

Leicester

**The Lodge of Research
No. 2429**

Transactions 2003-04

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EDITORIAL

Last year we congratulated W.Bro. A. N. Newman, Master of *The Lodge of Research No. 2429* in 1996, on being only the second member of the Lodge to be appointed Prestonian Lecturer. He is to be congratulated once more; in recognition of his contribution to Freemasonry, he was appointed to the rank of Past Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies, in the United Grand Lodge.

This year we conclude W.Bro. A. D. Herbert's series of papers *Masonic Personalities as seen through the Byron connection*, embracing the years 1782–1850. The first paper being published in the Lodge Transactions of 1999 and in each subsequent year, providing a valuable insight into the social lives of our leaders.

Once again the Lodge has been privileged to receive an unofficial delivery of the Prestonian Lecture. The lecturer's remit was *with a philosophical rather than historical basis*. It is mentally very stimulating and is worthy of being re-read a number of times.

The Lodge of Research, No. 2429

Officers 2003–2004

Worshipful Master

BRO. M. DAVID M. PARKES BOWEN

Bro. PETER A. NEAVERSON (P.M.)	Senior Warden
Bro. JOHN M. CAPPIN (P.M.)	Junior Warden
Bro. EDWARD W. BRAMFORD P.M.	Chaplain
Bro. ROGER G. PIPES (P.M.)	Treasurer
Bro. WALTER W. GLOVER (P.M.)	Secretary
Bro. KENNETH G. MASON P.M.	Director of Ceremonies
Bro. JEREMY A. RIDGE P.M.	Almoner
Bro. AUBREY N. NEWMAN P.M.	Charity Steward
Bro. JOHN T. HARRISON (P.M.)	Senior Deacon
Bro. BRYAN B. WILLS (P.M.)	Junior Deacon
Bro. W. JOHN S. BOOTON P.M.	Assistant Director of Ceremonies
Bro. RALPH LEEK (P.M.)	Organist
Bro. VICTOR C. CLARKE (P.M.)	Assistant Secretary
Bro. MICHAEL E. HERBERT (P.M.)	Inner Guard
Bro. ALAN SELBY (P.M.)	Steward
Bro. WILLIAM G. DAWSON (P.M.)	Steward
Bro. A. DAVID HERBERT (P.M.)	Tyler

Immediate Past Master

W.BRO. ALAN SIMPSON

Master Elect

W.BRO. PETER A. NEAVERSON

Treasurer's Address

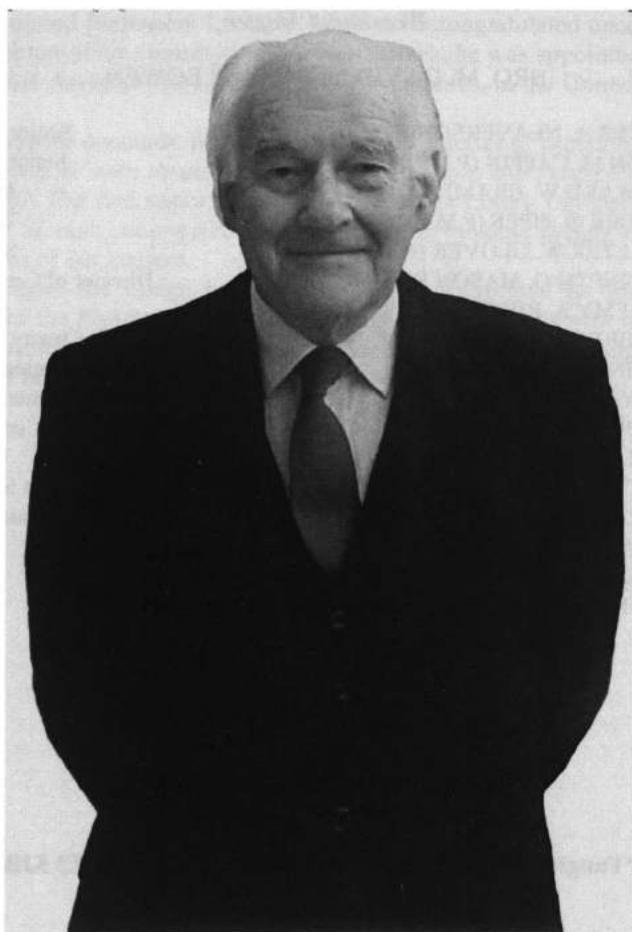
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Editor

**W.BRO. J.A. RIDGE
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W. Bro. Malcolm David Marston Parkes Bowen

BIOGRAPHY

W.Bro. Malcolm David Marston Parkes Bowen was made a Mason in the Albert Edward Lodge No. 1560 in January 1956 and Master in 1966. In 1971 he joined the Leicestershire and Rutland Lodge of Installed Masters No. 7896 becoming Master in 1985, and was elected a full member of the Lodge of Research No. 2429 in 1993. He joined the Gayton Taylor Lodge No. 9176 in 1992 and was a founder of Ratae Meridian Lodge No. 9673 in 1998. In 1983 he was promoted to Provincial Senior Grand Warden and in 1994 to Past Junior Grand Deacon in The United Grand Lodge of England.

In the Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch he was exalted in St. George's Chapter No. 1560 in 1962, being First Principal in 1976. A founder of the Morley Chapter No. 8320 in 1974. He joined the Leicestershire and Rutland Chapter of Installed First Principals No. 7896 in 1980 and was First Principal in 1992. In 1986 he was promoted to Past Provincial Grand Scribe Nehemiah and in Supreme Grand Chapter was appointed as Past Grand Standard Bearer in 1988.

In the Degree of Mark Master Masons he was advanced in St. George's Lodge No. 1133 in 1981, being Master in 1992. A founder of the Progress Lodge of Installed Mark Masters No. 1786 in 1997 and Master in 1999. In 2000 he was promoted to Past Provincial Grand Junior Warden, and in the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons was appointed Deputy Grand Sword Bearer in the same year.

He was elevated in the Honourable Degree of Royal Ark Mariners in the Oliver Lodge of Royal Ark Mariners No. 751 in 1990 and was Commander in 1997. He was a founder of the Progress Lodge of Enthroned Commanders No. 1786 in 2002. He was appointed to Provincial Grand Rank in 2003.

He was installed in the Byzantine Conclave No. 44 in the Masonic and Military Order of the Red Cross at Constantine and the Orders of the Holy Sepulchre in 1968 and elected Sovereign in 1982. In 1973 he was a founder of the Isle of Patmos Conclave No. 277. In the East Midlands Division he was promoted to Viceroy in 2000, and in Grand Imperial Conclave as Grand Junior General in 2003.

In the Ancient and Accepted Rite under the Supreme Council 33^o he was perfected in 1967 in the Hugh Latimer Chapter Rose Croix No. 558, becoming Sovereign in 1977. In 1992 he was a founder and first Sovereign of the Saints Peter and Paul Chapter Rose Croix No. 1046. In 1985 was installed as Inspector General for the Leicestershire and Rutland District.

In the United Religious, Military and Masonic Orders of the Temple, and of St John of Jerusalem, Palestine, Rhodes and Malta, in England and Wales and Provinces Overseas he was installed in Rothley Temple Preceptory and Priory No. 152 in 1971 and was Preceptor in 1984. In 1987 he was promoted to Past Chancellor in the Provincial Priory of Leicestershire and Rutland and in the Great Priory in 1999 was promoted to Past Great Herald.

In the order of the Holy Royal Arch Knight Templar Priests or Order of Holy Wisdom he was admitted into the Leicestershire and Rutland Tabernacle No. 122 in 1987 and was High Priest in 1998 and in the Grand College was promoted Past Grand IV Pillar in 2002.

He was inducted into the Order of the Secret Monitor in Amity Conclave No. 51 in 1991, and joined Ernshale Conclave No. 220 and was Supreme Ruler in 1998, and in 2001 a founder of the Ivanhoe Conclave No. 458. In Provincial Grand Conclave he was promoted to Visitor in 2003, and in Grand Conclave was appointed Past Grand Sword Bearer in 2003.

He was received into Leicester Council No. 146 in the Order of Royal and Select Masters in 1990 and was installed as Thrice Illustrious Master in 2002, and in 2001 was a founder of Lutterworth Council No. 234.

In the Order of the Allied Masonic Degrees he was admitted in the Ratae Council No. 124 in 1991 and was Master in 2001. In 2002 he was a founder of the Golden Jubilee Council No. 179, and in the same year was appointed District Grand Organist.

He was advanced and promoted in the Royal Order of Scotland in the Provincial Grand Lodge of Warwickshire in 1992.

In the Worshipful Society of Free Masons, Rough Masons, Wallers, Slaters, Paviers, Plaisterers and Bricklayers he was admitted into the Collyweston Quarry Assemblage in the East Midland Counties in 2003, and in 2004 was a founder of the Breedon and Cloud Hill Quarry Assemblage.

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 any 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 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 £10.00 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 Four-hundred and seventieth Meeting
was held on
MONDAY 24th November 2003

There were present W.Bro. A. Simpson, W.M.; W.Bro. M. D. M. Parkes Bowen, S.W.; W.Bro. P. A. Neaverson, J.W.; eleven officers, ten full members, thirty-one members of the Correspondence Circle, a total attendance of fifty-five.

Two brethren were elected members of the Correspondence Circle.

The Master elect, W.Bro. M. D. M. Parkes Bowen was presented by the Director of Ceremonies, installed by W.Bro. A. Simpson and proclaimed in three degrees.

After the Worshipful Master had appointed and invested his officers for the year he delivered his inaugural address entitled; "Masonry. Why?"

The brethren afterwards met together for refreshments and conversation.

The Four-hundred and seventy-first Meeting

was held on

MONDAY 26th January 2004

There were present W.Bro. M. D. M. Parkes Bowen, W.M.; W.Bro. P. A. Neaverson, S.W.; W.Bro. J. Cappin, J.W.; thirteen officers, five full members, thirty-eight members of the Correspondence Circle and sixteen visitors, a total attendance of seventy-five.

The W.M. introduced the subject for the evening.

To Conduct a Symposium on Masonic research:

W.Bro. D. M. Sharpe	“The Rancliffe Lodge No. 608”
W.Bro. D. J. Hughes	“Gilbert and Sullivan, some Masonic Echoes”
W.Bro. A. D. Herbert	“When Two Leicestershire Masons Ruled in the Craft”

The brethren afterwards met together for refreshment and conversation.

The Four-hundred and seventy-second Meeting

was held on

MONDAY 22nd March 2004

There were present W.Bro. M. D. M. Parkes Bowen, W.M.; W.Bro. P. A. Neaverson, S.W.; W.Bro. J. Cappin, J.W., thirteen officers, six full members, thirty-one members of the Correspondence Circle and five visitors, a total attendance of fifty-eight.

Three brethren were elected members of the Correspondence Circle.

The annual election resulted as follows:-

Master Elect	W.Bro. P. A. Neaverson
Treasurer	W.Bro. R. G. Pipes

W.Bro. R. A. Crane, presented his Millennium Prestonian Lecture entitled:

“For therein you will be taught . . .”

A vote of thanks was given by the Worshipful Master and the brethren expressed their appreciation.

The brethren afterwards met together for refreshment and conversation.

MASONRY, WHY?

W.Bro. M. D. M. Parkes Bowen, P.J.G.D.

Answering the question "Masonry, why?" poses as many questions as it answers.

Why do we join? Why did I join Masonry? Why are so many people against Masonry? Why do the majority of Freemasons get so much pleasure from it? Why is it such a benevolent institution? Why does it give us so much satisfaction?

It seems to be a natural thing for certain men and women to join clubs and societies to add another dimension to their lives. The length of time that they remain members in a society depends on the kind of society it is, and on their particular circumstances in life. A child is encouraged to take up membership of various societies or clubs at school, such as music, chess, football, cricket, drama and many others. Out of school a boy or girl may join a church choir or learn a musical instrument and join an orchestra or band, or they may join one of the scouting organisations such as Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Rainbows, Brownies or Guides, or the Junior Training Corps or the Boys Brigade. Such activities help us to develop our social skills in relation to others. When attending Colleges of Further Education and University the majority of students are involved with some society or other such as a political association, a debating society, bridge club, photographic, athletic, football, rowing or other club engaged in physical activities whilst they are at college. A few students might even join a University Lodge. Thus at school and at university students are encouraged to join in extracurricular activities.

In one's professional life or avocation, there is a tendency to join a craft or professional society or union. In my own case, if I may use this as an example, after I qualified I joined the British Medical Association, the Medical Defence Union and the University Medical Society, and my name was placed on the Medical Register for life for the then princely sum of £15. Nowadays an annual fee of £380 is required in order to stay on the register. When I arrived in Leicester I joined the Leicester Medical Society and a little later a golf club. All this was predictable and natural. Serendipity and chance play a large part in determining where one's path leads. I had not really taken any real interest in Masonry until I was engaged. I had heard of Freemasons and read about Masonry in Tolstoy's 'War and Peace', but that was all, and I did not consider finding out anything more about them. My father-in-law was a Freemason and I was invited to Ladies' Evenings but I never asked or presumed to ask to join. When I started as a General Practitioner my work took me to Ratby where my practice undertook a joint surgery session with a neighbouring practice three times a week. One Morning Dr Godfrey Jones asked me if I had any interest in Masonry and if I would like to consider joining. Having a vague idea of what it was all about, having seen inside the Lodge Room, or Temple as they were called,

at a Ladies' Evening, and having been told the names of some of the members of the Albert Edward Lodge No.1560, I said yes, without any further enquiries. I knew a lot of the members because they were doctors and it was reputed to be a doctors' Lodge. Had I said no at that time, or prevaricated, I think that it would have been highly probable that I would never have joined. But what other society might I have joined? A comparison with other clubs and societies comes later in this paper, and any of these I might have joined, and some I did.

The Craft is but the first step in Masonry and leads on to other orders and degrees. My own path in Masonry is as follows. St. George's Chapter Royal Arch No.1560 is attached to the Albert Edward Lodge and it was customary in the 1950s for the Deacons of Albert Edward Lodge and Lodge Semper Eadem No. 3091 to be invited to join St. George's Chapter, and as a Deacon I became a Royal Arch Mason. I was then invited to join the Christian Orders, which conveniently met on a Thursday, my half-day, and thus I was Installed as a Worthy Knight Companion in the Byzantine Conclave No. 44; in the Order of the Red Cross of Constantine. I was perfected in the Hugh Latimer Chapter Rose Croix No. 558 and installed a Brother Knight in the Rothley Temple Preceptory No. 152 in the Order of Knights Templar. At this stage I was told by my mentors 'not to bother with anything else'. Thus I was denied the pleasure of Mark Masonry for many years, but fortunately was invited to be advanced in St. George's Mark Lodge No. 1133 in the early 1980s. This I greatly enjoyed and subsequently was elevated in the Oliver Lodge of Royal Ark Mariners No. 751. As a Knight Templar I was invited to become the first candidate for the Leicestershire and Rutland Tabernacle No. 122 of The Holy Royal Arch Knight Templar Priests. I was also invited to join the Royal Order of Scotland in the Province of Warwickshire which is a fascinating Order but in which for several reasons I am not an active member. I was then inducted in the Amity Conclave No. 51 of the Order of the Secret Monitor or Brotherhood of David and Jonathan. When the Order of the Royal and Select Masters, and the Order of the Allied Masonic Degrees came to Leicester I was invited to join these very engaging and thought provoking Orders, for which as a Royal Arch Mason and a Mark Master Mason I was qualified. Lastly I was invited to be admitted as an Indentured Apprentice to the Collyweston Quarry Assemblage of the Worshipful Society of Free Masons, Rough Masons, Wallers, Slaters, Paviers, Plaisterers and Bricklayers, commonly known as the Operatives and am a founder of the Breedon and Cloud Hill Quarry Assemblage which meets at Lutterworth. All these degrees and orders are different and yet have much in common and many similarities, and are thought provoking and full of interest.

At this point I feel it might be of interest to plot the development of British Clubs and Societies¹ over the years and to see how Freemasonry

¹ Peter Clark, *British Clubs and Societies*, (The Origins of an Associational World), Oxford 2000.

relates to these. A major event in the development of societies was in 1586 when the Antiquaries' Society started to meet at the Heralds' Office in London.

Prior to this, trade and craft associations known as guilds or livery companies flourished all over Europe and had done so for centuries. As early as 168 B.C. bakers were the only craftsmen in Rome who were *freedmen* of the city and were incorporated in a college of bakers (*Collegium pistorum*) and they had a seat in the Senate. It is possible that such a Craft fraternity existed in London during the Roman occupation.

In mediaeval times the guilds prospered. They were named *guild* meaning payment, because membership was paid for. They were named livery, as members of each guild wore distinctive uniforms, or livery. They had their own patron saints and each guild attended a particular church and some took the name of the church. The guilds instituted trading standards and protected customers, employers and employees. They trained the young and looked after their own in sickness and old age. Each livery company is governed by an annually elected court typically composed of a master, elected from Upper, Middle and Lower Wardens. The Wardens are elected from ten to twenty Court Assistants. There is also a Clerk to keep the records and a Beadle to keep order. There are at present one hundred, or so livery companies. They have been commended by successive Royal Commissions and their representatives carry out important functions in the governance of the City of London.

Between the reigns of Charles II (1660–1685) and George II (1727–1760) societies and clubs were largely national with a few provincial centres. After this time they spread to a variety of towns and became more formalised with detailed rules and regulations. There were societies that existed in considerable numbers from mediaeval times up to, and the time of, the civil war in the 1640s, for the provision of banquets on feast days. These declined under Cromwell and became unfashionable. After the Restoration and the end of censorship and the growth of political pluralism, there was an upsurge in the formation of scientific, philanthropic bodies, county societies, political, literary, musical and social clubs and these were accepted as a fashionable form of sociability.

At this time benefit societies began to be formed. The Masters and Workers Printers Society was formed in 1621 and had an annual feast and sermon. After the Restoration general friendly societies emerged in England, as for example the Civil Club in 1669. By 1801 there were seven thousand two hundred friendly societies in England and Wales with six hundred and forty eight thousand members and two years later there were nine thousand six hundred and seventy two societies. It is estimated that in London 40% of the working population were members of the friendly societies. Their aim was to relieve the sick and arrange benefits for funerals and widows. By 1793 attitudes towards friendly societies were coloured by fears of the possibility of their powers of causing economic and political disorder, and anxiety over the possible spread of radicalism caused by the

events in France with their revolution. The Friendly Society Act of 1793 gave large scale information based on the Friendly Societies, but not as large as that of the present day Freemason. By the 1760s actuarial principles had been well established but these were ignored or neglected by the artisan and middle class clubs and this often led to their decline and being wound up, as they could not afford the expensive form of audit and the regulations which had been introduced and were used by the larger clubs.

How did Freemasonry differ from other clubs, or was it distinct? Some accounts have emphasised the civic quality of Masonic sociability, its building of polity within sociability, the content of its moral vision and discourse, and its mystical quality and belief in a Supreme Being. Others consider Freemasonry to operate more in line with the mainstream British associations. As one preacher said, the Principles of Freemasonry were those of societies of every kind. Its great asset was its development as a strong federal organisation.

The first Modern Grand Lodge was formed at a meeting of four London Lodges at the Goose and Gridiron alehouse in St Paul's Churchyard in 1717 when Anthony Sayer was elected first Grand Master. By 1771 the Ancients had seventy four Lodges in London, eighty three country Lodges and forty three Lodges overseas. In that same year, 1771, the Modern Grand Lodge had under it one hundred and fifty seven London, one hundred and sixty three country and one hundred overseas Lodges².

In 1813 the twenty one articles of union between the Ancients and Moderns were signed and sealed by the two Grand Masters and Royal brothers, the Duke of Kent of the Ancients, and the Duke of Sussex of the Moderns. The Duke of Sussex appointed the Duke of Kent his Deputy Grand Master. At the time of the Union there were six hundred and forty seven³ numbered Lodges in total, in the U.G.L.E. The Lodges were renumbered and this was determined by chance. The Ancients won the toss, their Lodges were odd numbered and the Moderns even numbered. The Lodge of Antiquity, formerly with the Moderns, became No. 2 in the U.G.L.E. The Grand Stewards' Lodge headed the list but was not numbered.

Freemasonry tended to be selective by setting the admission charge low enough to attract members but high enough to exclude people regarded as socially undesirable. Only the friendly societies in the eighteenth century were more numerous than the Masonic Lodges. The friendly societies were mainly restricted to the artisan and working classes. As far as the respectable classes were concerned Freemasonry was the largest association in the British world. Freemasonry was not only fashionable but also brought social and economic dividends. Masonry is '*no small advantage*', one writer noted in 1726 '*to a man who would rise in the world, and one of the principal reasons why I would be a mason*'. Business commissions were

² Fred L. Puck & G. Norman Knight, *The Pocket History of Freemasonry* 8th Edition (Revised by Frederick Smyth) London.

³ *Ibid.*

one obvious benefit. Lodges generated a heavy demand for varying products including drink, dress, publications, jewels, artefacts and portraits and publications, and inevitably gave the business to members.⁴ But that was in 1726 and it is important to stress that such business is now conducted on a merit and cost basis with no preferential treatment for masons. Charity played a large part in the Lodges then as it does now.

Today United Grand Lodge of England has three hundred and twenty thousand members in forty seven Provinces and thirty three Districts abroad. The Provincial Grand Lodge of Leicestershire and Rutland has just over three thousand masons out of a total male population over the age of twenty one of say three hundred and fifty thousand, or between 0.8 and 0.9%.

We know about Masonry but what other alternatives are there? I have looked into other associations that men and women join for comparison and describe some of them.

Rotary International has 1.4 million members worldwide in one hundred and sixty six countries. It was founded in 1905 and its aim and object is to improve communities locally around the world and aim for high ethical standards in business and professional work; to advance understanding by partnership with clubs in other countries. Since 1947 Rotary has raised \$1.1 billion in humanitarian and educational grants administered at local level. Rotary is aiming to eradicate poliomyelitis by February 2005 their centennial year. Jonathan Majiyabe from Nigeria is the first African International President. Rotarians meet every week and a high percentage rate in attendance is required and expected. The Ladies of Rotarians have a club of their own, the Inner Wheel.

The Round Table was founded in 1927 at the instigation of a Rotarian from Norwich, Louis Manchesi, and has one thousand clubs in England and thirteen thousand members. The members range in age from eighteen to forty five when they have to retire. Their motto is *Adopt, Adapt, Improve*. They meet twice a month and raise money for projects for their communities and offer services to their communities as well. Associated with the Round Table is the 41 Club, so called as forty one was the original retirement age, which is a social club. They also have a Ladies' Circle.

Lions Clubs were formed in 1917 from several businessmen's clubs, the Business Circle of Chicago, by Melvin Jones. He believed that local business clubs should expand their horizons from purely professional concerns to the betterment of their communities and the world at large. There are now over 1.4 million members worldwide, in forty six thousand clubs in one hundred and ninety two countries. Each club meets twice a month on average. Major projects are prevention and cure of blindness, drug abuse, and diabetes awareness. They also try to help their local communities by providing water supplies, building parks, supporting hospitals and other activities. Fund raising is an important function. Lions Clubs International

⁴ *Ibid.*

Foundation holds substantial funds for providing money for urgent projects and emergency relief such as floods. Recently L.C.I.F. provided £15,000 to double the amount raised by two local Lions clubs to purchase a retinal camera for the Diabetic Department at the Leicester General Hospital. There are twelve Lions Clubs in Leicestershire with about three hundred members. Potential members are invited to attend three meetings and if they wish to join they are introduced at a club meeting by their sponsors. They promise to serve the club to the best of their ability. The sponsor reads the Code of Ethics and Objects, with some similarities to the 'charge', and a badge is pinned on the new member's jacket. There are also Lioness Clubs, originally for women, and Leo clubs for young people of both sexes from eighteen to twenty five. Now there are women in men's clubs and men in Lioness clubs. This happened because of anti-discriminatory laws in the USA. There are eighteen thousand six hundred Lions members in the British Isles, divided into thirteen districts which each hold Annual Conventions. There are also Multi District and International Annual Convention.

PROBUS Clubs were introduced about twenty years ago for retired professional and businessmen. They meet each month for lunch and usually have a speaker. The meetings are relaxed and friendly and convivial and the club is for the benefit and enjoyment of its members. There are four clubs in Leicester and more in the surrounding towns.

Women have their own associations and it is of interest to consider these. Mary Sumner founded The Mother's Union in 1876. It is the world's largest Christian Women's Organisation. There are over three million members in seventy one countries and there are one hundred and twenty two thousand members in the U.K. They are committed to promoting Christian Family life and do good works in eighty four prisons, forty eight hospitals, and twenty three child contact centres and many others.

The National Federation of Women's Institutes was formed in the British Isles in 1915, in Llanfairpwll, after several attempts previous by a Canadian, Lady Adelaide Hoodless to set it up in England. It had been founded in Canada in 1887 and was eventually formed in England and Wales with the help of Colonel Stapleton-Cotton, who was heavily involved with agriculture during the first Great World War. The W.I. was intended to be productive and to help the war effort. It now has two hundred and thirty thousand members in England and Wales, and the mission statement is *Truth, Justice, Tolerance, Fellowship*; compare this with the Masonic Tolerance, Fortitude and Justice. Its aim is to educate women for an effective role in the community, expand their horizons, and develop and pass on important skills. The National Headquarters is in London and there is an Office in Wales at Cardiff. There are regional offices in the seventy Counties and some of the Islands of the British Isles. There is an Educational College in Oxfordshire. In Leicestershire and Rutland there are one hundred and sixty Women's Institutes.

The Soropomist, meaning 'best of sisters', is an international women's club. Their object is to work for the welfare of women and children. They take professional women as members but select their candidates from managerial level or above. They are organised into regions and form an International Federation. They are affiliated to U.N.I.C.E.F. and can exert considerable influence on governments, as for instance in pressing for an improved breast screening programme. There are clubs in Leicester and Loughborough.

Moving to a subject that I knew little about, the Odd Fellows.⁵ The name is derived from the fact that in Seventeenth century England it was odd to find people organised for giving aid to those in need. Thus the Odd Fellows were formed whose aim was to improve and elevate the character of man and help those in need. It was also known as the Three Link Fraternity, the links being friendship, love and truth. The first Odd Fellows Lodge was formed in Manchester at the beginning of the Eighteenth century and subsequently Lodges were formed all over the country. Members had to believe in a Supreme Being. At first quite a number were members of the Odd Fellows and the Freemasons, both sharing much in common. After a time Grand Lodge prohibited any one from being a member of any order other than Freemasonry, so that they could not be both Freemasons and Odd Fellows, as hitherto. The Masonic Lodges had tended to reserve membership for the professional and better off members of society. This left the Odd Fellows with mainly working men.

The Unlawful Societies Act of 1799 was passed in response to the French Revolution amid fears that a similar revolution might occur in the U.K. together with the perceived danger of insurrections being organised by secret societies. The Freemasons managed to get a clause inserted in the act allowing their Lodges to continue much as before. The Odd Fellows had no such clause and many members left the Odd Fellows' Lodges to join Masonic Lodges. Prior to that the Odd Fellows' Lodges were individually organised. The first Lodge shared to some extent a common history with Grand Lodge in London. In 1832 in England the Odd Fellows had five hundred and sixty one Lodges with over thirty thousand members. This made it at that time the largest such society in England. It became international, when Thomas Wilding and four members from England instituted the Washington Lodge No. 1 in America, on 26th April 1819 in Baltimore, Maryland. It received its charter from the Manchester Unity Lodge of Odd Fellows. The First Degree of the Odd Fellows is based on the story David and Jonathan which also forms the basis of the ritual of the Order of the Secret Monitor. Nowadays the Odd Fellows advertise as a mutual, non-profit making Friendly Society with medical benefits, travel and holiday clubs, care service, legal aid and members are invited to enjoy an active social life. The Odd Fellows is open to women who have the Rebekah

⁵ The Odd Fellows - 'Making friends, meeting people' Pamphlet ODD/3620/01/04.

Degree. Vice-president Colfax of the U.S.A. wrote in 1851. The Odd Fellows also have homes for their older members and for orphaned children.

The following extract makes interesting reading and shows what an effect public relations display could have on the general public of the Isle of Man. It dates from 1870 and shows that many societies can exist in a small region. This is borne out by the following newspaper heading in the island, '*Manxmen believe in Benefit Societies*'. The article goes on to say that in the Island with its small population of less than sixty thousand there are Odd Fellows, Druids, Foresters, Artificers, Rechabites and Sons of Temperance, Good Templars and Freemasons. The members of these Societies vie with each other in their annual processions in the exhibition of costly regalia. The Sons of Temperance and the Good Templars were not benefit societies but temperance societies.

The origin of the Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes is of some interest. It appears to have derived from the Order of Lushington, which was a brotherhood of Actors and Artistes who met at the Harp Tavern, Great Russell Street, Near Drury Lane Theatre. The meeting room was laid out in the form of a city with four or more wards. The Master was referred to as the Mayor and other officers carried the name City Barber, City Physician and City Taster. The latter had the most important job as he tasted the ale of the Tavern that was on sale, and if it was found wanting the host/landlord had to pay a fine by providing the brotherhood with two gallons of ale without charge.

Stage-hands were originally allowed to attend these meetings but were eventually squeezed out because of lack of space. They then organised their own exclusive meetings; as they said *nuffin to do with them acter fellows*. As they moved around the country they founded more Lodges. About 1922 they chose antediluvian rather than ancient because they said that the desire of mankind to relieve the poverty of one's fellows has been around since the earliest ages and if that isn't antediluvian, what is? Their Logo is a Buffalo and it is said that in the early stages of its formation two of their members tried to promote a song named *We chase the Buffalo*. It never caught on as a song, but the society remains *The Buffaloes*. With the *Seditious and Riotous Assembly Act*, the members agreed to add the word loyal to their name to show that they were not subversive and this in time became Royal. Administratively they are a three-tier organisation. Minor Lodge, Provincial Grand Lodge and Grand Lodge and there are four degrees or rank of membership. 1st (Brother), 2nd (Primo), 3rd (Knight of Merit) and 4th (Right Honourable). The higher degrees are the prerogative of every Brother who aspires to them and who, by the quality of his service, is shown to deserve them. The first, and possibly the most important fact, is that there are no contractual or insurance elements attached to membership of the Order. Grants from benevolent funds at any level, are not related to what you give but to what you need.

The Ancient Order of Foresters is a unique branch based friendly society providing low cost life insurance, savings plans and health and sickness insurance plans. Their mutual status is gained as all the members pay into a mutual pool. This is used to help those in need. They also provide a range of additional membership benefits such as discretionary grants, social activities, and friendship and support throughout the U.K.

Turning again to women; they too have an interest in Freemasonry. The Honourable Fraternity of Ancient Freemasons is a fraternity for women organised by women. It was founded in 1913 and membership is open to those of any race or religion who are able to express a belief in a Supreme Being. They have lodges throughout England and the Isle of Man stretching from Carlisle in the North to Brighton and Bournemouth in the South. There is now a branch in Gibraltar. The H.F.A.F. had its headquarters at 68 Great Cumberland Place, London. This is a grade II listed building. The rent rocketed as did the cost of maintenance so they have moved to Dartmouth Park, London NW5. They work various degrees such as Royal Arch, Mark, Royal Ark Mariner, and Rose Croix, in addition to the three Craft Degrees. There are two Craft Lodges in Leicester with a membership of about eighty. They say that *in common with our fellow Masons in the United Grand Lodge of England we believe in giving to Charity. We are concentrating our efforts on purchasing equipment for the help and assistance of cancer patients, particularly women and children. We were pleased to have helped many hospitals and hospices.*

It is of interest to note that the first British Grand Lodge for Men and Women⁶ had its inaugural meeting in February 2001 following its breakaway from the International Order of Co-Freemasonry, following the suspension of the Consistory Council of the British federation of Le Droit Humaine by the Supreme Council in Paris, for objecting to changes in the landmarks. The new body is dedicated to following the time-honoured concord, which requires every candidate to profess a belief in a Supreme Being. The regalia is very similar to U.G.L.E. regalia. Their Grand Master is John Michael Westcott and the Assistant Grand Master is Jeanne Heasleywood. There are four lodges, the first founded in 1902.

Young peoples' associations have a large membership throughout the world.

The Boys Brigade has as its object the advancement of Christ's Kingdom among boys and the promotion of obedience, reverence, discipline, self-respect and all that tends to train Christian manliness. The ages range from five to nineteen and in the movement worldwide there are half a million. There are ten national regions in the world largely in countries which formed the British Empire. Such as America, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Malaya and Singapore and the U.K. and others. They involve

⁶ Freemasonry today – Issue 7.

the members in games, sports, music, Christian teaching and holidays. Nowadays the brigade includes girls.

The largest youth organisations are the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides (the Scouts now admit girls). There are over ten million guides in the world, in one hundred and forty countries in seventy five Associations. The aim of the Associations is to enable young girls and young women to develop their fullest potential as responsible citizens of the world and to be responsible for themselves, their communities and for the world at large. The modern mission statement is to provide high quality, non-formal education that provides dynamic flexible and value based training in life skills, leadership and decision-making. It is interesting to note that Lord Baden Powe!! said in 1918 when it was founded *Our method of training is from within rather than without, to offer games and activities which while being attractive to the girl seriously educates her mentally and physically.*

The World Organisation of the Scouts Movement has twenty eight million scouts in two hundred and sixteen countries. The chairwoman is Dr. Marie Correa of Senegal, and the Secretary General is Dr. Eduardo Missoni of Italy. Their mission is to contribute to the education of young people through a value system based on the Scout Promise and to help to build a better world where people are self fulfilled as individuals and play a constructive role in society.

In the U.K. boys join the Beavers at six to eight years, Cub Scouts from eight to ten and a half years, the Scouts from ten and a half to fourteen, Explorer Scouts from fourteen to eighteen, and Venture Scouts, now more likely to be named Network Scouts, from eighteen to twenty five years.

Of the non-masonic organisations, the Scouts and Guides probably have a very meaningful initiation ceremony, which makes a lasting impression on the mind. Other associations accept new members with a few words of welcome and introduction, and the presentation of a badge.

As W.Bro. W. Steel P.J.G.D.⁷ said in a paper entitled *Some Musings on the International Aspects of Scouting and Freemasonry* given at the Spring Meeting 1987 of the Kindred Lodges Association, *There is much in common between Scouting and Freemasonry.*

1. Both are brotherhoods (one of the Scout Laws requires that a Scout is a brother of every other Scout).
2. Both require a belief in a Supreme Being (the Scout Promise states that a Scout will do his best to do his duty to God)
3. Both require allegiance to the sovereign of his native land
4. Both are interdenominational
5. Both teach high standards of morality
6. Both may be considered uniformed organisations
7. Both are patronised by members of the Royal Family

⁷ W Steel, 'Some Musings on the International Aspects of Scouting and Freemasonry' Spring Meeting Kindred Lodges Association 1987.

8. Both have signs of recognition, signs, which are symbolic. The Scout sign or salute refers to the three parts of the Scout Promise (On my honour I promise that I will do my best to do my duty to God and the Queen, to help other people and to keep the Scout Law) and the left-handshake is a sign of heartfelt greeting
9. Both are international

Being admitted a scout with the presentation of the Tenderfoot Badge after taking the Scouts' Promise would doubtless make a lasting impression on the new made Scout's mind. It is the same sort of impression that the ceremony of initiation made on our minds.

It is hardly surprising that Freemasons who had a past or present connection with Scouting and other Youth Organisations, should form Lodges recruited from Scouts and Boys Brigades and the like, just as Lodges in the past have been founded by Founders who have come from groupings of the same profession or occupation such as Accountants, Bankers, Doctors, Engineers, Industrialists, members of the Armed Forces, School Lodges formed from old boys, Musicians, Tradesmen, Actors and Artistes and similar. As the United Grand Lodge of England was formed in 1717 by four Lodges meeting at the Goose and Grid Iron Ale House in St Paul's Church Yard so the seeds for the Kindred Lodges Association were formed following a meeting at the court Association in 1952⁸. Five Lodges were known to be composed of present and past Scout Leaders and Supporters and on 11th September 1953 members of three of these Lodges met in London. There are now thirty eight Kindred Lodges and the Kindred Lodges Association have met every year since 1953. The Aim of the association is to facilitate and foster relationships amongst freemasons who are or were engaged in Youth Work, including the encouragement of Inter-Lodge visiting. The secretary of the Kindred Lodges Association since 1987 is W.Bro. Cyril Davison, a Leicester Mason and a member of the Compass Lodge No. 8765 meeting at Syston.

Not all youth associations are good and neither are all brotherhoods. The Hitler Youth springs to mind as one. Of the others I mention but two.

The Hong Kong Triads are very powerful, and the border of the new frontier territory between Hong Kong and South China is fertile ground for criminal gangs and corruption. Huzhon is said to be the Palermo of South China. The New Discipline and Peace Triad is said to control many of the parking lots in Hong Kong. Chinese authorities estimate that there are one hundred and fifty thousand members in the Triads operating in the Peoples' Republic of China.

The Mafia, or Cosa Nostra, originated in Sicily and is now largely worldwide. A new recruit is told that it is a secret society and that there is one way in and one way out. *You walk in on your feet and you go out in your coffin.* At his initiation the new recruit is accepted into a circle of

⁸ Ron Hall, Pathfinder Lodge No. 8236, 'Kindred Lodges Association – 1953 – 2000'.

members holding hands and the presiding officer says *In honour of the brotherhood, I tie the knot.*

Reverting to Freemasonry outside England, I mention Freemasonry in France, which has celebrated two hundred and seventy five years of working. There are one hundred and thirty thousand men and women belonging to ten different rival jurisdictions and all satisfied that their particular model is the best, and at the same time demonstrating that the values and culture of Freemasonry tended to make them as one rather than to divide them. Only one of these is recognised by the United Grand Lodge of England and that is the Grande Loge Nationale Française, which has thirty thousand members. They use Emulation working and apart from the 'word order' to comply with French grammar it is exactly as our emulation working or, (as in my version of emulation working), very near it. The French, although they have several different jurisdictions, often work from the same Masonic Hall, which from a financial point of view is very sensible. The others not recognised by the U.G.L.E. are:

Grande Loge de France 25000 members and men only

Grande Loge Feminine de France 12000 women only

Grande Loge Feminine de Memphis Misraim 600 Women only

Grande Loge Mixte de France 2000 members men and women in equal proportions

Grand Loge Mixte Universelle 1000 men and women

Grand Loge Traditionnel et Synbolique Opera 2500 members Men only

Grand Orient de France 45000 Men only

Loge Nationale Française 300 members Men only

The first member of the French Resistance shot by the Germans in the Second World War was a Freemason Jose Roig on 2nd August 1941. The Freemasons formed one of the most important groups of resistance.

Why are some people so averse to Freemasonry?

The first time that I became aware of anti-masonry, other than from gentle leg-pulling by my friends, was when I was researching the history of the Albert Edward Lodge in 1975. At the time that the Albert Edward Lodge No. 1560 was consecrated in 1875 French Bishops were preaching against Freemasons. In the *Freemason*⁹ dated 20/11/1875, there is a response to a letter in the *Journal de Geneve*, Paris, 8th October 1875 suggesting that Freemasonry and Roman Catholicism were represented as two hostile camps. On the one hand Freemasonry representing liberalism, progress and toleration and on the other, Roman Catholicism representing intolerance, retrogression and persecution. The letter complained of Rome taking an untenable and untoward position of unceasing denunciation of Freemasonry everywhere. The Roman Catholics have their own men's society, the Catenians, which is non masonic. There are also anti-masonic

⁹ The Freemason - 1875.

feelings recorded from time to time in newspaper reports and articles, and on radio and television programmes. In personal life I experienced it in a more jocular form, for the second Tuesday in the month, the day my Lodge meets, I was invariably greeted with *Oh! You're off to Mau-Mau tonight, aren't you?* For a number of years at the Annual Representative Meeting of the British Medical Association there was an item on the agenda to the effect that *any member should declare any interest that they have in Freemasonry*. This proposition was never debated, as with over five hundred items on the agenda it is hardly surprising that there were far more important matters to discuss.

A recent article in "Freemasonry Today"¹⁰ gives an account of modern anti-masonry and talks of a new version of an old conspiracy theory. It suggests that Freemasonry has always been fair game for criticism. It alleges that the Hebrew Kabbalah (dark arts) has been learnt from the Egyptians and transferred to the Knights Templars, who on their suppression (1312) eventually brought it to Scotland where they had sought and obtained sanctuary. Many years later, it is alleged that they re-emerged as Freemasons, and so it is said, have been responsible for all the world's trouble since. A French priest Abbé Barruel was said to be responsible for adorning the story in the late eighteenth century.

In Iraq in 1968 the Ba'ath Socialist regime in Iraq, decreed that *Whoever promotes or incites Zionist principles, including Freemasonry, or belongs to any of its institutions, or helps them materially or morally, or works any form of achieving its purposes shall be executed*. Fundamentalists and Nationalists of all sorts tend to link plutocratic finance, freemasonry, secularism, zionism and communism together as a force for evil. It is interesting to note that also included in the list of persona non-grata in Iraq were Rotary Clubs and Lions Clubs.

Freemasons are invariably peaceful, hardworking, charitable brethren with hearts and minds generously expanded with benevolence and charity and who work together harmoniously. Our Grand Master and the Grand Lodge have embarked on a programme to educate the public more fully on the aims and objects of Freemasonry.

There are other Orders, unrecognised by the U.G.L.E. and which have not yet established their right to recognition. These are irregular because they do not observe a Supreme Being. Others are nearer to the Grand Orient Lodges and widely separated from regularity as we understand it. Some partially recognised orders such as Prince Hall Freemasonry, centred in the United States of America, have associations with African countries. It is well structured and established in the U.S.A. and having spread to other countries may be accepted here. (Some but not all are recognised).

¹⁰ Freemasonry today Autumn Copy 2003.

The Ancient or Mystical Order of the Rosae Crucis (AMORC)¹¹, based in California and not to be confused with the Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia, has been described as a correspondence college, having obvious money catching propensities. It was proscribed here in 1957. The Loyal Order of Moose, was imported from America, and was condemned by Grand Lodge in 1929 and 1942 for being imitative of Freemasonry. It is now regarded as a non-ritual and benevolent society.

Also in the U.S.A and Canada is The Ancient Arabic Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine which was formed in 1872 and works a humorous ritual, open to Knights Templar and Scottish Rite 32° masons. This is present in every state of the USA and provides children's hospitals and is freely available to all without any restrictions.

The Royal Order of Jesters was formed in 1917. Candidates join by invitation only and this Order is associated with most Shrine Temples. The Mystic Order of Veiled Prophets of the Enchanted Realm, or simply The Grotto, is eighty thousand strong, is founded on an old Persian manuscript and admits Master Masons. It is good humoured and its object is to support clinics for neurological palsy. The Tall Cedars of Lebanon meets in Forests and supports research and treatment into muscular dystrophy. The Order of the Eastern Star is serious in what it teaches and is for ladies and men who must be Masons, although there is no Masonic content, and some Grand Lodges in the U.S.A. forbid entry. There are other orders for women with ties with Orders in which their husbands meet, e.g. Royal Arch Widows, Order of Beauceant, and Daughters of the Nile, which often support the relevant order's charity. Then there are Orders for boys, sponsored by masons, such as The Order of de Molay, and for girls, the Order of Job's Daughters.

The Ancient and Primitive Rite of Memphis and Mizram, or Egyptian Masonry began in France in the early Seventeenth Century. It applied to the Grand Orient in the Eighteenth Century for recognition but was turned down as its antiquity had not been proved. Of the ninety degrees in this Rite, sixty eight were already known. Many of the degrees were too abstract to be popular. The Initiation degree reproduces the ancient Rite of Isis and represents the contests of Osiris and Typhon, the death, the resurrection and triumph of the former and destruction of the latter. It is said to be a Rite of great interest, with a colourful history. It has been accused of being a fee snatching diploma mill requiring one or two weekends for the conferment of ten or more degrees for a few hundred dollars. It is an amalgam of several Masonic Rites and numerous degrees.

I come back to the original question, *Masonry, Why?* Freemasonry tends to bring out the best in its members and sets out a high moral code. It encourages good teamwork and bonds its members together, for a lot of application and hard work is needed to work a good ceremony. It encourages charity

¹¹ The Pocket History of Freemasonry 8th Edition Fred L. Pick and G. Norman Knight (Revised F. Smyth).

and beneficence and instils in us the natural duty to look after the needs of others. The study of Freemasonry is of great interest and it is a fascinating subject. The answer is simple, one with which most masons will agree. We enjoy Freemasonry and derive great satisfaction from it because it is well organised, its members are like minded, we enjoy the ceremonies and all that these teach us. The Brethren are serious in their application, steeped in fraternal fellowship and goodwill, convivial at the Festive Board, solicitous in adversity, generous in their benevolence and they conduct themselves with decorum.

Although we may not know much about Freemasonry when we are accepted for membership, we allow our names to go forward largely because of the enthusiasm for the craft of the friend who proposes us, and because of the happiness and the enjoyment that the Brethren whom we know derive from their membership of their Lodge. We join Freemasonry because it has so much to offer and because as a society it is equal to the best.

EARLY FREEMASONRY IN LOUGHBOROUGH: THE RANCLIFFE LODGE NO. 608

W.Bro. D. M. Sharpe, P.P.J.G.D

Freemasonry first reached Loughborough on Tuesday, December 9th, 1834, when the Rancliffe Lodge met by dispensation at the King's Head Hotel. Bro. James Elverson, the Provincial Senior Grand Warden, acted as Most Worshipful Master, Bro. Timothy Barney was Senior Warden and Secretary *pro tem.*, Bro. Thomas Harrison was Junior Warden, Bro. William Simpkin Senior Deacon and Bro. William Palmer, Junior Deacon. William G. Palmer, a surgeon, Charles M. Williams, a dentist, and Daniel Cartwright, a printer were proposed as members. It was resolved that Job Abbot, who was a serving brother, be made a Mason free of initiation fee and be appointed Tyler. A week later, there was an Emergency meeting with the same officers when Christopher Cleaver, a maltster and publican, was proposed. It was agreed that the Right Worshipful Master and the Senior Warden should wait upon the Rt. Hon. Lord Rancliffe to see *when it will be the most convenient for him to open and dedicate the Rancliffe Lodge.*

The Lodge next met on January 13th, 1835, with Bro. Barney in the chair (and Acting Secretary again), Bro. Harrison as Senior Warden, Bro. Simpkin as Junior Warden, and Bro. Palmer as Senior Deacon. It was agreed that Bro. Simpkin should be raised as soon as circumstances *will admit*, and Bro. Palmer passed. It was also proposed that Francis Harley, a surgeon of Costock, should be a member. The Tyler's fee for each new initiate was fixed at half a crown. At the next meeting, held on February 10th, 1835, Messrs. Palmer, Abbott, Cartwright, Harley and Williams were duly elected.

On March 10th, 1835, two new members were proposed and elected; Thomas Brooke Miller, a solicitor, and Bro. Edward Hodges, a surgeon of Syston, who was a member of Royal Sussex Lodge No. 576 [now 402]. It was also agreed that the Bye-Laws of St. John's Lodge No. 525 [now 279] be adopted for use by the Lodge.

On Friday March 13th, 1835, the Rancliffe Lodge, No. 608, was consecrated, and the five candidates were initiated. This was the first official meeting, as all the others had been by dispensation. Lord Rancliffe and twenty-one other brethren attended, and the Master of the Ceremonies read the Warrant of Constitution. The Lodge was opened in the First Degree and was consecrated. It was then opened in the Second Degree and finally in the Third or Master Masons Degree. W.Bro. Elverson was installed, and the officers who were appointed were the same as at the initial meeting. Bros. W. Palmer, Williams, Cartwright, Harley and Miller were initiated. Then Bro. Abbott was initiated by especial dispensation. At a Lodge of Instruction held a fortnight later the charge was delivered to the newly initiated

brethren, the rudiments of the Order were then explained, and there was an Initiatory lecture.

On April 14th, nine members were present with two visitors. Bros. William Palmer (Snr) and W. Grimes Palmer (Jnr). Hodges, Cartwright, Williams and Abbott were passed to the degree of F.C.; William B. Throsby, a surgeon of Leicester, was proposed as a member. The Worshipful Master agreed to present a set of Jewels for the offices of Worshipful Master, Senior Warden, Junior Warden, Senior Deacon, Junior Deacon, Secretary, and Outer Guard. Bro. Hodges agreed to present columns, which had previously belonged to Bro. Edward Hodges of St. John's Lodge. The evening concluded with Bro. Morris of St. John's Lodge delivering the lectures in the First and Second Degrees.

On May 5th Bro. Barney took the chair and nine others were present. William Throsby was elected and Joseph Ewbank was proposed. Bros. Miller and Harley were elected to the Second Degree and subsequently *initiated* (sic). At this meeting Bro. William Palmer acted as Secretary. At the meeting held on June 2nd R.W. Bro. Lord Rancliffe was present. W. Bro. Elverson was in the chair. There were a further nine members present, along with six visitors. Bros. Simpkin, Hodges, Williams, Cartwright, Miller and W. Palmer Snr and Jnr were raised to the Third Degree. Bros. Throsby and Ewbank were initiated. Bro. Barney gave a Holy Bible, and there was a promise of a gift of Ashlars. William Wolfe was proposed as a servant of the Lodge. After the Lodge had closed he was obligated so that he was able to start his duties immediately.

On July 7th the Right Worshipful Master and six members received a lecture at a Lodge of Instruction, with Bro. Miller acting as Secretary. The August meeting saw a fall in numbers with Bro. Barney in the chair and three others present. It was agreed that Bro. Harley should be raised at the next meeting, along with Bros. Throsby and Ewbank being passed to the degree of F.C., and William Wolfe should be initiated and appointed I.G. At the meeting held on September 1st with W. Bro. Morris, P.J.G.W., as Worshipful Master, Bro. Martin as Senior Warden, Bro. Hodges, Junior Warden; Bro. Simpkin, Senior Warden; and Bro. Cartwright, Junior Deacon and seven members present, only Bro. Throsby was passed to the Second Degree. Charles Orton, a surgeon, was proposed for membership. He was elected and initiated by Bro. Barney at an Emergency Meeting held a week later. This was contrary to the Book of Constitutions as Bro. Barney had never been installed in the Chair of the Lodge.

On October 6th 1835, W. Bro. Elverson was in the Chair with six members and one visitor present. It was proposed that Bro. Throsby become a M.M., and Bro. Ewbank a F.C. The following month it was proposed Bro. Wolfe be passed to the Second Degree. On December 1st, six members and one visitor were present (one additional member arriving 'afterwards'), with Bro. Barney as Secretary. Bro. Harley was raised to the rank of M.M. John Morris was proposed as a member, and was elected in January 1836 at a meeting when Bro. Palmer (Snr) was Secretary.

On February, 2nd 1836, W.Bro. Elverson was present with eight members. The minutes of the previous meeting were not confirmed after a ballot. Following a proposition Bro. Wolfe was raised. W.Bro Elverson was re-elected Worshipful Master and he then appointed his officers, Bro. Hodges, Senior Warden; Bro. Miller, Junior Warden; Bro. W. G. Palmer (Jnr), Senior Deacon; Bro. Williams, Junior Deacon; Bro. Wolfe, Inner Guard; Bro. Abbot, Outer Guard (Tyler); and Bro. Barney, Secretary and Treasurer. After this meeting no degree was conferred on any brother in the Lodge, and although the Lodge remained in existence until 1848 there were no initiations after the ten in the first year.

On March 1st W.Bro. Elverson and seven members were there with ten visitors including the Deputy Provincial Grand Master, but the Lodge was not opened because the Provincial Grand Master was not present. A lecture was delivered at the April meeting, while in May the Lodge was not opened, as only the Secretary, Inner Guard, Outer Guard, and one other brother were present. In June, there was one additional member present and the Lodge was adjourned to the first Tuesday in September, when the Worshipful Master and five members met to confirm the minutes of the previous meeting.

Interest had started to wane to such an extent that meetings now became irregular.

Matters started to come to a head in October when there was a proposition that *a fine be inflicted upon every Brother residing within the length of the Cable Tow for non-attendance*. The proposition was suspended *for the present*, but gives an indication as to the state of the Lodge. However, the Lodge was opened in the Second and Third Degrees for the *Instruction of Brothers of that degree*. John Robinson, another surgeon of Syston, was proposed as a member.

On November 1st, 1836, the Lodge was opened and closed with five members present, and the Minutes were confirmed in December, when Bro. Hodges took the chair with three other members present.

On February 7th 1837 the Lodge was opened and closed in the Third Degree. Five members were present and Bro. Hodges was elected Master. On February 28th he was installed by visiting P.Ms.

On April 4th 1837, W.Bro. Hodges at his first meeting since his Installation commanded the Lodge stand closed until September. An Emergency Lodge in June proposed meetings be moved to the second Wednesday of the month, probably in an attempt to revive interest.

On February 6th 1838, the Lodge met again, the first time for ten months, and Bro. Miller was elected Worshipful Master. He was not installed until October 16th, when the Deputy Provincial Grand Master, W.Bro. Sir Frederick Fowke, was present. It was agreed at this meeting that Bros. Cartwright, Harrison and Simpkin should look at the Lodge finances. This resulted in a notice of motion at the next meeting (February 1839) that the Annual Subscription should be reduced. In March it was agreed to consider this at the next meeting, which took place in April. The

Subscription was to be reduced to 1/- (5p) per month. It was also agreed that the Worshipful Master should be elected at the next meeting.

Despite three attempts to hold meetings there were no further Lodges until October 15th, 1839, when the state of the Lodge became more obvious. Bro. Wolfe became Tyler as Bro. Abbott had died; several members were in arrears; and the Secretary was to ask that the money be paid by the next Lodge night or defaulters were to be reported to the Provincial Grand Master and Grand Lodge, with the other Lodge returns.

On November 3rd, 1840, only six brethren (Bro. Miller, Worshipful Master, and Bros. Simpkin, Senior Warden, W. Grimes Palmer, Junior Warden, William Palmer, Daniel Cartwright and William Wolfe) attended the first meeting for thirteen months. Indeed only these six faithful brethren ever attended the Lodge again. The Minute Book states that *in consequence of the demise of several brothers residing in the town of Loughborough, no Lodge was opened from October 15, 1839, until this day*. Rev. Joseph Towell of Normanton was proposed and elected at the meeting, as was William Sudbury, a cabinetmaker, but neither was ever initiated.

The Lodge did not meet again until the following October. The Secretary was instructed to write to Bros. Hodges, Williams and Ewbank to see if they still wanted to be members. He was to request a reply within a week. An Inventory of the Lodge's property was to be made. It was also agreed that the members should individually and collectively exert themselves by every means to further the prosperity of the Lodge.

W.Bro. Fleeman in his book *Freemasonry in Loughborough*, has suggested that these two meetings were only the result of pressure from Provincial Grand Lodge, and that they were held in order to maintain the Warrant. This seems likely as in July 1842, when W.Bro. Miller took the chair with three members present, Provincial Grand Lodge had inquired if they still wanted to continue. It was noted that *Private meetings had been held*, but no details seem to exist as to where and when.

There were six further meetings with equally lamentable attendance in 1842 (including one on December 6th when Bro. Simpkin was elected Master for the ensuing year, but was never installed; and when it was agreed that the meeting should be held in a private room instead of at the King's Head). It was also agreed in November that W.Bro. Miller, as Worshipful Master, should write in reply to a letter from the Deputy Provincial Grand Master to assure him that the Lodge was trying to increase its membership and that meetings had been regular. This was perhaps true for 1842, but the previous four had never been opened.

An Emergency Lodge was held on November 24th, 1843, attended by W.Bro. Miller and four others, when it was noted that due to the paucity of numbers no Lodge had been opened since December 1842. In December 1843 Bro. W. G. Palmer was elected Master by the other three members present (including Bro. Simpkin, who seconded the proposition), and was installed on July 24, 1844, when Provincial Grand Lodge met under the Rancliffe Banner. The only other member of the Rancliffe Lodge present

was W.Bro. Miller. An Emergency Meeting had been held the previous week when Provincial Grand Lodge had ordered that the Minute Book be produced at the meeting of Provincial Grand Lodge when the Lodge hoped the Installation could take place.

It seems strange that Bro. Simpkin was not installed as Worshipful Master having been previously elected, but, in 1846, there was a petition to the Board of Benevolence, which resulted in a grant of £7-/- (£7.00) for his relief. W.Bro. Fleeman has suggested this is the probable explanation of his non-acceptance of the Chair, but there is no way of confirming this. If Bro. Simpkin had needed such support in 1842, why was there the delay in approaching the Board, especially when the Lodge had met in 1843 and 1844?

The Lodge met again in December 1845 when the Minutes record, *Several Brothers have at various times met since July, 1844, but from the want of a sufficient number assembling, the Lodge has not been formally opened.*

In February, 1846, W.Bro. Palmer (Jnr) was re-elected Worshipful Master, and appointed five officers. At this meeting W.Bro. W. Kelly, Deputy Provincial Grand Master, requested that the Lodge would sign a recommendation for a new Lodge in Leicester, the John of Gaunt No. 766 [now 523].

In May, 1846, W.Bro. Palmer (Jnr) represented the Rancliffe Lodge at the Consecration Meeting of the John of Gaunt Lodge.

In February, 1847, the Lodge Minutes record the attendance of three members, the Worshipful Master, the Immediate Past Master and the Secretary, due to the *illness of several Brothers*, which had prevented any Lodges since the previous October. However, the previous meeting had actually been in June 1846. In April, four brethren were present when it was proposed that *Bro. T. B. Miller, Provincial Master, be appointed Worshipful Master for the ensuing year. This was agreed to.* There was no Installation and Bro. Miller simply assumed the chair, and the next meeting on June 1st was adjourned, after the acknowledgement of receipt of subscriptions by Grand Lodge, to October, when, with only three Brethren present, the Lodge was not opened. A further meeting on November 3rd, 1847, was not opened as only W.Bro. Miller and three others were present.

The final entry in the Minute Book is for Tuesday February 1st, 1848, which records that the Lodge was not opened as there was *no business*. It was also noted that there had been no meetings previously due to the *indisposition of the Worshipful Master*. This was the death knell of the Rancliffe Lodge, which was erased from the roll of the United Grand Lodge in 1853.

Various reasons have been made to explain this sad state of affairs. R.W.Bro. William Kelly suggested that the Lodge was too exclusive for its own good, *a suicidal policy in a country town like Loughborough*. This would imply that there were too few people who either wanted to, or were able, to join. It can be seen that many of the candidates for initiation were in the medical profession, and did not come from Loughborough either.

Others have suggested that at one shilling a month it was too expensive, yet the John of Gaunt Lodge founded in 1846 had a subscription of 12/- payable half-yearly. The most probable explanation was that there were too few people who wanted to join, living in Loughborough, which was only a small town. However the light of Freemasonry still burnt in the darkness, as there was an attempt, albeit unsuccessful, to revive the Lodge in 1856.

So was there a problem with Freemasonry in the Province in the nineteenth century? (It is perhaps noteworthy that Charnwood Chapter [1007] consecrated in 1873 did not celebrate its centenary until 1983 i.e. when it had been existence for 110 years, and The Howe Lodge of Mark Master Masons [21] also struggled for survival, even meeting to surrender its warrant in 1879 but with only four present could not open the Lodge to debate the matter!)

W.Bro. G. M. Dyson claims that part of the problem was that the Lodge existed in one of the worst periods for Freemasonry since 1717, as the other two Lodges in existence, St. John's and Knight of Malta No. 48 [now 50] were also in the doldrums and Freemasonry had generally fallen on hard times. Nevertheless it must be apparent that the life of the Rancliffe Lodge was little short of a fiasco, with its poor record of not increasing its membership nor working degrees for several years.

The areas from which the Howe and Charnwood Lodge [1007], (founded in 1864) in its early years, and Rancliffe Lodge drew their membership differed greatly. While the Howe and Charnwood Lodge drew its membership mainly from Loughborough and the immediately surrounding villages, the Rancliffe Lodge was more rural in its membership, notably Syston and Costock. Furthermore there was a growth in housing to the south of Loughborough in the 1860s, with bigger houses and an increased population, which does seem to have provided membership of the Craft Lodge.

Between 1831 and 1861 the town's population was only eleven thousand, but by 1881 there was an upsurge to fourteen thousand six hundred and eighty one followed by a steady increase ever since. In addition, there was a growth in prosperity, with new industries established along the Derby Road and several different trades being followed. The new Paget estate to the north of the Town Centre grew rapidly, and although it is unlikely, looking at the census returns and the directories, that many, if any, from there joined immediately, this is evidence of the growth in wealth of the town.

Similarly, both the Rancliffe Lodge and, in its early years, the Howe and Charnwood Lodge suffered the difficulty of not having skilled Past Masters to act as D.C.'s and installing officers. Practically nobody knew the work and much of the work of these offices was done before 1841 by W.Bro. Lawrence Thompson from London assisted by W.Bro. Burckhardt as there was no other brother, with the exception of the Deputy Provincial Grand Master (W.Bro. Sir Frederick Fowke), capable of performing the ceremony of Installation, and it was the custom of W.Bro. Lawrence Thompson to

come down annually from London, at the expense of St. John's Lodge, to install each Worshipful Master. After W.Bro. Kelley was installed in the chair of K.S. in St. John's Lodge in 1841 he rapidly assumed this duty himself.

However, the greatest factor was the interest and support from Leicester Masons at the crucial time. When the Howe and Charnwood Lodge was in serious decline in the 1870s the Provincial Grand Master, R.W.Bro. Earl Ferrers, decided to hold a P.G.L. in Loughborough in 1880, which was attended by sixty-four brethren (thirty two of whom were Installed Masters). This meant that there were undoubtedly several who saw plenty of opportunity to revive this small Lodge. Indeed within a month of the Provincial Grand Lodge meeting in Loughborough, eight Leicester brethren had been proposed as joining members. Of these, five, W.Bros. C. and G. Oliver, J. Marshall, W. Wilkinson and T. Laxton went on to become Worshipful Master of Howe and Charnwood.

In addition, travel was much easier by the 1880s. It was not until 1904 that details of train times to and from Leicester were printed on the summons as well as details of Masonic Tickets. However, the opportunity existed for the Leicester members to use the train to attend meetings. The Midland Railway did run trains to Loughborough during the lifetime of the Rancliffe Lodge, but how regular and reliable these were is not known.

In the period 1880 to 1901, sixteen of the Masters of the Howe and Charnwood Lodge came from Leicester, as did sixty of the new members, mostly before 1896. Thereafter the emphasis returned once more to Loughborough for membership, with only two Leicester brethren being Master in the next one-hundred years (and they were in 1901 and 1903 [W. Bros. A. H. and H. Tyler]). It was undoubtedly this push, which saved the Lodge, but it had not been there in the 1840s and 1850s to save the Rancliffe Lodge. Had R.W.Bro. William Kelly been able to persuade Leicester Masons to revive Masonry in Loughborough instead of opening the John of Gaunt Lodge, the Rancliffe Lodge might have survived. However, his telling comment about the Rancliffe Lodge's exclusiveness suggests that he saw little hope for the Lodge. It is perhaps therefore appropriate that it was to be the John of Gaunt Lodge, which would eventually revive Masonry in Loughborough.

“GILBERT AND SULLIVAN: SOME MASONIC ECHOES”

W.Bro. D. J. Hughes, P.P.G.St.B

The annals of Freemasonry are, as we all know, replete with the names of those who have achieved greatness in a wide range of human endeavours. In the world of music our two most famous brethren are, very arguably, Haydn and Mozart, and much learned ink has been utilised in discussing the contribution of Freemasonry to art in the form of one of Mozart's masterpieces, *The Magic Flute*. On a slightly less exalted musical plane, yet one which still represents a great achievement in terms of human endeavour, we may, in this country, point to the achievements of Sir William Gilbert and Sir Arthur Sullivan; known throughout the English speaking world, and probably equally loved and misunderstood also. Gilbert and Sullivan produced a very considerable body of works in their own individual rights, yet it is together as *G & S* that they created a particular musical genre, a form of musical theatre which still serves as a yardstick of wit and literacy for all those who have followed them. They are certainly two brethren of whose heritage the craft may justly be proud. And yet, how many people know that both collaborators were Freemasons; and, more importantly, how many care to speculate on whether Freemasonry had an influence on their joint work?

So far as members of the craft are concerned, if they did not already know the facts, Howard Stephens revealed the Masonic identities of Gilbert and Sullivan in *Freemasonry Today*, Spring 1999. However, for those without access to that publication, I can state, through the kind offices of the Library and Museum of Freemasonry in London that the brief outline of the collaborators' Masonic Life was as follows.

W. S. Gilbert was Initiated on 12th June 1871 into *St Machar Lodge No. 54 (Scottish Constitution)* in Aberdeen. He was Passed on 16th June and Raised on 23rd June the same year. His occupation was given as a Captain in the Aberdeen Militia. A partial explanation for this hurried sequence of events was that, along with many other upper middle class men, Gilbert felt the call of duty to serve in a volunteer regiment, the ancestors of our Territorial Army, he held, at the time in question, a Commission in the Aberdeen Militia, having previously served in the Rifle Volunteers, transferring to the Scottish regiment in 1868. Finding himself on annual manoeuvres in Scotland, Gilbert may have responded to an invitation to become a Mason from fellow volunteer officers associated with the *St. Machar Lodge*. In England W. S. Gilbert subsequently joined *Bayard Lodge No 1615* in London on 26th June 1876. Though he apparently never held office, he was subsequently exalted into *Friends In Council Chapter No. 1383* in London on 15th February 1877, having previously been perfected into *Bayard Rose Croix Chapter No. 71* in London some time in 1876, from which he resigned in 1880.

Arthur Sullivan's Masonic career began somewhat earlier. He was, most appropriately, Initiated into the *Lodge of Harmony, No. 255* in Richmond on 11th April 1865, passed on 3rd October and raised on 30th January 1866. He subsequently joined *Studholme Lodge No. 1591* in London on 17th January 1896, and also held high office in the craft as Grand Organist (1887). Sullivan was also exalted in *Friends in Council Chapter No. 1383* on 12th July 1877, shortly after Gilbert's exaltation and at a time when their collaboration had begun. Clearly each would be fully aware of the other's Masonic connection. Sullivan was also perfected into the *Bayard Rose Croix Chapter No. 71* in 1878, he resigned in 1881. Why Gilbert and Sullivan both resigned is as yet unknown to the author, but it could be a subsequent route of research.

While, however, the Masonic biography of these two theatrical collaborators is known, at least within the craft, it has received scant attention from the authors who have published studies or biographies of Gilbert and Sullivan. No mention of Sullivan's Masonic career was made in Walter J. Wells' *Souvenir of Sir Arthur Sullivan*, published shortly after the composer's death, in 1901, nor in *Sir Arthur Sullivan: His Life, Letters and Diaries* by Herbert Sullivan, the composer's nephew, and Newman Flower, published in 1927. Neither do we find any mention of Freemasonry in Gervase Hughes's *The Music of Arthur Sullivan*, 1960, nor in Reginald Allen's *The Life and Work of Sir Arthur Sullivan: Composer for Victorian England*, 1975. Only Arthur Jacobs in his generally definitive 1984 biography *Arthur Sullivan: A Victorian Musician* makes an allusion to Freemasonry stating that Sullivan's initiation was perhaps brought about by the influence of Sir Michael Costa; adding that neither the records of the Lodge of Harmony nor Sullivan's private documents indicate an active role in Masonry, and stating that *membership of the order may have strengthened his social advancement at a time when Royal Princes and other notables lent their names to it*. Jacobs seems to have been unaware that Sullivan was later a member of Studholme Lodge and was also in Royal Arch and Rose Croix Chapters.

Gilbert's Masonic career receives equally scant treatment from his biographers. His membership of the craft is not mentioned in *Gilbert: His Life and Strife*, by Hesketh Pearson, published in 1957, and Jane Stedman's otherwise excellent *W. S. Gilbert: A Classic Victorian and his Theatre*, 1996 only briefly refers to Gilbert's initiation into Lodge St. Machar (getting the date slightly awry in the process), though pointing out that his seconder into Freemasonry was connected with a lunatic asylum, and arguing that Gilbert merely joined a Lodge to amuse himself while away from London. She further adds that *Gilbert's masonic brethren were to prove useful in popularizing his light operas, and he enjoyed their company, but there is no evidence that he attended lodge meetings regularly back in London*. The most recent joint study of the collaborators *Gilbert and Sullivan: A Dual Biography* by Michael Clinger published in

2002, though written after both Jacobs' and Stedman's works were published, makes no reference to Freemasonry at all.

We may ask ourselves why the scant references, in some cases no references at all, have been the norm. Perhaps the authors were unaware of Gilbert and Sullivan's membership of the craft. Perhaps if they did know they considered it of no importance. Perhaps they were not in a position to appreciate that there are, very arguably, Masonic echoes in the Savoy Operas.

It is one of those instances on which I wish to dwell. It comes from the very last Savoy Opera, *The Grand Duke* of 1896, an opera which contains some of its composer's best music, but which has never been professionally revived since its first production. The reason for that is not difficult to find. Gilbert, a leading social satirist of his age, laid about him with his satiric blade in all directions in this last work with Sullivan: petty German Royalty, the fussiness of court ceremonial, Monte Carlo and the playing of Roulette, the Law and the peculiarities of statutory interpretation, the awful jealousies and rivalries of the theatrical profession and, to a minor degree, Freemasonry, all receive attention from Gilbert's pen. The resulting libretto is almost indigestible. Briefly the plot turns on an attempt to overthrow the Grand Duke of Pfennig-Halbpennig by a troop of strolling players.

Before, however, considering the Masonic references, I should point out a feature of Gilbert's style of writing which was to subvert the subjects of his attention by inverting the natural order of things. In other words. Gilbert's world is one of Topsy Turveydom. This is evident in his early Bab Ballad *My Dream* which begins:

*The other night, from cares exempt
I slept – and what d'you think I dreamt?
I dreamt that somehow I had come
to dwell in Topsy Turveydom!*

*Where vice is virtue – virtue vice:
Where nice is nasty – nasty, nice:
Where right is wrong and wrong is right
Where white is black and black is white.*

Remember that principle of subversion by inversion in a particular lyric from *The Grand Duke*, as follows:

*By the mystic regulation of our dark association
Ere you open conversation with another kindred
soul, you must eat a sausage roll!
If in turn he eats another, that's a sign that he's
a brother. Each may fully trust the other.
It is quaint and it is droll, but it's bilious on the whole.
It's a greasy kind of pastry which perhaps a judgement
hasty night consider rather tasty.*

*Once (to speak without disguise) it found favour
in our eyes.*

*But when you've been six months feeding (As we
have) on this exceeding bilious food, it's no
ill breeding if at these repulsive pies our offended
gorges rise.*

*But – by the mystic regulation of our dark association
Ere you open conversation with another kindred soul, you
must eat a sausage roll.*

Surely there are Masonic echoes in the allusions to *mystic regulation* and each brother being fully able to trust the other. Furthermore in the preceding dialogue one of the characters in commenting on the plot to dethrone the Grand Duke says: *We're all in it we're all tiled here*. That line, gives real credibility to the argument.

But, Freemasonry is not a secret political organisation devoted to overthrowing German princelings, or any other government. We all know the order is social and philanthropic, designed for the improvement of its members and to assist them in living their lives in an exemplary fashion. We know that; but if we were in Topsy Turveydom then Freemasonry would inevitably take on the peculiar characteristics of Gilbert's fantasy world. Good would become bad, bad would be good; vice would indeed be virtue and virtue would be vice. Freemasonry's social and philanthropic values would be entirely inverted. Hence it could well be a secretive political organisation devoted solely to the advancement of the selfish motives of its members, by violent means if need be. Topsy Turveydom Freemasonry would indeed by what our detractors and misguided critics in this world believe it to be.

And so in conclusion who was Gilbert satirizing; Freemasons or those who see among them only conspiracies and other evils? The craft had its detractors then as now.

**FOR THEREIN YOU WILL BE TAUGHT...
(The Millennium Prestonian Lecture)**

W.Bro. R. A. Crane, P.G. Treas.

Brethren, when I was first asked to give the Millennium Prestonian lecture with a philosophical rather than an historical basis and at the same time keep it light and entertaining, I sat down rather heavily. I truly wondered if such a lecture was possible. Would the Brethren really want to sit through half an hour or so listening to a properly argued and properly referenced dissertation on Freemasonry, a past-time that should be fun and bring them happiness? Certainly, it seemed to me that a fully academic paper would not and could not meet the brief.

Yet the challenge to untangle my personal thoughts on the touchy subject of morality, religion and Freemasonry, and perhaps at the same time to provoke thought, open windows and maybe clear away some of the accumulated misconceptions surrounding our ancient art seemed highly attractive.

So I wish to share my personal thoughts with you today in the hope that at the end of it, we may the better understand the seemingly complicated mixture of universal morality and the religious belief systems that have developed over thousands of years, and our own ancient system of morality veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols.

I shall start with examples of everyday activities that demonstrate some common denominators. This in turn will lead to our main subject but will first require some definitions and explanation of the various topics we need to deal with. Hopefully I will then pass quickly on to the relationship and affinity that Craft Freemasonry appears to hold with religion.

So Brethren, where do we start?

Let us take a look at sport. Whatever sport you may like to think of, they all have a set of rules and they all need players. Ideally the players must want to compete (although some schoolboys may have a different idea on a wet Wednesday afternoon) and everyone should want to play to win. But whatever the circumstances whether it is football, ping pong or Sumo wrestling one has to be fit to play to win. So we see that fitness is a common denominator to success in sport.

Maybe you drive a car. Now whatever the car you drive, again there are a set of rules for driving on the road. And again, each car has a book describing where the battery is and how to adjust the seats and so on. You also have to have a place to keep the car irrespective of how large or small it is. But, if you have really defective eyesight you are prohibited from driving the car. So whatever the type of car, and whatever else is a common denominator, the requirement of good eyesight is a common denominator in the question of safety on the road.

As you can see, the point I am making is that outside the specific, the game of cricket or the Rolls Royce, in many walks of life are common denominators that ideally always apply. One could say, universal standards.

In the same way, all belief systems, all religions, demonstrate certain common practices. They may be sacramental practices with dogmatic creeds. They may include prayer, fasting, ritual, meditation, historical remembrance, pilgrimage and no doubt many other things in all sorts of combinations. But one other important matter that appears as a universal concern is how one deals with one's fellow man or not; the question of Morality. There appears to be a universal concern as to how we behave in this World here and now.

Brethren, the title of this paper is *for therein you will be taught* and, as we all know, is taken from the charge after initiation. It refers to the Volume of the Sacred Law, whichever volume may be personal to you. We are told that therein we will be instructed in our duties to God, to mankind and to ourselves; the teachings of religion found within your particular Sacred Volume.

However, at the same time, our antient ritual instructs us to live according to the Masonic line and rule, a system of morality veiled, as we say, in allegory and illustrated by symbols.

This appears to underline that morality and religion are different things albeit, perhaps, intertwined in such a way that at times either side might claim the other as its own.

So Brethren, let us take a look at what religion and morality are, and then to see how out particular system of morality fits into the scheme of things.

Perhaps a good place for us to start with is Ethics. We all know only too well the expression, ethical values, and we all know that it refers to behaviour. The dictionary definition of ethics is *the philosophical study of the moral value of human conduct and of the rules and principles that ought to govern it.*

So what is philosophy? And what about theology and religion and morality? We desperately seem to need some definitions in order to make sense of it all.

Brethren, let us start again.

Philosophy first. This is man using only his reason, his mind, looking at the World, at Creation about him to determine whether there has to be something behind it all, whatever that something might be. If his personal answer is *Yes*, then that something, however he considers it, is usually called *God* or the *Supreme Being*, or some other title that suits his approach. However, do notice that he uses his mind does it all himself. Man, by looking about him at Creation down here, has throughout the ages most often convinced himself that there is, shall we say, *Him up there.*

Theology is different. Theology works on the basis that *Him up there*, God, the Supreme Being, has revealed Himself to mankind down here. In this case the belief that there is a God could be seen to travel the opposite way. It has come from Him to us.

However, neither philosophy nor theology is religion. But just a minute, from what has just been said it can be seen that both philosophy and theology can be offered as evidence for, or as an acknowledgement of, the

existence of God. Exactly so, but that is not enough. Religion is more than that. It is mankind's attempt to establish a personal relationship with God, and the various religions in the world are the outcome of that attempt. Of course you may not accept a belief in a Supreme Being and thus you will dismiss religion as an irrelevance. It is also very possible to accept that there is a Supreme Being but still do absolutely nothing about it.

Maybe this all sound a little heavy, but it is important in the overall understanding of just where morality and religion stand either to other. And please be careful. I did say religion as a collective term and am not referring to any one particular belief system.

Brethren, we now turn our attention to defining the awkward one. Maybe one could say the troublesome one, Morality. It is possible that morality is one of the root causes of the misunderstanding which has been repeatedly in evidence between religion and craft masonry since Masonry re-vamped itself all those years ago back in the age of reason in its attempt to be purely speculative.

So what then is morality? Fortunately there is some help. The help is very ancient and has been absorbed by both religion and Craft Masonry as well as a lot of other systems. The help I refer to comes from that philosopher Plato.

You are sitting in the Main Temple at Great Queen Street, or possibly you and your wife have just been round the Museum and are on the conducted tour and you idly gaze upwards. What a magnificent ceiling. But have you ever noticed the corners?

There for all to see and think on are the four cardinal Virtues; Prudence, Temperance, Fortitude and Justice.

Now the word cardinal comes from the Latin word meaning a hinge, and these virtues are judged to be the most important moral values, the hinge on which we hang, or should hang, our human behaviour. Indeed, Virtue is the quality or practice of moral excellence.

Well, it was Plato who first determined the cardinal virtues some two and half thousand years ago, his millennium is well past, and, as I am sure we all know, they are part of the fabric of our system of morality albeit veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols. The four cardinal Virtues should correctly be symbolically displayed as the tassels on each corner of your Lodge carpet.

A proper study of these virtues will inevitably lead to an understanding of those principles upon which we are founded: brotherly love, relief and truth.

You will find that you should act with charity toward your fellow man, trust him and have faith in him. You will want whatever is best for him and hope that whatever that is, will come to pass and, if you can, you will help him to achieve it. You are instructed to act truthfully, justly and honourably towards him. You are encouraged to look after, not only those nearest and dearest to you, but to observe these principles in your behaviour towards all

of mankind. So morality is a doctrine or system concerned with conduct and duty.

But whilst his moral teaching is unquestionably a basic masonic recommendation, it is, nevertheless, a universal and a very ancient teaching.

Let me heavily emphasise this point. It is a universal teaching. It does not belong solely to Freemasonry. It is not ours alone. What does belong to Freemasonry is the charming, attractive and, because of its age, somewhat quaint and curious way our ritual implants or underlines in the minds of men these ancient and universal principles known as the four cardinal Virtues.

Alright then, you may well ask, *To whom else does moral teaching belong?* Well, many organisations and movements from the Girl Guides and Boy Scouts, to religions in general. They all have their own way of putting it across and you will have noticed that God does not necessarily have to be mentioned. The Humanist, for example, will both claim, and demonstrate, that it is possible to lead an excellent moral life without acknowledging the existence of a Supreme Being.

This, however, is not the case with Freemasonry. As we all know, a belief in a Supreme Being is required of each and very one of us as a pre-condition of joining.

So the morality of Craft Freemasonry is certainly a system of moral philosophy that also requires a belief in God. Does it go further?

Yes it does.

It does Brethren, because we also acknowledge revelation in that our Lodges must have an opened Volume of Sacred Law on display whilst the Lodge itself is open. The Volume of Sacred Law, which should be appropriate to the Faith of those present, is accepted by believers as God's revealed will and word to mankind. In other words, *Him up there has revealed Himself to us down here.*

Now this lecture states in its title, and we acknowledge that ***for therein you will be taught*** So we can see that Craft Masonry not only has a firm philosophical basis, but also is founded upon a Theological basis as well. So does this mean that it must be a religion?

No, it does not.

Let us explore this question Brethren by looking yet a little further.

Let us first remind ourselves that it is possible to acknowledge God's revelation to mankind and do nothing about it, it is, as it were, just a theological, or one could say, an academic belief in God. It is from hereon that the muddle becomes a real problem.

You see, by definition, there are not just four but actually seven Virtues. We have dealt with the four cardinal Virtues of Prudence, Temperance, Fortitude and Justice in our moral philosophy, but there are also the three Spiritual: Faith, Hope and Charity.

These are the concern of religion in a very particular way, but they are also the joint concern of both religion and morality in a different way. Should the distinction between these two approaches not be clear, it is

possible that one could question whether Freemasonry either is, or at least challenges, religion.

The problem is that Faith, Hope and Charity, the spiritual Virtues, must of necessity also be found within the four cardinal Virtues. Let us look at them. I must have Faith in my fellow man. I must Hope for the best of everything for him and I must act in Charity or love toward him.

Philosophy embraces all of this, and, as I have stated, so does religion in exactly the same sense.

But religion also moves these virtues on to a very different plane. Many belief systems clearly state that these Virtues are applied, not only in our moral behaviour toward our fellow man, but also in the religious sense to that desire for a personal relationship with God. They are indeed used in that quest and thus in the problems of sin, of confession, of heavenly forgiveness, of heavenly salvation and of a belief in a life hereafter – all concerns that fall within the province of, and are peculiar to, religion. Indeed, the full definition of Virtue goes beyond that of being a moral person. It is the quality and practice of both moral **and** religious excellence.

So religion not only must accept the four Cardinal virtues of moral philosophy, but has to apply not one, but two uses to the three Spiritual: one philosophical use and one religious. Add to this the case that Freemasonry has a theological basis as well as a philosophical one, and it is no wonder that perhaps there is misunderstanding and confusion.

Masonry needs to clearly state its position.

Brethren, Grand Lodge maintains that Freemasonry is the friend of religion.

So where may we find the justification for this declared policy clearly demonstrated and within every Brother's reach? In what way can Freemasonry claim to be a friend of religion? And if we, like many others, have a universal system of morality, why is the whole thing overlaid with secrecy, a secrecy that is not a secret? Go to any Public Library and, as they say *Read all about it*. Our so-called masonic *secrets* have been exposed for years, in fact for centuries.

Brethren, the answer lies within our ritual working. Our Craft ritual holds the key to a fuller understanding of these problems for us all to see and we must look carefully at it, even maybe, with new eyes.

Perhaps we should return to the question of universal morality.

It is easy to both say and accept the four cardinal virtues as they stated. We would all acknowledge that it is good to have wisdom. It must always be a good thing to act with reasonableness and courage, and we all would accept that such an approach to life should be supported by a just dealing with mankind in general.

One can well see the underlying precepts of brotherly love, relief and truth, the ideals toward which a Mason should strive.

However, universal morality may well provide the bedrock, but is it enough?

No. It is not.

Having accepted the precepts of universal morality, mankind then is faced with the task of translating them into everyday behaviour. We move from universal morality to specific morality.

Let me give you an example. We all acknowledge the recommendation that we should give to charity. But which charity, how much we give, and if and when we give, we have to decide for ourselves. We have moved from the universal to the specific.

Another example shows that a large part of the problem is decided for us. We may all agree that our cars must not be left just anywhere in the High Street. The Local Authority will determine for the good of all that you cannot leave it there, and that if you do, you will be brought to Court and be fined for disrupting the community, specific justice at work. So quite a lot of specific morality is determined by the laws of the State in which we live and as we all know, a Mason must pledge his obedience to those laws.

However, as our first example shows, many of our personal dealings with our fellow man are left to us to determine. We have to deal with our specific approach to life ourselves. Does our system of universal morality offer any help.

Yes it does.

Perhaps I can put forward three examples of help from within our Craft ritual which are in evidence to assist the Mason by pointing him in the right direction to fulfil the ideals of our ancient system of morality.

Firstly, we must always listen to the voice of conscience. Within mankind is that still small voice which, if we do care to listen, will tell us the path we should take.

The masonic ritual beautifully encapsulates this inner first principle of how we should deal with our fellow man. In the Charge after Initiation we are instructed to behave thus:—

To your neighbour, by acting with him on the square, by rendering him every kind office which justice or mercy may require, by relieving his necessities and soothing his afflictions and by doing to him as in similar cases you would wish he would do to you.

It is this last phrase that particularly falls within the province of conscience, the inner voice.

So here we are shown how to use the Universal approach in our daily lives. Masonry does not make the mistake of going any further because specific morality changes from age to age, we no longer hang sheep thieves.

This is of course the reason why Masonry has so remarkably resisted the destroying hand of time. We are pointed beyond the Universal toward the specific but the active morality of the age is not commented upon. However, Masonry has moved us in the right direction by reminding us to listen to the voice of conscience. But is this enough?

No, It is not.

Mankind operates a free will. The conscience has whispered to us, but will we do anything about it, and will it be the right thing? Well, yes it could

be if we are honourable men. It is here that we need to unveil a major attribute of our system of morality which overlays all our ritual and colours our whole approach to our masonic life and yet is, I believe, somewhat misinterpreted, if not forgotten nowadays, both within and without the Craft.

So, perhaps surprisingly, our second help lies within the lesson of secrecy, as understood in time of old, at the time that our ritual was taking shape.

The Mediaeval emphasis on secrecy is no more and no less the ground that promises are promises. In the whole of life we must keep our word.

Sometimes the means overtake the end and we forget what was originally intended. Most of us today understand that we keep Masonry under wraps to prevent outsiders knowing our practices and that our Masonic *secrets* are solely a test of membership.

However, we must remember that we are involved in an ancient system of morality veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols. We appear to have lost the symbolic meaning given to the system of recognition we adopted from the stone masons of old.

Yes, of course they are used as a test of membership, but we must look to the time our speculative system was constructed so ingeniously back in the age of reason and hark back to the understanding of that age.

The speculative lesson is clearly stated above. Above all, a man of honour keeps his word. We call ourselves an ancient and honourable institution, and within our system of morality we are continuously reminded through the teachings on secrecy in our ritual, that we must act honourably and keep that word. That word may be to whatever we understand as a Supreme Being, to our neighbour, or through the voice of conscience, to ourselves.

Such is the real purpose, the real teaching, of Masonic secrecy. The secrecy itself is a lesson in morality, an end in itself, and that lesson permeates our ritual.

The fact that anyone can find our *secrets* if they have such a mind in no way detracts from the charming and persistent way the teaching is given. It is, of course, another step beyond the universal to help us as we search within ourselves to implement a specific morality.

But there is of course a third help to every Brother as he struggles to apply the four cardinal virtues in his everyday life.

As has already been discussed, our system of morality has both a philosophical and theological basis and we must all state a belief in a Supreme Being. We also saw that the virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity apply to moral as well as spiritual behaviour.

Once again I return to those early days when our rituals took form. I have one further quotation for us. Dr Samuel Johnson constructed the very first dictionary of the English language.

Under the heading *Moral*, Dr Johnson had this to say:—

In moral actions Divine Law helpeth exceedingly the law of reason to guide life but in supernatural it guideth alone

So here we have it. The reason for the title of this lecture is clear.

Let me recommend to your most serious contemplation the Volume of the Sacred Law, charging you to consider it as the unerring standard of truth and justice and to regulate your actions by the Divine precepts it contains; for therein you will be taught

It appears that in the thinking of the day at the time that our ritual was being developed, the virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity were indeed accepted as aiding the reason in dealing with our daily approach, or specific moral approach, toward our fellow man. Religion and religion alone then had the further task of applying these spiritual virtues in matters supernatural; in the quest for a personal relationship with the Supreme Being.

So the universal morality adopted by so many belief systems needs support to move to a specific morality. Our antient system teaches us to listen to the voice of conscience, implement that voice honourably and then firmly recommends that we should look to religious teaching, whatever our personal revelation may be, to enable us the more properly to lead the virtuous life.

It is well said that Freemasonry is the friend of religion.

However, you may then ask *which religion?* This seems to be a perennial problem. Some belief systems are known to claim that their path is the only true path of revelation. Only they are able to lead mankind toward the goal of that personal relationship with the Most High, and who is to say that they are wrong?

This is a subject that Freemasonry is not qualified to comment upon, to debate or even to discuss. Yet it is an important and at times troublesome matter and Freemasonry should be able to face the question. How then should Freemasonry deal with the dilemma of *which religion?*

Brethren, I believe that the answer lies within a proper understanding of **how** the teaching of universal morality operates within our antient ritual.

I return to the title of his lecture *for therein you will be taught* It is the strong recommendation to every new Brother that he should study his particular Volume of Sacred Law. For the Muslim it will be the Koran. For the Jew it will be the Torah. For the Christian it will be the Bible and so on for whoever joins Freemasonry with a belief in a Supreme Being.

We do not teach, **but we firmly recommend** that whether it be by private study, or whether it be at Church, Mosque, Synagogue or Temple, our system of morality veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols receives the assistance of religion to move from the universal to the specific. We do **not** insist but we **do** recommend. It is here that our ritual working so fully justifies the approach of our forbears back in the age of reason.

Our common belief in a Supreme being, whatever that might mean to us and whatever our particular revelation might be, enables us to sit comfortably with each other in our Lodge room. For example, the Jew, the Christian and the Muslim all hear our antient ritual and its quaint, charming, attractive and non-dogmatic method of reminding and recommending to us those four cardinal Virtues of Prudence, Temperance, Fortitude and Justice as they join together in our ritual working.

But what do they really hear? Well, the words are all the same. But the Islamic Brother is reminded of the five pillars of his Faith. Sitting next to him the Jewish Brother is reminded of the path of Holiness, whilst next to him, the Christian Brother is reminded of those two Commandments on which, for him, hang all the law and the Prophets. They all hear the same words, are reminded of the universal moral teaching within Freemasonry, and if they have also accepted the firm recommendation within our ritual, the spiritual and specific moral teaching of their own Faith.

Thus the relationship between Freemasonry and religion can and should be seen as both supportive and compatible. Freemasonry is the friend of religion indeed.

Our antient and honourable system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols, able by its very nature to resist the destroying hand of time, will still be much in evidence at the next millennium reminding the Brethren, and possibly by then, the Sisters, of those four cardinal Virtues which should guide our moral behaviour - Prudence, Temperance, Fortitude and Justice, whilst at the same time firmly recommending a study of the Volume of the Sacred Law - for, Brethren, *therein you will be taught*

THE DEVELOPMENT OF MARK MASONRY IN HINCKLEY

W.Bro. Donald A. Peacock, P.P.D.G.D.C.

The history of the Mark Degree in England and Wales is somewhat obscure but some facts are certain. In 1769 Thomas Dunckerley, a stalwart of the Premier or Moderns Grand Lodge made some of the Brethren of the Friendship Chapter, Mark Men and Mark Masters. It was recorded that he had received the Degrees shortly before. We should note that he conferred these Degrees in a Chapter and not a Craft Lodge as the Premier Grand Lodge would only acknowledge the three degrees of Craft Masonry.

Back in 1751 certain Masons who were dissatisfied with the ceremonies authorised by the Premier Grand Lodge had formed another Grand Lodge and this new Grand Lodge became known as the Antients or Atholl Grand Lodge. Over the years this new Grand Lodge became very popular and was a powerful rival of the Premier Grand Lodge. They scathingly referred to their older rivals as Moderns because they claimed that the older Grand Lodge had radically modified the ceremonies. The Antients generally encompassed a much wider spread of Masonic ritual and by 1780 the Antients Lodges were working many other degrees apart from the Craft. In the neighbouring Province of Nottinghamshire the Newstead Lodge, working under the Antients constitution, first made mention of the Mark Degree in its minutes in 1793.

In Leicestershire, in the 1790s, there were only two Craft Lodges working and these were both based in Leicester. The first was Lodge Number 91 under the Antients Constitution and this had been formed in 1761. The other Lodge was St. John's Lodge, now Number 279, which had been formed in 1790 under the Moderns Constitution. We can assume that the Antients Lodge 91 was working the Mark Degree among others and that the Moderns lodge St. John's was not but it is possible that the Chapter of Fortitude 279, warranted in 1796, may have conferred these degrees.

In 1802 some seven Brethren from Hinckley decided to try to obtain a Warrant to form a Craft Lodge in Hinckley and applied to the Antients Grand Lodge. Because of an Act of Parliament introduced in 1799, it was not possible to grant a new warrant and the Grand Lodge eventually issued a Warrant from a Lodge in Macclesfield that had been surrendered in 1800. This warrant was numbered 47 and was received in Hinckley on 12th February 1803. The first meeting was held on March 1st 1803 and the new Master, Henry Granger, was installed in the Chair. We know that four of the founding Brethren were members of Lodge 91 and one was a member of St. John's Lodge, but had previously been a member of Lodge 91. We do not know the Mother Lodges of the other two founder members.

Not long after this first Installation ceremony the Brethren were working a wide variety of Degrees in addition to the three Degrees of Craft

Masonry. Records of the Degrees conferred on each member were sent to the Grand Lodge and there is a list dated London 1803 "List of the Members of Lodge 47 from the commencement with the Date of their Different Degrees." Columns are marked for the following particulars.

Name--- Profession--- Residence--- Made--- Past--- Marked--- Raised---
 Past Chair--- Arched (Ould)--- Arched (New)--- Templd--- Joined and
 from where--- Remarks.

Some explanation of this list is, perhaps, necessary. Made refers to the initiation ceremony, Past Chair refers to the brief ceremony by which a Brother became qualified to be exalted to the Royal Arch, (Ould) and (New) I cannot definitely explain. Templd of course refers to the Knight Templar Degree. I think from this evidence that I can safely confirm my theory that Lodge 91 was working the Mark Degree among others in Leicester during the 1790s. The Brethren of the new Hinckley Lodge must have learnt the ritual and been advanced before the new Lodge started work and where else but the Leicester Lodge? Having said this what do we know about the Mark ceremony then worked? Within the last few weeks, R.W.Bro. The Rev. Neville Barker Cryer has been kind enough to send me copies of the rituals that he has reconstructed from records found in the archives of Mark Master Masons' Hall. These rituals illustrate the ceremonies that would have taken place in the period between 1780 and 1850. There are two separate and distinct, and quite lengthy, ceremonies associated with the Mark Man and Mark Master degree. There is clearly not time to dwell on these now but I do wish to share one point with you. In the Mark Master ceremony of those early years the candidate carries the keystone and the Junior Deacon a square stone. Perhaps you can now see why the Brethren of the Knight of Malta Lodge Number 30 persist in their old ceremony using only two stones!

The story of Mark Masonry in Hinckley continued and we find several records of Brethren being advanced. For instance Benjamin Payne was Arched (Ould and New), Templd and Markd., all on the same day, September 6th 1812. However difficult times were ahead for in December 1813 the two Grand Lodges merged to form the United Grand Lodge of England. While the Chapter was acknowledged the position of the Mark Degree was not defined. Undoubtedly the Antients Grand Lodge would have wished for this Degree to be continued under the authority, perhaps, of the Grand Chapter, but this was not to be. The Grand Chapter was not to be part of the United Grand Lodge as was the case in the Antients organisation and the Grand Chapter of the Moderns had perhaps not embraced the Mark Degree. In any case the new Supreme Grand Chapter did not become reality until some years after the formation of the United Grand Lodge. In many cases the Mark Degree was still worked under the authority the old Craft Warrant and certainly in Hinckley the Degree was still worked under the Craft Lodge. For example on December 28th 1814 four Brethren were advanced. The latest entry referring to the Mark Degree still bound into the

Craft Lodge records is for March 2nd 1828 when Michael McKenney The Plumb Rule, William Clark The Compass, William May The Half Moon, Joseph Ayre The Ladder and Joseph King The Seven Stars, were Marked and Arked on the same day. The objects appended to their names are presumably the equivalent of Marks, very different from our present practise.

Around 1828 two distinct and very powerful problems assailed our ancient Mark Brethren. Firstly the Provincial Craft authorities were continuing to put pressure on the Craft Lodge to cease all unauthorised ceremonies and secondly the poor state of the economy forced several members of the Craft Lodge to resign their membership. In the return of 1829 to Grand Lodge the Secretary was obliged to state that several members had been declared off due to non-payment of dues but hoped that they would be able to rejoin in future. I believe that at about this time, 1828-1829, the Mark Lodge became an effective independent unit but with close links to the Craft Lodge. Although records do not exist we have the testimony of R.W.Bro. William Kelly that the Mark Lodge continued. From his "Sketch of the History of the Mark Master Masons Degree etc." read to his Brethren in Leicester on 20th February 1868 we read the following. "— and in our own Province the Knights of Malta Lodge, Number 50, Hinckley, in which the Mark Degree was regularly conferred up to a few years ago, several of the present Past Masters of the Lodge having received it, but since the death of Bro. Needham the working of the degree has been lost." Bro. Needham was active until 1854 and from 1850 Bro. May came back into membership of the Craft Lodge and was Secretary until his death in 1859. As has been stated before, Bro. May was advanced as a Mark Mason in 1828. Also on the list of members of the Craft Lodge was Bro. William McKenney who had also been advanced in 1828 and who died in 1862. Both of these Brethren would still have been able to work the Degree of Mark Mason until the end of the 1850's.

In 1858 the Fowke and Howe Lodges were founded in Leicestershire after William Kelly and several others travelled to the Newstead Lodge to be advanced as Mark Master Masons to qualify themselves as founders. Leicestershire was then constituted a Province, with R.W.Bro. Kelly at its head. Probably due to the low ebb of Freemasonry in Hinckley in the 1850's until Earl Howe became the Master of the Craft Lodge in 1858, the Mark Lodge in Hinckley did not come under the jurisdiction of the new Mark Grand Lodge at this time. However, in 1870, Bro. The Rev. William Langley was installed in the Chair of the Craft Lodge by W.Bro. William Kelly. At the time both Bros. Kelly and Langley were respectively Provincial Grand Master and Deputy in the Mark Degree and these Brothers joined by W.Bros. J. Cotman and G. Clarke petitioned for a Warrant under the Grand Mark Lodge. Bros. Cotman and Clarke were both Past Masters of the Craft Lodge and must have been among those who received the Mark Degree under the auspices of the independent Mark Lodge.

The Knight of Malta Lodge received its Warrant as a Time Immemorial Lodge and the first meeting took place on 27th Sept. 1870. It is also interesting to note the following oral tradition carried down regarding the records of the earlier independent Mark Lodge. W.Bro. Alan Pickering first mentioned this story to me some time in March 2001. He said that around 1917 his uncle W.Bro. A. J. Pickering had heard the following story from W.Bro. Harrold. W.Bro. Harrold said that W.Bro. (Capt.) Tom Needham had destroyed all the previous records of the independent Mark Lodge at the time they came under the authority of the Mark Grand Lodge and believed he had been so ordered to do by the Grand Lodge.

W.Bro. Harrold was initiated in 1858 and Master of the Craft Lodge in 1860 as the direct successor to R.W.Bro. The Earl Howe. He was a noted historian and was one of the first advances in the newly Warranted Mark Lodge.

Meetings from 1870 onward were sparse and indeed no meetings were held between 1872 and 1875 but from then on the Lodge grew from strength to strength. Fuller information can be obtained from the Time Immemorial Knight of Malta Lodge of Mark Masters Historical Notes written by W.Bro. Alan Pickering in 1975.

There are some notable landmarks that should be mentioned within this short talk tonight. In 1929 the Craft and Mark Lodges moved into new premises in what was then York Road and is now St. Mary's Road. These premises were very much needed to give the Lodges a stable meeting place after meeting in many of the Hotels and Inns in Hinckley over the past one hundred and twenty five years. As you look around this evening, Brethren, you will note the ornamental panels on the wall. It is not surprising that the mallet and chisel are one of the four emblems depicted. The Architect of the Hall was W.Bro. S. J. Walker and he was one of the leading figures in the Mark Degree in Hinckley. So much so that we still refer to the Walker workings. He had completed fifty years as a member of the Lodge in 1966 and his abilities as Director of Ceremonies ensured that the Lodge cherished its old traditions.

In the late 1930s the Lodge was very popular and attracted candidates from Nuneaton and Atherstone and this carried on until a Mark Lodge was formed in Nuneaton. Today the Lodge in Hinckley is as strong as it has ever been and attracts candidates from a wide area of southwest Leicestershire.

As you proceed to the Festive Board, you should inspect the three framed images on the walls of the Dining Room. The first you will see is a print taken from a copper plate found in a storage space in the roof of this building. The plate dates to around 1795 and was used to print Masonic aprons. It is covered with symbols from many degrees including the Mark and Royal Ark Mariner. There is also a photograph of a Masonic Ark or Box used to store the warrant etc. Finally there is a photograph of the original tracing board also found in the storage space. This also contains many symbols including Mark and Royal Ark Mariner. All of

these objects are on display in London Road on loan from the Craft Lodge. It is my belief that the tracing board and copper plate were inherited from Lodge 91, the Mother Lodge of the Craft Lodge, which was erased in 1821. As such they trace a link back to the earliest days of the Mark Degree in this Province.

MASONIC PERSONALITIES AS SEEN THROUGH THE BYRON CONNECTION

THE RANCLIFFE FAMILY

Thomas Boothy Parkyns – 1st Lord Rancliffe (1755–1800)

George Parkyns – 2nd Lord Rancliffe (1785–1850)

Provincial Grand Masters of Leicestershire

by

W.Bro. A. David Herbert P.P.S.G.D.

The family seat of the Parkyns' family was at Bunny, a village in Nottinghamshire near to the border with Leicestershire. Their association with Bunny dates back to the 1570s, when a Richard Parkyns is shown as being Recorder for both Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire. One of his descendants must have received a knighthood as the next member of the family I can trace is a Sir George Parkyns of Bunny, living in the first half of the next century. During the English Civil War the Parkyns family supported the King, and a son of this Sir George, Isham Parkyns, is shown as Governor of Ashby-de-la-Zouch at the time, serving under the command of Lord Hastings. This connection between the Hastings and Parkyns families is important to this history as we shall see.

With both Leicester and Nottingham effectively under the control of the Parliamentary forces in the Civil War, Ashby and its Castle remained an effective Royalist outpost. Help was given to Royalist supporters in both of these nearby large towns from Ashby. However, following the Royalist defeat at nearby Naseby in 1645, King Charles fled from the battlefield and stayed for a short time at Ashby Castle. Ashby held out for the King for several months after the defeat at Naseby, but inevitably it fell to the Parliamentary forces; Isham Parkyns surrendering to Colonel Needham, the Governor of Leicester. The Hastings family, who were Earls of Huntingdon, retired in humiliation to Donington. The Parliamentary forces then took revenge on the town of Ashby by destroying the Castle. Isham Parkyns died in 1667. With the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, he probably received a knighthood from King Charles II for his services, as at the time of his death he is recorded as Sir Isham.

In 1680 or 1681, both dates being mentioned, his son, another Thomas, was created a baronet by King Charles II as a reward for his family's loyalty to the King. One of his sons was a well-known wrestler who went under the name of 'Luctator' which is the Latin for 'Wrestler'. The next Sir Thomas Parkyns, the 3rd Baronet, was born in 1729, and in the early 1750s married Miss Winstanley of Braunstone Hall, Leicestershire. The eldest son of this marriage was Thomas Boothy Parkyns born on 24th July 1755, who in 1795 was raised to the peerage as 1st Lord Rancliffe, and is the subject of this article. I shall from now refer to him as Rancliffe so as not to confuse father and son.

When Sir Thomas's first wife died he remarried a daughter of his gardener and several further children resulted from this marriage, and when his second wife died he married again, this time to the governess of the children of his previous marriages. Family ties were further advanced when a prominent Leicester man, Clement Winstanley of Braunstone Hall, returned the compliment by marrying a daughter of Sir Thomas Parkyns. Rancliffe was admitted to Queens College, Cambridge University on 23rd April 1773 following a private education.

Another boy was born some six months before Rancliffe, on 9th December 1754, to the owner of an estate only a few miles away from Bunny. His name was Francis Rawdon of Donington Hall, Leicestershire. He was educated at Harrow and Oxford University. Rawdon's father was a Yorkshireman, who in 1761 had been created 1st Earl of Moira, and his mother was Elizabeth, sister of Francis Hastings, 10th Earl of Huntingdon, a very well known Leicestershire family with a history going back many centuries. By their teenage years Rancliffe and Francis Rawdon had become good friends and this friendship lasted for the rest of their lives, bringing the Hastings and Parkyns families together once more. In the early 1770s Rawdon joined the army and was sent to America where he took part in the War of Independence, serving with gallantry at the battle of Bunker Hill, near Boston, in 1775, where the British lost over one thousand men. The worst injury Rawdon received was fatigue and a bullet through his hat! After further distinguished service in this war he returned to this country in 1781 having gained the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

On the sea voyage back to England he was taken prisoner by the French and was held captive by them for a short time before being released in a deal involving an exchange of prisoners. In 1782 he was appointed aide-de-camp to King George III and in the following year he was created Baron Rawdon. This appointment brought him into contact with the Prince of Wales, who between 1790 and 1813 was Grand Master of English Freemasons (Moderns). Rawdon then inherited his father's title becoming 2nd Earl of Moira. Because of various titles which he acquired I will from now on refer to him as Moira. He was appointed as Acting Grand Master to the Prince and served for that same period 1790 to 1813. The Prince constantly quarrelled with his father King George III and supported the Whigs rather than the Tories who had the support of his father. Rancliffe and Moira also supported the Whig or Reform cause and now moved in the Prince's political as well as his social circle. As you would expect this association did not come cheap. Rancliffe probably relied on his father for funds who was resident at the ancestral home at Bunny. Then, as often happened in those days, a fortunate marriage came to his rescue. It was on Christmas Eve of 1783 that Rancliffe married eighteen year old Elizabeth Anne, only daughter and heiress of Sir William James of Eltham Park, Kent. On the very day of the marriage, so we are told, Sir William died suddenly leaving a substantial sum to his daughter. A comment made at the time concerning his new wife was as follows:

She was one more instance of the ill-fated partiality of relations, who in the moment of parental delusion, defeat the happiness of a favourite child by throwing too princely a fortune in the capricious lap of a giddy female.

Whatever the truth of this, it nevertheless put Rancliffe in possession of substantial funds and probably for the first time gave him financial independence from his father. This fact would have made him even more valuable to the Prince of Wales who was constantly in need of funds. Moira for instance is known to have loaned thousands of pounds to the Prince.

In 1783 also Rancliffe was appointed Provincial Grand Master for Nottinghamshire at the age of twenty-eight years. In the following year he was elected Whig M.P. for Stockbridge, Hampshire but it is doubtful if he ever visited his constituency. In 1785 his first son and heir was born to be followed by a further eight children, but only his eldest son and three sisters survived to maturity. In 1789 in addition to being Provincial Grand Master for Nottinghamshire he became Provincial Grand Master for Derbyshire, Leicestershire and Rutland. In 1793 he is shown to be the first Grand Superintendent of the Royal Arch Degree in Leicestershire and later is described as Grand Master of Royal Arch Masons. At the time his Craft Lodge was the Lodge of Friendship No. 6 but it is not known if he was initiated into that particular Lodge. Meanwhile Moira was busily engaged in the war against France, although still Acting Grand Master. 1790 was the year that St. John's Lodge at Leicester received its warrant, being the only Lodge in this Province from that time still in existence.

In 1790 Rancliffe was elected Whig M.P. for Leicester. He was described as 'a middle sized man with pleasing, mild and expressive features, very well made and active, rather slender than corpulent. In the whole of his deportment he has very much the appearance of a man of fashion'. He is also described as 'an excellent classical scholar with a masterly knowledge of history and politics'. Local reports from the *Leicester Journal* of that time say that Lord Rancliffe has declared himself a candidate and is hourly expected in the Borough. He arrived on Sunday 13th June with a colleague and the report goes on to say that when their intention was announced by public advertisement, a number of gentlemen and a great concourse of people went to meet them at Stoney-gate, where the horses were taken from their carriage, which was then drawn into town by the populace.

These were indeed turbulent times. There was great concern in England that the masses might take over here as they had done in France. Moira, among other things, was busy rescuing French aristocrats and bringing them to England. No doubt they were one of the reasons for the formation of French Lodges at the time in this country, and indeed in Leicestershire. Elections were opportunities to air grievances resulting in riots and disorderly behaviour and the election of 1790 was no exception. The authorities were so concerned that they proposed that the two Leicester seats should be allocated one for the Tories and the other to Rancliffe for the Whigs, so as

to avoid an election. However when this proposal became known this in itself caused a riot. The mob broke into the Exchange building smashing windows and throwing the corporation records into the street. They next attacked the Assembly Rooms where they destroyed the music library and the musical instruments that were kept there. When the election did finally take place Rancliffe was declared the victor. War with France was not imminent and the political parties set aside many of their differences in the national interest. Lord Moira was promoted to the rank of Major General in 1793 and in 1794 led an army of some seven thousand men to link up with the Duke of York on the continent. Moira was now one of the Prince of Wales' closest advisors and it was at this time that he made a loan to the Prince of fifteen thousand pounds to help him through a cash crisis. In 1795 the Prince married, under protest, Caroline of Brunswick and Moira rode with him in the coach to the Chapel Royal for the ceremony. The Prince was far from happy and turning to Moira he remarked 'It's no good, Moira. I shall never love any women but Fitzherbert!'

Mrs Fitzherbert, a widow and a Roman Catholic, had actually gone through a wedding ceremony with the Prince but the marriage was declared void under the Royal Marriages Act. The Prince then became so depressed that he thought he was going to die. He made out his Will naming Moira as his executor. The Prince did however manage to survive for another thirty-five years! Rancliffe in the meantime was busy with the war effort raising a regiment of Loyal Leicester Fencibles, consisting of one thousand men for home defence, and in the following year he became Colonel of the Prince of Wales Fencibles, an elite corps for home defence. The threat of invasion by France was very real. It was probably for his efforts in this direction that he was raised to the peerage as 1st Lord Rancliffe in 1795, an Irish title, which fact enabled him to continue as MP for Leicester. Also in this year his wife died at the young age of thirty. At the 1796 elections Rancliffe was returned as a member for Leicester for a further term.

With British victories against the French at Cape St Vincent, Camperdown and Aboukir Bay in 1797 and 1798 the threat of invasion receded, but Lord Rancliffe would not have been able to turn his attention to Freemasonry in Leicestershire or to his constituents. He was ill with what was referred to at the time as a 'wasting illness'. Lord Rancliffe did manage to visit St. John's Lodge only once in 1791 but he did present the Lodge with a set of silver jewels.

Now how does the poet, the 6th Lord Byron, who inspired these articles fit into all this? On 21st May 1798, William, 5th Lord Byron died at his home Newstead Abbey in Nottinghamshire. He had been Grand Master of English Freemasons from 1747 until 1751. His heir was his great-nephew the future poet who was then only ten years old, who travelled down from Scotland with his mother to claim his inheritance. They knew no one in Nottinghamshire, but the Parkyns family were related to the Byron family as a result of earlier marriages and it was to that family that Mrs Byron and her son turned to for help. A Nottingham lady by the name of Abigail

Gawthern kept a diary at this time, which has survived, and there is an entry for 21st August 1798 which records her seeing Lord Byron and the two Miss Parkyns in Nottingham. Then a further entry a week later she records seeing Lord Byron, his mother, Mrs Parkyns and the two Miss Parkyns taking tea with others at the bowling alley. The two Miss Parkyns referred to would have been Rancliffe's daughters.

I am not certain if the ten-year old Lord Byron was introduced to Lord Rancliffe, as Rancliffe was spending most of his time in London at this time at his house in Portland Place where he was no doubt having treatment for his terminal illness. Byron would however have met Rancliffe's father at Bunny. He would also have met at Bunny, Rancliffe's eldest son, George, who was just two and a half years older than Bryon, and who was to become the 2nd Lord Rancliffe.

The 1st Lord Rancliffe died on 17th November 1800 aged only forty-five years. Abigail Gawthern records in her diary for 17th November:

Lord Rancliffe, Sir Thomas Parkyns' eldest son, died in London; he was buried at Bunny, Dec 1st, attended by a vast number of noblemen and gentlemen's carriages, 6 mourning coaches, and near 200 of his own tenants and all in black cloaks, the whole forming a grand but mournful procession.

Rancliffe's body was brought from London to his Nottinghamshire house at Rempstone, his father still occupying the family home at Bunny, where it had lain in state. It was then taken the short distance to Bunny for the funeral service and burial in the family vault. Mrs Gawthern's diary entry was a nearly accurate summary of the funeral but I think it is worth giving full details of that procession which left Rempstone on Monday 1st December at 3pm if only to show what the burial of a nobleman entailed:

The procession

Two hundred and fifty of his Lordship's Tenants on horseback,
in black cloaks, two and two;

His steward on horseback bearing his coronet on a velvet cushion;

Footmen bearing black plumes of feathers;

The Hearse drawn by six horses covered with black cloth and
plumes of feathers;

Four mourning coaches drawn with six horses each with Clergymen;

Seventeen Gentlemen's carriages with Gentlemen in the neighbourhood;

Upward of twenty servants, two by two, closed the procession.

The report goes on to say that the concourse of people was greater than ever known on any similar occasion and that the procession reached upwards of a mile in length!

It is not known if Lord Moira attended the funeral of his friend but I feel he must have done as we know he was in the area at the time, especially as Mrs Gawthorn records in her diary for 19th December 1800:

The Prince of Wales came through this town (Nottingham) to go to Lord Moira's at Castle Donington; a Swiss servant went before the carriage smoking a pipe; the Prince sent for horses from the Black's Head to the Trent Bridge to avoid stopping in the town.

No doubt the Grand Master was planning to spend Christmas with his friend the Acting Grand Master on his estate at Donington. Mrs Gawthorn records in her diary at this time that the mob was again active in Nottingham and that the 17th Light Dragoons had arrived from Birmingham to restore order. Riots were even more prevalent and severe in Nottingham than they were in Leicester at this time.

How then do we judge the 1st Lord Rancliffe? The history of St. John's Lodge states that 'he was not a model of Masonic zeal and that his action aroused an almost unquestionable spirit of discontent in the local body Masonic'. In the transactions of The Lodge of Research No 2429 for the year 1989, as well as listing other degrees in which he was involved, mentions that enquiries were made into his involvement in neighbouring counties, but the conclusion was drawn that his contribution and involvement was negligible there also. Against this it has to be understood that he held high rank in many orders and much of his time was therefore spent in London and indeed with the army in Ireland. Certainly, his military and political life had to take priority, as these were very difficult times with this country preparing for the probability of an invasion. Fears of an uprising similar to the revolution in France were very real.

The death of Rancliffe in 1800 left the position of Provincial Grand Master of Leicestershire vacant and it was to remain so until 1812, when his son was invited to take this position. It also left vacant that position in Nottinghamshire, but a new appointment was quickly made here in the person of Admiral Sir John Borlase Warren. When he resigned from Derbyshire again a new appointment was made without delay. Grand Lodge records show that for some reason Rancliffe had resigned as Provincial Grand Master for Rutland in 1798 with a Richard Barker succeeding him. If these appointments were filled so quickly, why was it not so in Leicestershire? Let us then make a calculated guess.

At the death of Rancliffe his eldest son and heir, full name George Augustus Henry Anne - yes, Anne is correct - was just fifteen years old and he had three younger sisters. Lord Moira, his father's close friend and Acting Grand Master, immediately took on the responsibility of becoming their legal guardian. George was sent to Harrow School. Byron, and Colonel Wildman who was to be a future Provincial Grand Master of Nottinghamshire, were also at Harrow around this time. In 1806 when reaching the age of twenty-one, the income of George, 2nd Lord Rancliffe was estimated to be £21,000 per annum, an enormous sum for that time. He

purchased the pocket borough of Minehead and entered parliament, but it is doubtful if he ever visited his constituency. In fact he was only the M.P. for the constituency for seven months. He declared that it was this experience that made him fight for parliamentary reform.

The following year he married Lady Elizabeth Mary Forbes, a niece of his guardian, the Acting Grand Master, once again cementing the Hastings and Parkyns relationship. With The Prince of Wales and the Duke of Cumberland, both Grand Masters, as godparents, Freemasonry was well and truly in his blood. From now when I refer to Rancliffe it will be the 2nd Lord unless stated otherwise.

Now Moira, as we have seen, was at this time a powerful military figure, an influential politician and the leading Freemason in England. It is a distinct possibility that Moira, a Leicestershire man, was prepared to leave the office of Provincial Grand Master for Leicestershire vacant for a few years until his charge attained his majority in 1806. Certainly St. John's Lodge appear not to have approached any other person of distinction during this interval. It was the year after Rancliffe's twenty first birthday that they decided to approach him, although for some reason the appointment was not made until five years later. However, with Moira about to leave for India to take up the position of Governor General of Bengal, he could well have issued a hasty reminder to Rancliffe and the Leicester brethren to make the appointment. Certainly a letter was sent from Leicester on 5th February 1812 inviting him to accept the office, adding rather tongue-in-cheek that this high and honourable office had been filled by his noble father 'with ye greatest satisfaction to the Lodge'. Rancliffe replied on the 8th saying 'I feel much honoured by their (the brethren's) choice and will endeavour by following ye steps of my father to merit the continuance of their good will.'

On 4th November 1812 the 2nd Lord Rancliffe was finally appointed Provincial Grand Master for Leicestershire at the age of twenty-seven. A number of important changes were now taking place in the administration of Freemasonry in England. The Prince of Wales, as Prince Regent, ceased to act as Grand Master in 1813 being superseded by his younger brother the Duke of Sussex. As we have seen The Earl of Moira, bound for India, also retired as Acting Grand Master, having been the person mainly responsible for bringing about the Union of the two Grand Lodges. Waller Rodwell Wright who had played a not insignificant part in drafting the Articles of Union, and was a signature to them, left to become Provincial Grand Master of the Ionian Islands.

With the Prince of Wales being close to the Whig party of Moira and Rancliffe it was expected that when he took over from his ailing father that certain Whig politicians would achieve high political office. Indeed at one point Moira was challenging Pitt as Prime Minister and Rancliffe was an equerry to the Prince. However the Prince, when he took control from his father, continued his father's association with the Tories. Rancliffe's election as a Member of Parliament coincided with his appointment as

Provincial Grand Master for Leicestershire. Whereas the 1st Lord had been MP for this county, the 2nd Lord was elected for Nottingham. This election of October 1812 was particularly notable and was celebrated on the 17th October of each year for the next thirty years by the emerging Liberal Party in Nottingham as 'The Triumph of Independence 1812'. Let us look at the circumstances of this famous election victory, which helps perhaps to explain Rancliffe's absence from active participation in Freemasonry in Leicestershire.

In 1812 the country was still fighting Napoleon, but locally the problems were the Luddites and famine. The years 1810 to 1820 saw some of the coldest winters of modern times. The price of flour and therefore bread was high through poor harvests. New machines, and changes in working practices, were being introduced in the hosiery industry, which threatened the incomes of the workers. This combination produced an underground movement which went about destroying frames at night taking its name from a Leicestershire youth, Ned Ludd, who is reputed to have destroyed his master's frame following a dispute. Such was the level of violence that a bill was passed by parliament making frame breaking a capital offence. Lord Byron, a kinsman of Rancliffe, made his famous maiden speech in the House of Lords against this Bill. Rioting for many years had been a factor of life in Nottingham, much more so that in Leicester, and the mob was out on the streets at the slightest provocation and 1812 was no exception. Local reports say that Nottingham at this time had a population of twenty nine thousand and was a besieged town with rioters and frame breakers rampant and looting and burning an everyday occurrence. Order was maintained only by the military, who fought running battles with the protesters. In the run up to the Parliamentary election of October 1812 it was thought to be a foregone conclusion as to who would win. The nominated candidates however did not seem to represent the interests of the workers. Then word got around that Lord Rancliffe might stand as a candidate for reform. The Whig leaders felt that the election in Nottingham was already lost and, as a consequence, urged Rancliffe not to stand, believing he had no chance of winning and that a contest could be the spark for more rioting.

As I mentioned earlier, it might well have been at the suggestion of the Earl of Moira, his legal guardian, that Rancliffe became Provincial Grand Master of Leicestershire. There is certainly no doubt that it was Moira who encouraged him to enter politics for the Whig or Reform cause. When word got to the rank and file in Nottingham that Rancliffe was considering standing on the Reform ticket 'joy and exaltation' broke out, as this party had never had such a prominent local figure to support their cause. A deputation of working men sped to Bunny to urge him to stand. Rancliffe, with the support of his wife, Moira's niece, took up the challenge. They drove into Nottingham in their carriage according to a local report where 'the immense assemblage were literally delirious with delight and exaltation'. Addressing the large crowd Rancliffe stated that he was standing on the principles of 'peace, parliamentary reform and liberty of conscience.' His

chief opponent was Richard Arkwright of the famous cotton spinning family. Rancliffe gained one thousand five hundred and fifteen votes against one thousand two hundred and thirty nine for Arkwright – a remarkable triumph! It is not stated how much the election cost Rancliffe, but the records state that there was great expenditure on both sides and it cost Arkwright almost twenty thousand pounds. This is known from the fact that he deposited this amount with his managers who to his horror returned a balance of only forty pounds to him at the end of the contest!

In 1812 Lord Byron had returned to England after his travels on the Continent and was now the most acclaimed poet in the country. Being unmarried, a peer, handsome in looks, and with the adulation now-days only accorded to the major pop artists, Byron was the central figure at every house party. He was a frequent visitor and the centre of attention at the parties and glittering balls laid on by Lady Melbourne, the famous Whig hostess at Melbourne House. It was here that he met Lady Melbourne's daughter-in-law, Lady Caroline Lamb, the wife of her son Lord Melbourne, in later years to become the young Queen Victoria's trusted Prime Minister. Byron's affair with Lady Caroline is well known. She was completely besotted with him and Byron and Lady Melbourne did all they could to stop the scandal. However Lady Caroline was not to be so easily brushed aside. Byron met Rancliffe many times in London, where they went to the theatre and dined afterwards together. Lady Rancliffe often accompanied Byron to the receptions, which had the effect of keeping the enthusiastic young women at bay and no doubt it pleased her to be with this celebrity. It did not keep Caroline at bay for long. Her desire for Byron turned into a jealous form of anger and rage and this boiled over at a party given in the summer of 1813 by Lady Heathcote. Lady Caroline Lamb's version of events, which I summarise, was as follows:

After dancing – feeling ill – I went into a small inner room where supper was prepared. Lord Byron and Lady Rancliffe entered. Seeing me, Lord Byron said 'I have been admiring your dexterity'. I clasped a knife, not intending anything. 'Do my dear,' he said; but if you mean to act the Roman's part, mind which way you strike with your knife – be it at your heart, not mine – you have struck there already'. 'Byron!' I said, and ran away with the knife. I did not stab myself. It is false. Lady Rancliffe and Lady Tankerville screamed and said I would do so. People pulled to get it from me. I was terrified. My hand got cut, and blood came over my gown. I know not what happened after – but this is the very truth.

Byron's version was somewhat different, but of course the press got hold of the story and had a field day in the scandal columns. In Byron's account she took hold of his hand as he and Lady Rancliffe passed her, and she pressed a sharp instrument into it saying 'I mean to use this'. He and Lady Rancliffe continued walking by, with Byron saying 'against me, I presume?' trembling in case Lady Rancliffe overheard. He says he would have gone after her but 'I could not with any kind of politeness leave Lady Rancliffe to drown herself in wine and water, or be suffocated in a jelly

dish, without a spoon, or a hand to help her'. Byron knew and associated with many of Moira's and Lady Rancliffe's relations. He writes that Lady Rawden had given him a general retainer to her box at the theatre, and speculation was rife that Byron might enter into a relationship with one or another. Moira had five brothers and four sisters and they all had children so it is difficult to say which particular lady is referred to. We do not know Rancliffe's reaction to his wife's association with Lord Byron.

There is an interesting letter written by Mrs Byron to her son while he was overseas in 1809. She informed him that she had been to a musical festival and that all the Parkyns family were there and they send their respects, adding that 'Lord Rancliffe is a very ugly man and his wife not pretty'. She then adds that Byron's tenants were expecting rents to be raised now he had come of age and that she did not want to disappoint them, adding 'Lord Rancliffe had raised his twice in the last five years'. Byron, always careless with money, was constantly in debt and it is known that Rancliffe's sisters had made loans to him, which he was slow to repay.

Following his election as Member of Parliament and Provincial Grand Master in 1812, we next hear of Rancliffe in 1814 at the Congress of Vienna. I imagine he was there as part of the UK delegation, which was held to sort out the countries of Europe following the Napoleonic era. The Battle of Waterloo, which finally sealed Napoleon's fate, took place in 1815 and Rancliffe was then in Paris, where he was to remain for a lengthy period. He was still in Paris when he was nominated for parliament again in 1818.

Whether he had been there the whole of the time or spending part of the time in England and part in Paris is difficult to establish with any certainty. Anyway he did return to Bunny for the Nottingham election where he was again successful. A local report says that this was the most exciting election on record and you can judge for yourself from the following quotation:

It was attended by a great amount of drunkenness and disorder, breaking of windows, blue and yellow fights in the streets, intimidation, and other party animosities. At the close Lord Rancliffe, Mr Birch, and Mr Denman addressed the electors from a window, and a public chairing immediately followed. About three hundred of the Whig electors afterwards dined together in the Exchange Hall.

However, more was to follow. The Tory party lodged some sort of objection and so confidently did they feel they would succeed that both parties were celebrating victory at the same time! When the constitutional committee met later to consider the petition, it was dismissed and Lord Rancliffe was declared the winner. I will now quote again:

Nothing could exceed the triumph with which the decision was hailed. A grand celebration of it took place on the 31st of the same month. His Lordship set out from Bunny at the head of a numerous body of his tenantry on horseback, and was met at the foot of Wilford hills by a very

large procession of gentlemen on horseback and pedestrians, with numerous and brilliant flags, colours, and bands of music. Ascending Hollow-stone, his Lordship was accompanied along the Pavements and Bridlesmith-gate to the Market Place, where he addressed the multitude from a window of the Black Boy Inn.

We know for certain that Rancliffe returned again to Paris after this election because of an event which took place on 16th August 1819. It was the Peterloo Massacre in Manchester, notable in English history, where a crowd estimated to be around forty thousand, consisting of men, women and children, were being addressed by 'Orator' Hunt on the reform question. The cavalry were ordered to charge the meeting to make them disperse which resulted in eleven persons being killed and somewhere approaching five hundred injured as a result. Lord Rancliffe returned especially from Paris to attend a special meeting in the Nottingham Market Place. With the Mayor presiding, Rancliffe was one who addressed the meeting. It was agreed that a communication should be sent to the Prince Regent about what they termed a 'flagrant outrage upon the liberty and persons of Englishmen' and stating 'We call God and our country to witness our determination that the freedom of England shall never be outraged with impunity in our persons'.

King George III died in the following year, which meant that Parliament was dissolved and this time Rancliffe decided that he just could not afford the expense of another election contest and declined to put his name forward. We know he was still in this country in August 1820 as he welcomed Lord Folkstone to the Guildhall at Nottingham to receive the Freedom of the town.

The history of St John's Lodge tells us that on 22nd November 1820 a 'memorial' was unanimously approved and sent to Lord Rancliffe, but that the contents do not appear in the minutes. The writer of that history feels certain that it was a call for him to relinquish his office due to his lack of interest in Masonry. With no reply forthcoming it was planned to send another but Sir Frederick Fowke informed the brethren that he had spoken with the Provincial Grand Master on the subject. Nothing became of this and as a result Sir Frederick with two brethren from the Lodge had an interview with the Grand Master who, in short, felt that with Rancliffe living abroad there was sufficient reason to replace him with Earl Howe, the choice of the brethren. Once again nothing came of it in spite of these assurances. It was possibly a bad time to raise this matter as Rancliffe's former guardian, Lord Moira, now with the title of Marquis of Hastings, was planning to return to England from India. On 8th August 1823 he met with the Master, Wardens and Brethren of St John's Lodge at the Three Crowns Hotel, Leicester, for the purpose of receiving a tribute from Earl Howe on their behalf. Hastings had just paid a visit to Donington and was on his way back to London. I do wonder if he met up with Rancliffe on this visit to England.

On 23rd September 1822 the Duke of Sussex, the Grand Master, paid a visit to Colonel Thomas Wildman, whom he had recently appointed as Provincial Grand Master for Nottinghamshire. Colonel Wildman had purchased Newstead Abbey from Lord Byron, who was now living in Italy, and Wildman was also equerry to the Duke. The Duke was a frequent visitor to the Abbey and had his own rooms there. His relationship with Wildman was very amiable and the Duke, on informal occasions of course, always referred to him as Tom. As with most persons who entertained royalty it cost Tom a lot of money. The visit on this occasion was rather special as the Duke was to receive the Freedom of the Borough of Nottingham. The Duke and Colonel Wildman arrived by carriage in the Market place where he greeted the assembled crowd and then proceeded into the Exchange Rooms for the ceremony. Several notable persons were mentioned as being present but no mention was made of Lord Rancliffe. Had he been at Bunny I feel sure he would have attended, but possibly he was in Paris once again.

It was around this time that Rancliffe and his wife separated, which one report said was due to infidelity on both sides. Byron was not involved in this as he was now in Italy and about to travel to Greece. Lord Byron had not long to live, dying just a few months after his arrival in Greece. The date, was Monday 19th April 1824 and he was thirty-six years of age. His body was returned to England for burial in the Byron Vault at Hucknall Parish Church, Nottinghamshire. The funeral procession was similar in style to the one for the 1st Lord Rancliffe mentioned earlier. His body having been brought back from Greece, the procession moved off from the Blackmoor's Head Inn, Nottingham at 10am on 16th July en route for Hucknall. Among the official mourners was listed 'The Right Honourable Lord Rancliffe in his carriage'. Also in the procession were 'James Orme Esq., and twenty six of Lord Rancliffe's Tenants on horseback'. In another coach was Colonel Wildman, Provincial Grand Master of Nottinghamshire, who was one of the chief mourners. Another coach contained the Mayor of Nottingham, Alderman William Soars. The cortege reached Hucknall Church at 3.30pm. At the service the front pew on one side was occupied by Lord Rancliffe, Colonel Wildman and two other persons. The front pew on the other side was occupied by Alderman Soars and the Corporation of Nottingham.

Later that year on 31st October H.R.H. the Duke of Sussex, Grand Master, was again staying with Tom Wildman at Newstead Abbey. I will quote from a local report:

His Royal Highness the Duke of Sussex attended the assembly for the benefit of the General Hospital. On the 3rd of November he again visited the town, and inspected Mr Homer's lace factory. On the 4th, attended by Colonel Wildman and his suite, he visited the works of Mr Hall, of Basford, for gassing lace. The affected manner in which rough fibres were removed excited the Duke's complete astonishment. His Royal Highness then honoured Mr Hall with a visit to his house, and partook of a

sumptuous repast; and after complimenting him in warm terms for his ingenious and useful inventions, set out on his return to Newstead. He again came to Nottingham on the 4th and inspected the House of Correction attended by Colonel Wildman, Mr Alderman Barber, and other gentlemen. The Duke went over nearly every room, and examined the arrangements very minutely

Although the Grand Master was a frequent visitor to stay with Colonel Wildman, it is noticeable that Lord Rancliffe never seems to be present on any occasion when the Duke was present. Rancliffe and Wildman were often together at other events such as political meetings where they held similar views. Considering the annoyance of the Leicestershire brethren over Lord Rancliffe's apathy and their appeals for a change you would have thought there would have been some consultation on such occasions. I do believe that the Grand Master was put in a very difficult position through Rancliffe's failure to meet his obligations. He was no doubt very reluctant to have to go through the unpleasantness of having to relieve him of his office.

In June 1826 there was a General Election called and Rancliffe, who had declined to stand at the previous election in 1820, again sent in his nomination papers and was elected by a majority of two hundred and sixty four. On 28th November 1826 Rancliffe's former guardian and his father's close friend, the Marquis of Hastings, died on board ship in the Bay of Naples aged seventy two. As the Earl of Moira he was Acting Grand Master for over twenty years. King George IV, who was Grand Master during the same period died in 1830 causing another General Election to be held. Lord Rancliffe now aged forty five declined to stand again, giving his desire not to be involved in further expense as the reason. He had been involved in considerable expense on his home and estate at Bunny. He never stood for election again. On 14th April 1831 at a political banquet in the Exchange Hall an elegant silver tureen, weighing sixteen pounds, was presented to him as a mark of esteem from the Reformers of Nottingham. This valuable tribute to him was to be the cause of much aggravation on his death.

On the death of King George IV an address was sent to his brother and successor, King William IV, expressing the sympathy of St John's Lodge but at the same time sending congratulations to him on his accession. This address was drafted by Sir Frederick Fowke, who was a friend and associate of the King in former days, being a Gentleman of the Bedchamber. The address was signed by the Worshipful Master and both Lord Rancliffe and Sir Frederick. Lodges went into mourning for six months.

In 1831 the main topic of conversation in the political field was reform. Certainly Colonel Wildman and Lord Rancliffe both supported the Reform Bill which was being debated by Parliament. It is also worth mentioning also that, contrary to his Royal brothers, the Duke of Sussex also supported this party and their aims. On Saturday 8th October 1831 Pickford's Van arrived in Nottingham at about 8.30 in the evening bringing the news that

the Bill had been thrown out by the House of Lords. It probably could not have happened at a worst time for the town because it was the time of the Goose Fair, which brought in many undesirable characters. Word spread and on Sunday morning the mail from London confirmed the news. The crowd then became violent and started attacking shops. Many were looted and burned and anyone known to be anti-reform was a target. The mayor and the magistrates called out constables and the 15th Hussars to no avail.

The Mayor arranged for a meeting on Monday morning at eleven o'clock and by that time the Market Place was full of people. A wagon was drawn into the centre to accommodate the Mayor and the speakers. The crowd seemed for a time to be more subdued. Lord Rancliffe was one of the speakers and resolutions were passed, but the more agitated members proceeded to go on the rampage causing damage and injury. The military were over-stretched having sent some of their men to Derby to deal with disturbances there. Attempts were made to storm the House of Correction but they failed. The gas works were guarded as a precaution. The magistrates were busy swearing-in hundreds of townfolk as special constables to deal with the situation, which was now almost out of control. As Monday evening approached, the mob turned its attention to Nottingham Castle and gained entrance through a breach in the walls. Once inside the mob started a series of fires, which took hold quickly. The Castle was apparently outside the jurisdiction of the town magistrates, but then it was realised that Colonel Wildman and a Mr Norton, who were County magistrates, were in Nottingham at a regular meeting of The Royal Sussex Lodge. As they were about to take their places at the Festive Board the news was related to them that the mob had set fire to the Castle. They immediately left to accompany a detachment of Hussars to the scene but it was too late to save the Castle which, when daylight returned, was a roofless shell. Bunny Hall escaped the rioters as Rancliffe was pro-reform.

In April 1832 the Reform Bill was before the House of Lords again with much better prospects of becoming law. On 15th May an immense public meeting was held in the Market Place to register a protest against those in high places and who were opposed to reform. It is recorded that Lord Rancliffe and Colonel Wildman were two of the chief speakers. When the Bill was finally passed later in the year there was great celebrations in the town. It is interesting to note that in August a special jury was appointed at Leicester Assizes to deal with the burning of Nottingham Castle. It awarded the Duke of Newcastle, the owner of the Castle, compensation of £21,000 from Broxtowe district. Presumably the authorities in Nottingham feared more trouble if the case was heard there.

From what has been written so far it can be seen that Rancliffe's interests were firmly in Nottingham rather than Leicester. The only Leicester contact worthy of note was his appearance at the closing Ball of the Leicester Music Festival of September 1827. His complete lack of interest was the cause of much discontent in St John's Lodge, Nottinghamshire under Colonel Wildman was thriving and so were many other Provinces, but Leicestershire

did not even have a Provincial Grand Lodge. At the Installation meeting of St John's Lodge in 1831, the Lodge was honoured by the presence of Earl Ferrers, the Provincial Grand Master of Warwickshire. He had visited the Lodge on previous occasions and must have been well aware of this lamentable situation. He advised the Lodge to contact Lord Rancliffe, requesting him to appoint a deputy and to hold a Provincial Grand Lodge. Earl Ferrers pleased the brethren by becoming a member of the Lodge.

As usual nothing happened for nearly two years. With Earl Ferrers, Earl Howe and Sir Frederick Fowke all now members of the only Leicester Lodge, it seems inconceivable that nothing was being done about this totally unsatisfactory situation. Colonel Wildman would have been aware of the situation and it must have been brought to the attention of the Grand Master on many occasions. I feel convinced that in September 1833, on another visit to Newstead Abbey to stay with Colonel Wildman, the Grand Master already had a plan worked out, in conjunction with the Grand Secretary, to bring matters to a head. Being a regular visitor to Newstead Abbey, I can well imagine the scene in the salon there. Around the table sat the Grand Master, Colonel Wildman and V. Worshipful Bro. William H. White, Grand Secretary, putting the finishing touches to this plan. Lord Rancliffe would walk straight into the trap set for him! The Exchange Hall and adjoining Magistrates Room in Nottingham were hired for a Masonic Festival. Here is what happened:

A meeting of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Nottinghamshire took place in the above mentioned hall. When the normal business was over, it was announced that Right Worshipful Bro. The Right Honourable Lord Rancliffe, the Provincial Grand Master of Leicestershire, sought entrance into the Lodge. Clearly he was there at the invitation of the Grand Master. He was admitted and saluted in ancient form and took his seat on the left of the Provincial Grand Master.

Colonel Wildman then announced from the chair that the Most Worshipful Grand Master, having honoured him by a visit to Newstead Abbey, had graciously signified his pleasure to meet the brethren of the Province and that an address, which had been previously drafted, should be read and presented to the Grand Master. It was then resolved that a deputation of nine brethren from the Province should meet the Grand Master on his arrival in the adjoining Magistrates' Room. When the Grand Master arrived he was attended by Right Worshipful Brother Sir Frederick Fowke, Baronet; Right Worshipful Brother, the Right Honourable Lord John Spencer Churchill, both Past Senior Grand Wardens and Very Worshipful Brother William H. White, Grand Secretary.

The M.W. Grand Master was escorted into the Lodge where he took his seat upon the Throne and was saluted according to ancient custom. The Grand Master then announced that he would now hold an Especial meeting of Grand Lodge. Colonel Wildman was directed to act as Acting Deputy Grand Master and those brethren who had just been given Provincial appointments were directed to act as Grand Officers. Grand Lodge was then

opened in ample form. The prepared address was then read to which the Grand Master responded 'expressing great satisfaction . . . at the prosperous state in which he found the Fraternity of this Province'. With the Grand Master in the Chair, Colonel Wildman on his right, Lord Rancliffe on his left and with the Grand Secretary in attendance, this remark would not be lost on Lord Rancliffe. Neither would it be lost on Sir Frederick Fowke, the most likely person in the Leicester contingent to take over or deputise for Lord Rancliffe. In addition there must have been other brethren from Leicester present by invitation, particularly Bro. William Cooke, secretary of St John's Lodge. Lord Rancliffe must have felt uneasy at the very least, unless he was totally insensitive to what was happening. After more formalities 'the Especial Meeting of the Grand Lodge of England was closed in ample form and with solemn prayer'. This meeting is described as being unique. The Provincial Grand Lodge minutes of Nottinghamshire verified the above details. We now have to look at books giving details of what happened following the official business.

It may be significant or not that the Provincial Grand Masters of say Derbyshire or Lincolnshire for instance, were not present and presumably were not invited. The fact that Lord Rancliffe was present from Leicestershire could be explained by the fact that it was described as a Nottingham festival and of course Lord Rancliffe was a prominent member and former MP of that county. It all fitted together perfectly! The Grand Master then stated that in addition to meeting the brethren of Nottinghamshire, he would like the Provincial Grand Masters of other Provinces to present their officers. Now unless the minutes are incorrect or another Provincial Grand Master arrived afterwards, the request applied only to Leicester and Lord Rancliffe! According to reports Lord Rancliffe was thrown into 'an endurous state of distress' he having neither a Provincial Grand Lodge, or as a consequence, any Provincial officers to present. We are then told that he evaded this difficult position by, in the adjoining Magistrates' Room, constituting Sir Frederick Fowke his deputy and the other Leicestershire brethren the officers of his Provincial Grand Lodge, and as such they were presented to His Royal Highness. Certainly Bro William Cooke's appointment as Provincial Grand Secretary took effect from this time.

A banquet took place in the evening at which the Grand Master thanked the Worshipful Mayor of Nottingham, Mr John Heard, for his kindness in making the Exchange Rooms and the adjoining Magistrates Room available to the fraternity for the festival. Now if my view that all this was part of a grand plan is wrong, and all this happened by chance, it was nothing short of amazing. In the course of one afternoon the problems, which had been occupying the Province of Leicestershire for almost twenty years, had been resolved. Lord Rancliffe had never been a member of St John's Lodge, but at the next Lodge following this meeting, on 6th November 1833, Sir Frederick Fowke proposed him as a member. The following year Lord Rancliffe was elected Master of the Lodge and I quote from that history:

On the 5th November 1834 Lord Rancliffe was elected Worshipful Master not however without a vigorous protest from a strong minority. His Lordship did not present himself for installation until the following March.

Here the writer of the history adds a note to say:

It is but fair to say that this apparent neglect might have been due to an accident which happened to his Lordship in the hunting field in December 1834.

The history goes on to say that the March visit was:

...the only occasion on which he attended the Lodge. Continuing: The brethren however, with commendable loyalty to their chief and forgetful of his shortcomings, accorded him a vote of thanks 'for his condescension in serving the office of Master'.

Perhaps the events of 1833 and 1834 had raised the hopes of the brethren that Lord Rancliffe would perhaps now take a greater interest in the Province, particularly as he was no longer a Member of Parliament. A new Lodge was formed, 'The Rancliffe Lodge No. 608' and held its first meeting on 9th December 1834. At the consecration meeting 13th March 1835, Lord Rancliffe attended and installed its first Master, Bro James Elverson, a past master of St John's Lodge, with the assistance of Bro Lawrence Thompson PSGD and Prestonian lecturer from Grand Lodge. Bro Thompson was a regular visitor to Leicester for over thirty years. In those days few of the brethren were competent enough to do certain ritual, especially Installation ceremonies. This Lodge met at Loughborough, probably to encourage Lord Rancliffe's participation, being close to Rancliffe's home at Bunny. However the Lodge lasted for only a very short time. The short-lived optimism was of no avail.

At this point I have to mention that Lord Rancliffe is said in reports to have been drinking heavily. Also having been separated from his wife for many years, he had formed an attachment to his housekeeper, Mrs Harriet Burt.

On Easter Monday, 4th April 1836, the Irish Patriot and Member of Parliament for Dublin, Daniel O'Connell visited Nottingham. He was welcomed by the Mayor and then addressed a crowd estimated to be around twenty thousand from the window of the Exchange Buildings. At the banquet which followed, Lord Rancliffe and Colonel Wildman were the chief speakers. On a purely historical note, in November of that same year a severe fire destroyed the Exchange Buildings. So fierce was the fire that engines were sent for from Mansfield, Loughborough and Derby to assist the beleaguered Nottingham fire-fighters. The Nottingham Review says that the Leicestershire and Midland Counties fire engine arrived between one and two o'clock, having been brought from Loughborough by four post horses in one hour and ten minutes. It continued to say that this fire engine attracted great attention, being one of the best ever constructed, and is so

powerful that it can throw up sixty gallons of water per minute to a height equal to the top of the Exchange.

Lord Rancliffe's name is mentioned in reports whenever a national or local election was taking place. Often he proposed the adoption of the Liberal candidate. I will now quote from a report for 3rd August 1841, particularly as it gives us some idea of life at Bunny at that time:

A festival at Bunny Park, in honour of the Right Hon. Lord Rancliffe. The company, chiefly from Nottingham, entered at the great park gates over which a triumphal arch of evergreens and flowers had been erected and on each side purple and orange flags flaunted in the breeze. The drive across the spacious park then conducted the company to another pair of gates leading to the grand entrance to the Hall, and here stood another triumphed arch, with purple and yellow banners. Passing in front of the grand entrance to the Hall, which was decorated with several large flags, another triumphal arch surmounted the gateway to the lawn; and then the chief attractions of the festive scene burst upon the sight. A large pavilion and numerous marquees were so arranged with the fancy wall of the Italian garden as to form a large square. The marquees etc. were tastefully decorated, and on top of each and along the wall were flags and evergreens in profusion. The pavilion itself was 175 feet long and 35 feet wide.

At two o'clock dinner was served in the pavilion. Addresses were given by Mr T. Wakefield, the noble Lord the proprietor of the estate, Mr Larpent M.P. and others. Tea was provided at six.

Up to five o'clock the day had been as joyous as could have been desired: the sun had shone brilliantly, and everything was quite promising. But the evening set in thoroughly wet and continued to descend very heavily till morning. There was no possibility of returning home except in covered conveyances; and the few flys that kept traversing the night through the seven weary miles to Nottingham could scarcely accommodate one in twenty of those who were anxious to leave by them. Most of the company however made the best of their position. The large pavilion was occupied with country dances, and one of the marquees with quadrilles. In the large kitchen and other parts of the hall, various games whiled away the time and by about ten in the morning the whole company had departed.

News from Nottingham on Lord Rancliffe during the rest of the 1840's is sparse and could find nothing worthy of note. It should however be mentioned that he gave practical support to a fund set up to alleviate the distress of the working people of the area at that time, known as 'the Hungry Forties'. He continued to live contentedly at Bunny with his companion Mrs Harriet Burt. He had no children to inherit the title.

Lord Rancliffe had always been kept well informed of the business at St John's Lodge by the secretary, Bro William Cooke. Summonses were sent to him as a matter of course. It is difficult to know how much contact there

was with Sir Frederick Fowke, his deputy. In a letter of 30th December 1842 Sir Frederick tells Cooke that if he is not able to settle a dispute over a certain brother then he must refer the matter to Rancliffe. In December 1841 Bro William Kelly, the future Provincial Grand Master for Leicestershire and Rutland, was installed as Worshipful Master of St John's Lodge and during his year in office, Cooke writes to tell Rancliffe that the Lodge was progressing well. Kelly was a young man, still in his twenties on his initiation in 1838, and Sir Frederick Fowke regarded him with great affection realising his potential. Lord Rancliffe replied to Cooke's letter, saying that he was glad to hear that the Lodge was prospering and that he would not forget to tell Lord Zetland, the Pro Grand Master (soon to become Grand Master), when he next saw him. He also asked Cooke to give his regards to 'my excellent and amusing Deputy, Fowke'.

From this time and for most of the remainder of the 1840's, there would be a certain amount of ill feeling creeping into Freemasonry in Leicester, which necessarily brought Lord Rancliffe into the action. Kelly, with the backing of Sir Frederick, represented the new force in Freemasonry, while Cooke represented the old school. At first Cooke was glad to see Kelly being so positive in his year as Worshipful Master, hence the above comments to Rancliffe. Kelly tried to raise funds to purchase a Masonic Hall in Leicester and in his year he introduced fourteen initiates to the Craft. It appears however that Kelly became critical of the attitude of some of the elder brethren and expressed his feelings. Likewise the elder brethren came to resent this young progressive who was disturbing their particular way of doing things. It is not for us over a century and a half later to adjudicate on masters, but the result was that Kelly resigned from St John's Lodge. As a result he was instrumental in forming a new Lodge, the John of Gaunt, with the blessing especially of Sir Frederick, who at this time was highly displeased with the attitude of Cooke and other brethren of St. John's. The Grand Secretary told Sir Frederick that the petition must have the sanction of the Provincial Grand Master. A letter of 17th February 1846 to Kelly from Sir Frederick includes the following paragraph:

I have therefore enclosed a letter to him (Rancliffe) which to secure his Lordship's immediate attention to the business should by all means be delivered to him by yourself personally.

Continuing later in this letter:

I am giving you a great deal of trouble in requiring you to go to Bunny, but I feel unless this is done, you will not get the Petition out of Lord R's hands for some time.

As a sweetener for Lord Rancliffe no doubt, he added in the letter:

I have congratulated the P.G.M. on the prospect of the extension of our Order in his Province for which I added he will have all due credit with The Grand Master and the Order in general.

Sir Frederick knew that if it was sent by post it may well have been put on one side and forgotten. It is also interesting to note that Lord Rancliffe was not invited to become a member of the new Lodge. Earl Howe, who was at this time Deputy Grand Master of English Freemasons, and fully supported the formation of a new Lodge, and Sir Frederick both were invited to join. The Consecration of the Lodge took place on 11th May 1846. Lord Rancliffe was not present. The ceremony was carried out by Sir Frederick Fowke, assisted by Bro Lawrence Thompson P.S.G.D. from London.

To give some idea of Kelly's impact on Freemasonry in the province, it is recorded that at his initiation ceremony in 1838 there were fifteen brethren present and three of those were visitors! In his year as Master, 1841, he initiated fourteen brethren. He had six initiates for the new John of Gaunt Lodge at its formation in 1846, and by the following year, according to Kelly, it had more members than St John's.

The strained relationship between Bros Cooke and Kelly, and hence the two Lodges, certainly continued until the end of 1847. It was not helped by Sir Frederick's painful illness, which was to trouble him to a greater or lesser extent for the rest of his life, making it difficult for him to attend to his duties or even to visit Lodge. With Rancliffe's lethargy and Sir Frederick's illness there was so much misunderstanding that Sir Frederick threatened resignation which jerked Rancliffe into action. Full details of the dispute are given in my biography of Sir Frederick Fowke. Harmony was only restored towards the end of 1847 by both sides agreeing to bury the events of the past in oblivion.

Rancliffe's letter to Sir Frederick dated 3rd September 1847, which I believe to be his most valuable contribution to Freemasonry in Leicester, read as follows (extract):

My dear Fowke,

...No one can regret more than I do that there should have been this disagreement. I am most anxious they should be put an end to, that everything should be forgotten and forgiven and that we all go on and act as Masons in perfect confidence and good feelings towards each other ... sometime later we might all meet at Leicester in the Bond of Friendship. I have heard from Cooke this morning and I am certain he feels inclined to have that reconciliation which is most desirable. I therefore hope you will write me a letter that will tend to put an end to all this unpleasant business. I hope this finds you well. I wish I could tempt you to come here.

Believe me

My dear Fowke

Rancliffe

On the 28th October, Sir Frederick writes to Kelly:

I have received a letter from Lord Rancliffe this morning full of joy that all these differences are at an end.

Adding in a later letter:

For I want nothing but a common sympathy on the part of the brethren and this if joined in by both Lodges I could not object to, as I should feel more happy when I again appear in either of the Leicester Lodges.

According to the history of St John's Lodge, both Lord Rancliffe and Sir Frederick attended the annual festival of St John's Lodge on 27th December. It was a particular landmark, as from now Lord Rancliffe, who was sixty-two at this time, was to withdraw from life outside Bunny where he lived with his intimate companion, Mrs Burt. One report mentioned that he was drinking heavily and three years later he was dead. Sir Frederick was three years older than Rancliffe and, although suffering health problems himself, he succeeded him as Provincial Grand Master of Leicestershire.

It must be said that the 2nd Lord Rancliffe would never have regarded himself as a ritualist. He, like many others of the nobility at that time, regarded himself as a figurehead. There were those from Grand Lodge, such as Bro Lawrence Thompson PSGD, who made themselves available to perform the different ceremonies on their behalf. Sir Frederick Fowke at Leicester and Colonel Wildman at Nottingham were the forerunners of the present day Grand Lodge officers, who set an example to the brethren by their dedication and proficiency in Craft ceremonies.

I find it very difficult to assess his character. He appears to have been a kindly man, with 'sparkling wit and abundant humour' as someone wrote of him; perhaps very easy going, but without drive and conviction. His attitude seems to have been conciliatory, perhaps because he liked a quiet life. His only occupation seemed to be as a Member of Parliament, and he perhaps did just that which was asked of him. There does not seem to have been any involvement in local government. Certainly his interest in Freemasonry in Leicestershire left a lot to be desired – it just seems that he could not be bothered. Like most men who have this lackadaisical attitude, he relished a pastime which required little thought, but which brought him stimulation – in his case foxhunting.

Here is a verse written by a sporting friend on this subject:

*Rancliffe! Shall thou unnamed, unnoticed be?
I name not hunting if I name not thee;
Pride of our country, thine the liberal board
And liberal heart, with man's best feelings stored.
What hungry hunter ever passed thy hall,
And found no warden answer to his call?
Nor was it all that heart and cheer were good,
Foxes ne'er failed us in Bunny Wood!*

Even his death brought controversy. I will summarise what was printed in a local newspaper of the time, the Nottingham Guardian.

Monday, 11th November 1850. As we neared the village on the morning of the interment fixed for 12.30, we overtook considerable numbers of persons from the adjacent hamlets and parishes, even so far as four or five miles from Bunny, and not a few pedestrians and equestrians from Nottingham, all apparently alike anxious to bear a last testimony to the memory of the deceased lord. Upon reaching Bunny we found the street crowded, more particularly the Nottingham and Loughborough turnpike which divides the Hall and grounds from the Church. The chief object of interest here to the simple minded rustics were two mutes who stood either side of the outer gates and another four mutes who stood around the Hall. The funeral bell was tolling and had been since five o'clock this morning. The undertaker was Mr John Barrow of Loughborough with Mr Dickinson, a draper of Nottingham.

As mentioned, Rancliffe had no heir and had been separated from his wife for over twenty years. She had been receiving an annual amount of £1000 from Rancliffe under the terms of the separation agreement. This settlement provided for this to be increased to £2000 on his death. His immediate family were therefore his surviving sisters and their children. The eldest sister was the wife of Sir Richard Levinge and was resident in Ireland. Another sister was Maria Charlotte, the Princess Polignac, who had married Prince Auguste Jules Armand Marie de Polignac, a former Minister of Charles X of France. The third sister, the Hon Lady Rumbold, had predeceased Rancliffe. It was representatives of these families who gathered this day at Bunny to attend the funeral. Rancliffe had requested a modest funeral and it has to be stated that on no account would Mrs Burt be present. Neither would his sisters or any other females for that matter, which was in accordance with the custom of the time. The mourners who formed the cortege which made the short journey to the Church, were the Earl of Scarborough, relatives and members of his household, and twelve of his tenants – two by two. It was on the return to the Hall afterwards that controversy erupted.

Mr Jenkyns, a solicitor from London, produced the Will, which Rancliffe had made shortly before his death dated 27th June 1850. The following were present at the reading: The Earl of Scarborough, Sir Richard Levinge (brother-in-law), Sir Cavendish Rumbold (son-in-law), Sir Thomas Parkyns and Mr Mansfield Parkyns and a Mr Williams, a friend of Sir Cavendish Rumbold. It did not take long to read as it consisted of only six lines! I will now revert to the newspaper article:

By the provisions of the Will every pennyworth of his late Lordship's property is bequeathed to Mrs Burt, no mention being made of other relations or servants and even the plate presented to his Lordship in 1831 by the Radicals of Nottingham, which he promised should be bequeathed to his heirs forever fall into the same hands.

The newspaper report continued:

Upon the Will having been read, Sir Cavendish Rumbold stepped forward and said 'I as the eldest son and representative of my deceased mother, the Hon. Lady Rumbold, one of the co-heiresses, in my behalf, and in behalf of my aunts, the Hon Lady Levinge and the Princess Polignac, protest against this will. I declare it not a valid will, and not Lord Rancliffe's by his own free will, but it is the will of Mrs Burt. The whole party then left the hall and we hear have since taken active steps for disputing the validity of the document and settling the matter in a court of law.

The newspaper adds the following pointed comment:

Mr Hurst, a solicitor of Nottingham, was the first to be approached to draft The will by his Lordship and Mrs Burt but declined on learning of the contents.

The newspaper further reports:

His Lordship was for more than 40 years Provincial Grand Master of Freemasons for Leicestershire and was held in high estimation by his brethren.

Whoever supplied this last piece of information to the press clearly was not aware of the facts and would no doubt have brought an astonished gasp from the brethren who read it. The report concludes by telling the readers that he had been ailing for several years and for the last two his constitution had entirely broken up. Dr Hutchinson, his local doctor, travelled to London ten days prior to his death to consult with two eminent doctors there.

My research has not extended to discovering the outcome of the family's opposition to the Will. However a comment appears in a letter dated 10th September 1856 from Sir Frederick Fowke's doctor, Mr Dalton, to Bro William Kelly, the Deputy Provincial Grand Master of Leicestershire, following Sir Frederick's death about his Masonic jewels. Dalton writes 'The Provincial Grand Master's jewels, were sent to him by Mrs Burt, the late Lord Rancliffe's friend.' It does not give details but it is quite probable that these are among the regalia which belonged to Sir Frederick and which are now exhibited in the Leicester Masonic Library and Museum.

And so ended the Rancliffe era in Leicestershire Freemasonry.

SIMON de MONTFORT LODGE, RAM, No. 194

**Oration by The Revd Canon Alan T. Green
Provincial Grand Chaplain**

Monday, 24th May 2004. London Road

Who was Simon de Montfort? We know he was for a time the Earl of Leicester. He was the second son of an Anglo-French family, born in France in 1208. When his father died he became the Earl of Leicester in 1229, his elder brother inheriting the Estates owned by the family in France. Henry III (1216–1272) confirmed him in his inheritance two years later. In time, he became a great English soldier and statesman. He married Eleanor, the King's younger sister in 1238.

Going back in time to June 1215, many Barons, who were dissatisfied with King John's (1199–1216) military failures against France, his stringent taxation and his abuse of royal and feudal privileges, rebelled and drew up a Charter, which the king refused to sign. The barons marched on London and captured the city, and John realised he had to sign the charter. This he did at Runnymede on the 15th June 1215. This was the Magna Carta, which contained the first detailed definition of the relationship between the king and the barons, and guaranteeing rights under feudalism and regularizing the judicial system, part of which introduced the jury system into law.

John failed to honour Magna Carta in the last year of his reign nor did his son Henry III and so began the Barons' War. As the leader of the English barons, de Montfort expressed their dissatisfaction with the arbitrary rule of the king and when Henry rejected the Provisions of Oxford, by which the barons had a share in the government, Simon de Montfort took up arms against the King, who was defeated and captured in 1264. Simon de Montfort virtually became ruler of the kingdom. He summoned a Parliament in 1265 and established an assembly to assist the king's council, it included representatives of the gentry and the towns and is considered the ancestor to our Parliament. It established the principles of parliamentary representation that influenced the eventual development of the British House of Commons. The barons however, in turn, became dissatisfied with de Montfort and he was killed in battle against combined royal and baronial forces at Evesham on the 4th August, 1265.

In Simon de Montfort we can see a man who looked forward with new hope for his country and who tried to make that hope become a reality. He, I believe, looked forward to a time when men and their families were free in the true sense of that word, where they could live in their country without being subservient to the local baron or titled family, and to the king or queen who happened to be ruling at that time. Here are those principles, I suggest, which Freemasonry teaches, support for one another, charity and the ability to see the good and the best in their fellow human beings. Principles which, are the basis of all that Simon believed in, and which the lodge should always remember, and live up to.

ORATION AT THE DEDICATION OF THE NEW BANNER OF EAST GOSCOTE LODGE No. 2865

6th November 2003

W.Bro. Rev. Canon M. Wilson, P.A.G.Chap.

Thank you for your kind invitation to dedicate and consecrate your Centenary Banner. I consider it a great honour. The emblems of the East Gosscote Lodge, No. 2865, proudly bear the subscription "Founded in the FIRST year of the reign of HM King Edward VII". I notice on the Centenary Banner this legend is now a subscription. Unlike the sixty-two year reign of his mother Queen Victoria, King Edward's reign was short. He came to the throne at the age of sixty and died in 1910. This Lodge came into being at a most interesting time. During Queen Victoria's reign the world had begun to open up. Travel and trade meant that people and places were confronting each other as never before with consequences for good and evil.

There appears a surge in Masonic interest and membership following warfare and conflict, even sometimes in their midst. The customary black necktie was a sign of mourning following the carnage of the First World War of the twentieth century. The turn of the nineteenth into the twentieth century prefigures this war with unease and edginess. Here is an example. In 1900 in the last year of our Widow Queen's reign, the "Boxer Rebellion" gripped China in the twilight years of its own Dowager Empress. The Boxer movement was far from loving and inclusive. It was a xenophobic organisation bent on expelling all "foreign devils" and their works. The Boxers had a banner. Their English name derived from their Chinese emblem "the fist of righteous harmony". They were enraged by everything European from railways to the Christian religion. Their path of death and destruction to everyone and everything from outside occasioned a brief and effective rallying of European unity never seen again.

With an inclusivity prefiguring that of the Eurovision Song Contest decades later, British, French, Germans, Italians, Russians and what we may politely term "honorary Europeans" (Americans and Japanese) joined forces in the face of a common threat. This united ranging of banners was but a "flash in the pan". Once the immediate emergency was saved, each European power quickly resorted to its own agenda. Germany and Italy claimed embarrassingly excessive reparations. Russia was more interested in occupation than in bringing miscreants to justice. Each state interpreted the concluding convention in widely divergent ways. Europe was becoming the powerhouse of the world. Einstein was starting to juggle towards $e = mc^2$ and, regrettably, in Edwardian England D. H. Lawrence was putting pen to paper feverishly imagining and describing a gas chamber for the gratuitous destruction of superfluous people in the best possible taste.

This historical retrospect is a flavour of the light and darkness of the times when the East Gosscote Lodge was founded and beginning to flourish

in espousing Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth within the Lodge and also effectively dispersed and shared outside it in local and wider society. So this Centenary Banner is a rallying point and a focus of unity as with the earlier ones that have served so well and are now laid up with honour. The Prayer of Dedication emphasises that this Banner is “corporately owned” by all Lodge members together in common cause. The prayer of Consecration ascribes all honour and glory to the Great Architect of the Universe with the brethren of the Lodge dedicated to God’s service “in thought, word and deed”. Due to modern technology, we have to imagine the incense rising symbolising our prayers of dedication and consecration. Incense would have alerted the smoke detectors, the alarm and the sprinklers. To switch them off would have compromised eligibility for insurance claims. Damage limitation was the name of the game.

Just over one hundred years later, despite technology, we live in a similar world day by day. It is living testimony to the zeal and fellowship of the East Goscote Lodge that its brethren continue to embody and apply the mysteries and privileges of Freemasonry openly within the Lodge and with purpose and humility in wider society. Continuity in a locality is getting rarer in our present world. How marvellous that so diverse a group of men who prize honour and virtue, integrity and good intentions, band together in the pursuit of happiness and of communicating happiness. Even tonight this Lodge has performed its “magic” of bringing together those who would otherwise be at a perpetual distance. Amidst fragmenting tendencies around us close to home and worldwide, this the East Goscote Lodge No. 2865 must continue to cherish its existence. Its future will always be assured if what is communicated explicitly in the Lodge is shared implicitly among our fellow mortals to the benefit of all in this part of Leicestershire and in all undertakings. Every blessing to you all.

LEICESTER CATHEDRAL

W.Bro. Rev. Canon M. Wilson, P.A.G.Chap.

Advent 3, 14 December 2003

It is very gratifying to see so many Freemasons of the Province of Leicestershire and Rutland, with their families and friends, gathered here in Leicester Cathedral as we prepare for the Christmas Festival. It is very much your Cathedral, as much of it would not exist were it not for the Christian commitment and generosity of Freemasons throughout the last century. We at Leicester Cathedral continue to be thankful for ongoing support that ensures development and consolidation of the Cathedral Community at the centre of the City and County.

How appropriate it is to have as the opening choral meditation at this service, where so many Freemasons are present, a poem penned by the Archbishop of Canterbury. Here he focuses his thoughts on mortality and the enlightenment the Advent of God in Christ brings to the cycle of life and the seasonal changes of the year.

It is more gratifying still to observe that, despite the disparagement and prejudice against Freemasonry that without foundation still exists in church and state institutions locally and nationally, more of us Freemasons continue to develop our faith and charitable commitments with increasing motivation and energy. Nor does continuing calumny, blatant or covert, about Freemasonry mean that we are going to be bullied out of existence. Let us for a moment remain godly, but suspend undue humility. More than over four hundred and forty five attended the Provincial Grand Lodge at the end of November, and more than over three hundred and fifty one dined together in that spirit of equal and dispassionate friendship and mutual concern that characterises Freemasonry of the English Constitution. This is out of just over three thousand of our local membership. In my thirty years as a Freemason, never have I experienced happier times for our national and worldwide institution. More important than this, if we are increasingly committed to our fraternal and charitable aims in society, the true message will get around and "put to silence the ignorance of foolish men and women".

Throughout this current period of official disapproval by some of the English Christian Churches, Local Authorities, Professional Groups and the like, I have taken consolation from three words in the ornate decoration of the Holmes Lodge Room at Freemasons' Hall, London Road, Leicester. These words are: "Audi, vide, tace". Latin for "Listen, observe, remain silent!" Would that journalists, broadcasters and institutional self-promoters could take the hint! In a perfect world, that is a world committed to ensuring and cherishing the freedom and dignity of every individual by respecting their calling and their conscience, these words would be enough. My prayer would be that in the observance of Christ's holy birth, we each do listen, observe and remain quiet for a time in silent awe.

As a Christian who is a Freemason, I take strength from some key aspects of the Christmas narratives in St. Matthew's and St. Luke's Gospels. Those called by God to be the first to rejoice with the Holy Family were shepherds, people designated unclean and therefore outcast by the religious strictures of the time. And then, at Epiphany, along come the Wise Men (three gifts, gold, frankincense and myrrh, but the number of individuals is not stated). These Wise Men, though prompted by wisdom and revelation, were not of the "in-crowd" religiously, politically and ethnically.

At Christmas, with the birth of Jesus, God is breaking new ground. Let us listen to what God is saying in Jesus Christ, observe his radical and revolutionary will for the whole world revealed in his Messiah, and refrain from cheap words and unfair judgements. So we should continue to "Audi, vide, tace" Listen, Observe, and Remain Silent as Jesus did when facing Pontius Pilate.

When the glorious day comes, a very happy Christmas to you all.

LODGE TRANSACTIONS

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

Years

1928/29 to 1930/31

1932/33

1934/35

1942/43 to 1961/62

1963/64 to 1967/68

1969/70 to 1970/71

1972/73 onwards

at £5.00 per yearly issue – inc. postage

Cheques for copies of Lodge Transactions to be made payable to 'The Lodge of Research No. 2429'.

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 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.

THE 17th REGIMENT OF FOOT THE 17th or LEICESTERSHIRE REGIMENT

The Lodge of Research No. 2429 and the Provincial Library and Museum have a continuous research project into Masonic activity in the Regiment.

The Editor, on behalf of the above, would like to be informed of the whereabouts of any original material either for purchasing, photographing, or copying. Any gifts would also be gratefully received.

MEMBERS OF THE LODGE

Brown, A.F., P.M. 6514, P.M.
Stops, T.G.N., P.G.Supt.Wks., P.M. 4088
Buswell, D.A., P.Prov.G.M., P.M. 4874, 7896, P.M.
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Cope, G.S., P.M. 1130, 8312
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Robinson, M.A., P.M. 3078
Sharpe, D.M., P.M. 1007, 8312

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R.W.Bro. G.M. Cooper, P.Prov. Grand Master for Lincolnshire
W.Bro. A.R. Hewitt, P.J.G.D.
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W.Bro. W.H. Staynes	1895
W.Bro. S.S. Partridge	1896
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W. Bro. F.H. Doughty	1920
W. Bro. F. Haines	1921
W. Bro. W.J. Bunny	1922
W. Bro. J.H. Hawthorn	1923
W. Bro. C.F. Oliver	1924
W. Bro. N.K. Lee	1925
W. Bro. A.H. Hind	1926
W. Bro. C.S. Bigg	1927
W. Bro. Rev. E.R.J. Biggs	1928
W. Bro. H. Hyde	1929
W. Bro. H.D.M. Barnett	1930
W. Bro. M.D.R. Richardson	1931
W. Bro. W.H. Riley	1932
W. Bro. G.B. Ellwood	1933
W. Bro. A.J.S. Cannon	1934
W. Bro. A.L. Macleod	1935
W. Bro. W.H. Cotton	1936
W. Bro. W.R. Bridger	1937
W. Bro. J.T. Cooper	1938
W. Bro. G.E. Phipps	1939
W. Bro. F.G. Fleeman	1940
W. Bro. E.H. Stork	1941

W.Bro. J.C. Burton	1942
W.Bro. T.O. Judge	1943
W.Bro. G.W. Wilkes	1944
R.W.Bro. Sir John Corah	1945
W.Bro. P.M. Webster	1946
W.Bro. S.F. Herbert	1947
W.Bro. W. Tomlinson	1948
W.Bro. A.T. Shorthose-Smith	1949
W.Bro. W.H. Wood	1950
W.Bro. F.W. Heaton	1951
W.Bro. C.C.H. Binns	1952
W.Bro. C.E. Haines	1953
W.Bro. E. Murray	1954
W.Bro. A.G. Kilner	1955
W.Bro. J.E. Foister	1956
W.Bro. R.H. Dilworth	1957
W.Bro. J. Lees Smith	1958
W.Bro. S. Kay	1959
W.Bro. W.E. Boulter	1960
R.W.Bro. C.B.S. Morley	1961
W.Bro. G.H. Fox	1962
W.Bro. H. Carr	1963
V.W.Bro. W.G. Fox	1964
W.Bro. E. Muddimer	1965
W.Bro. T.W. Haird	1966
W.Bro. W.H. Russell	1968
W.Bro. E. Thomas	1969
W.Bro. O. Farrant	1970
W.Bro. H.L. Wheatcroft	1971
W.Bro. C.E. Neale	1972
W.Bro. K.G. Westmoreland	1973
W.Bro. L.J. King	1974
W.Bro. R.G. Smith	1975
W.Bro. W. Steele	1976
W.Bro. T.M.Ll. Walters	1977
W.Bro. Rev. Canon J.R.H. Prophet	1978
W.Bro. H. Starmer	1979
W.Bro. J.E.R. Tompkin	1980
W.Bro. A.F. Brown	1981
W.Bro. E.V. Hazell	1982
W.Bro. L. Starmer	1983
W.Bro. S. Brown	1984
W.Bro. F.A. Stafford	1985
W.Bro. N.B. Ashcroft	1986
W.Bro. D.A. Buswell	1987
W.Bro. J. Sturges	1988
W.Bro. F.W. Warburton	1989
W.Bro. G.V. Clark	1990
W.Bro. R.M. McCrory	1991
W.Bro. R.T. Jacques	1992
W.Bro. A.R. Butler	1993
W.Bro. W.V. Dean	1994
W.Bro. J.A. Ridge	1995
W.Bro. A.N. Newman	1996
W.Bro. K.G. Mason	1997
W.Bro. D.L. Wykes	1998
W.Bro. W.J.S. Booton	1999
W.Bro. E.W. Bramford	2000
W.Bro. [REDACTED]	2001
W.Bro. A. Simpson	2002
W.Bro. M.D.M. Parkes Bowen	2003

EDITORS OF THE TRANSACTIONS

J.T. Thorp	1892
A.L. Macleod	1931
C.C.H. Binns	1941
O. Farrant	1962
H. Starmer	1974
J.A. Ridge	1991