membership

The membership of the Lodge is limited in number. The members will, *as a rule*, be elected from among the members of the Correspondence Circle.

Papers

The writers of Papers are alone responsible for the opinions expressed therein.

CORRESPONDENCE CIRCLE

The members of the Correspondence Circle are entitled

to have posted to them, as issued, the Summonses convoking the meetings of the Lodge,

to be supplied, gratis, with the Annual Transactions of the Lodge,

to attend Meetings of the Lodge,

to take part in discussions relating to any Papers which may be read, or subjects of general masonic interest which may be introduced,

to read Papers and introduce discussions on masonic subjects (by arrangement)

They are not entitled to vote, hold office, or take part in the management of the Lodge.

A Candidate for Membership of the Correspondence Circle is subject to election by the Members of the Lodge by a show of hands.

The names of Candidates will be submitted to the Permanent Committee at their next Meeting after completed application forms have been received by the Secretary.

No entrance fee is required, and the Annual Subscription is £1.50 payable in advance in the month of July. Any member whose subscription is unpaid for the current year is not entitled to a copy of the Lodge Transactions.

The Lodge reserves to itself the full power to exclude any Member from the Correspondence Circle whom it may deem unworthy of continued membership.

Note.—All Master Masons, in good standing, whether Members of Lodges in this Province or elsewhere, are eligible for membership of the Correspondence Circle.

The Three-hundred-and-seventy-sixth Meeting

on

MONDAY, 27TH NOVEMBER, 1972

There were present W.Bro. H. L. Wheatcroft, *Master*, W.Bro. C. E. Neale, *S.W.*, W.Bro. K. G. Westmoreland, *J.W.*, twenty-four other Officers and members of the Lodge, sixty-four members of the Correspondence Circle and thirteen visiting Brethren—a total of one hundred and four.

The Master referred to the death of W.Bro. C. E. Davey, *P.P.J.G.W.*, past Treasurer of the Lodge and the Brethren paid respect to his memory.

R.W.Bro. Brig. C. B. S. Morley, Provincial Grand Master, was saluted.

Twenty-four Brethren were elected members of the Correspondence Circle.

A ballot as a joining member, which proved in favour of the candidate, was taken for W.Bro. Frederick Alfred Thorpe, P.M. of Granite Lodge, No. 2028.

The Master-elect, W.Bro. C. E. Neale, was presented by the Director of Ceremonies, W.Bro. Vernon Best, installed by W.Bro. H. L. Wheatcroft, and proclaimed in the Three Degrees.

After the Master had appointed and invested his Officers for the year, he delivered his inaugural address, entitled

“The Ancient Landmarks of the Order” (see page 9).

After the Lodge had been closed, the Brethren retired for refreshment and conversation.

The Three-hundred-and-seventy-seventh Meeting

on

MONDAY, 22ND JANUARY, 1973

There were present W.Bro. C. E. Neale, *Master*, W.Bro. K. G. Westmoreland, *S.W.*, W.Bro. R. G. Smith, *J.W.*, twenty-five other Officers and members of the Lodge, forty-six members of the Correspondence Circle and five visiting Brethren—a total of seventy-eight.

The Master referred to the death of W.Bro. C. E. Haines, *P.P.J.G.W.*, and the Brethren paid respect to his memory.

Eight Brethren were elected members of the Correspondence Circle.

W.Bro. Walter John Binns, P.M. of the Albert Edward Lodge, No. 1560, and W.Bro. James Edgar Riley Tompkin, P.M. of the Lodge of Gratitude, No. 6514, were elected joining members of the Lodge.

W.Bro. G. M. Dyson, M.A., D.Sc., Ph.D., *P.J.G.D.*, then delivered an address entitled,

“La loge des neuf soeurs” (see page 18).

After several questions had been put and answered the Master thanked W.Bro. Dyson on behalf of the Lodge and enthusiastic applause was a mark of the appreciation of all present.

After the Lodge had been closed, the Brethren retired for refreshment and conversation.

The Three-hundred-and-seventy-eighth Meeting

on

MONDAY, 26TH MARCH, 1973

There were present W.Bro. C. E. Neale, *Master*, W.Bro. K. G. Westmoreland, *S.W.*, W.Bro. R. G. Smith, *J.W.*, twenty other Officers and members of the Lodge, forty members of the Correspondence Circle and eleven visiting Brethren—a total of seventy-four.

The Master referred to the death of W.Bro. F. W. Heaton, M.A., B.Sc., *P.P.J.G.W.*, and the Brethren paid respect to his memory.

Nineteen Brethren were elected members of the Correspondence Circle.

The annual elections resulted as follows:—

Master-elect: W.Bro. Kenneth G. Westmoreland.

Treasurer: W.Bro. Ernest V. Hazell

Auditors: W.Bros. R. G. Smith and L. J. King.

Lodge Committee: W.Bros. S. Brown, D. Timson, T. M. Ll. Walters and W. J. Binns.

W.Bro. T. O. Haunch, M.A., *A.G.Supt.Wks.*, Librarian of Grand Lodge read a Paper entitled:—

“It is not in the power of any man . . .” A study in Change
(The Prestonian Lecture 1972—see page 31).

The R.W. Provincial Grand Master expressed his pleasure and appreciation for this excellent, instructive and well delivered paper.

The Master warmly thanked Bro. Haunch on behalf of the Lodge, and the Brethren expressed their appreciation by applause.

After the Lodge had been closed, the Brethren retired for refreshment and conversation.

THE ANCIENT LANDMARKS OF THE ORDER

by

W. BRO. C. E. NEALE, P.P.J.G.W., P.P.G.S.N.

Master

What vague conjectures do these words evoke, and what mystique do they conjure up in our minds! Many Masons, like myself, must often have pondered, wondering what these Ancient Landmarks actually are. Apparently evolved in the remote past of Freemasonry, these Ancient Landmarks probably came into being as Freemasonry itself developed, and now form the fundamentals on which the Craft rests. But what are they? They are not defined in our ritual, nor has Grand Lodge ever listed them; yet again and again these words appear in our ceremonies, always with the strict injunction that they are to be adhered to and preserved inviolate—or words to that effect.

In the Charge after Initiation, the candidate has his attention peculiarly and forcibly directed to certain excellencies of character, one of which is the need for Fidelity, which must be exemplified by a strict observance of the Constitutions of the Fraternity, by adhering to the Ancient Landmarks of the Order etc. The phrase “Constitutions of the Fraternity” obviously refers to the Laws governing our Order as laid down in the B. of C., but the question must inevitably arise in the initiate’s mind, “What are the Ancient Landmarks of the Order?” These Landmarks are also referred to in the Charge after Passing and in the Charge after Raising (neither of which is Emulation working and which are seldom given, although they are of considerable importance). In the Charge after Passing the Candidate is told:—“As a Craftsman in our private assemblies you may offer your opinions on such subjects as are introduced in the Lecture, under the superintendence of an experienced Master, who will guard the *Landmarks* against encroachment.” In the Charge after Raising he is told:—“*The Ancient Landmarks of the Order*, which are here entrusted to your care, you are to preserve sacred and inviolable, etc.” And this Charge is confirmed in the Introductory Address to the Third Degree Lecture, which states:—“Among the brethren of this degree the *Ancient Landmarks of the Order* are preserved.” Also when the Installing Master recites to the Master Elect the various qualifications essential in every candidate for the Master’s Chair, in the third qualification, amongst other things, he is told that he should be “well skilled in the Ancient Charges, Regulations and *Landmarks* of the Order.” To all of which he has to give his unqualified assent. Here again, the Ancient Charges and Regulations are set out in the B. of C., but *Landmarks* are not defined. And then, in the Obligation which follows, the Master Elect further solemnly promises that he will not, either during his Mastership, or at any time that the Lodge is under his direction, permit or suffer any deviation from the established *Landmarks of the Order* etc. From all of the foregoing it is obvious that the *Ancient Landmarks of the Order* are of paramount importance to Freemasons, as their inviolability is so zealously guarded.

So, what are these *Ancient Landmarks*? That great writer and poet, Bro. Rudyard Kipling, apparently had no doubt as to what they were, because his Junior Warden was one "*Who know'd the ancient Landmarks—and kep' 'em to a hair.*" However, before any attempt is made even to suggest what some of them may well be, it would perhaps be as well to ascertain the meaning of the word "Landmark". The Oxford New English Dictionary gives this meaning:— 1. "*The boundary of a country, estate, etc., an object set up to mark a boundary line.* 2. *An object in a landscape, which by its conspicuousness serves as a guide in the direction of one's course, (as a guide to sailors in navigation.)* In an older dictionary founded on the labours of Dr. Johnson, Walker, Webster, etc., *Landmark* is defined as "*A mark to designate the boundary of land; any elevated object on land that serves as a guide to seamen; hence, any fixed mark, point or station.*" From this it would seem that the word *landmark* was originally used to describe the object which defined the boundary of land or property, and it undoubtedly stemmed from the word "*Land-meorce or Lond-meorce*" which was in use in this country before the Norman Conquest. It is interesting to note that the word appears in Deuteronomy, Chap. 19, verse 14:— "*Thou shalt not remove thy neighbour's landmark which thy of old time set in thine inheritance, which thou shalt inherit in the land that the Lord thy God giveth thee to possess it.*" And in Chap. 27, verse 17:— "*Cursed be he that removeth his neighbour's landmark. And all the people shall say, Amen.*" Also Job complains, in Chap. 24, verse 2:— "*Some remove the landmarks; they violently take away flocks and feed thereof.*" And in Proverbs, Chap. 22, verse 28:— "*Remove not the Ancient Landmarks which thy fathers have set.*" The broader definition of the word is applied to any physical object which serves as a guide or mark from which a bearing can be taken to direct one's course, either on land or at sea. But there is an essential difference between that kind of physical land mark and the Landmarks of Freemasonry. Whereas the former may be removed or altered by natural or man-made causes, the Ancient Landmarks of our Order form the fundamental and basic principles on which Freemasonry rests; and they are immovable and permit of no deviation whatsoever.

The question of what these Ancient Landmarks are and how they came into being has always been a mystery. But one thing is certain: they are the unwritten laws, the principles and the guide lines or framework within which the masonic system of morality has been created. They can be likened to the unwritten laws of our own country, which were gradually brought into being throughout the centuries by common usage and acceptance by all concerned. As mentioned at the beginning of this paper, I suggest that the Ancient Landmarks of our Order evolved in a similar manner, and likewise are difficult to define. Probably the first mention of Ancient (old) Landmarks in masonic literature occurs in the General Regulations compiled by George Payne, the antiquary, in 1720, when he was Grand Master, and approved by Grand Lodge in 1721. They were printed

and published together with the Revd. Dr. James Anderson's Constitutions in 1723. Regulation No. 39 reads as follows:— "Every Annual Grand Lodge has an inherent power and authority to make new regulations or to alter these, for the real benefit of this Ancient Fraternity, *provided always that the Old Landmarks be carefully preserved.*" Every B. of C. published since that date has contained a similar proviso, guarding the Old Landmarks against any interference or abrogation, and our present B. of C., in Rule 4, states:— "The Grand Lodge possesses the supreme superintending authority, and alone has the inherent power of enacting laws and regulations for the government of the Craft, and of altering, repealing and abrogating them, *always taking care that the Ancient Landmarks of the Order be preserved.*" Now, the great question is what did Payne and Anderson mean by the term "Old Landmarks." Was it just a fine sounding but empty phrase, void of any real meaning, as was suggested by the editor of *Miscellanea Latomorum*—an opinion which is not likely to be shared or accepted by Masons generally—or did they in fact, vaguely accept them as being handed down from time immemorial undefined—in effect taking them for granted. Or, as some eminent Masons suggest, did they consider that the Charges collected by Anderson in his B. of C. were in fact the Ancient Landmarks of the Order, and that it never occurred to them to doubt but that future generations of Masons would accept them as such without question. Or did they find it impossible to compile a list to which they and their associates could unanimously agree! Whatever the reason, they obviously thought it best to leave the word undefined, and the only fact of which we can be sure is that they were in existence prior to 1720. But the lack of definition of the term in the 1723 B. of C. has certainly left us with a legacy of doubt which throughout the years has proved to be a source of useful discussion and surmise amongst Masons.

William Preston in his "Illustrations of Masonry", published in 1775, maintained that the term *Landmarks* was synonymous with "The Ancient usages and Customs of the Order." As these "Illustrations of Masonry" had the sanction of the Grand Lodge of England, one might infer that it approved of this definition of the term *Landmark*. It is interesting to speculate whether William Preston meant those "Ancient usages and Customs of the Order" which came into being *after* the advent of Free or Speculative Masons or whether he meant those previously obtaining amongst purely operative masons. In which latter case the various "Old Charges" promulgated for the general guidance, moral conduct and duties of operative masons, really set forth the prevailing usages and customs of the Order. In fact there are some eminent Masons who claim that the Landmarks *are* the "Old Charges", or that they are contained in the "Old Charges" in the form of the Secrets.

In a discussion on a Paper on the "Landmarks" given by Bro. Axel J. A. Poignant in the Quatuor Coronati Lodge on June 24th, 1911, Bro. Hawkins, a well-known writer on masonic matters, after

commenting on the rather negative character of the Paper which seemed to set forth what is *not* a Landmark rather than what *is* a Landmark, went on to suggest that, as in Anderson's first B. of C., a distinction was made between the General Regulations and the Charges of a Freemason, therefore the Charges were the Landmarks or unwritten usages of the Craft, whilst the General Regulations were the written laws. He therefore maintained that the Charges collected by Anderson were accepted as the Landmarks by the Masons in 1723, and that they are our Landmarks now. Bro. W. B. Hextall, another well-known member of the Quatuor Coronati Lodge in a Paper read to that Lodge on March 1st, 1912, on "The Old Landmarks of the Craft" (which was in effect a reply to Bro. Poignant's Paper) put forward the theory that the Old Landmarks were in fact the secrets which existed amongst the operative Masons in the days when they alone supplied the membership of the Craft. Perhaps, in view of these various contentions, it would be helpful to take a brief look at the old MSS. documents whence these "Old Charges" originated. The earliest authentic MS. is the Halliwell or Regius MS., now in the British Museum, and it is thought to have been written about 1390. Some authorities consider that it was written by a priest in the West country, where at that time there was considerable building taking place in the shape of cathedrals at Worcester, Hereford and Gloucester as well as various abbeys and minor buildings in the same area. It is in the form of a poem or doggerel verse, and was then entitled "A Poem of Moral Duties", setting forth a code of morals governing the conduct and duties of operative masons. After an historical preamble (which among other things tells how the craft of Masonry came into being through the teaching by Euclid of geometry in Egypt and how later it came to England in the time of King Athelstan) it gives fifteen Articles defining the duties and conduct of a Master Mason and fifteen Points on the duties and proper behaviour of Craftsmen. The first of the fifteen Articles outlines what a Master Mason must be:— 1. He must be steadfast, trusty and true, pay his fellows truly what they earn and deserve, accept no bribes, and be as upright as a judge. 2. He must attend the general congregation or assembly unless sickness or some other reasonable excuse prevented him. 3. The Master must take no apprentice unless he is assured he will dwell with him seven years to learn his craft. 5. He must only take apprentices who are free and well born and who are not deformed or maimed. And 13. He must teach his apprentices so that they fully and ably may know their craft wherever they go. These are some of the important duties prescribed for a Master Mason. Amongst the fifteen points set forth for a Craftsman are these:— 1. He must always love well God and Holy Church, as well as his Master and fellows. 3. He must strictly keep secret the counsel of his Master and his fellows, and tell no man what transpires in the Lodge and in other private places. 4. No Mason shall be false to his Craft but obey its laws. 7. He must respect the chastity of his Master's wife and his fellows' wives and concubines! 10. Disobedience of these prescribed duties and behaviour to be punished by expulsion from the Craft. 11. Masons must help each

other in their work. And 14, He must swear an oath of loyalty to the King. Another old document is the Harleian MS. of the 17th century (circa 1670) which is also in the British Museum, and it contains what are called the "New Articles" Nos. 26 to 31. No. 26 states that at least five Masons (who must include a Master or Warden) must be present at an initiation. No. 27 sets forth the necessary qualifications of apprentices. No. 28 states that a certificate of membership is essential before visiting another Lodge. No. 29, Membership enrolment strictly according to priority. No. 30, Master and Wardens to be selected annually at a general assembly. And No. 31 sets forth the oath of Secrecy to be taken in the Obligation before anyone can be accepted as a Freemason. There are many more MSS. dealing with the Old Constitutions and Charges of Masonry, including the Cooke MS. which is the second oldest document (circa 1425) dealing with the "Old Charges", and it was this "Old MS. of the Constitutions" which was produced by George Payne, Grand Master, at the Grand Lodge on June 24th, 1721. (St. John's Day Feast).

One reference to a specific Landmark is contained in the Minutes of the Special Lodge of Promulgation of October 19th, 1810, which reads as follows:— "*Resolved that it appears to this Lodge that the ceremony of Installation of Masters of Lodges is one of the two Landmarks of the Craft and ought to be observed.*" Some authorities contend that the word *two* was a copyist's or printer's error and should have been *true*—otherwise to suggest that there were only *two* Landmarks would have been an unwarrantable assumption. But frankly, I do not think many Masons would agree that the Installation Ceremony is a Landmark, as it can be argued, quite rightly in my opinion, that our ceremonies which certainly have been altered over the years, have been developed within the framework of our unalterable Ancient Landmarks, and cannot therefore in themselves be Landmarks. Many worthy Masons have endeavoured to define our Ancient Landmarks. Probably the best known and among the first of these was Bro. A. G. Mackey, the American author of the Encyclopaedia of Freemasonry, who compiled a list of Landmarks numbering no less than 25. I do not propose to enumerate them here, as I believe most English Masons would consider that many of them do not qualify as Landmarks. However, there are certainly two with which I personally agree and they are No. 19 "A belief in the existence of God as T.G.A.O.T.U." and No. 20 "A belief in the resurrection to a future life." It is interesting to note that quite a few overseas Grand Lodges—mostly American—have adopted certain Landmarks for the guidance of their brethren. The one most frequently quoted is the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts—the oldest in the U.S.A.—which recognises and has specified in its Constitutions seven Landmarks viz:—

1. Belief in God
2. Belief in the persistence of personality
3. A Book of the Law as an indispensable part of Lodge furniture

4. The Legend of the Third Degree
5. Secrecy
6. The Symbolism of the Operative Art
7. That a Mason must be a man, freeborn, and of age.

Other American Grand Lodges such as the Grand Lodge of Nevada and the Grand Lodge of Kentucky have listed many more. As mentioned at the beginning of this Paper, our own Grand Lodge has *very wisely* never attempted to define them, nor has the Grand Lodge of Scotland. That versatile and prolific masonic writer, Dr. George Oliver, in the *Freemasons' Treasury* in 1863, arranged a list dividing the genuine Landmarks of Freemasonry into 12 classes within which he enumerated over 40 as existing and at least a dozen others as either obsolete or spurious, and where he recognised that though most, if not all, are to be held immutable in theory, they have been and are, in fact, subject to alteration, significantly remarking that on this subject, "We are grovelling in darkness" and later confessing that "We have no actual criterion by which we may determine what is a Landmark and what is not."

It seems to me, that, judging from the various writers on masonic jurisprudence, Masonic Landmarks must fulfil these conditions: they must be Ancient and Universal, unwritten Laws or principles which have existed from time immemorial, unalterable and immutable, fundamental and absolutely essential. Heywood and Craig in "A History of Freemasonry" have this to say of Landmarks—"They are at the foundation of masonic jurisprudence, as unalterable as the Laws of the Medes and Persians. Anything contrary to immemorial usage cannot be a Landmark." Bro. Chetwode Crawley, a very distinguished Irish masonic historian and an eminent member of the Quatuor Coronati Lodge, said this:—"The Ancient Landmarks of Freemasonry like all other Landmarks, material or symbolical, can only preserve their stability when they reach down to sure foundations. When the philosophic student unearths the underlying rock on which our Ancient Landmarks rest, he finds our sure foundation in the triple dogma of the Fatherhood of God, the Brotherhood of Man and the Life to come. All laws, customs and methods that obtain amongst us and do not ultimately find foothold on this basis, are hereby earmarked as conventions and conveniences, in no way partaking of the nature of Ancient Landmarks." This dictum of Bro. Crawley's, if carefully considered, contains fundamental truths, and there is a lot to be said for his simple, though great, triad of Landmarks. Most brethren who give thought to this subject would, I am sure, produce widely differing lists of Landmarks—with one exception—Belief in God—which I am positive would be contained in every list. Coming now to my own list of what I believe to be some of the Landmarks of our Order, first and foremost is a "Belief in God", the Supreme Being who gives to all others their Being, and this belief permits of no equivocation or mental reservation of any kind. When every intending candidate for Freemasonry is interviewed by the Lodge committee, the first question

which is always asked of him is:— “Do you believe in God?”, and the answer must be an emphatic and unequivocal “Yes”, otherwise his application to join Masonry cannot be entertained. And then, when the candidate for initiation enters the Lodge, the second question put to him by the W.M. is:— “In all cases of difficulty and danger, in whom do you put your trust?” And the candidate’s reply must be a sincere “In God”. It is this essential belief in God which the Grand Orient of France threw overboard on September 14th, 1877, by removing from its constitution the necessity for a belief in God. This caused our own Grand Lodge and other Grand Lodges to withdraw recognition of the Grand Orient and so they became an outcast of Freemasonry. The *second* Landmark I believe to be the “V.S.L.” One would think that there could be no question of this being one of our great Landmarks, but it is argued by some that in the early days of Freemasonry and in the time of Bro. James Anderson, there was no reference to the V.S.L., and that it was then only used for the obligation of candidates, in a similar manner to its use by a witness in a court of law when taking the oath. Apparently it was not until 1760 on the motion of William Preston in Grand Lodge that it was made one of “The Three Great though Emblematical Lights in Freemasonry”—which would guide you to all Truth, direct your steps in the paths of happiness and point out to you the whole duty of man. Personally, although the purists will not have it, I still look upon it as one of our great Landmarks. Surely, after belief in God, it is the one great Landmark by which we as Masons steer the barque of our lives over uncharted seas—wherein we are taught the duties we owe to God, to our neighbour and to ourselves as well as the Divine truths concerning T.G.A.O.T.U. and the hereafter. In John Bunyan’s immortal work “The Pilgrim’s Progress”, in the opening passages the Pilgrim despairingly cries, “What shall I do?”, and I suggest it is in the ever present truths contained in the V.S.L. that we as Freemasons can give the answer to the Pilgrim’s question, remembering that we are *all* pilgrims. If Freemasonry is to fulfil its purpose as a power for good in the troubled world of to-day, it must ever regard the V.S.L. as the Great Light and Landmark of Freemasonry from which stems the lessons of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth. The *third* Landmark must be the other two Great Lights in Masonry i.e. “The Square and Compasses” which have been symbols of masonic morality and teaching from the earliest days of Freemasonry. The *fourth* Landmark—“The immortality of the Soul”. This I am sure is one of our fundamental beliefs and can therefore be regarded as one of our great Landmarks. It is expressed in the W.T’s of both the 2nd and 3rd degrees. In the former we are told that “by square conduct, level steps and upright intentions we hope to ascend to those immortal mansions whence all goodness emanates”, and in the latter we are informed:— “Thus the W.T’s of a Master Mason teach us to bear in mind and act according to the laws of our Divine Creator, that when we shall be summoned from this sublunary abode, we may ascend to the Grand Lodge above where the world’s G.A. lives and reigns for ever.” The whole conception of the 3rd degree teaches of the passing through the

darkness of death to life—the raising of the smitten builder to a reunion with the former companions of his toil. And the Charge confirms that the vital and immortal principle inherent in our perishable frames inspires the holy confidence that the Lord of Life will enable us to trample the King of Terrors beneath our feet. In the ceremony of the Royal Arch, which is included in pure Antient Masonry, the candidate is reminded that man would have remained a child of ignorance and error had it not pleased the Almighty to call him to Light and Immortality. Also, in the Mystical Lecture we are reminded of that great hereafter or futurity where we hope to obtain immortal life and everlasting bliss. The *fifth* Landmark must be the first of the Three Grand Principles on which our Order is founded, namely *Brotherly Love*—love for your fellow man, and by doing to your neighbour as you would wish to be done by. The *sixth* Landmark must be the second Grand Principle—*Relief*—we all know that this means Charity—the distinguishing characteristic of a Freemason's heart. And lastly the *seventh* Landmark is the third Grand Principle—*Truth*—without truth as set forth and embodied in the V.S.L., the principles and tenets of our Order would be of no avail. Our members must be true to God, to their Brethren and to themselves.

In conclusion, having tentatively presented what may well be considered to be some of the Great Landmarks of our Order, it cannot be denied that those Brethren who maintain that the Ancient Landmarks are in fact the Old Charges or the secrets contained in the Old Charges certainly also have good grounds for their contentions as well do those brethren who agree with William Preston that they are synonymous with “The ancient usages and customs of the Order.” There are, of course, many other opinions expressed on this fascinating and interesting subject, all of them probably equally tenable. However, of one thing we can be positive—the Landmarks do exist, for they are the very essence and backbone of the Craft because without them Freemasonry would no longer be Freemasonry, and although no one can be absolutely sure of what they consist, yet, as I have already premised there is no doubt that each one of us must have his own conception of what they actually are; the undefined yet always with us immutable masonic beacons, preventing any unwarranted innovation in, or encroachment on, our Order.

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LA LOGE DES NEUF SOEURS (The Lodge of the Nine Sisters)

by

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In discussing the history, personnel and peculiarities of this early French Lodge, I have anglicised, as far as possible, all the French terms, and where quotations are given I have translated them from the original language. Clearly, personal names, and in some cases the names of masonic offices are not amenable to such translation and are in the original language.

The first question that any Mason will ask concerning the somewhat unusual name of the Lodge is, "Who were the Nine Sisters?" The answer is simple enough; they were the Nine Muses of classical mythology, namely:

1. Clio the Muse of History
2. Euterpe the Muse of Lyric Poetry
3. Thalia the Muse of Comedy
4. Melpomene the Muse of Tragedy
5. Terpsichore the Muse of Dancing and Singing
6. Erato the Muse of Erotic Poetry
7. Polyhymnia the Muse of Mimic Art
8. Urania the Muse of Astronomy
9. Calliope the Muse of Epic Poetry

Calliope was the chief of the Muses, all of whom were the daughters of Zeus and Mnemoysyne; their meeting place was the Mount Parnassus, and they were held to provide the inspiration for the compositions of literary and musical geniuses. Since the founders of the Lodge of the Nine Sisters were poets, dramatists, actors, historians, and even astronomers, it is easy to see why they considered the name appropriate. The Grand Orient of France (in some ways the counterpart of our Grand Lodge) strongly objected to the name, with its wholly female connotation, and considerable argument between the founders and the Grand Orient ensued, until the former more or less "bull-dozed" the latter into giving permission for the name to be used.

I think it will be best to consider (a) the social (b) the masonic and (c) the personal backgrounds against which the formation of this Lodge may be observed; and later to examine its operation, its character and the events which finally led to its extinction.

The formal commencement of the Lodge was in 1776, although there had been some clandestine meetings of the founders in lodge form prior to that date (a not uncommon practice in the early days of Masonry).

The background

Modern Freemasonry had been introduced into France about 1725, coming from England where it had been born a few years previously. It is a peculiarly interesting fact that one of the major founders of English Freemasonry as we know it was a Frenchman—Jean Theophile Desaguliers, the son of a Protestant divine who had been forced to leave France by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes (October 18th, 1685). Freemasonry grew fairly rapidly in France between 1738 and 1743; records in detail of this period are scanty, but the Papal bulls of 1738 (Clement XII) and 1751 (Benedict XIV) make it clear that the Church considered the rapid growth of the Order to be a serious menace to its influence. Despite this proscription of Masonry, the Order contained many Catholic clergy. After this comparatively short period, during which the Duc d'Antin was Grand Master, Masonry fell into a slow decline under the Grand Mastership of Louis de Bourbon-Condé, Comte de Clermont; indeed, by 1770 the Order had almost perished and many unsuitable persons had gained access to its ranks.

The change which effected the renaissance of French Freemasonry was the replacement in 1773, by the Grand Orient of France, of the erstwhile Grand Lodge. This was not just a simple change of titles and persons; the Grand Orient assumed completely the representative character of a central body and called on its deputies to sit with those of the Lodge of Paris; it corrected the abuse of "*permanent masters*", who regarded themselves almost as proprietors of their Lodges; it generally purged masonic personnel by imposing an obligation upon all supporting Lodges to submit to reorganisation by the central authority. Naturally, the formation and consolidation of the Grand Orient took considerable time and much negotiation, most of which was carried out by the famous astronomer Lalande. Although the Grand Orient of France came into being in 1773, it was not until August 4th, 1774, that Lalande delivered the inaugural address. At this meeting the Grand Orient took possession of a vast estate in Paris. The Grand Orient was divided for administrative purposes into three chambers, and Lalande was successively second and first inspector-general of the *Chambre d'Administration*, having been previously its orator. Independently of these functions he was one of the commissioners nominated by the Grand Orient for the revision and editing of the Statutes and Regulations (5th July, 1773); a commissioner for the secretariat and correspondence of the Grand Orient (15th July, 1773); commissioner for the regulation of the discipline of the three chambers (12th August, 1774) and many other bodies concerned with putting Freemasonry in France on a surer footing; we shall hear more of him later.

The social background of the period must, inevitably, be bound up with the word "Revolution"; from 1730 onwards the man-in-the-street was becoming more and more vocal concerning his natural rights. It is idle to talk about the "French Revolution" as though it were a

single, even if important, incident in the history of the nation; there were at least four such "revolutions" each characterised by different but allied social symptoms. To most of us in this country this stormy period is dominated by the fall of the Bastille. On July 14th, 1789, La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt brought to the king, Louis XVI, then at Versailles, news of the fall of the Bastille. The king was astonished: "But,—this is a revolt!", he said; "No, Sire", replied Rochefoucauld "It is a revolution!" Just why the capture of an obsolete fortress with its handful of ancient prisoners should have been so significant is not clear, and it is a problem we must leave to the historians to elucidate. Nevertheless, it led to the overthrow of the establishment and to the Reign of Terror in the 1790's and was sufficient to drive underground many masonic activities. When the Grand Orient was constituted in 1774, and for several succeeding years, it struggled along with 198 Lodges, of which 35 were in Paris. By 1789 there were 629 Lodges of which 63 were Parisian; most of them "*disappeared*" in 1792/93 to emerge again after a decade (the Lodge of the Nine Sisters was resuscitated in 1805).

Foundation of the Lodge of the Nine Sisters

As Louis Aimable, in his important history of this Lodge states, "The Lodge of the Nine Sisters is the posthumous child of Helvétius who unfortunately died before its consecration". Helvétius (1715-1771) was an important French philosopher (albeit a hedonist). We know very little of his masonic career save that he became in later life, a close friend of Lalande. Lalande had founded the Lodge of the Sciences to bring together those Freemasons especially gifted in science; Helvétius had the idea of enlarging on such a group, and founding a Lodge in which scholars would mix with philosophers, men of science and letters, artists of all kinds, and, in general, men of distinguished attainments and education. This—a sort of Lodge of Science and Art—was his original concept of the Lodge of the Nine Sisters. Lalande promised Helvétius his co-operation in the formation of such a Lodge, but the time was not propitious since in 1767 the Grand Lodge of France had been proscribed, and interdicted by the government—and remained so until the death of the Comte de Clermont. Its meetings were clandestine and it had difficulties of communication with older Lodges, and could not constitute new ones. One could only wait—meanwhile Helvétius died (1771) without his project having been realised. This is not the place to discourse on the effect of Helvétius' philosophy on the trend of early French Freemasonry, but there is little doubt that it engendered an attitude in which the existence of a Supreme Being was doubted, or in some cases even denied, and led to one of the prime reasons why the Grand Orient was incapable of recognition by our own Grand Lodge.

It is strange that a woman—Madame Helvétius—should have played a not unimportant part in the bringing together of those who ultimately formed the founding body of the Lodge of the Nine Sisters.

Descended from a very distinguished, but somewhat impoverished, family, (she had twenty brothers and sisters!) she was about to enter a convent when she was adopted by a wealthy aunt, Mme. de Grafigny, who had devoted herself to literature and made a name as a writer. She had a salon in Paris which attracted many 'men of letters' and representatives of high society. Helvétius, who met her at the salon, married her in 1751; from that time the salon of Mme. Helvétius was the most brilliant concourse of Parisian society. As Aimable puts it, "Princes, ministers, philosophers, the nobility, men of letters—all were eager to be admitted". Garat is said to have described the salon of Mme. Helvétius as "The General Commonwealth of European Philosophy." After the death of Helvétius the salon continued, although on a more intimate and less sumptuous scale at Auteuil; there were fewer notables but more men of science and art. A philosopher and historian who knew many of the survivors of this élite group used the following words to express his appreciation:

"The Auteuil gatherings constituted an intimate academy, an 'institute among ourselves', wherein, for undiluted zeal, or simple love of science, one could pursue those studies which needed the unconstrained intercourse of minds. Cabanis was the soul; Volney assisted him, and de Tracy was assiduous, taking an active part . . . and many others brought the tribute of their wisdom. One discussed, one read, one acquitted tasks and gave directions and help; one really philosophised; and if the plan one was following had vices and errors . . . then the researches to which one would be committed in order to stress and defend them would be well calculated to clear and strengthen the mind."

Such, then, was the great woman who contributed in a most efficacious way to the formation of the Lodge of the Nine Sisters and afterwards to its prosperity. The preliminary discussions were held at her house in Auteuil, and her co-operation is attested by the fact that as soon as the Lodge had been founded Mme. Helvétius presented it with the masonic insignia of her late husband which she had carefully preserved. Further, in its first two years, 1776 and 1777, the summer feast of St. John which reunited all the members of the Lodge, was celebrated in her house and grounds at Auteuil.

The Founders

Lalande, as one might have expected, became the master-designate ('le Vénérable' is the title for 'master' in France) and to found the Lodge he got together a small group of devoted Freemasons—nine in all, that is, two more than the statutory seven required for the petition. They were:

1. **The abbé Cordier**, a cleric and man of letters, who was a staunch Freemason and remained so until his death. He composed many historical eulogies almost all of which were read at the Lodge of the Nine Sisters.

2. **Le Changeux**, an important scientist specialising in the biological and meteorological disciplines; he invented many meteorological recording instruments.
3. **The abbé Robin**. There were three abbés of this name living in France at the time and it has proved difficult to disentangle them; however, in the 12th supplementary volume of Querard's *La France Littéraire* (1859) the errors of the 18th volume of the main work (1836) are cleared up, and identified this founder with the author of '*Researches on Initiations, ancient and modern*' (a work showing great zeal for Freemasonry but lacking in erudition). Robin was chosen by Benjamin Franklin (then American ambassador to France) as chaplain to the French Expeditionary Corps which was sent to America.
4. **Chevalier de Cubières**. Esquire to Madame la Comtesse d'Artois. A literary figure of great productivity. He was ordained at S. Sulpice, but renounced his clerical career in favour of poetry and a long liaison with Fanny de Beauharnais, an aunt of the Empress Josephine.
5. **Fallet**. Secretary (editor) of the *Gazette de France*, and a prolific author of poetry and drama.
6. **de Cailhava**. A dramatic author, one of the strongest supporters of the true genre of comedy. In the Lodge list of 1806 he is named as a founder and member under the title "Member of the Institute".
7. **Garnier**. Trained as a lawyer he did not practise, except during the Revolution, but turned his genius towards literary affairs, in which he proved both successful and fecund.
8. **Chauvet**. A leading member of the Académie des Sciences de Bordeaux about whom little is known.
9. **Parny**. Esquire to the Queen.

Thus, the founding Brethren were few in number, but outstanding in influence; the returns made to the Grand Orient in 1777, a year after the foundation, showed sixty members, and after the initiation of Voltaire, when in 1779 the first printed list of Lodge members was prepared, the Lodge had 144 subscribing members and sixteen honorary members; and the quality was no less remarkable than the quantity. The rapid growth was due to the prestige of Lalande and his founding colleagues, and to the excellent organisation of the Lodge, which had been formulated with by-laws which were in themselves a masonic document of the first order.

Conduct of the Lodge

In this connection I would like to give a translation from the text of Aimable on this subject.

“The Grand Orient had not at this point yet drafted the regulations for the conduct of Lodges. They completed this task in 1781, largely because of the pressure from old-established Lodges that requested directions as to the number, privileges and functions of their officers. It recognised a large measure of autonomy in the different groups federated under its auspices. Also after having prepared a long and detailed text, which covered no less than 65 pages, they presented these ‘Rules for Lodges as a simple sketch which they (the Lodges) could curtail or alter as might be thought necessary’. ‘Each Lodge’ (one reads in the preamble) ‘was at liberty to conduct itself according as its interests dictated, as long as it in no wise deviated from the fundamental principles and general regulations of the Order’. In going over the text of these regulations it is clear that its editors were guided by that which has previously been worked out by the Lodge of the Nine Sisters, from which they had borrowed copiously.”

These Lodge regulations merit our attention—they took long enough to work out, and were not completed until the membership had become numerous, seeing that there are no less than twenty-five officers; the date imprinted is L.D.L.V.L.1 5779. They form the introductory portion of a pocket-book, in 32-mo. pages 5—43. The remainder of this slender book is devoted to a list of members entitled, ‘List of brethren of the Lodge of Nine Sisters’, from the East of Paris L.D.L.V.L 5778 under the auspices of the most serene Grand Master Louis-Phillipe Joseph, duc de Chartres.

At the beginning of this book is an emblematic engraving, the work of two artists who were members of the Lodge, the painter Notte and the engraver Godefroy, and is signed by both of them after the abbreviation “m.d.l.l.”² This engraving shows a slender pyramid placed on a pedestal: luminous rays flow from the summit of the pyramid, descending as thunderbolts. On the pyramid itself is placed a garland of foliage, descending spirally in three turns, and on which are placed the symbols of the nine Muses, while between the turns of the spiral are the square and compasses, the all-seeing eye within a triangle, the sides of which are inscribed with the words ‘Truth’, ‘Union’ and ‘Strength’. Lower down are the inscriptions:

“The true Light is formidable, only to error”.

“Presented by Bro. the Abbé Cordier de Saint Firmin, established in the Lodge on the twenty-eighth day of the ninth month of the year of true light 5778, the Vénérable de Lalande of the Academy of Science illuminating the East.”

¹L’an de la vrai lumière (The year of true light).

²Membre de la loge (Member of the lodge).

The date of the second inscription is doubly interesting, as it was that on which the funeral of Voltaire was solemnized, at which ceremonies Lalande presided. Hence one is able to say exactly when the work was completed. There are, in addition, two figures chained to the pedestal and struck by the lightning deriving from the point of the pyramid; one, entwined by three serpents and with a reversed torch appears to symbolise 'fanaticism'; the one, pen in one hand, the other broadcasting a sheaf of pamphlets represents 'calumny'. Thus, the engraving itself is quite a manifesto.

The text of the Rules is preceded by a declaration which explains the nature of the general teachings of Freemasonry (and is for this reason, *inter alia*, of great interest to us today); it pictures the man who is ameliorated by such rules as:

"The well-taught Mason, imbued with a true sense of duty is a man free from reproach or remorse. He possesses, without having recourse to Philosophy, the most sublime precepts of morality. He will prove just, inasmuch as he is benevolent and impartial. Nowhere will he be a stranger; and no country will be strange or dangerous to him. All men are his friends, whatever may be their opinions. Moreover, in his own country he is a faithful subject, a zealous citizen, devotedly submitting to the law, and to the duties imposed by society in the name of his principles."

"The Lodge of the Nine Sisters, in making the masonic virtues the foundation and buttress of its institution, thought it its duty to combine with them the cultures of science, of letters and of the arts. That is, to bring them back to their true origin. The arts possess, as does Masonry, the inestimable quality of bringing men to a better understanding of each other. It was at the sounds of a voice and lyre of Orpheus that the savages of Thrace abandoned their caves. It is the fine arts that serve to mollify the manners of nations: it is they that will enable us to preserve our own.

Let us, then, work with zeal and assiduity to fulfil the double purpose of our institution; that the foundation may support the superstructure; we may decorate it, but let us allow nothing of such decoration to hide the least part of the dignity of its ancient architecture."

The peculiar spirit of the Lodge, stemming from its own title, and affirmed by the preamble just cited is followed by a statement of Rules, as follows:

"The qualities which the Lodge demands from its aspirants, apart from proving their good name, comprise the sciences and the liberal arts; so, that every candidate that is proposed should be endowed with some special talent, whether it be in the sciences, or whether it be in the arts, and should have already given to the world at large some sufficient proof of this talent."

This rule was strictly applied, not only to the 'children of the Lodge', but also to joining members, 'exceptions being made for those initiates alone who were distinguished by their rank or by the honourable positions which they occupied'. Nor was the requirement a theoretical one, for, as another consequence of the peculiar character of this Lodge one finds later in their Rules this double precept:

"All men of letters will give a discourse at the first Grand Assembly after their reception. Each musician will perform some composition in his particular medium at the first Grand Assembly after their reception".

The most strict guarantees were required from the proposer of a candidate, and there were then appointed three commissioners to examine the candidate and report to the Lodge when a ballot was taken and the candidate was only then allowed to submit his application in writing, by the hand of his sponsor. A further discussion and a second ballot was taken. The proposer and the commissioners were held strictly responsible; if it appeared that, after his initiation, a Brother's character was such that the Lodge repented of having elected him, the proposer was banished from the Lodge for five months, and the commissioners for three months. Visiting was under similar strict control; no visitor could be admitted without a letter of summons sent by the Lodge secretary stating the name of the Brother who invited him. The only exceptions were the Honorary Officers of the Grand Orient and the presidents of its three chambers.

We know that the Volume of the Sacred Law was not present (opened or unopened) in many French Lodges of this period, and I have also come to the conclusion that a belief in a Supreme Being was not then a prerequisite of initiation, which makes the position of the obligation undertaken by the candidate a matter of great interest. The philosophical tenor of the Lodge engendered a remarkable innovation. Until this time it had been customary for the candidate to accompany his obligation with an imprecation against perjury, but in the Lodge of the Nine Sisters it was felt that the promise of a free and upright man was sufficient for honest men. It was therefore, decided that the candidate for initiation, having given those proofs demanded by the Lodge, was declared admitted and, with his right hand placed on the heart, promised to adhere to the following obligations:

1. "Never to say, write or prosecute in Lodge, anything derogatory of religion, morals or the State"
2. "Always be ready to speed to the succour of mankind"
3. "Never to reveal the secrets confided to his care"
4. "Inviolably to observe the statutes and regulations of the Lodge of the Nine Sisters"
5. "To make every effort to contribute to the glory and prosperity of the Lodge"

The Grand Orient, in promulgating its Rule for Lodges in 1781 adopted this innovation, while amplifying it somewhat to contain certain other conditions. However, after the Revolution, the Lodge reverted to the use of an obligation with an imprecation against perjury, although some years afterwards the imprecation disappeared again.

There were, after the first two years, twenty-five officers—the Master (Vénérable), two wardens (surveillants) and three orators; three because of the onerous duties of such an office in such a Lodge; in 1778 the orators were le Changeaux, l'abbé Remy and la Dixmérie. There were two (first and second) directors of concerts. The election (not appointment by the W.M.) of officers took place, each year, at the Grand Assembly held in the third month (May). To be eligible for election a Brother must have been a subscribing member of the Lodge and to have been so for at least one year from his reception; he must also have been present at five full meetings of the Lodge in the year preceding the election. The monthly Grand Assembly concluded with a banquet and was held ten times in the year (September and October were considered holiday months). The meeting preceding the banquet was devoted to a concert and to what were termed “pièces d'architecture” (= “*masonic work*”), but in reality to literary productions. Three of these meetings were more important than the others; those for the feasts of St. John the Baptist and St. John the Divine, which corresponded with the two solstices, and that held on March 9th in honour of the new Masonic Year; the latter meeting allowed particularly for an exposition of works of art produced, and music composed, by members of the Lodge. At each of the ordinary full assemblies, one of the orators delivered a eulogy upon some great man of the past, and the Master, Senior Warden, Archivist and one of the ‘experts’ each produced some appropriate “pièce d'architecture”.

Two other provisions of the Lodge Regulations are worthy of notice; the first of these established a revolving fund of 1200 livres for printing those works of members of the Lodge adjudged worthy, and which were related to the objects which concerned the Nine Sisters—the sciences, literature, fine arts, music, painting, engraving, etc. Advances made by the Lodge for these purposes were repayable from the first royalties of the work concerned, after which the publication became the unencumbered property of the author.

The second, and more remarkable, provision imposed a duty on all surgeons, doctors and lawyers to give free consultations to those who were recommended by the Lodge. But that is not all; the obligations solemnly entered into “to speed to the succour of mankind” implied for each brother of the Lodge a duty to assist the victims of injustice, (in those times when the greatest iniquities were so frequently committed) and thereby imitating, as far as possible the noble examples recently given by Voltaire. The regulatory text anticipated when one of the Brethren would be charged with the defence of someone innocently accused, who was without the means to defray the cost of

preparing the papers necessary for his defence, and guaranteed the Brother, subject to Lodge approval, 100 livres as a contribution to the printing of the briefs. More will be said about this in a subsequent section. When, in 1778, La Dixmérie produced a justificatory memoir concerning the Lodge of the Nine Sisters he lists all the beneficial activities of the Lodge and on p.13 says:

“No meeting is ever held without there being hatched some useful plan, or without some lecture considered interesting or instructive. There is nothing in the nature of sterile exchange of applause, but a veritable exchange of wisdom, where each imparts to the others what he knows and receives with gratitude that which will enlighten him.”

How sad it is that we are unable to judge for ourselves by reading the minutes of these meetings, which would, indeed, merit the title of “Golden Book”.

Voltaire

It is difficult for us to comprehend the veneration in which Voltaire was held by almost every Frenchman (except, of course, the ‘Establishment’); apart from his supremacy as a dramatist and as the literary doyen of France, he had been indefatigably committed to the defence, deliverance and rehabilitation of the victims of injustice, bigotry and oppression—of Calas, Sirven, Lally-Tolendal, the Chevalier de la Barrer, the negro slaves and the serfs of Mont-Jura. At the time of which we are speaking, 1778, Voltaire was eighty-four years of age; he had resided for twenty-five years at his country residence at Ferney, where he carried out his duties as seigneur (= *squire*) of the parish and despite his ecclesiastical heresies, was on excellent terms with his vicar. This is not the place to go into details of Voltaire’s views on religion, but the following remarks of Aimable are necessary to an understanding of his position, and also of the position of Freemasonry at that period.

“The clergy has always been invested with a dominion from which nothing could escape. They were the arbiters of life and death. They inclined public opinion towards their signs and external manifestations. The civil authorities habitually deferred to them and their requests. Their bishops and vicars were superior to mere civilians. One could not live a comfortable life without being fortified by the sacrament. After the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, Protestants were deprived of their civil rights; their marriage was held to be concubinage and their children bastards. When Adrienne Lecouvreur died without benefit of clergy her body could be seen lying about in the streets of Paris; the body of a great tragedienne denied the right of burial by the vicar of St. Sulpice.

Voltaire and other philosophers of the age bowed, ostensibly to this power, for the excellent reason that they could not do otherwise. Their attacks were addressed not against the religion of Christ, but against the superstitions grafted upon it, and against an exploiting and criminal theocracy. It was only in their intimate conversations and private correspondence that the cry of "Crush the villains!" resounded. Their criticisms were hidden under a veil of anonymity. At Ferney, Voltaire was a great benefactor to the parish, carried out his church duties regularly and even replaced an old and ugly church by a more beautiful and spacious one—but it is significant that the only dedicatory inscription on the new building was DEO EREXIT VOLTAIRE³."

Voltaire, then, at eighty-four returned to Paris, and was immediately subjected to intense clerical harassment which need not be detailed in this paper. His prime reason for coming to Paris was to superintend the production of his new tragedy *Irène*, at the Comédie Française. He threw himself into the work with such vigour that he collapsed with serious effusions of blood and his life was despaired of; but he recovered and rallied his forces, and assisted at the final rehearsal of *Irène*, but was unable to attend the opening night, which took place on Monday, March 16th, 1778. The piece was enormously successful, the Queen and Court were present at the first night, and Voltaire was accorded an overwhelming enthusiasm whenever he appeared in public.

The Freemasons of the Lodge of the Nine Sisters were not backward in manifesting their enthusiastic admiration for Voltaire; La Dixmérie sent him original and complimentary verses, which pleased the old man. His health was proposed in Lodge, together with verses composed in his honour (10th March) and it was decided to send a deputation to felicitate Voltaire on his return to Paris. On the appointed day (March 21st) the deputation was amiably received, with Lalande at its head as *Vénérable* and spokesman for the delegation. A contemporary account states "These gentlemen had fallen in a happy vein; the old chap was fresh and lively, and the open air had strengthened him, and he appeared amiably inclined to the visitors. Unable to recollect the ceremony, he feigned never to have been a Brother and he was proposed afresh; he signed, on the spot, the necessary declarations and promised to attend the Lodge."

Thus, the initiation of Voltaire was decided upon; it mattered little whether he had at some previous time been admitted to Freemasonry, or whether he had always been a stranger to the fraternity. He was received into the Lodge on April 7th, 1778. His initiation was a great Parisian occasion, announced by journalists to the four corners of France and Europe—a detailed account of the ceremony and subsequent musical, literary and gastronomic celebrations would take another lecture to describe, for it should be remembered that the

³ Voltaire built for God.

Lodge had its own commodious temple where the devotees of each of the Nine Muses occupied a special column of their own—a symphony for full orchestra was performed; Voltaire was crowned with a laurel wreath and the Master invested him with the apron of Helvétius; at the banquet, Voltaire, on a strict diet, requested permission to retire after the first few toasts; in a few short weeks (May 30th, 1778) he was dead, and the Lodge paid him elaborate funerary tributes.

The defence of the Innocents

To the historian, the period 1760-1800 is one of intense interest, and although many incidents of violence and hooliganism overlaid the purpose of the main movement, the latter was governed largely by a desire for all men to achieve equality, not of possessions, but of legal rights; all agreed that the laws ought to be amended substantially, but in any case, however the law stood, it should be applied fairly and impartially to all. Voltaire had, previously to the formation of the Lodge of the Nine Sisters, taken great pains to provide help and legal aid for numerous cases where it was clear that a great miscarriage of justice had taken place—as in the case of Jean Calas. In 1762, the Protestant Jean Calas was condemned to torture on the rack by the Parliament of Toulouse, and executed, as guilty of killing one of his sons to prevent his conversion to Catholicism. His widow and other children, stripped by confiscation of their father's possessions, became refugees in Geneva. Voltaire gave them all possible support, after having become aware that a gross judicial error had been committed. At his request, Elié de Beaumont (a leading lawyer, and afterwards a member of the Lodge of the Nine Sisters) undertook the defence of the widow and children, and in 1765, a decree of the King's Court rehabilitated the memory of Jean Calas, and restored his possessions to the family. Many such cases can be adduced.

In addition to Elié de Beaumont there were numerous lawyers of high repute in the Lodge and a number of these led by Dupaty placed their services freely at the disposal of those whom they adjudged were wrongfully sentenced, and also campaigned vigorously for a complete change of the law; this was definitely an activity sponsored by the Lodge, with both money and encouragement. Dupaty and l'abbé Remy, who were the spearhead of this movement, adopted as a basis for their proposed reforms the doctrines of a young Italian, Beccaria, who in 1764 published his "Treatise on Delinquency and Punishment", an immortal pamphlet which gave an impulse to the reform of criminal legislation and which is the *'fons et origo'* of the modern science of penology. It was inevitable that the general body of lawyers, always thirsting to resist any change, should range themselves against the proposed reforms, but this only led to a greater degree of complexity; Dupaty was arrested, together with others of the Lodge who were engaged in the work, and the trial and defence of these intrepid reformers would take several volumes to cover (the speech of the Counsel for the Prosecution occupies over 350 pages of close print).

It suffices to say here, that the Brethren of the Lodge of the Nine Sisters adhered strictly to their obligation "*Always be ready to speed to the succour of mankind*".

The Lodge 'went underground' about 1790 owing to the general disturbance of public affairs and the unrest in the country, and re-opened its general activities towards the end of 1805 with five of its original founders; Lalande, however, died two years later. In 1805 the number of members was 111, but the Lodge declined rapidly and in 1827 had only 20 members; it may well be that the decline was due, in part, to the participation by the members of the Lodge in the work of a feminine Lodge—La Loge Belle-et-Bonne—but this is another story and cannot be told here. After a gradually declining period, the revolution of February 1848, appears to have been the final stroke—and the Lodge of Lalande, Voltaire and Franklin vanished entirely.

For the preparation of this paper I have used and quoted freely and extensively, from Bro. Aimable's History of the Lodge, and the translating of his book into English has been a quiet pleasure during the past few years.

PRESTONIAN LECTURE 1972

'It is not in the power of any man . . .'

A STUDY IN CHANGE

by

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Introduction

It is, perhaps, a slightly unhappy fact that the recorded history of the Grand Lodge of England, the first Minute Book commenced in 1723, opens with a suggestion of some disharmony—and in Grand Lodge itself. The retiring Grand Master, the Duke of Wharton, frustrated in an attempt to have his own way over a certain matter departed from Grand Lodge in a huff—or, as it is put somewhat less colloquially in the Minutes for 24 June, 1723: 'The late Grand Master went away from the Meeting without any Ceremony.'

Earlier at the same meeting the authority for James Anderson's *Constitutions* (the very first Book of Constitutions) had been called into question and Grand Lodge, without satisfactorily resolving that particular matter did, instead, proceed to pass a resolution which has continued to ring down the years ever since, and to whose substance every candidate for the Master's Chair in one of our lodges is still called upon to signify his submission. 'It is not in the Power', Grand Lodge resolved, 'of any person, or Body of men, to make any Alteration, or Innovation in the Body of Masonry without the Consent first obtained of the Annual Grand Lodge.'

To many who are familiar with the 'Summary of Antient Charges and Regulations' to be read to a Master Elect, (an innovation, incidentally, introduced by the 1827 *Book of Constitutions*) it may appear significant that the eleventh clause of that summary omits the final phrase quoted above, 'without the Consent first obtained of . . . Grand Lodge'. This clause is therefore the mast, maybe, to which many a 'no innovations' banner has been nailed over the years for there has been—and often still is—a tendency to cloak Freemasonry with an aura of sentimental reverence which is as uncritical as it is irrational. It is to brethren who may not perhaps have paused to think about it, but who have rather accepted that the system of Freemasonry has always been as it is now and like the laws of the Medes and Persians 'altereth not', that this lecture is particularly addressed. In it I hope to show that, as with any *living* thing, Freemasonry has been subject to a continuing process of alteration and innovation with a climactic date of 1813 at the Union of the two Grand Lodges.

¹ Now Librarian.

The formation of Grand Lodge

In 1717 Grand Lodge was itself an innovation. Independent lodges of free and accepted masons had existed before that date back into the 17th century, but they were uncoordinated and often short-lived. The four London lodges which held a meeting at the Apple Tree Tavern (1716-17) and constituted themselves 'a Grand Lodge pro Tempore' were not seeking to set up, at a stroke, a *de facto* autocratic system of government for the Craft. Their purpose was merely 'to cement together under a Grand Master as the Centre of Union and Harmony'. The principal officers of the few London lodges were to meet together quarterly in fraternal communication (in the event they did not do so for the first few years) and once a year they would hold a Grand Assembly and Feast. Outside these meetings Grand Lodge did not exist except as an abstraction represented by the persons of the Grand Master and his two Grand Wardens—the only Grand Officers originally. It is doubtful whether the instigators of the idea saw anything more than a social purpose in the periodical getting together of the lodges in a general assembly or 'grand lodge'. If the latter was thought of as a central controlling body it was one aspiring to strictly limited territorial jurisdiction only, the Cities of London and Westminster and their immediate environs.

Grand Lodge cuts its teeth

In six short years, however, matters had taken on a very different complexion. By 1723 a Book of Constitutions had been published, Grand Lodge had appointed a Secretary for itself, had caused the regular recording of its proceedings to be commenced and had arrogated to itself sufficient authority to be able, in the first of its recorded minutes, to pass the resolution from which the title of this lecture is taken.

The brethren composing Grand Lodge at that date (1723) quite obviously did not regard Freemasonry as a complete system delivered, as it were, from heaven on tablets of stone and complete to the last detail. Innovations and alterations *could* be (and in the event were) made in the 'Body of Masonry' but *only* with the prior consent of Grand Lodge. And even then, it appears, the sort of changes immediately envisaged were those affecting the organisation and administration of the Craft rather than modifications in Freemasonry as 'a peculiar system of morality veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols'—which anyhow it was not at that date; this development was to come later. We find no evidence for instance that the consent of Grand Lodge was necessary—or sought—for the fundamental change which was taking place at that time (the 1720s): the evolution of a structure of three degrees from one of two grades only. Grand Lodge in any case could no more prevent this than it could enforce obedience to its own regulation that Apprentices were to receive the next—and then *only* other—degree solely in Grand Lodge, and just as later in the century it could only frown upon, but not stop the next ritual innovation, the rise of the Royal Arch and the proliferation of additional degrees.

The Third Degree

The study of the development of masonic ritual from the seventeenth, through the eighteenth and into the early nineteenth centuries is by the very nature of the subject a difficult one. From such little direct evidence as there is, and from what can be drawn by inference, it is apparent that it was very much a process of innovation and change reflecting the transition from operative masonry, by way of accepted Masonry, to speculative Freemasonry. The advent of the Third Degree is a striking example of this process at work. It was a free and accepted or speculative innovation, to take the material of the old two degrees, 'Entered Apprentice' and 'Master and Fellow-Craft', and rearrange and expand it into three: .E.A., F.C., and 'Master's Part' (i.e. M.M.). Yet, as I have already remarked, this three-degree system was coming into use in the Lodges about, or very shortly after the time (1723) that Grand Lodge had passed its 'no innovations' resolution.

The new arrangement did not take on immediately. An exposure of 1730 (*The Mystery of Freemasonry*) remarked 'There is not one Mason in a Hundred that will be at the Expence to pass the Master's Part except it be for Interest'. As late as the middle of the century it had still not penetrated to Kelso in Scotland, for it was only in 1754 that the Lodge there discovered 'a most essential defect in our Constitution', namely ' . . . that this lodge had attained only to the two Degrees of Apprentices and Fellow Crafts, and know nothing of the Master's part, whereas all regular Lodges over the World are composed of at least the three Regular Degrees of Master, Fellow Craft, and Prentice'.

The *Constitutions of the Free-Masons*, the first Book of Constitutions of the first Grand Lodge, was based on the old two-degree system. Among the General Regulations we find this, for instance: 'If the Deputy Grand-Master be sick, or necessarily absent, the *Grand-Master* may chuse any *Fellow-Craft* he pleases to be his *Deputy pro tempore*.' Then again, in the 'Manner of constituting a New Lodge' (the earliest official piece of ceremonial working we have) the Master and Wardens designate are described as 'being yet among the *Fellow-Craft*' and as the ceremony proceeds it is directed that the Deputy Grand Master 'shall take the *Candidate* [i.e. the Master designate] from among his *Fellows*'. The resemblance between the Ceremony of Installation as practised in English lodges and this, its counterpart of two hundred and fifty years ago, will be obvious if the two are compared. It explains, too, why to-day the presentation of the Master Elect takes place in the Second Degree; when this particular piece of ceremonial was devised there was none higher; the Third Degree was still to come.

The fact that the three-degree system was able to establish itself from the middle 1720s onwards, apparently without demur from the Grand Lodge, seems to lend support to the theory that it was developed by a rearrangement and expansion of basic material which already

existed in the two-degree system. To this extent it was not considered an innovation and therefore acceptable. This view is strengthened when we compare the attitude of Grand Lodge in the latter half of the 18th century to the next degree novelty which had by then made its appearance, the Royal Arch.

First, however, it is necessary for us to take a brief look at the relationship between the two rival Craft systems which were working in England at that time: that under the premier Grand Lodge of 1717, and that obtaining with its rival which came into being in 1751, the 'Grand Lodge of England according to the Old Institutions', the so-called Antients Grand Lodge.

Freemasonry antient and modern

To us the differences between the two systems may now seem small and of little consequence, and certainly out of proportion to the unmasonic feelings they generated, but at the time much was made of them and not least by that leading protagonist and Grand Secretary of the Antients, Laurence Dermott. In the Book of Constitutions which he compiled for that Grand Lodge, and to which he gave the curious title *Ahiman Rezon*, he roundly condemned (2nd, 1764, and later editions) the whole system of what he called 'modern masonry' (thereby, incidentally, coining the nickname for the original Grand Lodge) and charged it with having deviated greatly from the old landmarks. 'The innovation', he declared, 'was made in the reign of George the first [1714-27] and the new form was delivered as orthodox to the present members.'

He went on to allege in his typically disparaging way that the founders of the premier Grand Lodge had invented what they could not remember of the original mode of working:

About the year 1717 some joyous companions, who had passed the degree of a craft, (although very rusty) resolved to form a lodge for themselves, in order (by conversation) to recollect what had been formerly dictated to them, or if that should be found impracticable, to substitute something new, which might for the future pass for masonry amongst themselves. At this meeting the question was asked, whether any person in the assembly knew the Master's part, and being answered in the negative, it was resolved, *Nem. con.* that the deficiency should be made up with a new composition, and what fragments of the old order found amongst them, should be immediately reformed and made more pliable to the humours of the people . . .

Dermott's assertions may have a grain of distorted truth in them for, as we have already noted, the three Craft degrees were developed by a rearrangement of the existing motifs of the original two degrees and a filling-out with certain new material. On the other hand Dermott's own Grand Lodge worked the same three-degree system so

that he was probably carping only about matters of detail on which we know the two Grand Lodges differed. In this respect the most notable case in point related to the modes of recognition of the First and Second Degrees over which the premier Grand Lodge had made its most significant—and most ill-judged—innovation.

The transposition

At some time in the 1730s the premier Grand Lodge, alarmed by the publicity which Freemasonry was attracting through so-called exposures and by the increase in the numbers of irregular Masons (the two things were probably cause and effect), adopted a series of measures 'to be observed in their respective Lodges for their Security against all open and Secret Enemies to the Craft'. Just how far these measures went is open to debate for the Minutes of Grand Lodge are understandably reticent on the subject. Some concerned rules for visiting, but there seems little doubt that the major change was the transposition of certain words of recognition. This is apparent from the mid-18th century exposures and from the fact that certain continental systems which took their Freemasonry from England at that time still to this day retain the transposed arrangement, making intervisitation between Constitutions by E.As. and F.Cs. something of a difficulty.

This innovation was one of the sources of contention between the Antients and the Moderns. Dermott made an oblique reference to it in a typical skit describing Moderns lodges and, in particular, the drawing of the lodge done by the tyler on the floor of the meeting room. 'Nor is it uncommon', he wrote in *Ahiman Rezon*, 'for a tyler to receive ten or twelve shillings for drawing two sign posts with chalk &c. and writing Jamaica rum upon one, and Barbadoes rum upon the other . . .'

The premier Grand Lodge having allowed itself the power to make this fundamental alteration equally found no difficulty some seventy or so years later in countermanding it in order to pave the way for the union of the two rival Grand Lodges. In 1809 it passed a resolution to 'enjoin the several Lodges to revert to the Ancient Land Marks of the Society' and so removed one of the greatest obstacles to a reconciliation.

The Royal Arch

The Antients were, as we have seen, quick to charge the Moderns with having made innovations in Masonry, but it was they who adopted and fostered the biggest innovation of all in 18th century Freemasonry, the Royal Arch, together with a series of 'side' degrees out of which have grown some of the present-day additional degrees and orders of Freemasonry.

The Royal Arch degree had made its appearance some time during the 1740s and the Antients Grand Lodge, under Dermott's leadership, were quickly to become enthusiasts for it. Their lodges worked this degree (and others) under the aegis of their Craft warrant and they did not admit the necessity of any separate authority or organisation for doing so. The preamble to their *Rules and Regulations for the . . . Government of Holy Royal Arch Chapters* (1794) led off with the statement that 'Ancient Masonry consists of Four Degrees . . . The apprentice, the Fellow Craft . . . the Sublime Degree of Master, [and] The Holy Royal Arch' and it continued: 'It follows, therefore, of course, that every Warranted Lodge possesses the Power of forming, and holding Lodges in each of those several Degrees; the last of which, from its Pre-eminence, is denominated among Masons a Chapter.'

The premier Grand Lodge on the other hand did not recognise the Royal Arch as part of the original system of Freemasonry, although had it been so disposed it could presumably have done so within the power Grand Lodge had reserved to itself by the 1823 'no innovations' resolution. It preferred however to remain completely apart from the Royal Arch and so a quite separate organisation came into existence in 1766 to control the degree among the Moderns—the Grand and Royal Chapter of the Royal Arch of Jerusalem. The Grand Secretary at that time, Samuel Spencer, went so far as to say in writing to a correspondent: '. . . the Royal Arch is a Society which we do not acknowledge, and which we believe to have been invented to introduce innovations and to seduce the brethren from the true and original foundations which our ancestors laid down . . .' In other words it was not an innovation which the premier Grand Lodge was prepared to accept into the 'Body of Masonry' in the way that in the formative stage of its development, it had accepted the tri-gradal system which, as we have seen, was certainly not laid down by any who might be deemed to be the 'ancestors' of the speculative Freemasons of the mid-18th century.

Nevertheless, in spite of the premier Grand Lodge's non-recognition of the Royal Arch—and I use the neutral term 'non-recognition of' in preference to 'opposition to' as more nearly defining the attitude of Grand Lodge in the matter—the degree grew in popularity among the Moderns and indeed many of the leading figures in the premier Grand Lodge joined it. They were not opposed to it, but they would not mix the Royal Arch with Craft Masonry in their Grand Lodge nor allow their private lodges to do so—although here and there they occasionally did. As it was put by a later Grand Secretary, James Heseltine (himself a Royal Arch Mason and a founder of the Grand Chapter), displaying a more tolerant outlook than his predecessor and one better reflecting the position taken up by Grand Lodge on the subject: '. . . the Royal Arch is a private and distinct society. It is a part of Masonry, but has no connection with Grand Lodge.' Then again later, writing apropos the Royal Arch degree, he commented '. . . its explanations of Freemasonry are very pleasing and instructive.'

This fundamental difference in their attitude to the Royal Arch by the Moderns and the Antients was one of the more important points at issue which had to be reconciled before a union between the two could be effected. The compromise that in this instance did so was the statesmanlike concession by the premier Grand Lodge in 1813 that the Supreme Order of the Royal Arch was, after all, part of pure Antient Masonry, and the legal fiction by which it was acknowledged as 'the Perfection of the Master's Degree', thus leaving intact the body of pure Antient Masonry as consisting of 'three degrees and no more'. An equivocation, perhaps, but one which, happily, was to prove a firm foundation for the United Grand Lodge.

The nature of eighteenth century Freemasonry

When one examines (as far as the evidence permits) the development of 18th century Freemasonry, its religious basis, the moral and symbolic content of its ritual, the form of its ceremonies, its social customs—what, in fact, is of the very essence of Freemasonry—one cannot escape the conclusion that there was a subtle but continuous process of innovation, alteration and expansion which could hardly have been envisaged by the framers of the 'no innovations' resolution of 1723 although the seed of one very fundamental change had been planted in that year.

The year 1723, as we know, saw the publication of the first *Book of Constitutions*. It has been argued that the First Charge of a Freemason contained in the *Constitutions*, 'Concerning God and Religion', established the early speculative Freemasonry of Grand Lodge on a deistic basis. It is by no means certain, however, that this was the intention of James Anderson, the Editor, or of the committee of '14 learned Brothers' who were appointed to examine the manuscript. It may have been no more than a reflection of the more tolerant attitude of the Age of Reason to divergent views of the basic and universal Christian religion of the country. Be that as it may, and in spite of the fact that there are recorded instances from the 1720s onwards of men of the Jewish faith being admitted into the Craft, there is no doubt that English Freemasonry remained very definitely Christian throughout the 18th century and up to the watershed date of 1813, the Union of the two Grand Lodges. Then in a whole series of innovations and alterations the United Grand Lodge gave a 'new look' to the system of Freemasonry by, among other things, de-Christianising its ritual, thus establishing it henceforward and quite unequivocally as 'the centre of union between good men and true' irrespective of religion and mode of worship.

It was only to be expected that speculative Freemasonry should earlier have been developed on a Christian basis in a Christian country by the practising Christians who formed the great majority of its members. The ritual and ceremonies embraced Christian forms and allusions. The two Saints named John figured prominently in Masonic

tradition; they were the Patrons of the Art, the two Grand Parallels in Masonry; unattached brethren were said to be from 'the Lodge of St. John'; the feast days—that of St. John the Baptist on the 24 June and of the Evangelist on the 27 December—were observed by Masons as the days of installation which in many cases took place every six months. The installation meeting was called the Festival of St. John; in some places it still is—thus does tradition die hard.

The *MS. Constitutions* of the operative masons, the so-called 'Old Charges', were prefaced by a Trinitarian prayer which Dermott took and reproduced in *Ahiman Rezon* as 'Prayer used amongst the primitive Christian Masons'. He also, incidentally, printed a theistic prayer stated to be 'used by Jewish Free-Masons', but in general the speculative Free-masons of the 18th century followed their operative ancestors and when prayers were required in their proceedings they quite naturally adopted or adapted the Christian forms to which they were used in their worship. (As a matter of interest we may note that the *Book of Constitutions* of the Grand Lodge of Ireland, which is descended indirectly from an Irish version of *Ahiman Rezon*, still gives a prayer for use in the Third Degree which is Christian and Trinitarian in character. On its certificates, too, this Grand Lodge is referred to as 'The Most Worshipful Lodge of St. John'.)

When Lodges started to adopt distinctive titles—(the first to do so was in 1730; Antients lodges, seldom troubled; with the Moderns, and at first with the United Grand Lodge, it was usual but still optional; from 1884 it was mandatory)—a great many took the name of a Christian saint. One has only to refer to Lane's *Masonic Records* and the *Masonic Year Book* to note the numbers of lodges which have been and continue to be so named, thus underlining the strong connection there has always been between the Craft and the established religion of the country and its individual churches.

Ritual, ceremonial and custom

The development of the Craft system in the 18th century and up to 1813 is the final chapter in the story of the transformation of free and accepted Masonry into speculative Freemasonry—of the change from a simple social and benevolent society with a picturesque ceremony of admission inherited in its essence from the operative masons, to an altogether more serious and high-minded means of demonstrating a pattern for living by means of allegory and symbols. Freed from the shackles of its operative, purely trade restrictive purpose, and becoming fashionable and accepted at all levels of society, it was able to rise and expand on a more esoteric plane.

The first stage in this process has already been referred to: the adaptation of the system into three degrees and the clothing of the skeleton of these with additional material to fit them into the new pattern. Thus at first the purpose—or perhaps merely the effect—was to add to the novelty and appeal of what was becoming a fashionable

and growing institution by providing it with a dramatic content and with traditional 'histories' or explanations to suit its elements and motifs, old and new. As far as can be judged from the sources available (and, for want of anything better, and unreliable as by their nature they must to some extent be, we have here to depend very heavily upon exposures) there appears at this stage to have been no attempt to draw moral lessons from masonic traditions and emblems. True, Samuel Prichard in one of the first of the exposures to be widely circulated, his *Masonry Dissected* of 1730, did include this exchange:

Q. What do you learn by being a Gentleman-Mason?

A. Secrecy, Morality and Goodfellowship.

but he did not go on to develop this answer either here or elsewhere in the catechism. The morality which a 'Gentleman-Mason' learned was probably that of the code of conduct of the 'Old Charges' rather than that conveyed by ritual allegories and symbols.

In the 1740s however we begin to find scraps of evidence that symbolical explanations were being attached to certain features of the ritual and ceremonies. These occur here and there in contemporary French exposures and in the statements extracted by the Portuguese Inquisition from the unfortunate John Coustos, who was tried and tortured as a result of his masonic activities in Lisbon. It seems, therefore, that the expansion of masonic symbolism as a means of expressing certain ethical teachings must have been taking place round about the middle of the 18th century. By the end of the 1760s writers and lecturers were beginning to appear to expand and explain this new-found philosophy of Freemasonry and to develop its spiritual ideas and inner meanings, culminating in the work of one who was to tower above them all and whose masonic genius is annually commemorated by a lecture such as this—William Preston.

There can be little doubt but that the work of these masonic philosophers did much to give energy and direction to this aspect of Freemasonry. What they did in their commentaries was to produce a great mass of didactic and homiletic material which, although not specifically designed with this purpose in mind, was in fact—or the best parts of it—absorbed into the lodge work, thus establishing the pattern familiar to us. Reduced to their essentials our masonic ceremonies consist of certain forms of words and actions by which a man is made a Mason or advanced to another degree. These, the esoteric elements of the ceremonies, provide a rite which is *complete in itself* and all that is necessary to achieve its prime purpose, but around this framework is then built an elaborate system of formalised addresses, exhortations, charges and the like which lifts the whole onto a higher plane and expands and expounds (which the basic rite does not) the philosophical principles and tenets of Freemasonry.

We can understand how this, the great but gradual innovation of the latter half of the 18th century, came about if we consider what we know of the working of the time. The actual ceremonies were probably very brief by modern standards—no more than the simple ritual procedures for making, passing and raising; the basic rite, in fact. It was in the catechetical lectures, which at that time were worked as the brethren sat at table, that the explanations, the moralising and eulogising, the drawing-out of allegory and symbolism, took place. This is still so, of course, but the Lectures are largely neglected since much of their teaching (or, at least, the less verbose parts of it) has been absorbed into the ceremonies, and because of the change in function of lodges of instruction, for these are now almost entirely mere lodges of rehearsal and not, as they were until well into the 19th century, lodges giving instruction in Freemasonry by working the Lectures.

The coalescing of the basic rite and what might be termed the teaching and preaching part of Freemasonry came about as the ceremonial and the social and convivial aspects of lodge meetings became divorced into two separate and distinct activities. This was one of the many changes which finally became universal as a result of the work of the Lodge of Reconciliation in 1815. Whilst the Lectures were 'gone through' as the brethren sat around a table, smoking and drinking and indulging in many toasts and charges, there was probably much room for individual ideas in matters of interpretation and symbolism. The author of the exposure *Three Distinct Knocks* (1760) confirms this (despite his gibes) in a footnote appended to his version of the Fellow-Craft's Lecture or 'Reasons' (as he elsewhere calls a lecture) when he states:

"Some Masters of Lodges will argue upon Reasons about the Holy Vessels in the Temple and the Windows and Doors, the Length, Breadth and Height of every Thing in the Temple. Saying, why was it so and so? One will give one Reason; and another will give another Reason, and thus they will continue for Two or Three Hours in this Part and the Master-Part; but this happens but very seldom, except an *Irishman* should come, who likes to hear himself talk . . . some give one Reason and some give another; thus you see that every Man's Reason is not alike. . ."

When the writings of the masonic philosophers began to make their appearance they found favour by providing and popularising ready-made, but deeper interpretations which caught the imagination of the Masons of the day. To take an example by way of illustration, one of the first of these publications was Wellins Calcott's *A Candid Disquisition of the Principles and Practices of the Most Ancient and Honourable Society of Free and Accepted Masons*, published in 1769. The second part of this book has the sub-title 'The Duties of a Free-Mason, in several charges delivered in *regular* Lodges . . .' It consists of some sixty or so pages of charges, addresses, prayers and so forth delivered on particular, named occasions. This is what the author,

Calcott said in 'a Short Charge' delivered by him in the Palladian Lodge (now No. 120), Hereford, to a brother on his being installed in the Chair of that Lodge. The language may not be unfamiliar, although not necessarily in precisely the same context.

"Right Worshipful Sir,

By the unanimous voice of the members of this lodge, you are elected to the mastership thereof for the ensuing half-year; . . .

You have been too long standing, and are too good a member of our community, to require *now* any information in the duty of your office. What you have seen *praise-worthy* in others, we doubt not you will *imitate*; and what you have seen *defective*, you will in yourself *amend* . . .

For a pattern of imitation, consider the great luminary of nature, which, rising in the *east*, regularly diffuses light and lustre to all within its circle. In like manner it is your province, with due decorum, to spread and communicate light and instruction to the brethren in the lodge.

From the knowledge we already have of your zeal and abilities, we rest assured you will discharge the duties of this important station in such a manner, as will greatly redound to the honour of yourself, as well as of those members over whom you are elected to preside."

Other examples could be quoted from this and other authors where one finds phrases or sentiments unexpectedly standing out from the printed page with equal familiarity. It is difficult, however, to assess whether these represent original source material or whether they are instances of a writer collating or paraphrasing something already well known to him. Whichever way round it was, their appearance in print would nevertheless have the effect of standardising approaches and attitudes of mind if not of actual words.

This process by which the rudimentary degree system was expanded into fully-developed speculative Freemasonry has a faint analogy today in the desire of some brethren to expand and embellish Lodge work still further by desiring standard formal addresses or 'explanations' where *ad hoc* informality would be more appropriate. So new accretions grow quite unnecessarily on to 'The Ritual' to cover such occasions as the presentation of a Grand Lodge certificate, Hall Stone Jewel, or the Master's 250th Anniversary collar jewel, 'explanations' of the apron and so on. We may remember however that in *their* Freemasonry eighteenth-century brethren were only following the custom of the time, the Age of Formality, when almost any occasion was made the excuse for a sermon, address or discourse of one sort or another. For instance, James Boswell on being received as a

member of the Literary Club in 1773 recorded in his Journal: 'Upon my entrance, Johnson placed himself behind a chair, on which he leaned on as a desk or pulpit, and with humorous formality gave me a *charge*, pointing out the conduct expected from me as a good member of this club.' This procedure has a familiar ring to us although it must be stated at once that there is no evidence that Dr. Johnson was ever a member of the Craft although Boswell certainly was. Apropos this custom of a 'charge' being given to the new member of some organisation, we may remember that the *MS. Constitutions* of the operative masons are referred to as the 'Old Charges' simply because they contained a series of charges, read to a man on his being made a mason, giving rules and precepts for his conduct in his trade and in life, to which he was required to pledge his adherence.

1813—Union and reconciliation

Reference has already been made more than once in the course of this Lecture to the coming together of the two Great Lodges as the United Grand Lodge of England and to the year in which this took place, 1813, as a turning point in the development of English Freemasonry. We have now reached the point where we may take a look at the effect of this great upheaval and reorganisation of the English Craft, a traumatic experience which sister constitutions were spared—a fact which accounts for some of the differences between English practice and theirs. The story of the events leading up to the Union and how this was celebrated on 27 December, 1813, has been told many times over and need not be repeated here, for we are now more immediately concerned with the series of alterations and innovations which was its outcome.

The Articles of Union—the 'peace treaty' (as it were) ratified and confirmed by the two Grand Lodges—had provided for machinery 'to promulgate and enjoin the pure and unsullied system, that perfect reconciliation, unity of obligation, law, working, language, and dress, may be happily restored to the English Craft (Article XV). This provision was put into effect by the warranting of the Lodge of Reconciliation which commenced work in 1814 and continued over the following two years until 1816 when 'the several Ceremonies, &c.' recommended by the Lodge were approved and confirmed by Grand Lodge (20 May, 5 June, 1816).

Masonic scholars have now been arguing for many years as to how far the Lodge of Reconciliation went into detail in settling wording and working, and what therefore was approved and confirmed by Grand Lodge. The Minutes of the Lodge (which are preserved in the Grand Lodge Library) are very sketchy and unrevealing, but it does seem that the Lodge of Reconciliation may have concerned itself in the main with the broad outline or pattern of the ceremonies and only to have gone into precise detail on particular matters like the openings and closings, the obligations, passwords, methods of advancing and the like.

Be that as it may, the work of the Lodge was not accomplished without arousing opposition. Six Antients lodges under the leadership of the Lodge of Fidelity (former Antients No. 2, now No. 3) set up a committee 'for the protecting safeguard of Ancient Masonry' which embarked on a vigorous campaign against what were described as 'the Innovations attempted to be introduced by the Lodge of Reconciliation'. The leaders were Bros. J. H. Goldsworthy of the Lodge of Fidelity (who had originally been a member of the Lodge of Reconciliation until excluded therefrom for his 'improper conduct' in this affair) and Bro. John Woodcock, Master of the Phoenix Lodge (now No. 173).

The activities of the protestors soon, and inevitably, resulted in their being arraigned before the newly-created Board of General Purposes, but they had the courage of their convictions. Woodcock in particular pulled no punches. He refused to recognise the authority of the Board, denying 'that Grand Lodge was itself properly constituted, the Articles of Union not having been observed' and the Union therefore not yet complete. He then went on to level at the Lodge of Reconciliation the accusation that the Lodge 'had not done what they were directed by the Articles of Union and had altered all the Ceremonies and Language of Masonry and not left one Sentence standing'.

But the Union, so long and earnestly worked for and so recently won, was not to be jeopardised by renewed divisions and disharmony. The Board showed patience and the Lodge of Reconciliation a willingness to compromise. The Board could have recommended—but did not—action under one of the Articles of Union (XVI) which gave Grand Lodge power 'to declare the Warrants to be forfeited, if the measures proposed shall be resisted'. On its part the Lodge of Reconciliation, through its Master, Samuel Hemming, (in a report to the Grand Master, 11 February, 1815), stated that 'In conformity to the wishes of some of the objectors the Lodge of Reconciliation have introduced a trifling variation in the business of the Second Degree, because they are most anxious that the general harmony of masonic arrangement should not be disturbed by a pertinacious adherence to mere forms, which are themselves of minor import.' This was the crux of the matter; the Lodge was prepared to take the broader view for the general good of the Craft.

Although the organised anti-Reconciliation lobby stemmed from the Antients side (which had tended all along to show itself as intransigent as the Moderns were prepared to be statesmanlike) disquiet at the changes that were being made could not have been all one-sided. The premier Grand Lodge had already made moves to bring itself into line with the Antients, and thus to prepare the way for the Union, through the work of its own lodge specially warranted for the purpose, the Lodge of Promulgation which had worked from 1809 to 1811. (One of its recommendations—an innovation, incidentally, as far as Moderns

lodges were concerned—was the introduction of deacons). Moderns Masons had thus already felt the first stirrings of the wind of change which was to blow through the Craft at the Union. Nevertheless there must have been many, too, among their ranks who found this disturbing and even unacceptable. The Old Dundee Lodge (now No. 18), for instance, recorded a number of resignations about this time (1814-15) including that of a Past Master who wrote to say that he had ceased coming to meetings 'in consequence of his not being of late as comfortable when he attended the Lodge (on account of the alterations in the Lodge) owing to the New System since the Union'. The years after 1813 were unsettled ones for the English Craft when members fell away or were expelled and lodges erased, and although this may have been partly the result of economic conditions during the aftermath of the Napoleonic Wars, it was also to some extent a reflection of the dissatisfaction of the die-hards with the Union and its results. Only the firm Grand Mastership of the Duke of Sussex steered the United Grand Lodge safely through these difficult and often stormy seas and brought it into calmer waters beyond.

It is easy to understand the feelings of brethren as they found the old order changing. Imagine the reaction today in the event—the highly unlikely event, we may be sure—of the Grand Lodge deciding to issue an approved, standard ritual and requiring all lodges to conform. The adherents of this or that 'working' would indeed be quick to protest and to defend their own favourite variant. We may remember the excitement and controversy aroused on the two occasions in this century when Grand Lodge has moved from its traditional position of non-interference in such matters to discuss and legislate on ritual—and then only within particular, narrow fields. The first row in 1926, when the initial prohibition of the extended ceremony of Installation was wisely modified by a permissive compromise; and the second, in more recent years, over the optional variations in the obligations. How much greater must have been the consternation among many brethren a century and a half ago when, after years of bitterness and rivalry marked by a tenacity often verging on the fanatical to their own way of doing things, they found the Lodge of Reconciliation, backed by Grand Lodge, seeking to level out everything on to one common denominator of ritual and practice.

In point of fact the Lodge could not—and did not—succeed in doing this. For the remoter country lodges the sending of representatives to London to witness the demonstration of the ceremonies was an expensive and difficult business. Many did not even attempt to do so. Furthermore, for the transmission of the ritual to lodges reliance had to be placed on that most fallible of instruments, the human memory. The influence and effect of the work of the Lodge of Reconciliation over the country as a whole was therefore patchy and uncertain and this accounts for the many local variations which survive to-day. That in the circumstances so much uniformity was achieved is surprising, but it was probably only arrived at over several decades as opposition

and disgruntlement evaporated and the English Craft readjusted itself and settled down again. The founding of general lodges of instruction such as Stability and Emulation no doubt accelerated the stabilising process, as did that innovation of the 19th century, the printed ritual. The first of these was brought out by George Claret, a printer, in 1838—although not, it may be noted, without escaping the censure of Grand Lodge. (It was not until 1870 that the first edition of the popular *Perfect Ceremonies of Craft Masonry*, purporting to give correct Emulation working, was published.)

Alterations and innovations at the union

The question which now naturally arises is what then were the alterations and innovations made in the English Craft at the time of the Union? In broad terms they affected both of the aspects under which the system can be analysed. The basic rite was co-ordinated so that the outline of and sequence of events in the ceremonies (the openings and closings, making, passing and raising) followed a uniform and logical sequence. The unifying of the monitorial content of the ritual, the didactic and homiletic elements woven around the basic rite, was apparently more a process of selection and discarding (through the medium of the Lectures) from the mass of such material that had grown up since the middle of the 18th century as already described. A process, so to speak, of knocking off the superfluous knobs and excrescences. In both respects what was innovation to some was probably established usage to others; of necessity there had to be a great deal of give and take. It must have been to those prepared to take only the narrowest view that it seemed as though the ritual and ceremonies had been so altered that 'not one Sentence' had been 'left standing'.

The fundamentals of the system of Freemasonry—that is what were and still are the essentials of the basic rite—remained unchanged. This must be so, but if it were not self-evident proof is forthcoming from a conference of the Grand Masters of England, Ireland and Scotland which took place in London six months after the United Grand Lodge had come into being. At this conference '... it was ascertained that the Three Grand Lodges were perfectly in unison *in all the great and essential points of the Mystery & Craft* according to the immemorial traditions and uninterrupted usage of ancient Masons and they recognized this unity in a fraternal Manner'.²

It is possible to gain some idea of the variations which must have existed in the English Craft by comparison with the workings in those other constitutions (the Irish, Scottish and, to some extent, American) which were not subjected to internal strife and the purgative experience of subsequent union as was Freemasonry in this country. Further light can be thrown on the subject by an examination

² Minutes of the Grand Lodge of Ireland, 1 December, 1814 (Author's italics).

also of the position in Bristol which managed to remain the 'odd man out' and retain in its affinity with Irish practice its own unique working and system of degrees. The basic rite is common to all; the variations arise in the language and in the ceremonial to a greater or lesser degree dramatic (or even melodramatic) used to enact it, and in the range and diversity of the allegory in which it is veiled and of the symbols by which it is illustrated.

American printed monitors and lodge manuals provide interesting evidence on these points. Since they were derived in the first instance from English practice or publications originating here before 1813 they give an indication of the motifs and features which disappeared from English Craft Freemasonry at, or shortly after, the Union. They also, and incidentally, well illustrate the difference between the basic rite and the monitorial material with which it is embellished. The former, if given at all, tends to be printed in these American publications in a highly abbreviated form or in code; the latter, consisting of exhortations, charges, addresses, explanations and the like, is printed in the clear, sometimes with engravings of the emblems and symbols involved.

Among these will be found many of those which appear times over on pre-1813 English jewels and regalia, Masonic pottery and porcelain, furniture, tracing boards, emblematic charts and certificates and so on, but which no longer figure in the English Craft degrees. To quote but a few examples by way of illustration: the trowel, emblematically for the spreading of the cement of brotherly love and affection (still to be found in Bristol); the Beehive, the emblem of industry whose example urges man to add to the common store of knowledge so that he does not become a drone in the hive of nature, a useless member of society; the Hour-glass and Scythe, emblems respectively of human life and of time, serving to remind us of the transitory nature of our existence here on earth; the Pot of Incense, an emblem of that most acceptable sacrifice, a pure heart; and many others. Then there are sundry features such as the Middle Chamber Lecture with its homilies on the Five Noble Orders of Architecture and Five Senses of Human Nature—hearing, seeing, feeling, smelling and tasting—which originally appeared in print in Preston's *Illustrations of Masonry*. The Five Senses did not survive the Union in this country and the Five Noble Orders remain in the Ritual as a passing reference only (they are still described more fully in the Craft Lectures).

It seems, then, that what the Lodge of Reconciliation aimed to do and what in large measure it succeeded in doing, was to cut through the thicket of the accretions of the years to get back to the heart of things and re-establish English Freemasonry on the basis of 'pure Antient masonry'. If in so doing much was discarded which we may now regard with somewhat nostalgic regret, we may also be thankful that the Craft degrees emerged from the Union as the firm, lasting and (with the Royal Arch) the only basis of the English system.

The 1815 Book of Constitutions

At the same time that the Lodge of Reconciliation was working to restore 'unity of obligation . . . working [and] language', attention was also being given, as required by the Articles of Union, to the subject of 'law and dress'. By the twenty-first (and last) of the Articles of Union it had been agreed that 'A revision shall be made of the rules and regulations now established and in force in the two Fraternities, and a code of laws . . . for the whole conduct of the Craft, shall be forthwith prepared, and a new Book of Constitutions be composed and printed . . .' When this eventually appeared in 1815 it was a complete departure from what had gone before, the creaking structure which had been built up over the years on Anderson's *Constitutions* and the extraordinary hotch-potch of *Ahiman Rezon* which had done duty as a Book of Constitutions for the Antients Grand Lodge.

With the first *Book of Constitutions* of the new United Grand Lodge a serious attempt was made to codify the law and custom of English Freemasonry by gathering together under subject heads the regulations already in being (if appropriate) or such new ones as were required as a result of the Union. The Book remained in force for a period of three years during which time members of the Craft were invited to offer comments and suggestions and in 1819 a revised edition appeared containing a number of important alterations in substance.

The 1815-19 *Constitutions* had many new features, mainly covering administration and procedural points which had previously only been dealt with inadequately or not at all. Among them for example was a table of precedence of Grand Officers, more comprehensive than anything which had gone before and including a number of new offices the duties of which were detailed in new regulations; other new sections set out rules on such matters as Provincial and District Grand Lodges, the London District, and a number of newly created boards including a 'Lodge' to administer the Fund of Benevolence and (another innovation) the Board of General Purposes; a section on certificates appearing for the first time in 1815 was completely revised in 1819 to make it automatic for a Grand Lodge certificate to be issued to every member of the Craft—hitherto it had been optional, on request. There was much else that was new but we are not immediately concerned with the detailed codification of Masonic law and matters of administration; of more interest to us in this present study are the regulations made to secure uniformity of dress.

Regalia before and after the Union

One of the more extensive innovations of the 1815 *Book of Constitutions* (not substantially altered in 1819) concerned masonic clothing. Heretofore little or nothing precise had been ordained about this. Although from quite early in its history Grand Lodge had occasionally made orders about regalia, these were concerned only with such details as the colour of the silk lining to aprons or of that

of 'ribbons' (i.e. collars) for jewels (in each case blue for Grand Offices, red for Grand Stewards, and white for all other brethren); the overall design of aprons and jewels was largely at the whim of the maker or wearer. Just as in the latter years of the 18th century masonic writers were being inspired to interpret in many ways the philosophy and symbolism of Freemasonry, the makers of regalia from the professional to the home-made gave free rein to their imagination in the representation of its outward and visible signs and emblems. The result was an astonishing variety of aprons and jewels numerous examples of which are to be seen today in masonic museums and collections.

Aprons were often highly decorated with elaborate hand-drawn, printed, embroidered or *appliqué* designs. Jewels, apart from those of lodge officers (by no means as uniform and comprehensive as now) often took the form of medallions—thin plates of silver either engraved on the solid or intricately fretted with masonic emblems. Such medallions were for the most part worn by brethren, it seems, simply as personal adornment; quite often they were presentation pieces and occasionally they served as officers' jewels. The exposure *Three Distinct Knocks* (6th edition, 1776) described them in this way:

“These Medals are usually of Silver, and some have been highly finished and ornamented so as to be worth ten or twenty Guineas. They are suspended round the Neck with Ribbons of various Colours, and worn on their Publick Days of Meeting, at Funeral Processions, &c. in Honour of the Craft. On the Reverse of these Medals it is usual to put the Owner's Coat of Arms, or Cypher, or any other Device that the Owner fancies, and some even add to the Emblems other Fancy Things that bear some Analogy to Masonry.”

Plenty of room there for innovation, it would appear.

The Regulations of the 1815 *Book of Constitutions* swept away all this by introducing a section entitled 'Of Regalia' which for the first time laid down standard patterns for a complete range of aprons and jewels which were little different from those of to-day—an innovation one hundred years after the founding of Grand Lodge which must surely make misplaced the ingenuity of those who see hidden meanings in everything Masonic, however practical and mundane, even to the tassels of our aprons.

An alteration made at this time in officers' jewels was the changing of the deacons' jewel from the previously generally used (but nowhere ordained) figure of Mercury to a dove bearing an olive branch, but just why this change was made was not recorded nor has it ever been satisfactorily explained.

The nineteenth century

With 'perfect reconciliation' and unity 'happily restored to the English Craft'—or nearly so—the years following 1815 consolidated the position and paved the way for the great expansion of the Order in this country in the later years of the 19th century. The 'no innovations' principle (omitted from the Regulations in the 1815 *Book of Constitutions* but reinstated in the 1827 edition, as already noted, as one of the clauses in the 'Summary of Antient Charges') had only one further real test to face. Not that the process of development did not continue after 1815, for it did, but within very much narrower limits as far as ritual and ceremonial were concerned.

The ceremonies of Installation and of Consecration are cases in point. An attempt was made in 1827 to 'tidy-up' and standardise the ceremony of Installation, but with limited success since the work of the Lodge or Board of Installed Masters warranted for the purpose was promulgated to London lodges only. The ceremony of Consecration on the other hand is an example of something new in post-Union practice—although not in theory for it was not unknown in the 18th century having been first described in Preston's *Illustrations* of 1772. There is indeed good reason to suppose that it may have been an innovation of that worthy founder of this, the Prestonian, Lecture. However the ceremony appears to have been performed very little—if at all—in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. A prayer of consecration or dedication was the most that might attend the formal constitution of a new lodge. It was only from about the late 1830s or early 1840s onwards that the ceremony of Consecration as we know it (and derived essentially from the Preston model) really began to take on as an indispensable part of the ritual formulary for constituting a new lodge. So much so that we to-day speak of the *Consecration* of a new lodge rather than, as formerly, of its *Constitution*.

What was, it is to be hoped, the last great test of the innovatory powers of Grand Lodge came in the middle of the last century over the recognition of the Mark Degree when Grand Lodge found itself confronted by a similar situation to that which a century before had faced its predecessor, the premier Grand Lodge, over the Royal Arch. The story is long and involved and need not detain us here for we are interested only in its outcome. After much discussion and investigation by a special Committee set up for the purpose Grand Lodge adopted a resolution on 5 March 1856 (on the recommendation of the Committee) 'That the Degree of Mark Mason is not at variance with Craft Masonry, and that it be added thereto, under proper regulations'.

But this was not to be the end of the matter. At the next Quarterly Communication on 4 June 1856 when the Minutes of the previous meeting were put to Grand Lodge, a motion was proposed by Brother John Henderson (a Past President of the Board of General Purposes

and Past Grand Registrar) that the portion relating to the Mark Degree be not confirmed. In an impassioned speech to Grand Lodge (reported in the *Freemasons' Monthly Magazine*, 1 July 1856):

“He called upon Grand Lodge not to consent to any innovation on their present ceremonies, as, should they do so, the most disastrous consequences might result. If Grand Lodge were to consent to the proposed innovation, they would be laying the axe to their prosperity, and violating not only the letter but the spirit of their Masonic Union. He trusted the day would never arrive when Grand Lodge would give its sanction to so important an alteration in their laws and discipline as was then proposed. Indeed, he denied that they had the power to make so great a constitutional change as that of adding a new Degree to the Order. They were pledged against all false doctrines, all innovations on their landmarks, and he contended that no man, nor body of men, could make such innovations as that now proposed without endangering the stability of the whole Institution.”

Much discussion ensued but the matter was finally clinched when the Grand Master, the Earl of Zetland declared (according to the same report) that ‘seeing that the Book of Constitutions called upon all Masters to declare that no man, or body of men, could make innovation in the tenets of Freemasonry, and that by the Act of Union their Order was declared to consist of three degrees, and no more, he could not do otherwise than record his vote in favour of the non-confirmation of the minutes.

The motion proposing this was then put and carried by a large majority. The Mark Degree was not to be admitted part of pure Antient Masonry. The result was that the separate organisation, the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons, then came into being to control the Mark Degree in much the same way that a century previously the first Grand Chapter was formed because of the non-recognition of the Royal Arch by the premier Grand Lodge. Masonic history had repeated itself and once again on this point of the definition of ‘pure Antient Masonry’.

In conclusion

By its decision over the Mark Degree Grand Lodge had finally divested itself of the wider power it had originally reserved to itself in 1723. So today our *Book of Constitutions* defines the powers of Grand Lodge within the more limited field of organisation and administration. ‘The Grand Lodge’, states Rule 4, ‘possesses the supreme superintending authority, and alone has the inherent power of enacting laws and regulations for the government of the craft, and of altering, repealing, and abrogating them always taking care that the antient Landmarks of the Order be observed.’ There, in that last phrase, is the heart of the matter and the real ‘Body of Masonry’ is

seen to be 'the antient Landmarks of the Order'—that corpus of the lore and custom of the Fraternity, undefined and undefinable, which subjectively rather than objectively forms the ethos of Freemasonry.

We hear much to-day about permissiveness and we quite rightly see our Order as a bastion against the insidious nihilism which seeks to set aside accepted scales of values without offering anything in their place. But this does not mean that in our approach to the Craft we need remain rigidly uncomprehending so that innovation comes to mean anything to which we are not accustomed or, worse still, something with which we merely do not happen to agree. For we have seen how, over the years since the emergence of speculative Freemasonry and its growth as an organised Society, the 'body of Masonry' did not remain unalterable. Fundamental innovations there have been such as the three-degree system and the Royal Arch, alteration and additions in ritual and ceremonies as these grew in scope and significance, and changes without number in routine matters such as are inevitable in any developing organisation.

In 1813, after sixty years of dissension and division, English Freemasonry was given an opportunity to pause and take stock, to redefine and re-establish itself. The processes of innovation, alteration and development that have given us our system of speculative Freemasonry were slowed down, almost halted; the challenge of 1856 showed they were virtually complete. Grand Lodge had, in effect, acknowledged that not even it had any longer the power to make further innovations in the body of Masonry.

In a century and a quarter the wheel had come full circle.

Copies of the Prestonian Lecture, 1972, in booklet form, may be obtained from the author at Freemasons' Hall, Great Queen Street, London, WC2B 5AZ. Price 25p (post free).

The proceeds will be devoted to **THE ROYAL MASONIC HOSPITAL RE-DEVELOPMENT AND MODERNISATION FUND.**

**CONSECRATION OF
SAINT JAMES' LODGE, No. 8478**

at

FREEMASONS' HALL, 80 LONDON ROAD, LEICESTER

on

MONDAY, 29TH JANUARY, 1973

ADDRESS BY THE PROVINCIAL GRAND MASTER

R.W.Bro. Brigadier C. B. S. Morley, C.B.E., T.D., D.L.

Brethren, looking back down the corridors of time I am forcibly reminded that although it is now some forty-five years since my own Initiation I still retain a vivid recollection of the numerically large Lodges which were then commonplace in the Province. This was a condition which seemed to me, as a young student of our ritual, to run contrary to the basic teachings of the Craft, and it always puzzled me why so little attention was paid to the matter. The membership of many of the Lodges then exceeded three figures, and the resulting impersonal brand of relationship which seemed to exist between a Master and many of his Brethren, in, what is essentially a brotherhood of men, disturbed me not a little. Indeed, it continues to do so today when I find Masters who do not know the names of some of their Brethren.

The entire philosophy of Freemasonry is built around the individual; the erection of a moral edifice within the heart of a man. All our symbolism is individualistic and our traditions and practices aim at making individuals wiser, better, and, in consequence, happier; for mass movements surely have no place in our Order. When Brethren receive a summons to attend their Lodge they should do so because it is worth attending, and because the membership is small enough to form a congenial and closely-knit unit; a community of mutual interests. If only for those reasons, and there are, indeed, many others, one welcomes the birth of new Lodges to perpetuate these ideals and so strengthen the bonds which bind us together within our Province.

We ought to ask ourselves what happens when we worship at the shrine of large numbers. First and foremost a waste of leadership, and that is little short of a sin. Every year Lodges welcome into their midst many men with a great potential for inspired and dedicated leadership, and it is our clear duty to give them the fullest opportunity to exercise their talents, opportunity which at one time waited twenty years or more before it became a *fait accompli*. Only one Master can serve in a Lodge each year, and so it behoves us to take great care that we do not close the door on good material by short-sightedness, or being too solicitous of numbers, and therefore unwilling to divide our membership into smaller units which would utilise talents that might otherwise go to waste.

In my early masonic career I was fully convinced that we were providing too few opportunities for new Brethren to 'show their paces', and then, rather piously, we wondered why they lost interest and drifted away. How can Brethren maintain their enthusiasm for years when there is nothing for them to do except listen to what must, of necessity, be repetition? We ought periodically to examine our own consciences and ask ourselves who should accept responsibility if such a state of affairs is ever seen to develop in our midst.

Brethren, the fellowship of Freemasonry does not thrive from large Lodges, for it is, indeed, an intimate thing not shared with great numbers. Some of my happiest recollections, and I am sure also of yours, centre around individual contacts with my Brethren, in the Lodge room and at the after-proceedings; doing things together successfully, and even sometimes in adversity, but always together.

What must be the feelings of a newly-made Mason if he discovers that the Lodge into which he has been received, and which he thought promised fellowship and intimate friendship is, on account of its size, but an impersonal entity in which he is an isolated, and sometimes a lonely, figure?

I am not at all worried about Lodges that feel they are too small, because that condition takes care of itself. Nor does it concern me unduly when large Lodges complain about the loss of their members to become Founders of new Lodges, for experience has shown that these losses act as a corrective spur to achieve a more sensible balance.

The ceremony in which we are about to participate is part of a continuing process in this Province, designed to remedy those weaknesses which have troubled many of us from time to time. It is a process through which the Founders of this Lodge will, I am sure, ever remember their responsibility to masonic posterity and recollect that any tapering off of membership, any lack of interest and attendance, almost invariably rests upon the shoulders of the Lodge leadership. One Lodge in the Province, with a strength in excess of a hundred, numbers among its membership some twenty Past Masters of other Lodges, many of whom might never have reached the Chair had there been a less enlightened policy in their Mother Lodge.

Finally, may I say a word to those of you who in the not far distant future may occupy the Chair of this Lodge. We elect our Masters and then, willy-nilly, expect them to become leaders. I would a thousand times prefer to see as the Master of a Lodge one who, by previous careful training at the hands of his Brethren and full opportunity to bring his talents to bear on the life of his Lodge, is able to provide real leadership and comprehend what Masonry is all about. I am not impressed by the Brother whose main object is to show to his listeners his command of ritual. Ritualistic efficiency should go hand-in-hand

with administrative ability. As you admit your candidates and they progress towards the Chair let the quality of your leadership, and the spirit of this worldwide brotherhood, be the dominant factors in their masonic education, side by side with sympathetic teaching of the ritual, so that it is rendered to the best of each individual Brother's ability.

I will now call on the Provincial Grand Chaplain to ask a Blessing on the solemn act in which we are about to take part.

ORATION BY THE PROVINCIAL GRAND CHAPLAIN

W. Bro. Revd. Canon J. R. H. Prophet, B.A., L.TH., F.A.G.C.H.

Who was the man behind the name of this Lodge? Perhaps it matters that we should know because the fact that there was more than one Saint James could be confusing.

Our Saint James was one of the four foremost Apostles, originally Galilean fishermen who were called away to become 'fishers of men'. He was the brother of John, probably the elder of the two, but not so prominent. In their early days they were called "Sons of Thunder", a descriptive name suggesting that they were rather given to outbursts of temper which needed subduing. An illustration of it is found in that incident in Samaria in which these brothers reacted sharply to certain Samaritans who stood in the way of their passage through the territory with their Master. The gradual transformation of John into the Apostle of love is clearly indicated in the Scriptures. The transformation in James speaks more through the silent testimony of the Apostolic background wherein, through fellowship, the breaking of bread and the witness in which he shared to the full, we see him holding an honourable place.

We may, or we may not, believe the legend of James as the Apostle of Spain; but what we do know, for certain, is that he was an impressionable, if not conspicuous, leader in the Judaean Church. There at the centre, when the Gospel was beginning to be spread across the sea as far as Cyprus and beyond, Herod Agrippa took note of the Church and caused James the brother of John to be slain.

As a Masonic Lodge using the name of Saint James for its title we can picture him as a notable leader among a company of dedicated men, devoted to the cause of an all-good and all-supreme Master, a faithful and fearless protagonist, holding high place among his associates, yet content to work alongside the lowliest. We can see his ambitions to drink from the same cup as his Master whether in glory or humiliation, and achieving that very distinction through acceptance of the bitter cup of sacrifice.

It is sufficient to say that only a man who measures up to the conviction and constancy of Saint James can be really a fit and proper person to be admitted and then continue a member of the Order of Freemasonry. High standard it may be but, in the light of the high spiritual and moral principles, which in the Craft we have to guard and keep, it is a standard of necessity. Our principles need close guarding and keeping to-day. Freemasonry, as an Institution and Ideal, is not without strong opposition in the fluctuating moral and social environment of the day, and any weakness within the masonic 'Citadel', any significant incidence of personal failure within its membership, and compromise with principles, could bring about its ruin, without a doubt.

That is not putting it too strongly. On the other hand the converse is true that, given moral stability throughout the length and breadth of its membership, Freemasonry can and will weather the worst possible storms of political and social disruption and remain a moral force to help men regain their sense and equilibrium.

We might say of Saint James, as though the little we know of him were of great consequence, that he supplies, in his own exemplary record, two very important elements, or ingredients, in brotherhood. The first is the complete absence of vanity, or his humility; the second, his full involvement in and self-identification with the task in hand. He drew little attention to himself but much to the faith to which he was devoted. He did not do things to hit the headlines, but shared to the full in the life and work of the Christian community in its central acts and from its central ground.

First then is the willingness of a Brother to take a lead in the Freemasonry of his times, both eagerly and with constancy, whilst avoiding all obtrusiveness and the glare of praise. Self-effacing humility must surely be the characteristic of any member of the Craft who seriously wishes to see the honour of the Order respected in the sight of man. While this Lodge is coming to birth in solemn consecration, every Brother in it needs to be offering himself in sincere dedication, in order just to be ready for the new pastures where the nature and principles of the Order may be maintained evergreen and the holy will of the Supreme Architect ever served. Invariably self has to be hidden within the work if Divine Grace, needed for the work, is to be supplied and manifested.

Such is the Order of Freemasonry that some must be masters, some past masters, some assisting Officers and all Brethren. It may be that circumstances do arise in which a few of the Brethren achieve more prominence than others; but this does not preclude them all from advancing unitedly in masonic knowledge and experience, so that, in the final analysis, it is the reputation of the Lodge, not that of any single member of the Lodge, which is held in highest honour and esteem. The candidate at his initiation is charged to 'dedicate himself to such pursuits as will enable him to be respectable in life, useful to mankind, and an ornament to the Society of which he has become a member'. An ornament, yes, of honour and virtue; not a superficial decoration!

The other essential quality or ingredient of brotherhood which we can take from Saint James is his apparent loyalty and steadfastness to the Church in all its central activity. There can be no doubt at all about his close association with the Church and his complete involvement in its work. Where the body lived, he lived; where it worked, he worked; where it ate, he ate; where it prayed, he prayed; where it was, he stayed. Seeking no self-glory in a society which might justly have provided it (though the Church was not working to that

end), he was happy to partake in every domestic duty, and help, with his presence, to keep the Society united and advancing. He was with the Church in what we masonically term Labour and Refreshment.

We sometimes receive salutary warning to prevent our association as Masons from becoming more like a dining club than anything else. But refreshment remains a highly important part of the practice of Freemasonry, providing, as it does, not only that harmony and fellowship which we need together on our home ground, but also the reminder, as we partake, that the cause of charity must be honoured in grateful hearts as well as telling lips. When we close the Lodge for refreshment, we do not have to leave behind us the principles to which we have been testifying, all nicely packed away with our regalia until the next night of meeting. What we do is refresh ourselves with these principles uppermost in our minds, and begin to practise them in all our contacts, masonic and otherwise. Refreshment, as an inevitable part of the masonic schedule, needs to receive the same amount of forethought and attention as any other function in which we partake together. Saint James, in sharing with his brethren in all aspects of their common life, would have participated in the sacred common meal appointed by their Head. So, let Grace before and after the Festive Board be never a formal and extraneous ritual, but the offering of genuine praise and thanksgiving to the Great Giver of all good things.

Our Provincial Grand Master has asked us to reflect upon the benefit to Freemasonry at large when the affairs of a Lodge are conducted in such a way that the potential of leadership is not wasted away. Reference to the Apostle, Saint James, whose name will, we trust, add lustre to the design and structure of this Lodge, calls us to contemplate two very essential qualities or ingredients in the making of masonic leadership and the constitution of fellowship. In closing, let us repeat them in simple terms: true humility and complete identification with the task of creating brotherhood: not forgetting the aid of the Spirit by Whom 'we live and move and have our being'.

"Spiritus intus alit"

**CONSECRATION OF
TUDOR HOUSE LODGE, No. 8481**

at

FREEMASONS' HALL, 80 LONDON ROAD, LEICESTER

on

MONDAY, 19TH MARCH, 1973

ADDRESS BY THE PROVINCIAL GRAND MASTER

R.W.Bro. Brigadier C. B. S. Morley, C.B.E., T.D., D.L.

Brother Founders, it is a facet, perhaps peculiar to our English educational system, that however much pupils may express dislike for their schooldays, a very substantial number nevertheless retain a life-long affection for the school itself. Indeed, the Masonic Year Book lists nearly a hundred-and-seventy Lodges with an attachment to schools.

Perhaps one of the reasons for this may be traced to the emphasis which the staffs of the schools of our generation applied to the importance of personal discipline, corporate loyalty and good manners. If that be true then it follows that the exacting demands which Freemasonry makes on man, and which are plainly set out for our instruction and guidance in the Ancient Charges and Regulations, are more easily acceptable to those who join our ranks.

Without the ability to discipline the mind and will there is the ever present danger that these requirements could easily lead to the creation of a sham façade in our individual lives for, as you know, they are all-embracing—a belief in the Supreme Being—obedience to the moral law—respect for authority—the avoidance of excesses—courteous conduct and a tolerant approach to the views of others, even though those views may differ from our own. This is a formidable list with which it would be well nigh impossible to comply without the aid of the qualities of personal discipline and loyalty which are basic to sound education, and which play such an important part in Freemasonry.

You, Brother Founders, are perpetuating your former ties with a school which stands high in local educational circles, many of its pupils having made valuable contributions to the life and culture of our City and County, and it is fair to assume that the association of the high ideals which the school instilled into the minds of its pupils cannot but be beneficial to our Craft.

However, there is one inescapable fact that all of us must face, and it is that those qualities of citizenship laid down for us in the Ancient Charges are not necessarily to be found in all men. Since they are such an essential requirement in the body of Freemasonry it will be your

duty. Brother Founders, to satisfy yourselves that these qualities are demonstrably present in all those whom you admit to membership of your Lodge. Only by the most careful selection of its candidates can any Lodge hope to prosper, and if ever there exists but the smallest seed of doubt in your minds you will not require me to suggest what is the proper course of action for you to take, for the presence, in a botherhood such as ours, of just one disputatious character could have far reaching effects on the harmony of a Lodge. In saying that, let me add that his home life is one of the soundest indications of a man's general approach to his duties and responsibilities as a citizen.

When formulating your plans for the future you should bear in mind that great numbers do not necessarily bring success. Indeed, in Masonic Lodges they have frequently had quite the opposite effect, resulting in frustration and disappointment which has led to eventual withdrawal from Lodge activities. The ideal Lodge is one which is so sufficiently contained in its membership that very few brethren ever decline office when it is offered to them, and where there are facilities for all to take some part in the work at regular and frequent intervals. Leadership is a priceless quality, but it has to be encouraged and fostered if it is to benefit mankind, and it is a quality which we should at all times seek to develop to the maximum extent.

The Tudor House Lodge comes into being at a challenging time in our English history, a time when our way of life, religious convictions and customs, which have to be carefully nurtured and developed over the years, are facing open hostility from many directions. This being so, it behoves Freemasons to present to the outside world an image at which no finger of scorn can be directed. We should never forget that we who are Freemasons are judged, by those who are not, according to the picture we present to the world outside our Order, and by what that world sees of our conduct in our daily lives. If what it sees is in any sense derogatory it would be small wonder if it formed an unfavourable impression of our Institution.

Finally, Brethren, I want to stress that the Officers of Provincial Grand Lodge are always available to you for advice and guidance, of which you should never hesitate to make the maximum use. If I may coin a phrase that will have a familiar ring it would be to say that it is not the function of a Province to assume the role of a headmaster, wielding the now unfashionable cane, but rather that of a guide, philosopher and friend ever anxious to help and advise, and deeply interested in all your aspirations.

Having said that let us proceed with the first act in the Consecration and Constitution of this new Lodge, a Blessing by the Provincial Grand Chaplain on the ceremony in which we are about to take part.

ORATION BY THE PROVINCIAL GRAND CHAPLAIN

W.Bro. Revd. Canon J. R. H. Prophet, B.A., L.TH., P.A.G.CH.

Things old and new are linked in our thoughts today when in solemn assembly we bring a new Lodge into being and new masonic links are forged from the memory of an ancient house which was used for the establishment of a now notable school in Leicester.

This act of consecration, according to ancient custom, is evidence that we adhere to much in Masonry which is old; that we do so not only from sentiment and reverence for old ways but because of a firm and undying belief in their continuing benefit to our Order.

In these days, when one by one the venerable spiritual treasures and moral traditions of our civilization are roughly handled by critics and casually discarded by some of the rank and file, we, as Masons, need our ancient landmarks of faith, of life, and conduct, more than ever. We do not wish to see them thrown away in the medley of confusion and uncertainty of events in the world. They remain our light for the way forward and, having them, we need not be dismayed.

Yet we must be very conscious of the growing rift between what we know and want to keep alive in Freemasonry and what is happening within the mainstream of cultural and social development in the popular world. Science itself, as general law, is intrinsically amoral, but we know that the facts and fruits of science can and do have an important bearing upon the way that moral systems take shape, either for the good or the harm of mankind. In Masonry we owe much to science for the art of living, but so does human society as a whole; and what is happening in that wider sphere, from the moral point of view, is truly disquieting. Life becomes more generally comfortable and at the same time more insecure. There is plenty of competitiveness and acquisitiveness in human relationships, but less of that brotherly-kindness which is of the very essence of Freemasonry. We live in a world crazy for novelty and experimentation, in which old things either pass away altogether or are put to sleep upon the shelves of old collections. A free-for-all society clamours for a clean sweep of all things traditional and institutionalized, no matter upon what moral grounds they were founded. In place of the well attested counsels of true religion, a disordered variety of ideological theories is set in train by pseudo-intellectuals, some of these theories looking more modern than they really are, but all designed to displace or undermine the time honoured moral sanctions which were created in theistic belief and the God/Man relationship.

We are already experiencing the dire repercussions of permissive behaviour by both young and old in the community, the flouting of decent standards of moral worth; and, as Masons, we have to ask ourselves whether we could envisage the infiltration of all this disarray

into our own particular environment. We have to live amid it, day to day, but must we so live with it that we are tempted to bring our masonic pattern of life into line with it ?

Without being overdramatic we can say that Freemasonry is now in the midst of environmental changes. Nevertheless, we should not suppose that this is an entirely new situation. Change occurs in cycles, and not in a straight line, and we must recognise that nowadays it turns full circle much more quickly than formerly. If we study the history of those times when Grand Lodge took shape in the eighteenth century, we shall realise that Freemasonry, as it has come down to us, was cradled in an age every bit as sceptical and profane as our own, even though the influences of that age were more philosophic than scientific, and more hedonistic than humanistic. But this does not alter the fact that we now have to face our own situation of a scientifically conditioned humanism. We cannot compromise with this sort of world; we must guard the ancient landmarks and retain our ethical principles which are the foundations of our Order.

Freemasonry must retain its grip upon a theistic and moral understanding of the Universe with quiet but unswerving confidence and be open to receive into the bosom of its membership only those men of each succeeding generation who, in heart and mind and without equivocation of any kind, can subscribe to its position. We are not constituted into a church or religious body, but it is placed firmly upon every entered apprentice, every fellow-craft and every master mason to see that the manner of his disciplined life betokens his due regard for the highest principles of moral truth and virtue and his earnest desire to do his duty to God, to himself and his fellow-men.

It is not right or fitting that we should calmly sit back within our masonic strong tower and rely upon the religious bodies of the world to prepare the ground from which we may gather our own good fruit. We ourselves belong to that world and, if we want morally sound men for our fellowship within our masonic circle, we must live the life of moral soundness outside it. As we zealously follow the path of noble ideals in the Lodge we must practise the same in the wide open spaces of life's pilgrimage.

You may well ask, when it is sometimes said that Freemasonry should move with the times, what does this mean? Does it mean accommodating ourselves to the changing moods and patterns of society? Does it mean a re-appraisal of our traditional terms and their meaning in the light of modern philosophical thought? Well, I have yet to find a brother Mason who would seriously call for any changes in these ways.

There is of course, that cautious option, now granted to Lodges, for a slight modification of the wording in the penal clauses, but great care is taken in this not to lessen the seriousness of our obligation.

One can suppose that if the 'eggs' in the masonic 'basket' have to be 'brown' instead of 'white' before anyone will buy them, there's no harm in seeing that they are 'eggs' of such a hue, so long as we have the assurance of the experts that the contents of both are of the same value nutritionally.

Administrative changes will no doubt be necessary from time to time, but we can always feel assured that the Grand Lodge will vigilantly protect the fundamental *nature and principles of the Institution*. Our Order is built foursquare upon the foundation of belief in God; and it is upheld by adherence to the principles of *Truth, of Honour, and of Virtue*, amply illustrated in the Volume of the Sacred Law, which is given *as the rule and guide of our Faith*. We have no mandate even to toy with the substance of these principles which are inculcated through the symbolism of the Craft.

Fresh understandings of Truth are indeed always possible without displacing our ancient landmarks, and we should not presume that this were not so. New Lodges may emerge from old, and new life and vigour may arise from the old to keep the spirit of Freemasonry alive, fresh and ready to shoulder responsibility in any change of environment it may meet.

ROYAL ARCH FREEMASONRY

The Story of its Emergence and Development to 1817

by

W.BRO. L. M. SHERWOOD

Acknowledgment

(This lecture was prepared by W.Bro. (and E.Companion) L. M. Sherwood, an Official Lecturer under the United Grand Lodge of New South Wales, a Past Master of No. 2238 E.C. and a member of the Correspondence Circle of Lodge of Research, Leicester.

The paper was read originally at a meeting of the New South Wales Royal Arch Chapter of Research and Instruction at Summer Hill, Sydney, on 22 November, 1972.

It is reprinted here with acknowledgments to the N.S.W. Chapter of Research and to the author because it is thought that its contents will interest members of the Craft generally.—EDITOR).

PART 1—PROEM

Companions, my subject demands that we dissociate our minds from our present practices which are the result of developments made in the last 100-150 years. To facilitate the re-orientation I will give as background a brief picture of England and of Masonry in the early 18th century.

To put things into perspective I mention that Royal Arch Freemasonry was emerging in England at about the time of the birth of English navigator, James Cook, he who discovered our (East Australian) shores in 1769.

It will be recalled that following the mighty constitutional changes effected in England in the late 17th century the rule of law was established. The humanism that resulted secured for the individual freedom from arbitrary interference by authority and religious tolerance. This political revolution was confirmed by the suppression of the Jacobite rebellion of 1715. In this climate of political stability, in London, in 1717, four Lodges (three of them mainly operative) "constituted themselves into a Grand Lodge", having in mind to organize the enjoyment of Masonry in the cities of London and Westminster.

Following the constitution of this the premier Grand Lodge there arose a great clamour for admission to Masonry. By 1721 seventeen additional Lodges sought admission to the roll. By 1729 the original four Lodges had grown to 54 (42 in London, 11 in the Provinces and 1 in Spain). In 1738 there were 179 Lodges enrolled. This growth continued until by 1813 there were 647 Lodges. Other Grand Lodges came into existence: two in England that did not flourish (at York

in 1724 and South of the River Trent in 1779); in Ireland in 1730 and in Scotland in 1736—both the latter adopted English ceremonies and regulations and prospered. Freemasonry was established in France and Holland by 1725 and had reached America by 1730.

But what of the state of Masonic ceremonies? The view of H. Carr (Q.C. Lodge Summons for 22 June, 1972) is that from about the 1300s there had been one degree: that of the “fellow of craft”, i.e. a fully trained mason. There is, he says, reasonable evidence that in the early 1500s there were two degrees: Entered Apprentice and Fellow Craft or Master. The third degree made its appearance at some date between c.1711 and c.1725.

All was not happy in English Freemasonry. There were Lodges that refused to acknowledge the Grand Lodge. There were the Traditioners who refused to accept ritual changes ordered by Grand Lodge. More importantly there was a large body of Masons, Irish immigrants, who considered that they had been treated by the premier Grand Lodge with indifference. A schism resulted. The dissidents seceded and set up, in 1751, a rival Grand Lodge adhering, they said, to the “Ancient practices”. They became known as the “Antients” and, by reflection, the original Grand Lodge became known as the “Moderns”. The opposing Grand Lodges united in 1813.

Against this background let us look at the emergence and development of Royal Arch Freemasonry. My story will be divided into nine parts, namely:

1. Proem
2. The Emergence
3. Source Theories
4. Development to 1766
5. Development after 1766
6. The Union of Moderns and Antients
7. Postscript
8. Epilogue
9. Bibliography

It will be noted that in this paper I have referred to the Royal Arch as a degree thereby following New South Wales and Scottish practice. England refers to it as an Order.

PART 2—THE EMERGENCE

The emergence will be portrayed chronologically by listing cardinal dates:

1717: To this date there had been no reference in any surviving Masonic document of the Royal Arch (or the Hiramic) legend.

1720: A great burning of Masonic records (Anderson's 1738 Constitutions p.111) that may have destroyed early definite references to the Royal Arch.

1720-1732: Indications in catechisms and other writings that something was taking shape that might have been the Royal Arch in embryo. Knoop and Jones, on pp.282-4 of *The "Genesis of Freemasonry"* refer to such. They are discussed also in Section 3 of B. E. Jones's *"The Book of the Royal Arch"*.

1723: Anderson (1723 Constitutions Regulation II) referred to the authority of a Master of a Lodge to form its members into a Chapter. But this is now believed to be no more than a dissociation of the 1723 Lodges from the "confederacies made by the masons in their chapters assembled" prohibited by the mediaeval ordinances of Edward IV and Henry VI. In any case, 1723 Regulation X makes Chapter and Lodge synonymous.

1726: the year of the Graham MS. which gives evidence of the existence of the Royal Arch element in Freemasonry (Grantham: A.Q.C. lxxiii, 73).

1743: Something called a "Royall Arch" was carried in procession by two "excellent" masons at Youghal in Ireland (Franklin's Dublin Journal, 1/14 January, 1743). It has been suggested that what was carried was a small ark common among early Royal Arch furnishings. However, the Youghal minutes make no reference to the Royal Arch.

1743: There is a writing purporting to be a copy of minutes of Lodge Stirling Kilwinning (in Scotland) of 30 July, 1743, recording the admission of two brothers as Royal Arch Masons. Geo. Draffen, Librarian of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, has searched other old records and believes the aforesaid minute to be genuine (B. E. Jones: *Book of the Royal Arch* (1957), p.47).

1744: the year of the earliest positive written record Dr. F. Dassigny in his *"A Serious and Impartial Enquiry into the cause of the present decay of Freemasonry in the Kingdom of Ireland"* referred to "a certain propagator of a false system" who promulgated a "ridiculous innovation" available only to those "who have passed the chair" under title of Royal Arch Masons. From this document it is also learned that in 1744 (and probably earlier) Royal Arch Masonry was worked in London, was known in York and was introduced lately into Dublin. Although Dassigny was not a man held contemporaneously in high esteem yet most masonic scholars seem to accept his statement concerning the Royal Arch as authentic, in particular Hughan. As Eric Ward says, it is almost a breach of masonic tradition for a writer on this subject not to quote Dassigny at length but I have a time factor (and printer's costs) to consider. Instead I would refer interested

Companions to Hughan's "English Masonic Rite" p.74-5 and, for a less full quotation, to the readily obtainable B. E. Jones's "Book of the Royal Arch", p.45.

1745: A copy of the By-laws of Stirling Kilwinning Lodge dated 14 May, 1745, prescribes the fees for conferring the Excellent and Super-Excellent Degrees (which qualified for the Royal Arch). This proves conclusively that the Royal Arch in its essentials, if not in name, was known to Lodge Stirling Kilwinning at that time (Saunders: A.Q.C. liii, 42 and Knoop *ibid* 6.121).

1746: Laurence Dermott (later the most prominent member of the Antients Grand Lodge) became a Royal Arch Mason in Dublin (Hughan: "English Rite", p.121).

1751: The Royal Arch was adopted by the Antients Grand Lodge on its inception. (They are said to have worked it first in 1756.)

1752: First Antients written references to the Royal Arch. On 4 March and 2 September "every part of real Freemasonry was traced and explained, except the Royal Arch".

1753: A date in every American history of the Royal Arch. On 22 December, 1753, three Brethren were "raised to the Degree of Royal Arch Mason" at Fredericksberg, Va.

1754: The year that Dunckerley, prominent Moderns Freemason, said (in 1792) that he had the Royal Arch Degree conferred upon him.

1757, 2nd March. A summons to "the Masters of the Royal Arch".

1758, 7th August: The earliest record of an actual working in England—in a Bristol minute book.

From the above list of cardinal dates it will have been observed that there were several references to the practising of the Royal Arch degree in the 1740s. These were in places far apart when considered in the context of the slow communications of that time. I think that this coupled with the earlier allusions to what may have been the embryo of the degree must be accepted as evidence that the degree must have existed previous to the 1740—possibly as something complementary to an inconclusive and, therefore, unsatisfactory third degree.

PART 3—SOURCE THEORIES

The Royal Arch Degree emerged and spread in the first 60 years of the 18th century. This also was the period when many hundreds of new side degrees and rites unfolded. There can be little doubt that most of these were fabricated. Some of the theories of the source of

the Royal Arch suggest similar invention. I have classified the source theories into eight groups each of which will be discussed below :

The Theory of English Origin

As Speculative Freemasonry evolved there was available to it a fund of legends which could be drawn upon to inculcate some lesson or to justify some ceremonial act. For example: R. Radice (A.Q.C. lxxvii, 202-5) suggests that the Hiramite degree and the Royal Arch were derived from a common source but developed on different lines. In support of this he quotes indications of such in the Graham Ms. of 1726. He also gives a list of 24 items of evidence of early existence in England of essentials of the Royal Arch.

Ward (A.Q.C. lxxv, 131) also believes that the Royal Arch took shape in England partly by resurrecting old legends to which new material was added. He refers to Lawrence Dermott's confidence that the Royal Arch preserved ancient practice.

Songhurst (A.Q.C. xxxiv, 5) evolved a chain of evidence suggesting that in 1717 England had some knowledge (which was subsequently lost) of what was to become the Royal Arch degree.

Hughan (English Masonic Rite, pp. 73 and 90) says the Royal Arch working indicates early 18th century characteristics. He says that the germs of the Royal Arch were included in the Master Mason degree which was elaborated between 1717 and 1735 contemporaneously with the development of the Hiramite legend. However, B. E. Jones (Book of the Royal Arch, pp.20-3) argues that the source of the Royal Arch degree was not the English Master Masons degree.

I like the compromise suggestion already quoted that the origin was English and that it was evolved to complete an unsatisfying third degree.

The Theory of Scottish Origin

Knoop and Jones (Genesis of Freemasonry, 280-1) theorize that the germ of the Royal Arch degree may be found in the secrets and ceremonial connected with that part of the Scottish Mason Word which Masters had restricted to themselves.

Rosicrucian Origin

The original Rosicrucians were in England in the 17th century. The rite died concurrently with the birth of Speculative Freemasonry.

Two items have suggested a Rosicrucian source for the Royal Arch. First, several R.A. symbols were also Rosicrucian symbols. Secondly, the Rosicrucians used the secret vault story of Philostorgius (364-425 A.D.) which has a remarkable similarity to the Royal Arch vault story as we know it.

But, in so far as that Philostorgius's story was published also (in Latin) by Callistus in 1551 and in English in Lee's "Orbis Miraculum or The Temple of Solomon Pourtrayed" in 1659 it need not necessarily have come from the Rosicrucians.

Continental Origin

There have been many suggestions of a Continental origin, with and without amplification in Britain later.

For example: the Royal Order of Scotland emerged at about the same time as the Royal Arch. Coil ("A Comprehensive View of Freemasonry", 1954 p.98) suggests that both probably originated in France as adaptations of other side degrees. He says: the basic theme of the English Royal Arch and the 13th degree of the Royal Order, called the Royal Arch of Solomon, are the same but the rituals are dissimilar.

H. Carr ("The Early French Exposures", 1971, pp. 312 and 332) refers to allusions in two exposures (of 1747 and 1745) that could refer to the Royal Arch.

B. E. Jones states that through many of the new French degrees there ran a vault story and the Ineffable Name—ideas that some English editor might have taken to innovate a Royal Arch rite. Jones also points out, as does Redfern Kelly (A.Q.C. xxx, 12) the resemblance of certain degrees of the 25 degree French Rite of Perfection (now called the Antient and Accepted Scottish Rite of 33 degrees) to the Royal Arch degree, a similarity that may not be purely fortuitous.

Dr. Oliver, notably a prolific Masonic author who, according to one caustic commentator, "got some things right", asserted definitely that the Royal Arch degree was fabricated by Chevalier Ramsey, an active Scottish Mason who spent many years in France, who brought it to England about 1740. H. E. Peck (A.Q.C. lxxxi, 31) though recognizing his unreliability, sees no reason to doubt that Oliver might not be right in thinking that Ramsey came to Britain from Paris about 1740 with news of the Royal Arch which he put before the dissident Brethren who afterwards became the Antients. However, Batham (A.Q.C. lxxxi, 314) says Ramsey had severed his connexion with Freemasonry some years prior to 1740. Ramsey's name was also connected with the Royal Arch through two versions of his Oration (1736 and 1737) wherein he referred to the Israelites building the Second Temple at Jerusalem at the same time as they had to defend themselves "with the sword and buckle" (Batham A.Q.C. lxxxi).

Haunch (A.Q.C. lxxxi, 79) points out that the records of the Portuguese Inquisition indicate clearly that Coustos "knew nothing of anything like the Royal Arch degree otherwise one feels he would have elaborated on what he had said". This fact seems to give the lie to the theory that the Royal Arch degree was developed in France sometime

before 1740s. (Coustos, an active Mason, had lived in France sometime before he proceeded to Portugal where he was arrested in May 1739 for breach of the 1733 Papal Bull in that he practised Masonry. After imprisonment and torture he was tried before the Inquisition starting in 1743. Not long ago the full report of that trial was made available to English Masonic students.)

Furthermore there is no extant record of an early working of the Royal Arch degree in France; indeed, the Royal Arch never at any time flourished in France or Germany).

Thus the one time popular theory that the Royal Arch had its source in France would seem to be unfounded. The most that one could say would be to agree with Carr (A.Q.C. lxxvi, 214) that certain characteristic features of the Royal Arch ceremony were known on the Continent before 1745, in the middle of the period of extensive invention of new degrees.

Royal Arch a Replacement of the Scots Master Degree

There was a Scots Master degree born in France in Jacobite (therefore, Roman Catholic) circles. It appeared in Southern England in the 1730s. The theme of the degree was the discovery of a lost word in a vault. The political climate in England at that time was not favourable to anything of Jacobite origin so the degree was dropped. Immediately the Scots Master disappeared the Royal Arch emerged.

Some students theorized that some essential material from the Scots Master passed into the Royal Arch. But there seems to be little evidence to authenticate the theory.

(References: E. Ward, A.Q.C. lxxv, 160-3; J. Stokes, "Royal Arch Masonry" 1924; B. E. Jones, "Book of the Royal Arch" p.40; R. F. Gould, "History" ii, 457.)

A Templar Succession

In the first half of the 18th century there were vague references to an association between the original Order of Knights Templar and Freemasonry, e.g. in Swift's "Grand Mistress" of 1731 and in Ramsey's Oration of 1736-7. Klein (A.Q.C. xxxii, 42) says that there is much in the ceremonies of the Royal Arch and the Masonic Templars that indicate at least that both were derived from the same source; i.e. the Knights Templar of the Crusade times.

Later the Masonic Templars who had no supervisory body (hence no charter or warrant) tended to gravitate towards the Craft Lodges that they might have attachments of stability. The Grand Lodge of York after its revival in 1761 permitted a Templar degree to be worked in Lodges with the Royal Arch, making five recognized degrees. The

Templar degree was worked unofficially in other English Lodges. But nowhere was there such close association between the Templar and Royal Arch degrees as in Scotland. This obtained despite the displeasure of the Grand Lodge of Scotland which had censured its Lodges for working Templar degrees, even for associating with Templars at the Masonic laying of a foundation stone (Gould: History iii, 67 and 72).

"In Scotland the additional degrees were in the first instance wrought by Lodges and afterwards more often in Encampments" (Gould: History iii, 73). The 16 degrees concerned (named in Gould *ibid.*, 74) were divided into groups which were distinguished as blue, red, green, black and white Masonry. When in 1817, the Supreme Grand Chapter of Scotland was formed, the Grand Chapter took over the management of the non-Christian degrees that had been contained in the series known as red and green (hence the two Great Banners seen in Scottish Chapters are red and green). The Christians series, i.e. the remaining groups, came under the charge of the Templar Encampments. Additionally, for some years, the Encampments also conferred the Royal Arch degree. (From 1845 the Scottish Grand Chapter included also the Mark degree.)

A further indication of the close association of the Templar degrees and those of the Craft and Royal Arch is contained in Article II of the Union of the Antients and Moderns Grand Lodges in England which provided that any Lodge or Chapter might hold a meeting in any of the degrees of the orders of chivalry according to the constitution of such orders.

This persisting close association between the Masonic degrees of Royal Arch and Templar and certain similarities in workings has led many students to look for a common origin, that of the Order of the Temple, 1118-1314. Thus arose the phrase: Templar Succession.

Summary

Just as children of our generation were curious to know where their younger brothers and sisters came from so the relatively young Freemasons of yesteryears were intensely interested in from where the much loved sister degree of the Royal Arch issued. All the source theories summarized in this Part makes clear the existence of such curiosity. For myself I am happy to accept the observation of Chetwode Crawley, quoted in Mackey's Encyclopaedia (1956) ii 88:—

"It (the Royal Arch degree) is not a separate entity, but the completing part of a Masonic legend, a constituent ever present in the compound body, even before it developed into a degree . . . If the Royal Arch fell into desuetude, the cope stone would be removed and the building left obviously incomplete."

PART 4—DEVELOPMENT TO 1766

It is time to introduce Lawrence Dermott: Born in Dublin 1720, initiated 1741, Master 1746, Royal Arch Mason the same year, all in Dublin. He came to London in 1747 or 8 and immediately espoused the cause of the dissident Irish Masons already in England. The dissenters opposed principally the transportation of the pass words of the first and second degrees (aimed to counteract the irregular making of Masons with the help of the exposures) and disapproved of the premier Grand Lodge's refusal to recognize the Royal Arch degree. They had begun to organize themselves about 1739, set up a Grand Committee in 1751 which became a Grand Lodge in 1753 with the installation of a Grand Master. Dermott was Grand Secretary.

The new Grand Lodge had the abbreviated name of Antients and the original Grand Lodge came to be called the Moderns.

This schism affected greatly the rise and development of the Royal Arch because of the opposing attitudes adopted to the degree.

Attitude of the Moderns

The premier Grand Lodge consistently refused recognition of the Royal Arch degree as being part of Ancient Masonry holding it to be an unapproved innovation and contrary to the Grand Lodge resolutions of 24 June, 1723, and 21 November, 1724. The first outlawed "any alteration or innovation in the Body of Masonry" and the second condemned Brethren who met irregularly.

The following story exemplifies the attitude of the Moderns. In 1759, a Brother applied to the Moderns Grand Lodge for relief and, thinking it would strengthen his case, stated he was a Royal Arch Mason. This is the reply that he received from the Grand Secretary, Samuel Spencer:

"You being an Antient Mason you are not entitled to any of our charity. The Antient Masons have a Lodge at the Five Bells, in the Strand, and their secretary's name is Dermott. Our society is neither Arch, Royal Arch, or Antient so you have no right to partake of our charity."

Attitude of the Antients

The Antients adopted the Royal Arch degree from their inception to 1751. This is proved from their records dated 4 March, 1752, and 2 September, 1752.

In 1756 Dermott said:

"The Royal Arch I firmly believe to be the root, heart and marrow of Masonry, the perfection and consummation of the third degree".

Ahiman Rezon, their Book of Constitutions, described the Royal Arch as a fourth degree:

“This degree is certainly more august, sublime and important than the three which precede it and it is the summit and perfection of Ancient Masonry. It impresses on our minds a more firm belief of the existence of a Supreme Diety without beginning of days, or end of years, and justly reminds us of the respect and veneration due to that Holy Name.” (Quoted from edition of 1807.)

Also the degree was considered an asset by the Antients in so far as they were able to offer candidates four degrees as an integral part of Craft Freemasonry in contrast to the three offered by the Moderns.

The Popularity of the Royal Arch Degree

Antients Masons delighted in the degree.

Members of Moderns Lodges and of independent Lodges that acknowledged jurisdiction by neither Antients nor Moderns Grand Lodges also were attracted.

Sundays were the popular days for Royal Arch meetings and remained so until 1811.

Gradually Moderns Lodges began to work the Royal Arch. Their Grand Lodge was not at all hostile (its enmity was for all the Antients Grand Lodge). This lack of hostility to the degree was evidenced by the large number of prominent Moderns Masons who took it—including Grand Secretary Spencer and, on 11 June, 1766, the Moderns Grand Master, the 9th Lord Blaney.

The need for organization of Royal Arch matters soon became obvious to the many Moderns who were also Royal Arch Masons. Accordingly, a former Antients Lodge, called Caledonian, was given a Craft charter by the Moderns Grand Lodge in 1764. Attached to this Lodge was a Royal Arch Chapter also called Caledonian; the Chapter probably ante-dated the Lodge. Caledonian Chapter had a short life but a successor was born. At first this new Chapter had no name but it came to be called the Excellent Grand and Royal Chapter. The first minute book of the E.G. & R. Chapter starts on 22 March, 1765. By-Laws were made on 12 February, 1766. In the early pages of the minute book is a self-conferred charter indicative of thoughts of Grand Chapter status. (The story of the Excellent and Grand Chapter is to be found in A.Q.C. lxii, 165-182 and lxiv, 136-7 and Jones “Book of the Royal Arch”, Section Six.)

The Moderns had substantially the same workings as the Antients, the Zerubbabel re-building. Knoop (A.Q.C. liii, 33) says the different legend now associated with the Irish Royal Arch probably was not adopted until after 1751 because had the Irish worked the Josiah

legend then the Irishman Dermott surely would have adopted it for the Antients. (Another source says the Irish adopted the Josiah story in 1757.) B. E. Jones remarks that in the 18th century the degree had a decidedly Christian character and continued thus right into the 19th century; indeed even to-day discernable traces of Trinitarian influence remains in the current rituals.

By the 1760s the Royal Arch was well established in York, London and Lancashire in England, in Ireland and Scotland and in Boston, America. Even Glasgow had a Lodge called Royal Arch, chartered in 1755 by the Grand Lodge of Scotland, but to its members dis-appointment it was not permitted to work the Royal Arch degree.

At this time the degree was still worked in Lodge, the principal officers of the working being Master, Warden and Secretary. We get the first mention of a Chapter of Royal Arch Masons in 1765 but its members were not referred to as Companions for another 10 years.

PART 5—DEVELOPMENT AFTER 1766

Immediately after his exaltation by Thomas Dunckerley, Lord Blaney, G.M. became, by an unrecorded resolution or automatically, First Principal of the Excellent Grand and Royal Chapter. He presided over the next three meetings, all held in July 1766. It would seem that at the meeting of 22 July a Charter of Compact was agreed upon. Subsequently it was engrossed and signed at various times by 30 Excellent Masons including the Dukes of Manchester and Pignatelli who were not exalted until February 1778. After the meeting on 30 July, 1766, Blaney did not attend the E. G. & R. Chapter again. Nevertheless a precedent was established: the Grand Master could also be Head of the Royal Arch, as has been the case in England ever since 1817.

The Charter of Compact was a manifesto instituting and protecting The Grand and Royal Chapter of the Royal Arch of Jerusalem in the work of a Grand Chapter. (A picture of portion of the Charter with its irradiated triangles may be found facing p.172 of A.Q.C. lxiv; a transcription of the manifesto may be seen in A.Q.C. lxiv, 173-5 and in Jones: *Book of the Royal Arch*, pp.272-5.) There had been some monkeying with the date of the Charter of Compact and for many years it was thought to have been signed first on 22 July, 1767, but Dashwood's scrutiny of the E. G. & R. Chapter minute book proved conclusively that 22 July, 1766, was the correct date.

No use was made of the Charter of Compact for nearly three years. At the meeting of the E.G. & R. Chapter on 14th October, 1769, the Charter was resurrected. Laws and regulations were promulgated in preparation for the issue of charters to new chapters. Of the first four Chapters chartered on 14 July, 1769, two are still working; three others were chartered later in 1769 and these too are still working (A.Q.C.

lxxi, 56). It is of interest to note that each Chapter was also called a Lodge:

- The Cana Lodge or Chapter of the First Miracle.
- The Bethlehem Lodge or the Chapter of the Nativity.
- The Lodge of Intercourse or Chapter of Unanimity.
- The Lodge of Hospitality or Chapter of Charity.

It is also of interest to note that the first minute book of the E.G. & R. Chapter nowhere alludes to the necessity for an exalte to have been Master of a Lodge but at that time all Chapter members had been Masters. Nevertheless most Moderns Chapters were satisfied with a Master Mason qualification.

By 1785 the Royal Arch degree had spread steadily. Dunckerley had done much to promote it between 1778 and his death in 1795. For example, in three years he had ruled over 18 Provinces as Grand Superintendent and held that office in 17 Provinces at his death. Dunckerley was also prominent in the affairs of the Moderns Grand Lodge and in recognition thereof was awarded the rank of Past Senior Grand Warden in 1786. Yet the Moderns Grand Chapter was completely separated from the Moderns Grand Lodge.

By 1785 the E.G. & R. Chapter saw a need for the separation of its two functions, i.e. (1) that of a private Chapter and (2) that of a Grand Chapter warranting private Chapters. Accordingly it revived the moribund Restauration Chapter as an exalting Chapter and styled itself 'The Grand Lodge of Royal Arch Masons'. In 1801 this title was changed to 'The Supreme Grand Chapter'. But when, in 1810, the Duke of Sussex became head of the order he was styled 'The First Grand Master of Royal Arch Masons'.

At the end of the 18th century there were 126 Moderns Chapters (against 83 Antients) but some Craft Lodges were still working the Royal Arch. Even so on 21 November, 1792, the Grand Lodge of Moderns resolved: "that the Grand Lodge of England has nothing to do with the proceedings of the Society of Royal Arch Masons". In reply the supreme chapter ruled that no Royal Arch Mason who had been exalted in a Lodge could be admitted as a member of, or visitor to, a Chapter under its jurisdiction. Yet, as Part 6 will tell, official hostility was greater than that of the body of Masonry.

The Antients Grand Chapter

Within the Antients Grand Lodge the affairs of the Royal Arch degree were supervised by a committee. But the Moderns having set up a governing body, the Antients felt compelled to do likewise. Accordingly, a nominal Grand Chapter was established in 1771 but there are no minutes relating to its meetings until 1783.

Lawrence Dermott, mentioned in Part 4, was pre-dominant in the Antients affairs; he was Grand Secretary 1752-71 and later Deputy Grand Master for 11 years. He died in 1791.

The government of the Royal Arch by the Antients was by Grand Lodges through the Grand Chapter. The Grand Chapter had no independence of action. The following Grand Lodge minute of 4 December, 1771, exemplifies this:

“. . . expiated for a long time on the scandalous method pursued . . . in passing . . . Brethren through the Chair on purpose to obtain the Sacred Mystry's of the Royal Arch. And proved in a concise manner that those proceedings were unjustifiable . . .” yet the Antients maintained the “Passed the Chair” qualification for exaltees.

In 1793 a Chapter calling itself ‘The Grand and Royal Chapter of Emulation’ set itself up to take over from the Grand Lodge “the management of Royal Arch Masonry”. The attempt proved abortive and the G. & R. Chapter of Emulation disappeared.

From 1770 onwards the influence of the Antients became paramount in America and hence the early spread of the Royal Arch across the Atlantic. The first Grand Chapter in the United States was formed in 1798. The Antients requirement of a “passed Chair” qualification continues in some American jurisdictions.

At York

The Grand Lodge of All England at York (constituted 1724) was revived in 1761. It lingered on until the end of that century. It recognized the Royal Arch degree as part of Craft Masonry thereby permitting it to be worked in Lodges.

In Ireland and Scotland

The Royal Arch existed in Ireland in the 1740s. Despite its popularity in Ireland no Grand Chapter came into being until 1829. An attempt to give the Irish Grand Lodge control of the Royal Arch degree in 1805 failed. It was not until 1931 that the Grand Lodge of Ireland (formed 1725) did acknowledge the Royal Arch as part of “Pure Ancient Masonry”. However, there existed a close association between the Lodges that worked the Royal Arch in Ireland and the Antients Grand Lodge in England.

It is known that there was a Royal Arch Lodge in Scotland in 1743. The Scottish ceremonial is believed to have been imported from England. The Grand Lodge of Scotland, like the Grand Lodge of Ireland, was hostile to the Royal Arch. Because of such hostility there was no Grand Chapter in Scotland until 1816 when it brought under one management (1) the Chapters working in connexion with Craft Lodges and (2), as said earlier, the Royal Arch and allied degrees worked by the Templars. The Grand Chapter of Scotland excluded Chapters working in Scotland under the jurisdiction of English Grand Chapters. The latter operated independently until 1861 by when all had been dissolved.

Elsewhere

Except that the Royal Arch was worked in Portugal, Spain and Rumania in the 19th century (and later in Central and South America, Guam and Japan) it had little attraction for people who did not speak English. Chapters in France and Germany, for example, did not survive for long.

PART 6—THE UNION OF MODERNS AND ANTIENTS

Though the official attitude of the Moderns Grand Lodge was one of enmity to the Antients Grand Lodge yet the acceptance, in fact, of the Royal Arch degree by members of both Grand Lodges did much to reduce the fundamental differences between them.

By 1790 moderate Masons began visiting Lodges of the second jurisdiction. Thoughts of union were spoken. Prominent in this regard was Lord Moira.

After the Moderns, in 1809, re-transposed the pass words of the first and second degrees back to their original positions union of the two Grand Lodges was discussed as "a most desirable end" and serious negotiations began.

In November 1813 the intention to amalgamate was announced. On 27 December of the same year Articles of Union were signed. The Royal Arch was acknowledged but no provision was made for the governing of the Royal Arch. Both Grand Chapters had disappeared with the union of the two Grand Lodges.

During the period November 1813 to March 1817 there was no meeting of any Grand Chapter in England but subordinate Chapters continued to meet and to exalt candidates. There was in fact opposition to a union of Grand Chapters and it was not until 18th March, 1817, that differences were resolved and union effected. The Supreme Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of England came into being. Its rules provided that every Chapter must be associated with a Craft Lodge and none but those who had "passed the Chair" might become Principals of Chapters. That still obtains. Also, up to 1902, only Principals and Past Principals might be present at the opening of a Chapter.

At the Union the masterly method of reconciling the opposing views relating to the status of the Royal Arch is worthy of comment. The relevant declaration said: First, Pure Ancient Masonry consists of three degrees and no more; And then includes a fourth, namely, the Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch. Such satisfied the Moderns who did not recognise the Royal Arch as a fourth degree and satisfied the Antients in that it gave recognition to the Royal Arch. The choice of words which imply that the Royal Arch is part of the three degree system were adept in that they provided the *elixir of life* and

philosopher's stone that promoted union. Nevertheless, some of the English workings provide that it shall be said to the candidate at a concluding stage in the ceremony:

“You may perhaps imagine that you have this day taken a fourth degree in Freemasonry; such, however, is not the case, it is the Master Mason's completed.”

[The same caution is to be found in the Installation Ceremony in Lodges where the “Extended Workings” are used (e.g. Revised Ritual pp. 286-303). When the Master-Elect is presented to the Bd. of I.M. the Installing Master must warn the candidate that he is not about to have an additional degree conferred on him. To emphasize this point no certificate is issued to an English Installed Master as in Australian and New Zealand jurisdictions. However, both Moderns and Antients issued Royal Arch certificates and this has continued after the Union (II Misc. Lat. xvi, 24).]

PART 7—POSTSCRIPT

The Supreme Grand Chapter of New South Wales was constituted on 26 June, 1899. It succeeded the English Constitution District of New South Wales. The first English Chapter dated from 1854 and the District from 1861. When the United Grand Lodge of New South Wales was set up in 1888 the English Lodges were absorbed. Thus there being no English Lodges in N.S.W. with which the Chapters might be affiliated the English charters were withdrawn and these Chapters came under the jurisdiction of the new Supreme Grand Chapter of New South Wales. Because the source of Grand Chapter was the English Royal Arch a few additional remarks about English Royal Arch after 1817 might be appropriate.

Of the 273 Royal Arch Chapters in England at the time of the Union only 120 survived. Following an initial regression numbers began to increase. In 1971 there were 2,776 E.G. Chapters operating, 149 having been added in the previous 10 years (1971 Masonic Year Book).

The attachment of English Chapters to Lodges appears to have had the effect that nearly 40% of Master Masons become also Royal Arch Masons; compare this with about 13% in New South Wales, a number too small to be divided between two jurisdictions (Scottish and N.S.W.) The qualifying period in England was 12 months a M.M. until 1893 when it was reduced to 4 weeks.

It is, I believe, only in England that there is a nexus between Craft Lodges and Chapter jurisdictions, in all others the two jurisdictions are completely separated. It certainly is so in Scotland, Ireland, the United States and most Australian States.

Despite the Union there is no unanimity in England in respect of ritual. Following the Union a Dr. Browne was given the job of recasting the ritual in 1834 but his version had little acceptance. Twenty

years later a Chapter of Promulgation to spread Browne's ritual was set up but it had no better success. The result is that to-day England seems to have six principal workings, Aldersgate, Standard, Domatic, Metropolitan, Complete and Midland); seven minor workings (Bristol, Emulation, Stability, Logic, West-end, Oxford and Genesis) and about seven other lesser known formularies. No one ritual is granted greater authority than another but if adopted must be worked without addition to or subtraction from it. The differences in working one from another are of a minor and unimportant nature as are the differences between the 30 or 40 extant English Craft Rituals. N.S.W. Supreme Grand Chapter adopted the Oxford ritual in 1899 in the belief, G.S.E. told me, that it was THE English ritual. It is likely that the English Chapters in N.S.W. had the Oxford working and this was the source from which that working passed to the N.S.W. Supreme Grand Chapter. The 160 odd Chapters aggregating about 8,000 members, comprising the Scottish District of N.S.W. and the Australian Capital Territory, uses the official ritual of the Supreme Grand Chapter of Scotland.

PART 8—EPILOGUE

Royal Arch Freemasonry to-day is a highly respected world-wide observance yet like other rites of Freemasonry it possesses a paucity of reliable records through which its origin may be verified exactly. For example, it cannot be established whether the Royal Arch was fabricated out of existing degrees or whether it was a new creation in England or whether it was imported thither.

If it was a new creation or imported did it incorporate old-time legends known to the masonic fraternity? We do not know definitely.

If it was a development out of an existing degree or degrees was it the original concluding part of the Master Mason degree? Of this I think we can be sure. It was not. If it was so the Moderns would have worked the Royal Arch—in fact, though there were differences in detail the M.M. degrees use much the same in each of the Moderns and Antient Lodges. Secondly, the 18th century exposures would at least have given an indication that such was the case.

Finally, did the Royal Arch, like the first two Craft degrees, issue from Operative Masonry? It is thought not.

Perhaps one may surmise that at the time the 1717 Grand Lodge came into being there were considerable variations in ceremony, in traditions and legends and perhaps much dispute in respect of what was proper. Inevitably, attempts to co-ordinate matters would lead to compromise and so, perhaps, give birth to essential elements of the third degree of Royal Arch or both.

The ultimate result has been the perfection of the Master Mason's degree.

My last sentence shall be to applaud the zeal of the Antients in their promotion of the degree in the second half of the 18th century culminating in 163 Chapters being warranted between 1800 and 1813 and the acceptance by and continued promotion of the Order by the United Grand Lodge of England.

PART 9—BIBLIOGRAPHY

It is sometimes stated (in N.S.W.) that not a great deal has been written about Royal Arch Freemasonry but the contrary is true. In masonic literature references abound. The not yet complete subject index of my Masonic Library contains 811 references to the Royal Arch, references which vary in size from a whole book of 294 pages down to a couple of lines. I consulted most of them gratefully but I would give especial thanks for the help obtained in preparing this paper from the following 28 sources:—

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MISCELLANEA
QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS OF THE
CORRESPONDENCE CIRCLE

Answers by THE ASSISTANT EDITOR
(W.BRO. H. STARMER)

Question

Blindfolding I seem to remember was a feature of old initiation rites. Does it come to us from the Operatives or could it be the result of French influence?

I can find only two references to it in the "Early Masonic Catechisms"—Masons' Examination and possibly in the Graham version 'poor and penniless blind and ignorant!' From some of the questions in the other catechisms it would appear that the candidate was not blindfolded although the French Exposures state that the eyes were bandaged. J.S.

Answer

In most initiation rites it was customary to use blindfolding and this practice, there can be little doubt, was solely to emphasise the darkness of ignorance of the initiate.

A candidate was h.w. in order that 'his heart might conceive before his eyes should discover' although a valid second reason for the action might well have been to serve as a precautionary measure for, had he refused to go through with the ceremony, he would have been withdrawn without his having discovered the Form of the Lodge.

As a third reason it was doubtless to serve as a reminder that, as he was received into Masonry in a state of d , so should he always act to keep the world so with regard to its Ss.

The word h.w. appears in the Emulation Ritual as demonstrated in the Emulation Lodge of Improvement where in the questions before passing and in response to 'Describe the m e of your preparation' the candidate replies "I was d. of m. and h.w. etc."

By reason of the antiquity of blindfolding it is felt safe to suppose that its practice was common among the Operatives. Equally there can be little doubt that the French took advantage of the b . . . d . ge within some Lodges where, at the moment of entry of a candidate, the ignition of gunpowder or resin had, to say the least, a startling effect upon him despite his b . . d . . . d eyes.

Question

"If a mason you would be
Observe you well the Rule of Three"

What is meant by the Rule of Three?

J.S.

Answer

The explanation of the Second T.B. of the Emulation Ritual reads 'Three rule a Lodge . . .' The Three who rule a Lodge are the Master and his two Wardens . . .

The same explanation goes on to say 'Three rule a Lodge because there were but three Grand Masters . . . namely S.K. of I., H.K. of T., and H.A.

The quoted lines of the question are found in the anonymous letter printed in 1723 and form part of a masonic catechism which appeared without title. It is, of course, always now known by the heading supplied by Gould when he caused it to be reprinted in his *History of Freemasonry* a copy of which is in the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

Legend tells that adherence to the Rule resulted in the murder of H.A.B. and some believe it to be related to the ancient occult Kabbalistic system of Jewish worship where three was a symbolic number of great significance.

Question

'Squaring the Lodge ought to be carefully observed when conducting the candidate in the three degrees, this being important symbolically'. Explain the symbolism. J.S.

Answer

Squaring the Lodge seems to have originated in the 18th century when the Brethren sat around the rectangular table and worked the ritual in the form of a catechism. Any movement must, of necessity, have meant walking in the form of a square and the pattern obviously was retained when the tables were no longer used.

The square teaches morality as is stated when presenting the W.Ts. of a F.C.F.M.

Question

When closing in the Second Degree the J.W. is asked 'Bro. J.W. in this position, what have you discovered?' In what position? J.S.

Answer

According to the ritual we have:—

W.M. to order, Brethren, in the Second Degree.

All take Sp. with F.C.Sn. Then follows—

W.M. Bro. J.W., in this position, what have you discovered?

The position must therefore be that of a F.C. at order.

In the Province of Leicestershire and Rutland, however, it is no longer the practice to take the Sp. but to assume directly the final position.

Question

C.t. with a r . . n . . about my n . .
How did this come into the ritual?

J.S.

Answer

There are many references in the old catechisms to a c. rope. In a Masonic Confession comes the question "Where lies the cappel tow?" with the comment "There is no such thing among them as a cappel tow". Reading a little further in "Early Masonic Catechisms" we find—

Q. Whay a rope about your neck?

A. To hang me if I should betray may trust.

The halter is an ancient symbol of humility and submission which is clearly shown in the reply above and as we read in Kings XX 31-33 (inc). Additionally a rope halter was, and still is regarded, in some quarters, as a badge of slavery and bondage. Accordingly, as an affirmative reply is required of every candidate to the demand "Are you a free man etc?" it might be expected that the c.t. would be removed prior to the Ob. This is normal practice for Irish Brethren.

Question

Did we take from the French the passwords and the m.m. steps over the o.g.?
J.S.

Answer

A password remains in use in Irish Lodges where it is used during the opening of the Lodge and, if necessity requires it, for the examination of visitors. Here also the J.W., when the Initiate is presented to him, replies 'Pass free and of good report' and not 'Enter free and of good report', as in the Emulation Ritual.

One interpretation of the sps. as if s. over an o.g. sees them as symbolising contempt for, and fearlessness of, death. The remaining sps. show both boldness and confidence whilst the total number of them indicates perfection.

Question

Perambulating Deacons. Are two necessary? Would it be true to say that two only are required when wands are crossed or at the foot of the o.g. in the Third?
J.S.

Answer

The Emulation Ritual is demonstrated in the Emulation Lodge of Improvement and as published in 1969, in the First Degree Ceremony details the points at which one, or both of the Deacons are active

participants in the ceremony. In the rubric (p.42) we find—S.D. meanwhile replaces k.s. in normal position and when J.D. and Can. have passed N.E. corner, takes p. from S.W.'s ped. to W.M. and resumes seat.

P.40 reads—

S.D. takes up position on l. of Can. simultaneously with arrival of latter and J.D. so that all three stand facing W.M., J.D. on r. . and S.D. on l. of Can.

These detailed accounts of the movements continue throughout the Emulation Ritual but there are many Provinces in which, by custom, Lodges have variations in the patterns of movement which have developed over the years chiefly to meet the particular circumstances of the Lodge room.

Question

I can well understand an Initiate suffering d. by s . . . if he attempts to rush forward but why should he suffer d. by str - g from the c.t. if he attempts to retreat (having perhaps changed his mind at the very last moment) before even entering the Lodge? I.L.

Answer

In the ritual a Can. is informed of the dangers that he has escaped viz. of s. and s., and this takes place after his restoration to the blessing of l. .

It is felt that the second danger is intended to emphasise the consequence of retreat, not in the originally prepared s. of d., but of one who has himself forcibly removed the hw. to ascertain the form of the Lodge so as improperly to discover secrets. This implies that the danger of s. refers only to one who has entered the Lodge in an orthodox manner.

A Can. who changes his mind at the very last moment would, generally speaking, have seen nothing of the form of the Lodge and consequently incur no danger upon a decision to withdraw.

Question

There is something odd about the orientation of the Third Tracing Board—with east to east it looks the wrong way round when explaining it. J.S.

Answer

In certain Lodges it remains the custom to stand all the boards against a pedestal or even to hang them on the wall. Those Lodges apart, it is at once apparent that the Third Tracing Board is the opposite way round, compared with the other two, for its head is towards the west and its foot to the east.

This may well be yet another pointer that the third degree is the "Master's part" since the board is so placed that it can best be seen by the Worshipful Master in the chair, while the other two boards are placed that they can best be seen by the Brethren on the floor.

Most boards have the cardinal points drawn around their edges, and if boards are placed on the floor with the 'N' to the north and 'E' to the east, it is then that the first two face one way and the third the other.

REPAIR OF MASONIC DOCUMENTS AND OTHER ARCHIVES

(We are pleased to include this copy of a leaflet produced by W.Bro. A. R. Hewitt on behalf of the United Grand Lodge of England when he was Grand Lodge Librarian and Curator. Ed.)

It has often been found that some documents and archives presented to the Grand Lodge Library and Museum, or brought in for inspection, identification, etc., have been "repaired" by the use of self-adhesive tape. Although such tape is convenient for the repair of current office or domestic papers, it is not intended for valuable documents and its use on these can be disastrous. The adhesive is liable to discolour badly and to bleed right into the paper, thus rendering the text illegible, and the tape itself may shrink, allowing the adhesive to exude round the edges, causing documents to stick together. These can easily be damaged when an attempt is made to separate them.

Brethren owning or having the custody of documents or Lodge and Chapter archives are therefore most strongly urged never to use any type of self-adhesive tape in attempting to repair them.

There are three ways in which damaged documents can be handled in order to prevent further deterioration.

1. The document should be kept flat, or in its folded condition, between two sheets of clean white blotting paper inside two pieces of white cardboard tied up with tape.
2. Temporary repairs can be made with "butterfly" music tape, which is a transparent tape having a water-soluble adhesive—it is available in various widths. If the document is likely to be flexed, it is wise to "pink" the edges of the tape with pinking shears as this prevents there being a hard edge between the mend and the paper.
3. Good quality tissue paper, preferably "lens tissue" or "Japanese" tissue can be pasted over tears. The tissue should be torn, not cut, to size as this makes a less visible edge and avoids the hard edge mentioned above. Where a tear comes to the edge of a piece of paper, the tissue should be folded over the edge for a quarter of an

inch or so. The best paste to use is the traditional flour paste made of plain cooking flour and water in the proportion 1 oz. (av.) flour to 3 fluid oz. of water. Alternatively, Polycell paste, made slightly thicker than usual, can be used. In each case, as little paste as possible should be used and the document should be allowed to dry under slight pressure.

In the case of documents, minute books, etc., with textual material on both sides, the repair should be made with strips of "butterfly" or tissue paper affixed in such a way (between lines and in the margin) as not to obscure the text.

Parchment or vellum documents should be repaired only by experts.

Co-operation in this matter will help to ensure that historic material will be preserved for posterity in reasonable condition.

(Compiled by the Grand Lodge Librarian in collaboration with the Research Laboratory, British Museum).

Freemasons' Hall, London.

Supplies

'Butterfly' tape is manufactured by Samuel Jones and Co. Ltd., Paper Mills, St. Neots, Hunts.

Lens tissue (manufactured by J. R. Crompton & Bros. Ltd., Elton Paper Mills, Bury, Lancs. and by J. Barcham Green Ltd., Hayle Mill, Tovil, Maidstone, Kent) is obtainable from Russell Bookcraft, Hitchin, Herts.

Japanese tissue is available from T. N. Lawrence & Son, 2 Bleeding Heart Yard, Greville Street, London, E.C.1.

THE PRESTONIAN LECTURESHIP

(W.Bro. Haunch included this statement in the booklet of the Prestonian Lecture, 1972. ED.)

WILLIAM PRESTON (1742-1818), a very active Freemason at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries, developed an elaborate system of masonic instruction by means of catechetical lectures which was practised in association with the Lodge of Antiquity of which he was at one time Master. At his death he bequeathed to Grand Lodge the sum of £300, the interest from which was to be applied 'to some well-informed Mason to deliver annually a Lecture on the First, Second or Third Degree of the Order of Masonry according to the system practised in the Lodge of Antiquity' during Preston's Mastership. With occasional intermissions lectures on his method were accordingly delivered from 1820 until 1862 when

the Lectureship was allowed to lapse. In 1924 it was revived with certain modifications to the original scheme, the lecturer delivering a paper on a masonic subject of his own selection.

The Prestonian Lecture is the only lecture held under the authority of the United Grand Lodge of England, and with the exception of the years 1940-46 regular appointments have been made annually since 1924 to the present day. The list of Brethren so honoured and titles of the lectures appear at the end of the Masonic Year Book.

LODGE TRANSACTIONS

Surplus copies of the Lodge Transactions are available for disposal as follows:—

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Provincial Grand Chaplain, Leicestershire and Rutland

This booklet contains the transcript of seven Orations delivered at the Consecration of Lodges and two at the Dedication of new Lodge Rooms in this Province from 1966 to 1972.

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2. FRENCH PRISONERS' LODGES

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The book is full bound linen cloth, 304 pages. 9½in. x 7in. (post free) home £1.00; overseas £1.25.

3. 'BUILDERS IN STONE'

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Application for any of the above should be made to the Hon. Librarian, Freemasons' Hall, 80 London Road, Leicester, LE2 0RA.

Cheques etc. Nos. 1, 3, 4, 5 to be made payable to the Provincial Grand Treasurer, and for No. 2. to the Treasurer, Lodge of Research, No. 2429, at the above address.

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Revised 1973

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