

**AUSTRALIAN MASONIC RESEARCH COUNCIL**

**PROCEEDINGS**

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AND COVER**

**1994**

**Biennial meeting and conference  
30 September, 1 & 2 October**

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## *Preface*

Whereas the *Proceedings* of the inaugural general meeting and conference of the Australian Masonic Research Council in June 1992 were necessarily published after the event, it was decided to publish the 1994 *Proceedings* just prior to the conference.

This has several advantages: those attending the conference provide a ready market for the product; there is a saving on postage of other sales, where delegates have taken orders from their brethren who are unable to attend; and those attending the Kellerman Lectures have the opportunity to read the papers before they are presented.

The main disadvantage in publishing before the event is that the minutes of the general meeting scheduled for Sunday 2 October cannot be included. Some other material has had to be omitted because it was not submitted in time for publication. On 12 January 1994 the Secretary, Bro Henderson, requested that a copy of the Kellerman Lectures be supplied by 1 July. A deadline of 31 July was set for other material. Both deadlines were extended to 23 August, to no avail.

However, this issue is bigger than the 1992 *Proceedings*, at no extra cost. It is for you, the reader, to decide if it is also better.

24 August 1994

Tony Pope  
Editor, AMRC publications.



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# Conference programme

## Friday 30 September 1994

- 4.30 pm Registration
- 5 pm Cocktail party
- 6 pm Paper: *Our purpose*  
by WBro Lt Col (R) B W Palmer, ED, RFD, BEcon, AFAIM, JP  
President, W H Green Memorial Masonic Study Circle (Townsville)
- 7.15 pm short break
- 7.30 pm Paper: *Where do I come from?*  
by VWBro Dr I Sykes, MA, MB, BChir (Cantab), DObstRCOG, FRACGP, ThA, PGIL  
(TC)  
Launceston Lodge of Research 69 TC
- 9 pm Dinner

## Saturday 1 October 1994

- 9 am Late registrations
- 9.15 am Official opening of the Conference  
by MWBro Noel F Dunn, Grand Master, UGL of NSW
- 9.30 am Paper: *Our segregated brethren, Prince Hall Freemasons*  
by WBro A R F Pope, MPS  
PM, South Australian Lodge of Research 216 SAC
- 11 am Morning tea
- 11.30 am Paper: *Freemasonry among Australian prisoners of war*  
by WBro Rev B K Burton, BA, Grand Lecturer (NSWC)  
Research Lodge of New South Wales 971 NSWC
- 1 pm Lunch
- 2 pm Paper: *Back to the Future—a prescription for Masonic renewal*  
by WBro K W Henderson, DipT, BEd, GradDipEd, MEd, DipMEd, PGSwdB (VC)  
PM, Lodge of Research 218 VC
- 3.30 pm Afternoon tea
- 4 pm Paper: *The origin of a ritual in Western Australia*  
by WBro R H H Doran, PSGD (WAC)  
to be read by WBro G V Crosby, FFCS, FIAA, PPGSupWks (EC), GLib (WAC)  
Treasurer, Western Australian Lodge of Research 277 WAC
- 7.30 pm Conference dinner  
Presentation of certificates to Kellerman Lecturers

## Sunday 2 October 1994

- 9 am AMRC committee meeting
- 10 am Second biennial general meeting of the Council
- 11.30 am Conference closes

## **Programme for ladies accompanying brethren**

### **Friday 30 September 1994**

Cocktail party  
Dinner  
Riverside Theatre

### **Saturday 1 October 1994**

Coach trip to Katoomba  
Conference dinner

### **Sunday 2 October 1994**

Tour of Parramatta's historic buildings and sites



## WHERE DO I COME FROM?

*by Ian Sykes \**

I am professionally enthralled with origins! When my daughters were younger they asked me this question: ‘Where do I come from?’ I reckon I was able to give them an honest answer, but can I give you an honest answer to the same question when applied to Freemasonry? I am fascinated with the origin of Freemasonry. I read everything I can get hold of about this topic. I study hard, and, as I was told at my initiation, I ‘endeavour to make a daily advancement in Masonic knowledge’. But there are many lecturers and writers far more learned and skilled than I who have spoken and written about this topic, and all are agreed that it is impossible to know the real origin of Freemasonry. I am not talking about the way in which the medieval guilds of operatives have changed into the speculative Masonry of today. That topic was admirably covered by John Hamill in his tour of Australia in 1992. I am talking about the earlier origins, and we can only speculate on that.

I think we might all agree that the tight band of workers in the medieval operative guilds had signals by which they could recognise their fellows by night as well as by day, and that they had admission ceremonies to their guild which established the right of the operative to join the guild, and that they guarded their privileges very carefully. Those operatives were jealous of their skill, and did not hand over their knowledge lightly, but only to those who were apprenticed to them. They knew a thing or two about economics and the law of supply and demand—keep the supply low and the demand goes up. They wanted jobs, and who can blame them? They were exclusive and, as we would say today, they were fully unionised. No card, no start! They had their prejudices, too. I suggest that the reason why, until very recently, no one who was not ‘entire’ was admitted into Freemasonry has its origin in those days. I suggest that we see here an example of anti-Semitism; they wanted to keep the Jews out, and Jews are not ‘entire’—they have been circumcised. No doubt there is someone here tonight who will enlighten me as to the correct explanation, if it is better than mine.

I want to go earlier than the times of the guilds, and I must acknowledge that real information about early times is very difficult to find. In my small Masonic library at home I have a book called *The History and Evolution of Freemasonry*, by the delightfully named Delmar Duane Darrah 33°, Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Illinois. He quite definitely states that the origins of Freemasonry are for ever lost in the mists of time, and can never be discovered. However, he did manage to write a whole book on the topic, so I do not altogether accept his statement. But I am a speculative Mason, and I am not frightened to speculate, in the hope that in our discussion after my address some further light may be thrown on our origins. I hope that this form of address, in which I deliberately pose questions to my audience, may help to provoke a lively debate.

Whilst thinking how an earlier address of mine to the Launceston Lodge of Research on the topic of our origin could be modified to suit this assembly, I was at an Anglican service where the Minister made reference to Freemasonry in disparaging terms, and warned us that by embracing Freemasonry we risked damnation. One of my activities is as a lay-reader in the Anglican church, and I have never found anything in Freemasonry that is ‘incompatible with my civil, moral or religious duty’. But I was given to thought by the words of my Minister, and thus I shall devote my talk to the relationship of Freemasonry to religion—and by this I mean religion in its widest sense, not just Anglican religion, or Catholic religion, or any denominational religion; but its relationship to the basic moral code that seems to underlie all religions.

I certainly do not pretend to be an authority on the various religions in the world, but my theological studies have given me some insight into what a religion is, and why people need some form of religion. Perhaps we should first attempt to define what a religion is. It has been suggested that there are six dimensions to religion, and I summarise them as follows:

\* VVBro Dr Ian Sykes, PGIL, is a general medical practitioner at Launceston, who has gathered what he describes as ‘the usual academic degrees’, but he also has an MA from Cambridge and an Associateship in Theology from the Australian College of Theology. He was initiated in England in 1974, passed and raised in Victoria in 1975, and served as Master of St Andrew Lodge No 6 TC in 1980. He is a member of Launceston Lodge of Research, MWSovereign of an A&AR chapter and a member of the Order of the Secret Monitor. He is a lay reader in the Anglican Church in Australia, a licensed amateur radio operator since 1959, and owner of a middle-aged Rolls Royce.

- 1 **Doctrine:** A belief system which gives a total explanation of reality.
- 2 **Myth:** Stories about God and the gods, creation and salvation, and events of an historical significance. Myth is *not* fiction.
- 3 **Ethics:** Values and codes of behaviour.
- 4 **Ritual:** Worship, festivals, 'rites of passage' and initiations; and customs regulating food and dress.
- 5 **Experience:** The individual's experience of the awe-inspiring and the transcendent, or a sense of belonging and commitment to something greater than the self.
- 6 **Social:** The institutional organisation of people to practice their religion.

Thus my first question to you is 'Is Freemasonry a religion?' Many would argue that it is, and I refer to an excellent talk given to the Toowoomba Lodge of Instruction in 1991 by MWBro N W Bauer, PGM, on 'Freemasonry and Religion'. I am indebted to him for many of the ideas which have formulated my own thinking. MWBro Bauer defines religion as 'the categorical formulary by which man expresses his concept of God'. He states that Freemasonry does not satisfy this definition or even attempt to do so. I am not so sure. I think Freemasonry does indeed express a concept of God, as 'Great Architect of the Universe', 'Grand Geometrician of the Universe', or whatever. Certainly Freemasonry is based on an acceptance of God as Creator. I would rather define a religion very shortly as 'a means to personal salvation'. I do not think Freemasonry expresses this at all, but I am open to expressions of disagreement in our discussion afterwards. My definition admits those whose religion is the pursuit of money, influence, or power; all of which, they believe, will give them their own form of salvation. It admits members of most of the major World religions, who are almost all in a search for their own salvation. There are some brethren who find their salvation in Freemasonry as such, and in pursuit of their own advancement in the craft; and I acknowledge that many of our detractors use examples of excess devotion to Freemasonry being responsible for family problems or broken marriages. This is *not* the teaching of Freemasonry, but some brethren have made it so. We are all aware of Stephen Knight's book, *The Brotherhood*, which I am sure should be required reading for every thinking Freemason. I have recently read a sequel by Martin Short, entitled *Inside the Brotherhood*, which purports to disclose 'Further secrets of the Freemasons'. Oh, yes! We can laugh. We can say: 'What ignorance!' Even keeping as open a mind as I can, I find some of his allegations quite preposterous; but this is what the general public read, and some of his descriptions of broken marriages and homes, which he alleges are due to excess devotion to Freemasonry, do indeed ring true.

Does my Rector, then, object to my adherence to Freemasonry because he fears what might befall my marriage? I doubt it. Freemasons are on the whole 'just, upright, and free men, of mature age, sound judgement, and strict morals'. It is his belief that Freemasonry is indeed a religion, and one that is not compatible with the Christian Church. Why should he think this? He believes that our willingness to admit members of other faiths, and our willingness to have open in our lodges a sacred book from more than one faith, is incompatible with Christianity. I cannot agree with him here. I welcome the opportunity to meet as brothers those of other faiths. I doubt whether the Christian Church as a whole agrees with him either. All over the world, Christians are becoming more accepting of those who are seeking other ways to their personal salvation, and the last meeting of the World Council of Churches in Canberra confirmed this trend.

I also think that he believes that what we practice is heresy, and heresy has always been stamped on by the established Christian Church. He believes that we practice a form of dualism, and it is here that I come to the nub of my address.

In order to continue, I must first explain what I think dualism is, and where Christianity and Freemasonry fits in to it. Remember that the Christian Church went through many trials, disagreements, and schisms in its early days. There were many conferences and councils arranged at various places to try and settle just what the Christian was to believe. The canon of scripture that we call the New Testament was settled by the established church of the day. The apostle Paul virtually invented the type of Christianity we practice. Many of the rules we live our lives by, and aspirations we have for ourselves were set out by Paul in his letters, based on the teachings and sayings of Jesus. The words set out in the creed which we now say in modern English were settled at one of the Councils of the Church, against considerable opposition from some Bishops. The victors took the rewards. The losers were accused of heresy, and excommunicated, or worse. One of the earliest conflicts that the Church had to resolve was the concept of the doctrine of the Trinity, where we think of God as a three-in-one of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. There were in the early days of the Church other beliefs, and the Trinity we believe in today, and acknowledge in some of our Orders, is the belief of those who prevailed. Of course, the victors state that they 'won' because their beliefs are correct and have been justified by God himself, and this may be true. Perhaps their best proof is that the Christian Church is still alive and growing after nearly 2000 years.

But there were other slants on Christianity. There were other Gospels and scripture writings, all purporting to be Christian in origin. Amongst these were beliefs and writings by those known as the Gnostics, who were convinced that people could be saved through the acquisition of a secret 'knowledge' (*gnosis*). There are gospels written by Christian men which are not part of our New Testament. Elaine Pagels, who teaches religion at Barnard College in the University of Columbia, has written widely on the matter of Gnosticism. Some forty

years ago scrolls were discovered in an earthenware jar near Nag Hammadi in the upper Egyptian desert. In this jar were Gospels, including previously unknown sayings of Jesus. These writings have now been collated, and Pagels quotes from them at length in her book, *The Gnostic Gospels*. Some of the writings are totally unlike our New Testament, and are far more mystical. She describes one passage as being more like a quote from Zen Buddhism than a Christian writing. Nevertheless, the authors of these books were Christians. But they had a different outlook, an outlook that was not acceptable to the established church. Some of the writers, and some of those who followed Gnostic beliefs, could not accept the idea of an all-powerful God, and thought more of a God who was engaged in a constant struggle with the powers of evil. The forces of evil were so powerful that they became gods themselves, almost equal to the one true God. Thus they moved away from the concept of an all-powerful being to the idea of life being a constant battle between the forces of good and evil, with the good only winning after a long and bitter struggle. The hidden knowledge revealed to the Gnostic was in no small measure responsible for his salvation. God is good, but there are others almost equally as powerful who are bad. Life is a battle between them. This belief system is known as dualism.

My second question to you is then: 'Is Freemasonry like that?' Do we believe that the 'knowledge' revealed during our ceremonies is there to make us better equipped than our fellows who are not Freemasons to enter the Kingdom of God? Well, do we? I do not believe that we do, but I look forward to further discussion.

I will return to dualism, via the Inquisition, later. But for now I want to go even further back, to what I think are the origins of the ideas formulating many of the World's religions, and certainly a great influence on Gnostic thought; and a basis for our present moral code. Zoroaster is the name by which the West knows the prophet of ancient Persia. More properly he is known as Zarathustra. It was formerly thought that he lived some 600 years before Christ, but later studies tend to place his life at around 1500 BC, thus making him one of the earliest of all the known prophets. At the age of thirty he commenced preaching, and although he suffered persecution, his teachings spread throughout Persia, and became the dominant religion of what was, for a thousand years, one of the World's great empires. He taught that all men and women have a duty to choose between good and evil. God, he taught, was wholly good, and creator of all things. All things created by God were good. He was not responsible for evil in the world; this comes from the Destructive Spirit, whose nature is violent as well as destructive. It was he who created the demons, who rules in Hell, and who has opposed God from the beginning. The world is the battleground in which the forces of good and evil do battle. The world and man were created by God to aid Him in this battle. Zoroaster taught that the world, being created by God, was essentially good, but spoiled at present by attacks of evil. He looked forward to the day when the battle with evil would reach its climax, when good would triumph and the world would be restored to the perfect state given to it by the Creator. At last the dead would be raised and judged, the wicked would go to Hell, and the righteous dwell with God in perfection for eternity. Zoroastrianism is, as you see, a totally dualistic religion.

It is my thesis that this religion of the Persians, now only practiced by the Parsees in India, has had a major influence on many of the World's religions. Judaism picked up a lot of the teachings of Zoroaster during the exile of the Jews in Babylon, and shortly afterwards, following their liberation by Cyrus, a Persian and strong believer in Zoroastrianism. It is well acknowledged that the Essenes, the Jewish sect from whom some would argue that Christ came, and many would agree from whom John the Baptist came, were very strongly influenced by these teachings. Certainly the Gnostic views described earlier are heavily influenced by the teachings of this ancient Persian religion. More of the teachings of Zoroastrianism were transferred to Hinduism, and thus to the teachings of Buddha. What an influence this man had on the world!

'The Magic Flute', the opera written by Mozart, describes Zoroastrianism and dualism remarkably well. It is also supposed to be related to Freemasonry, but for the life of me I have never been able to see how or where. Certainly the opera describes a battle between good and evil, where good is eventually triumphant, and it also describes trials by fire and water. In no Masonic ceremony that I am aware of is a similar battle re-enacted. Is this ballyhoo surrounding Mozart's work the basis for the Christian church attacking Freemasonry? I read in commentaries that the connection of the opera with Freemasonry may be an attempt by Mozart to glorify Freemasonry. A commentary which perhaps I should not have read, because it is by a member of a proscribed quasi-Masonic organisation, suggests that the opera may wish to glorify a mystic of the time, Count Cagliostro, who had established some rather Egyptian 'Masonic' ceremonies. Again, I am open to enlightenment.

I have in this talk, I think, established that the moral code taught by Zoroaster has provided at least in part the basis of many of the World's religions. However, any religion that exists for a long period, as Zoroastrianism had, was bound to be modified, built upon, and altered for the interests of other sects. Christianity is no exception to this. The Romans, during their invasion of the Middle East, came into contact with the teachings of Zoroaster, which by that time had evolved far from the 'pure' and almost monotheistic teachings of the prophet himself. In particular, a whole pantheon of gods had become associated with the religion, amongst whom was a very ancient god, Mithra, a god of battle. The Romans were a warlike people, and found that Mithra was their kind of god. He was god of the Sun, of Justice, of contract, and war. There is a hymn in Zoroastrianism dedicated to Mithra who is depicted as the all-observing god of heavenly light, the guardian of oaths, the protector of the righteous in this world as in the next, and above all as the arch foe of the powers of evil and darkness and hence the god of battles and victory. He was a soldier's god, ideally suited to the Roman legions.

Most believe that the form of Mithraism which came to be practiced by the Romans was, in fact, a synthesis of the early beliefs with Platonic philosophy and Persian mysticism. It is certainly true that Persian philosophers settled in Rome during the first century AD, and it is from them that Roman Mithraism is believed to have taken its system of beliefs.

Mithra actually far predates the development of Zoroastrianism in Persia, and pre-dates the exile of the Jews to Babylon. Judaism, of course, returned triumphant from the exile, and there are those of us in other Orders who know of that story, but what is not altogether known is that Judaism returned from the exile a new, revitalised religion. It had picked up ideas from the beliefs of the captors in the exile, and that included some of the ideas of Mithraism which had by that time been absorbed into Zoroastrianism. It may also interest Brethren to know that Zoroastrianism has a Saviour who died and who rose again after three days, who was born of a virgin, and who brings us personal salvation. This predates Jesus Christ by hundreds of years.

The Romans took over Mithra as their own, and developed a religion founded on loyalty, especially loyalty to Rome. Most adherents of Mithraism known to us from inscriptions are soldiers of both low and high rank, officials in the service of the Empire, freedmen (ex slaves) who were often of very influential rank. Persons, in fact, who knew which god would lead them to quick promotion.

The theology of Mithraism concerns the creation of the world. According to the myths, the sun god sent his messenger, the raven, to Mithra, and ordered him to sacrifice a bull. Mithra executed the order reluctantly, and in many reliefs he is seen turning away his face in sorrow. But at the very moment of the death of the bull, a great miracle happened. The white bull was changed into the moon, the cloak of Mithra was transformed into the vault of the sky, with the shining planets and fixed stars; and from the tail of the bull and from his blood sprang the first ears of grain and the grape, and from his genitals ran the holy seed which was received by a mixing bowl. Every creature on earth was shaped with an admixture of that holy seed. One Mithraic hymn begins: 'Thou hast redeemed us too by shedding the eternal blood'. The plants and the trees were created. Day and night began to be alternated and the seasons took up their dance, and thus Time was created. But then, wakened by the sudden light, the creatures of darkness began to appear from the earth. A serpent licked the blood of the bull. A scorpion tried to lick the holy seed. With the death of the bull and the creation of the world the struggle between good and evil began; this, teaches Mithraism, is the condition of man's life. We can see the dualistic approach of this cult, as absorbed into Roman beliefs.

At one time, Mithraism was spread by the Romans all over Europe. As a boy, I can remember a Mithraic temple being uncovered in London during excavation for a new building. Wherever the Romans went, they took their civilisation, and they erected towns and cities far more permanent than those of the societies previously resident in that country. Their buildings were erected by artisans skilled in stonework, and who were members of what the Romans called their *Collegia*. One *Collegium* was attached to each Roman legion, and wherever the legion went, so did the infrastructure of Roman civilisation. They took their religion, too, and men of standing and skill were initiated into Mithraism. The initiation was by means of degrees, and in common with many other ancient schools of philosophy, there are believed to have been at least three degrees. Women were not admitted to the mysteries of Mithraism, but boys were initiated before puberty. The basis of Mithraism was a search for the light, and even today the Parsees of India have as their most sacred symbol an eternal flame. Alexander Wilder, in his *Philosophy and Ethics of the Zoroastrians*, states: 'The Mithraic rites superseded in Roman times the Mysteries of Bacchus, and became the foundation of the Gnostic system, which for many centuries prevailed in Asia, Egypt, and parts of Europe.'

The thing most people know about Mithraism, if they know anything at all, is that the ceremonies were said to include sacrifice of a bull. Nearly all the reliefs carved on the walls of Mithraic temples, show a bull being sacrificed. Nobody really knows, though, what the ceremonies of Mithraism were really like, and at first there would appear to be little similarity with the beliefs of Christianity. I suggest that the bull sacrifice, if indeed it took place at all, is an example of the idea of the 'suffering servant', which is a very old idea shared by Christianity and many other religions, and was probably garnered from Zoroastrian sources. The suffering servant is one who dies for our sins and for our redemption. Christ did this for us Christians. The bull may well have been a symbol of the 'servant' (the beast of burden) suffering on our behalf. Certainly ancient Persian and Babylonian kings would undergo ceremonies where they were symbolically made to suffer for the sins of their people, and to ensure their redemption. In Judaism, the prophet Jeremiah is an example of such a 'suffering servant'. Isaiah writes of the coming of the suffering servant, and his prophesy is believed to foretell the coming of Christ. We experience this concept of the suffering servant each time we take Holy Communion, and the consecrated bread and wine as representing the body and blood of Christ are symbols leading to our own redemption. Is that so different from Mithraism?

There are in fact many points of resemblance between Christianity and Mithraism. Perhaps this is because of the presence of the Persian mystics in Rome in the first century AD, and it is possible that the early history of both religions was interwoven. In both religions there is identification of the object of our adoration with light and indirectly with the sun. In both religions there is the legend of the shepherds with their gifts and adoration. The flood and ark legends are common to both, as is the use of holy water and the communion together. The sanctification of Sunday and of 25 December is another common point. In particular, both religions insist on

moral conduct, abstinence where appropriate, and self-control. There is a similar belief in the doctrine of heaven and hell, the atoning sacrifice, the constant warfare between good and evil with the final triumph of good, the immortality of the soul, the last judgement, the resurrection of the body, and the eventual fiery destruction of the universe.

For many centuries, Mithraism was almost the official religion of Rome, and it is said that at least one Roman Emperor was initiated into Mithraic mysteries; but when Constantine became Emperor in 312 AD, he decreed that Christianity was to become the official religion of the Empire. For a while Mithraism and Christianity survived side by side, but the two were really too close together in their basic beliefs and origins, and Christianity proscribed Mithraism. Nevertheless, in its influence on Gnosticism, and in its own right, pockets of Mithraism survived, especially in southern France. The Spanish Inquisition was in fact established in the 14th century to eliminate Mithraism and Gnosticism. This was duly done, with the great savagery typical of the Inquisition. If you want to know more, look up the history of what Catholicism calls the 'Albigensian heresy', it makes interesting and horrifying reading. Of course, after the Inquisition had dealt with Mithraism it found other heretical fish to fry (literally, as victims were burnt at the stake), and so started the persecution of others guilty of heresies a lot less obvious than Mithraism.

Now I am not suggesting for a moment that Freemasonry is a religion that is descended even indirectly from Mithraism or Gnosticism. I do certainly suggest that some of the symbols used in Freemasonry are similar to those used in ancient religions such as Mithraism. We use a lot of symbols borrowed from Christianity, too. There is considerable evidence that the 'all-seeing eye' is a concept used in Mithraic ceremonies. The raven is a bird mentioned in both Mithraism and Christianity, and in some of our ceremonies. Look at some Mithraic beliefs. Mithra was the god of Justice. He was the god of Truth, and contracts were sworn in his name. He was the god of loyalty to the Empire. He was the god of light, and the light brought knowledge, and how often do we use the symbolism of light in our ceremonies? He was the god for those in the Army, telling of the triumph of good over evil, and telling of his support in this world and the next. He gave ideas to Judaism and to Christianity. He was worshipped in the *Collegia*. Why should he not have given ideas to Freemasonry?

Nor can I suggest that there is any direct link between the Roman *Collegia*, their religious beliefs, and operative Freemasonry in medieval times. Darrah points out that it is impossible to trace the builders in stone of Roman times in a continuity of lineal descent to the early operatives, and there are many gaps which cannot be bridged. There is, however, abundant proof that, from as early as the fifth century onwards, bands of well-organised artisans and workers travelled throughout Europe and engaged themselves in the construction of religious and non-religious buildings. It is not unreasonable to suppose that this close-linked fraternity of builders might have been modelled on former similar organisations, and the time gap between the defeat of Rome by barbarian hordes and the development of bands of travelling masons is not very great. Darrah believes that these very early operative societies can be traced in their evolution to the highly organised and disciplined bands of medieval times, and thus to the speculative Masons of today. What do you think?

I believe that I have now established that Freemasonry could have obtained at least some of its philosophy from ancient religions which pre-date Christianity. I still cannot accept that Freemasonry in itself is a religion. We teach 'a peculiar system of morality, veiled in allegory, and illustrated by symbols'. Peculiar in this sense I translate as 'unique'. We teach men of goodwill to live in harmony with other members of the human race. We do *not* teach that personal salvation or advancement follows our membership of the order. We teach the moral law which seems to be common to most beliefs. We teach our members to be generous to those in distress, and to afford comfort to our fellow humans. In this we have much in common with nearly all religions. We meet as equals, for 'we are all brothers'. Equality is sometimes not so evident in some religions. Our basis for our beliefs and teachings is not solely Christianity, but it is certainly true that Christianity has been the most powerful influence on our ideas. We have nothing to be ashamed of, or even to hide. It is this message that we as Freemasons must take out into Australian society. We are not a cabbalistic secret society, but an organisation founded on the highest principles. We have much to offer this country. Let us not hide our light under a bushel.

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## OUR PURPOSE

by Brian Palmer \*

### SUMMARY

The main argument of this paper is that Freemasonry lacks an inspirational and formally stated objective, or purpose. It argues further that the lack of purpose is a root cause of our membership decline and suggests an objective that would attract and keep members, improve our public image, guide us in our actions and measure our success. I am aware that some Grand Lodges have adopted 'Mission Statements'. These seem to be of a more limited nature than the objective I now advocate. They are perhaps a sort of subsidiary mission, a task we undertake as part of our overall purpose.

### INTRODUCTION

Why did Leonidas and his Spartans stand and die at the pass? How did Mao Tse-tung gain the support of millions of his countrymen? What was it that instantly spurred the otherwise isolationist American public into vigorous and bellicose activity in 1941?

In each case they were motivated by a common cause. A cause that appealed so strongly that they joined together in a joint effort to achieve their purpose, well knowing that they would suffer and even die.

'A sense of common purpose' will motivate men to great efforts and great sacrifice. They will willingly place that common purpose above their own self-interest. Men and women will even *die* for a cause they believe in.

At a more mundane level, society is made up of thousands or maybe millions of organisations: government departments, businesses, churches, political parties, sporting clubs, charities, schools, parliaments, bridge clubs, committees for this and that *ad infinitum*, and they have only one thing in common. Each is a group of people working together for a common purpose.

That purpose is what attracts people to join and work for, and stay in, the organisation. It is usually stated clearly in the opening words of their constitution, used in their publicity leaflets and publicised quite vigorously to potential members. Each organisation judges its success by how close it comes to achieving its purpose.

As an army officer I am trained that when faced with a problem, the first step is to clearly define the aim. It must be a specific and positive statement in the form: 'We will capture / advance to / deny the enemy, the hill / river / town.' There can only be one aim; it cannot be 'to achieve this *and* this *and* this.' When the aim is defined, then, and only then, can you start to look for effective courses of action. The men under your command will willingly risk their lives to achieve that aim, if they believe in it.

As a businessman in later life, I found that the Australian Institute of Management teaches exactly the same method, *inter alia*, but the first step is always *to define the aim*.

I must tell you that this is not usually a simple matter. I have spent hours with students, both military and civilian, trying to define the aim. However, once it is clearly stated, it becomes the measuring stick for every proposed course of action. It becomes the motivation for all those in the organisation involved.

Whole nations of people respond to a clearly stated aim if it grips their imagination and appeals to ideals they strongly believe in. Just think of the Churchillian appeals to the British people to: 'Fight them on the beaches, etc, ... we will never surrender.' and 'We cannot rest ... until we have rid the world of Nazism'. What magnificent responses these clear aims evoked. Hitler's aim was also clear: the mastery of the world by the 'superior' Aryan race. With it he mesmerised most of the German people.

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## FREEMASONRY'S REAL PROBLEM

You may be wondering what this has to do with Freemasonry. Of all the organisations I know, Freemasonry is the only one that does not have a stated aim. It therefore lacks mass motivation of its members. Most of them have been in the Craft for many years and stay in it for the fellowship or because they like to work at the charities or, worse still, out of habit.

Ask a dozen of your brethren the aim of Freemasonry and you will get five or six different answers. I say five or six out of a dozen because most will not be able to answer you.

Freemasons in many jurisdictions are worried about how membership is falling and how hard it is to attract younger men into the Craft. We wonder why it is so, and spend much effort trying to reverse the trend. We know we have, at best, a poor public image.

There was a boom in membership just after the war. Why did this happen? Most of the new Masons were ex-servicemen. They undoubtedly felt the need for that close comradeship they had experienced in the services and now lacked. And, once in, they were attracted by the very admirable ethics they discovered in Freemasonry. Having experienced first hand how brutal man can be to man, they embraced the ideas of brotherly love, tolerance, justice and charity that Freemasonry was teaching. They found what they needed.

As the years went by, a new generation has found the mere teaching of these virtues is not enough. They know that these things are good and can conduct their lives in honourable and virtuous ways without regular attendance at Masonic lodges. Thus Freemasonry seems to them to be without a great purpose and they either don't join or don't stay if they do join.

And I think they are right!

Brethren, falling membership is not the *problem*, it is a *symptom* of a bigger problem. If we solve the greater problem, membership will grow again, or else it might not be seen as a big issue.

The real problem is that we lack a great purpose.

There are two kinds of men: the one who asks 'What's in it for me?' and the other who asks 'What good purpose does the Order serve and that I can help in?'

The first, we don't want in the Craft, at least until he has changed his attitude. The second is the kind of man we want. He will become a good and useful Mason.

Lacking a great purpose creates three problems for us. First, we don't have an answer to the natural question of a potential member 'What's it for?' Second, when we do get a man to join, there is no great objective to *challenge* him and motivate him to throw his effort behind the Order. Third, since we have no *stated* purpose that is known to the wider public, some will think that we have an *unstated* or *secret* purpose and that, as it is not stated publicly, it must be reprehensible or even evil because it has to be hidden.

The first problem hardly needs expansion. A man will be reluctant to join the Craft, not knowing what it is for.

As to the second problem of holding members, in time the repetitious rituals and social activities pall. The new member passes through the three degrees and, if he stays long enough, starts 'going through the chairs'. If he is still there a few years later he might get involved in Grand Lodge and/or enter the 'Red Lodge'. But the time will come when this seemingly endless series of activities loses its attraction. He will think: 'I have learned enough about Masonry.'

One friend of mine, a past master, who resigned after fifteen years in the Craft, told me that he had 'got all [he] could out of the Craft'. I was surprised and disappointed. At first I thought him a shallow and selfish fellow. But later I realised that it was the Craft that had failed him, not he who had failed the Craft.

'What we need is not more men in Masonry, but more Masonry in men.' This is a very perceptive thought by Lord Ampthill over seventy years ago, but I would re-state it as: 'If we had more Masonry in men, we would have more men in Masonry.'

The third problem is our public image. Our lack of a stated aim gives the suspicious something to be suspicious about. In these cases our defense is rather lame. It is negative. 'This is not so!' 'That is not true!' 'We don't do that!' We lack a positive defense.

Like every other organisation, we need an honourable purpose to give us a good public image, to attract new members, to bind us all together and to claim our continuing membership. We should make it plain not only to our initiates but to the world at large.

It must be not only honourable but also of such merit that it will have a strong appeal to all 'just and upright men of mature age and sound morals'. It must have an appeal so strong that they will give up their television, make time in their busy lives for the Craft and willingly, even eagerly, do their part in achieving that purpose. It must be a challenge that will inspire them to great efforts and hold their interest throughout their lives.

When we do that, the world will admire us, and men who believe in our objective will want to join us and will stay, Masonry will be more than just an old man's social club that performs beautiful rituals, does important charity work and has a few secrets. It will no longer be seen by some as a dark and malevolent secret society with secret aims. It will be an organisation the world will see as trying to achieve some great and worthwhile purpose.

Freemasonry needs a great purpose.



## A SEARCH FOR AN OBJECTIVE

I have postulated the need for a 'Statement of Purpose'. I cannot shirk the obvious responsibility of proposing one.

The constitutions are silent, so I looked in the 'Antient Charges', but they say nothing. I read most of the important books on Freemasonry by learned scholars, but none addressed this issue. In the end I found it in the ritual.

My ritual is that of the United Grand Lodge of Queensland, but I also found it in other rituals, read it in the address to the Master in the installation ritual and in the closing address of the Royal Arch Chapter. I have also been told that the same sentiment is in the rituals worked by many North American jurisdictions.

It is not at first obvious. One must think one's way through the implications of the words in the rituals.

When each of us was initiated, passed and raised, I am sure that only small parts of what transpired remained in our memories. But, as the years passed, we reviewed the ritual at our leisure. We even learned parts of it by heart, but I wonder how many of us have really studied it, seeking its full meaning.

The ritual contains two distinct parts.

First, the proceedings of the ceremonies such as opening and closing, initiating, passing, and raising, who moves where and does what, and the examinations of candidates, are all set out. These are important, as they teach you what to do and say in the lodge when you are given part of the work. But they do not tell us what is the purpose of Freemasonry.

More important to our discussion is the second part of the contents. This is found in those parts of the ritual that set out our philosophy. They are primarily the charges given after each degree and the explanations of the working tools.

You can get lost in the ritual and the beauty of the words and phrases. A well conducted lodge (or especially chapter) meeting is good theatre. You can hear the words without grasping their meaning. It is like a Gregorian Chant. It is beautiful but we do not know what it means.

I am convinced that most Masons hear the 'chant' but miss the meaning. They might be able to recite the whole ritual *verbatim* and still fail to grasp what Freemasonry is all about. They delight in the sights and sounds of the lodge and enjoy the ceremonial and the traditions and the fellowship.

But they are missing the point.

In the first degree a candidate is taught a dramatic lesson in charity. The symbolism of the working tools teaches him to honour God, serve a friend or brother in need, listen to his conscience, and educate and discipline himself to make him a better member of society.

And in the charge after initiation, his duties as a Freemason are clearly stated. He must look to God for comfort and support; treat his neighbour on the square, render him every kind office, relieve his necessities and soothe his afflictions; adopt a prudent and regular course of self-discipline to preserve his bodily and mental faculties in their fullest energy; be exemplary in his civil duties, obey the civil law and never propose or countenance any subversion; and finally to be prudent, temperate, just, and to have fortitude.

Note the emphasis here on duty 'to his neighbour' and 'civil duties'. Who is our neighbour? It surely does not only mean the fellow living in the house next door. Can it be anything else but *all other human beings*?

Is this the aim? Surely not, for many people already do that and don't need to be in an organisation to do it either.

In the second degree the working tools remind him that we are all equal, that no eminence of station should make us forget that we are brothers and that he who is in a subordinate position is as much entitled to our regard as he who has a position of power and authority. He learns to judge with candor, admonish with friendship and reprehend with mercy; to encourage industry, relieve a brother's needs, and never to wrong him.

All of these deal with how a Mason should behave toward his brethren in the Craft, himself and to every one else. In them there is only a hint of an overall purpose for Freemasonry, 'to be exemplary ...'.

Then in the third degree final charge he is told: 'It is your duty to improve the morals and correct the manners of men in society', 'to inculcate universal benevolence, and by the regularity of your own behaviour afford the best example for the conduct of others'.

Here it is. A Master Mason is bound by his duty to improve the morals of men, and inculcate *universal benevolence* by making his own life a example to the rest of the world.

So Freemasonry is about spreading the ideal of universal benevolence. That means being good to everyone. It means brotherly love, just, fair and honourable dealings between *all* men and women. It means spreading the idea of tolerance. We take no notice of a man's race or colour. We are quite indifferent to his religious beliefs. We care nothing for his rank or position in society, his wealth or lack of it. We only judge by the goodness of his character. We are tolerant of his failings. By our example we may hope that others will follow our lead.

It means influencing everyone to be peaceable and law-abiding citizens, to strive to improve themselves so that they can be more useful citizens, to always do their work to the best of their ability for the benefit of society. Duty is the glue that holds a society from falling into anarchy. Work is not just a way to make money. We hope to make everyone understand that the work each one does is part of the community effort and all work in that sense is equally valuable.

The Master Mason is told to improve the morals and correct the manners of men. Here is a potentially dangerous task. I don't think that it means that we are obliged to walk over to a stranger seen being rude to someone and tell him to 'correct his manners'. If we did that we would all walk around sporting black eyes most of the time. But we can find ways to exert our influence so that everyone in our society is made aware of the benefit of good moral behaviour and good manners. At the very least we can be living examples.

Here is a clear call on Masons to try to influence the world at large with these ideals. Here also is the main method of doing this, which is by the example of our own lives and morality. We are duty bound to speak out against immoral acts and ideas.

## OUR PURPOSE

With all this material in the ritual, can we now define the purpose of Freemasonry?

I believe that our purpose is nothing less than this: **'Universal benevolence'**.

*Universal* means everyone in the world. *Benevolence* can be defined as brotherly love, charity, tolerance, respect and mercy. It will involve for each individual the adoption of the Masonic virtues of prudence, temperance, justice and mercy, and the acceptance of his or her civil and domestic duties. It will make every person reject the unworthy impulses of envy, greed, revenge, fanaticism and contempt.

In each Grand jurisdiction we can add the limitation 'throughout France / Russia / Japan' or 'the State of Queensland / Victoria / Texas, etc.'

This is a great purpose. This a purpose that will grab the attention of all good men. This an aim that will inspire men. This an objective of which the public will approve.

Just think for a moment what the world would be like if every human being actually lived by these principles.

- ♦ Hindus would not destroy Muslim places of worship, and *vice versa*.
- ♦ The IRA could not, or would not need to, exist.
- ♦ Fraud would not exist, neither would theft, burglary, assault, rape or murder. We would not need police or armed services.
- ♦ Disasters like Rwanda would never occur.
- ♦ The Bosnians would not be fighting the Serbians, and *vice versa*.

The list could go on and on.

The idea may shock you. You may think it impossible, a utopian dream. I do not. It does not matter how long it will take. It does not matter even if it is impossible, for it is worth working towards. It is a purpose worthy of the efforts of all good men. It is a challenge that will inspire all good men.

I have used this idea of universal benevolence in talking to prospective members and their wives. I find it grabs their attention and they are strongly and favourably impressed by the idea. In every case the man joined the lodge and his wife practically pushed him through the door.

Interestingly there seems to be no other organisation with exactly this aim. I may be ignorant, but I can think of none.

The prime object of most religions seems to be to promote their own theology, philosophy and dogma as the only correct one. And the saga of religious intolerance does not bear thinking about.

Governments certainly have other aims. The United Nations is concerned with promoting peace, justice and equity. Rotary might go close, but its aims are more restricted.

The philosophers, poets, songwriters and authors of every age express man's longing for such a world, but they lack organisation.

Here in Freemasonry we have a worldwide organisation with Grand Lodges in most nations. If we were to adopt this as our stated aim and work towards it, we could make a difference.

With this aim in mind, we would probably be doing different things than we do now. What those might be is too large a subject to include in this paper, but it is worthy of our serious consideration.

I think that the Freemasons of old saw this as their task. The fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when the beginnings of 'Speculative Freemasonry' were developing, were turbulent times. The Dark Ages had passed, learning and science was spreading, new ideas and philosophies were diffusing through societies, and old ones were being re-assessed. The social structures of the times promoted divisions between men. Religions persecuted each other and their own dissenters. Tyrannical monarchies that suppressed the people were commonplace. Equality just did not exist.

In such an environment our founders saw the need to promote universal brotherhood, equality and tolerance, and created an organisation devoted to that end.

The fact that Elias Ashmole, supporter of the King, was made a Mason in 1642, in the midst of the civil war, in the house of his father-in-law, who was a supporter of the Parliamentarians, and in a lodge of men from both sides who might be fighting each other the next day, is remarkable testimony to the lofty ideals of those men.

Their ideal of equality, though maybe not theirs exclusively, nevertheless influenced the 'New World' and became part of the ethos of Americans and was expressed in their wonderful Declaration of Independence and their Constitution.

Let me remind you that they opened their 'Declaration of Independence' with the words 'We ... are dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal and are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights ...' It is not surprising to find that five of the seven men who wrote that declaration were leading Freemasons.

Twenty years later the Paris mob was shouting 'Liberty! Equality! Fraternity!'

I am sure our forefathers were conscious that their ideas would lead to a state of universal benevolence.

**Here then is a cause for Freemasonry. Here is a real challenge. To change the world!**

**We changed the world before, with the idea of equality. Once more we can lead society when we aim for—**

## **UNIVERSAL BENEVOLENCE**



**BACK TO THE FUTURE—  
A PRESCRIPTION FOR MASONIC RENEWAL**

*(The Lodge Epicurean experience)*

*by Kent Henderson \**

In 1992, when working on a new edition of my book, *Masonic World Guide*, I compiled a table of the membership movements of most Masonic Grand Lodges in the world from 1980 to 1990 (see *Appendix 1*). The results, while not unexpected, were alarming. Five of Australia's Grand Lodges were in the top ten membership losses in the world, with Victoria heading the list. Between 1980 and 1990 Victoria lost forty-six per cent of its members. Clearly, based on these figures, even the most optimistic casual observer would have to conclude that Australian Masonry in general, and Victorian in particular, was doing something very wrong to have such an enormous loss of membership.

**WHAT HAS CAUSED THE DECLINE?**

During its early history in Australia, Freemasonry was not an egalitarian movement. Indeed, it was never designed to be egalitarian. Aside from its teachings, the greatest strength of Masonry has always been its mystique.

Prior to the Second World War, in Australia it cost twice the average weekly wage (around 5 or 6 guineas) to join Freemasonry, and around the average weekly wage as annual dues. Since the war, annual dues have not kept up with inflation. If they had simply done so, they would currently be at a level around the present average weekly wage, \$350–\$400. What has occurred is that lodges have historically held down dues based on the spurious argument that to put them up would mean that members would resign. This, of course, never occurred, nor would it if the dues had been increased progressively, in line with inflation. Indeed, in effect the reverse happened—members resigned because dues had not been put up!

The effect over the years has been a steady fall in lodge standards. The quality of the repast available, in particular, declined from the regular banquet of pre-war years to the 'cold sausage rolls and limp sandwiches' found served at most lodge festive boards today. As a result of ever-lowering standards, members at first drifted away from the Craft. In more recent years, as standards have continued to fall, the drift has become a stampede. When candidates are gained today, they often do not stay beyond acquiring their third degree. The acceleration of resignations from the Craft, in my view, can be explained by the 'tolerance factor'. As standards fell, more and more members reached the point where they could tolerate no more. The effect has been compounding. The lower the standards became, the quicker became the pace of resignations. Those that do remain must accept ever-lowering standards. There is no impetus to reverse the trend. Rather, the reaction, the temptation, is to make the Craft even easier to join, to effectively lower the standards still more. The way to get more members, the rationale goes, is to do things such as relaxing dress standards 'as young people don't have dinner suits', or as is now permitted in New South Wales, to advertise for members in newspapers.

The depletion of Masonic membership has had other snowballing effects. As numbers have fallen over the years, lodges have had fewer competent members remaining to perform the ceremonies. In turn, this has meant that less-competent members, who would have never been called on in the healthier times of the past, were now thrust into office. The ongoing result has been a serious decline in the standard of ritual and ceremonial, which in turn has helped speed membership losses. A Master being prompted in every word of an obligation is not an inspirational sight, and that is the standard to which many lodges have been reduced.

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Another result has been the progressive aging of the Craft. Younger members are not joining, and in most Australian Grand Lodges a substantial majority of members are over sixty years of age. The oft-heard reasons espoused for this are the great diversity of community groups available to join, which were not available in the past, and the economic pressures on young families, amongst others. These reasons may have some superficial validity. However, this is not a problem in Europe, replete with countries with similar social and economic conditions to ours, where Masonry is expanding.

Another oft-cited reason for the decline in Masonic membership is the wide range of diversions available to modern young men. That this variety exists is clearly true. However, this is surely a false and irrelevant argument as to why young men are not joining the Craft. Surely Freemasons believe their organisation to be superior to other social institutions? Again, no matter how good the contents, few will buy something wrapped in a brown paper bag. A reactionary trend today in Australian Grand Lodges is towards 'public relations', to package the Craft in the media. Yet how does one sell a defective product? Certainly, the vehicle itself is sound, but the rust and tatty upholstery do not inspire. Perhaps a media blitz may entice a few more members attracted by whatever hype the advertising boys can come up with. However, when new members join and face the reality of old men destroying the ritual, of long, boring speeches, of food they wouldn't serve at home except at a child's birthday party, they promptly become that now common Masonic phenomenon, the Revolving-door Freemason.

Overall, one is led to strongly suspect that younger men are not joining the Craft because they perceive that Freemasonry, in its current form, has little to offer them. One suspects that cold sausage rolls and limp sandwiches have far more to do with this aspect of the problem than the more conventional wisdoms cited as reasons. As soon as you make something cheap and easy to join, nobody wants to.

The root cause, then, of this massive decline in Australian Masonic membership has been the failure of lodges to maintain their level of dues in real terms since World War Two. The result, in the post-war years, has been a consistent lowering of standards. The symptoms of the disease, not the cause, are poor festive boards, poor ceremonial, an aging membership, and a lack of new candidates wishing to join. Unfortunately, the reaction to the latter has been to take virtually anyone, which has further compounded the problem.

## **THE EUROPEAN MASONIC EXPERIENCE**

In reviewing the world Masonic membership figures, aside from noting the disastrous Australian decline, it is also noticeable that membership under a number of other Grand Lodges is expanding, notably in Europe. Could it be, therefore, that European Masons are doing things right?

The emphasis of European Freemasonry is in many ways different to Masonry in Australia. Current European annual dues average around the average weekly wage. In Europe, lodges are often not easy to join. Long waiting lists are common, and in some jurisdictions less than 50% of applicants are actually accepted. Standards are very high and ceremonial work is first rate. Few European lodges hold a festive board, as Australian Masons would understand the concept, but often hold a dinner, in style, associated with meetings.

Another strength of European lodges is their Masonic education. Under their system, it takes up to five years for a new Apprentice to receive the Master Mason Degree. In the intervening time, the candidate must participate in a great many Masonic education sessions, and is subjected to extensive oral and written examinations prior to his promotion to a higher degree.

In short, European Masonry is to some extent exclusive. It is certainly not easy to attain membership and, once attained, promotion takes considerable time and must be earned. The result of these high standards is that because it is hard to join, many wish to, and because those joining are given significant challenges, these standards are greatly appreciated and valued when attained. Clearly, these are reasons why European Masonry is thriving.

## **THE CREATION OF LODGE EPICUREAN**

In early 1992, a group of mostly young (but Masonically experienced) Geelong Freemasons, lamenting the state of the Craft, decided to do something about it in a practical way. They determined to form a new lodge which would be quite different in a great many ways from others working under the Victorian Constitution. Lodge Epicurean, as they named it, would be a top-quality lodge, with the highest standards. Anything not consistent with such high standards would be discarded.

It was decided to form the lodge on *Two Great Pillars*:

- 1 A high quality lodge must be paid for, therefore dues need to be commensurate with this. Based on the successful European formula, it was decided on dues at about the average weekly wage.
- 2 A lodge has only two main challenges: getting members, and keeping them.
  - (a) Getting Members

Only an existing member can propose a candidate. We suspect the reason why members do not propose candidates repeatedly, if at all, is because either consciously or subconsciously they do not

think their friends will be interested. There are perhaps a variety of reasons for this, but one is probably fear that in the event that their friends do not like the lodge their friendship might be affected. Members these days are rarely proud of the standards of their lodges. However, if a lodge has very high standards, members do not hesitate to ask their friends to join. This is the secret of gaining new members, and lots of them.

(b) Keeping Them

A high-quality lodge will greatly assist in holding new members in the longer term, but this is still not enough. There are other social organizations which offer quality. Freemasonry has one great thing more to offer, available nowhere else—Freemasonry! But what is it? It is not a charitable organization like Rotary or Lions (though some would make it out to be), although charity is an important part of its teachings. Masonry is first and foremost an education society, one which *teaches* morals and ethics—a way of life. Secondly, Masonry is a universal brotherhood, with all that implies. Thus, what we must do is *teach*. Exposure to the three degrees is but the beginning. What a lodge must understand is the overriding reason why a brother will sit in a Masonic lodge in the medium to long term is because he knows exactly why he is sitting there. The answer to keeping them, therefore, is to give them quality, and concurrently to educate them in Masonry.

It is therefore, with these thoughts in mind that Lodge Epicurean was created with 35 Founders in Geelong in February 1993.

## THE GUIDELINES OF THE LODGE

What were we to be about, specifically? As with every lodge, Epicurean has by-laws. However, by-laws are a document largely set in concrete, which are produced purely out of constitutional necessity. What we also created was the *Guidelines for the Operation of the Lodge*. This is a living, evolving document, and it is to this that we work. The lodge Committee of Management reviews the *Guidelines* and amends them from time to time. All members of the lodge subscribe to them. They are the practical expression of members' collective philosophy on how a Masonic lodge in general, and Lodge Epicurean in particular, should be run. All joining members receive a copy of the *Guidelines* prior to affiliating, as do all candidates after initiation. These *Guidelines*, with commentary where they are not completely self-explanatory, are as follows:

**1 *The aim of the lodge in all its endeavours will be quality, in ceremonial, in workings, and in after proceedings. We believe quality must be paid for.***

**Commentary:** This first guideline is based firmly on our belief of how a successful lodge should operate, in view of the European experience and how many pre-WWII lodges operated in Australia. The name 'Lodge Epicurean' was chosen simply to illustrate the dining/quality nature of the lodge. We believe it is a self-evident truth that people will only join an organisation in terms of what they perceive they will get out of it. This is human nature. Whether we like it or not, to a great extent this 'value' will be measured in monetary terms. Of course, with education, members will also see a great many other 'values' to be had in Freemasonry, as we know, more so than they will find in virtually any other social organisation. However, this revelation will not come immediately. Why do men pay high fees to join a golf club? How many would pay the dues at the Melbourne Club, or the Victoria Racing Club, if only they could get in? Why does the Melbourne Cricket Club have a 20 year waiting list to join? It is a question of the quality offered and what it is worth to them.

**2 *The lodge will meet six times per year, with an Installation meeting (the first in the calendar year), and five working nights, which may be degree work or lectures/speakers on Masonic subjects. The lodge will normally tyle at 6 pm.***

**Commentary:** English lodges only meet 4–6 times per year, and we thought this quite adequate. We also considered that less frequent meetings would assist in not rushing candidates through their degrees. In addition, we felt that in terms of time, six meetings per year was more in tune with the time restraints often placed on younger members in particular, in terms of occupational and domestic impediments.

**3 *Master Masons will be appointed to office strictly on merit, and encouraged to undertake the work as applicable. Progress to higher office will not be automatic, but will depend on the demonstrated proficiency, attendance and interest shown by each individual office-bearer.***

**Commentary:** In order to effect this guideline, the lodge has created a Promotions Committee, appointed by the Master. This committee annually determines those members of the lodge team to be promoted to higher office. The lodge holds one or more 'step up' rehearsals in the second half of each year, whereupon all lodge officers 'step up' into the next higher office and perform at such a rehearsal. The Promotions Committee policy is not to recommend the promotion of any brother who does not show his competence in this manner. Where a brother fails to satisfy the committee, he will be invited to remain in his current office (if performing satisfactorily in it) for a further year, and if no other Master Mason subsequently proves his competence for the position in question, then the Committee recommends a Past Master to fill the vacancy

created for the ensuing 12 months. The present Promotions Committee members represent a cross section of the lodge and includes two Entered Apprentices. In addition, the job of Inner Guard is annually 'up for grabs', assuming all members of the current ceremonial lodge team (Senior and Junior Wardens, Senior and Junior Deacons, and Inner Guard) gain promotion. Any Master Mason is welcome to try out for this position at a 'step up' rehearsal.

Clearly, the primary role of the Promotions Committee is to ensure the highest quality of ritual and ceremonial in the lodge. This has been quickly achieved, and the lodge is determined it will be maintained.

- 4 ***Visitors will be vouched for by the 'card system', with responsibility for this placed with the Tyler, Inner Guard and Secretary. No visitor may be admitted unless properly vouched for, or examined.***

**Commentary:** Under normal circumstances, the lodge tyles at 6 pm. All visitors then present are asked to enter the Temple for the Opening. Upon signing the Appearance Book each visitor is asked to fill in a visitor's card, detailing his name, rank, lodge, and which member vouches for him. These cards go to the secretary, and they are read prior to Opening. The vouching brother signifies to the Master accordingly. If a brother cannot be vouched for, he must retire to be examined by the Director or Tyler. We expect to 'pick up' any unvouched brother prior to Opening, and see to the matter then. Only when all visitors are vouched for does the Master open the lodge. The lodge holds the view that avouchment is, regrettably, virtually non-existent in Victorian lodges, but we determined that this would never be the case in Epicurean.

- 5 ***The Master shall annually appoint a Committee of Inquiry into proposed candidates. Candidates shall not be promoted to a higher degree unless proficient, and stringent examination will be introduced and maintained. A candidate must prove his proficiency to the Education Committee, prior to the night of anticipated degree promotion. Unless the Master considers there to be exceptional circumstances, no brother shall receive more than one degree per calendar year.***

**Commentary:** The lodge Committee of Inquiry is very diligent in its role. Of thirteen applications from potential candidates to join the lodge in its first year of operation (1993), two were unsuccessful and one was withdrawn. From the remaining ten, seven were initiated, and three held over until 1994. Applications continue to come in steadily.

The lodge has adopted the European System of a minimum time lapse between degrees of one year, together with strict proficiency requirements. We require the standard 'test questions' for promotion to the second and third degrees, plus several extras, bringing the total to twenty. They must also learn and recite their Obligation in each degree before Education Committee members. Master Masons raised in the lodge have a further twenty questions, plus their third degree Obligation to learn, prior to receiving the Grand Lodge certificate, or being promoted to any office beyond Steward. The lodge holds the firm view that our policy will both assist in members' Masonic education and cause them to place a high value on the promotion that they have earned.

It is useful to expand on how the lodge educates its members in general, and candidates in particular. As already mentioned, lodge members firmly believe that the only way a candidate will sit in a Masonic Temple in the medium to long term is because he knows exactly why he is sitting there. Clearly, Masonic education is vital.

While some may consider the lodge's proficiency requirements to be stringent, they are less so than in many other parts of the Masonic world, such as America and Europe. The lodge is absolutely determined to ensure candidates thoroughly understand the teachings of their current degree before proceeding to the next. Otherwise, there is no point in them advancing. As an assistance here, the lodge has formed a good lodge Masonic library from which books are lent to initiates and any other member wishing to borrow.

The lodge also considers that promotion needs to be earned and that if it is, it is more highly valued. While not compulsory as such, candidates are strongly encouraged to be very regular attenders at both meetings and rehearsals, and a lack of attendance will affect promotion. At every rehearsal, the lodge Education Committee meets informally with candidates to assist them with their proficiency requirements and to answer any questions. At Installations, and second and third degree workings, Education Committee members retire as appropriate with Entered Apprentices and Fellow Crafts to conduct Masonic education seminars. In summary, the lodge believes that candidates must gain the requisite Masonic knowledge to understand our teachings and be able to advance. The lodge also believes that, within reason, if something must be worked for, and waited for, it will be appreciated more.

- 6 ***The Mentor System shall be supported, and the Tyler (who is also chairman of the Education Committee) shall act as the lodge Mentor Officer.***

**Commentary:** The lodge Tyler is, by design, a very experienced brother. The lodge believes the office to be one of the utmost importance. The Tyler doubles as chairman of the lodge Education Committee and leads Masonic education seminars regularly held in combination with meetings and rehearsals. He is *ipso facto* the lodge Mentor Officer, supported by the members of the Education Committee.



- 7 *In view of the lodge's commitment to benevolence, a Charity Collection shall occur at each second Rising or, if a first degree ceremony, during the N.E. Charge. No raffle shall be held in connection with any lodge dinner. The lodge shall regularly donate appropriately from its Benevolent Fund to such charitable organizations as it may select.*

**Commentary:** This guideline is largely self-explanatory. In Victorian terms, a charity collection during the Northeast Charge is unusual, but it does occur in other States. Nonetheless, it is very effective in reinforcing the lessons learned in that portion of the ceremony. The lodge regularly receives over \$100 per charity collection, and this is applied to both Masonic and non-Masonic charities.

- 8 *Unless it be the official representative of the Grand Master, it shall not be the practice of the lodge to formally receive visitors after the lodge has been opened. All visitors will be asked to attend the opening. Any late-coming members or visitors (properly vouched for) may enter the lodge at an appropriate juncture under the direction of the Tyler, salute in the west, and be seated in the lodge.*

**Commentary:** The lodge has done away with the reception of visitors and this saves a huge amount of time. All visitors are asked to be present at the opening. Late-arriving visitors are admitted after the opening at an appropriate juncture, shortly before the alarm. The Inner Guard then reads out their vouching cards (passed inside to him by the Tyler), and visitors are vouched for prior to their admittance. An unknown brother will have been examined and vouched for by the Tyler. When 'late-coming' visitors are admitted, they salute the Master and are seated according to their rank. The Master does not receive any visitor individually except that, of course, should the Grand Master, or his official representative be attending he will receive him formally. Prior to the alarm, however, the Master welcomes all visitors, *en masse*. These procedures ensure that at all meetings the degree ceremony to be worked is commenced no later than 6.20 pm, and on occasions a start has occurred as early as 6.15 pm. This permits the meeting to conclude by about 7.30 pm and allows members to be sitting down at dinner, after pre-dinner drinks, by 8 pm.

- 9 *The lodge shall hold one rehearsal before every meeting, on the Wednesday prior.*

- 10 *It shall be the policy of the lodge that the Master shall install his successor.*

**Commentary:** This is an old Masonic tradition, followed in England and in other States such as New South Wales. The lodge believes that if a Master is competent to hold the position, he must be competent enough to install his successor.

- 11 *The lodge will only 'farm out' excess degree work to lodges known to us to work quality ceremonial and hold quality repasts, such as the Lodge of the Golden Fleece or The Lodge of Commerce, or a daughter lodge when formed. If the lodge does decide to provide a candidate(s) to another lodge in Geelong and District, such would only be on the basis of Lodge Epicurean visiting officially and our team of officers performing the ceremony.*

**Commentary:** This is largely self-explanatory. The lodge is not interested in low standards being inflicted upon our candidates. Only where it is ensured that such is not the case will an Epicurean candidate be allowed to receive a degree in another lodge.

- 12 *The minutes of the previous regular meeting, together with a copy of the Summary of Grand Lodge Correspondence, will be circulated with the lodge summons to every member. This should enable administrative matters to be dealt with expeditiously in open lodge, and the night's main work commenced soon after opening. The evening's work should commence no later than 6.20 pm.*

**Commentary:** After the lodge is opened, business is expedited very speedily. The minutes and Summary of Grand Lodge Correspondence is pre-circulated to members, allowing them to be taken as read. The actual Grand Lodge correspondence is tabled for members who desire to read it later. The lodge holds the view that the seemingly interminable reading of minutes, correspondence, and admission of visitors in other lodges is boring, unnecessary, and at best a waste of time, and thus detrimental to Freemasonry. As far as Epicurean is concerned the only thing important in a lodge meeting is the degree ceremonial—conversely what happens either side of the ceremonial is considerably less important and should be effected in the least possible time.

- 13 *Dues of the lodge are as follows:*

*Ordinary Member who is not a member of another lodge:*

*Grand Lodge fee \$35, lodge administration fee \$60, dining fee \$270 = \$365.*

*Ordinary Member who is a member of another lodge:*

*lodge administration fee \$60, dining fee \$270 = \$330.*

*Country Member who is not a member of another lodge):*

*Grand Lodge fee \$35, lodge administration fee \$60 = \$95.*

*Country Member who is a member of another lodge:*

*lodge administration fee only = \$ 60.*

*Joining Member's fee & Initiation fee: = \$100.*

*Ordinary members pay the dining fees (6 meetings x \$45 = \$270) in their annual dues. Country members (members residing more than 60 km from the Geelong Post Office), pay their dining fee on each occasion they attend.*

*Dining Entrée Cards: Upon the payment of dues, an ordinary member shall receive six Entrée Cards for dining in the ensuing year. If a meeting is missed, the extra card(s) may be used for an invited guest of the member. All entrée cards need to be redeemed in their year of issue.*

**Commentary:** As will be seen, the annual fee for each member is \$365—one dollar per day, and is in the range of the average weekly wage. Most members pay this quarterly by direct bank debit, and find it is hardly missed from their bank account. The dining component of \$270 is costed at \$45 per dinner over the six ‘all inclusive’ dinners per year (\$45 x 6 = \$270).

When a member pays his annual fee he receives six dining cards redeemable at lodge dinners. A ‘Duty Steward’, appointed for each meeting, collects these at the door of the restaurant after each meeting. If a member misses a meeting/dinner for any reason, he can use his extra card at a subsequent dinner for a guest. However, all cards must be redeemed in the year of issue. In other words, while the dining component of the annual fee is paid ‘up front’, it is redeemed by the member over the year. Thus, the effective dues of the lodge are only \$95 per year. A second category of membership is that of Country Member. This applies to members residing more than 60 km from the Geelong Post Office (i.e. members living in Melbourne). These members only pay the annual dues of \$95, but *not* the dining component. Instead, they pay \$45 for their meal on each occasion they attend.

The beauty of having the dining costs included in the lodge dues is that this tends to ensure a very high percentage attendance of members, often 80% or better. There is method in our madness!

**14** *Members, and visitors so desirous, will dine together after each lodge meeting, at a local restaurant. The lodge shall not, on any occasion, hold a Masonic festive board.*

**Commentary:** The lodge purposefully determined to meet on a Tuesday night—a night when most restaurants are empty. This invariably enables top quality cuisine and wines to be obtained at a satisfactory price per head. As well, we are able to request, and receive, the restaurant to ourselves. Upon its foundation, the lodge resolved to never hold a ‘festive board’. It is noted that such is unheard of in about 80% of the world’s Masonic lodges.

**15** *The lodge shall have a Dining Committee consisting of the Master, Secretary, Treasurer, and such other members as the Worshipful Master may appoint. The Dining Committee shall be responsible for the selection of restaurants and all matters related to lodge dinners.*

**Commentary:** The lodge Dining Committee meets infrequently as a body but nonetheless its members are very active. The Master delegates one or more members of the committee to ‘investigate’ various restaurants. This is achieved by them dining there anonymously, and later negotiating on behalf of the lodge. Restaurants used are determined by the Master with the consensus of involved dining committee members. A restaurant that proves its worth can expect a repeat visit. Thus far, the lodge has not dined at the same restaurant twice in one year, but this matter is kept flexible.

**16** *The Master-elect shall be solely responsible for restaurant selection for his Night of Installation, but may call on dining committee members to assist with arrangements.*

**17** *Members are welcome to invite guests to a lodge dinner. The member shall be responsible for the dining fee of any guest.*

**Commentary:** This has proved both popular and useful. Members are strongly encouraged to invite candidates they propose to lodge dinners, and the lodge itself invites each candidate to one dinner, as a ‘guest of the lodge’, prior to his initiation night. The beauty of this is that candidates get to know all the members of the lodge prior to joining. This has very obvious advantages.

**18** *Visitors, so desirous, may attend a lodge dinner, if space exists, upon paying the \$45 dining fee to the lodge Tyler prior to the opening of the lodge.*

**Commentary:** Visitors to the lodge are always welcome to attend lodge dinners. It needs to be noted that, officially, dinners are not part of the lodge. It is just purely coincidental that these dinners occur on the same night as Lodge Epicurean meetings. The point is that nobody (member or visitor), no matter how ‘exalted’, has a ‘right’ to attend a lodge dinner, but all are welcome to do so—provided each pays the \$45 dining fee.

**19** *It shall not be the practice of the lodge to run accounts. No member shall be entitled to attend any lodge dinner if his dues are outstanding, and all country members and visitors need to pay for their meal prior to partaking of it.*

**20** *The policy at lodge dinners is to strictly limit speeches. Under normal circumstances, no toasts of any nature will be offered. Limited ‘taking wine’ can be undertaken, at the Master’s discretion. These*

*restrictions do not apply to a guest speaker, who may have been invited to the dinner specifically to briefly address those present.*

**Commentary:** It is considered that most toasts proposed and responded to at festive boards were long and boring and not conducive to pleasant conversation and fellowship. Quite plainly, this is the reason Lodge Epicurean has no festive board. No speeches are given at any dinner. The Master might, briefly, 'take wine' with selected members, but that is all. The only time the Master speaks at dinner is after the main course, when he requests all present to 'circulate' to another table. This custom further assists the fellowship of lodge members.

- 21** *It will be in order for members, with the knowledge of the Master, to invite adult male non-members/potential candidates to dine with members at any dinner following a lodge meeting. Such a non-Mason needs to be the specific guest of a member, with his dining fee paid by him. It will be the responsibility of the hosting member to ensure such a visitor is properly attired in either a dinner suit or dark lounge suit.*

**Commentary:** This is effectively an extension of having candidates at dinner. Members regularly bring potential candidates—friends they wish to interest in Freemasonry in general, and Lodge Epicurean in particular—along to lodge dinners. Members feel very comfortable with this; they are safe in the knowledge that their friends are being offered quality all the way. Very often, these friends wish to join—the fellowship of the members, in a convivial atmosphere, spins its 'magic'. This method is very much in line with one of the lodge's 'pillars'—getting candidates.

- 22** *The lodge shall have a Social Committee, which shall consist of a chairman appointed by the Master, the Master, Secretary, Treasurer, and such other members and wives of members as the Master may appoint. It shall be responsible for organizing any social function (other than lodge dinners) connected with the lodge.*

**Commentary:** The lodge holds at least three quality social functions per year for members, their wives and friends. These include luncheons, dinners, cocktail parties, wine tastings and so forth. The lodge has no firm policy on ladies dining with members at lodge dinners, but may evolve one in the future. The ladies did dine with members, most successfully, after the December 1993 meeting, and such will undoubtedly be repeated in the future.

## **APPLYING THE EPICUREAN MODEL**

Certainly, given the will, any group of Freemasons can set up a quality lodge on the 'Epicurean model.' Clearly, it works. It reverses the great decline in quality apparent in most Australian lodges. It has attracted, and is readily holding, more than its share of worthy candidates and there is every reason to believe this situation will continue in the future. Certainly, given about 25 or so like-minded members, a new lodge on Epicurean lines is quite simple to erect.

But what of existing lodges? Can these be changed into Epicurean-type lodges? Only with difficulty, one would suggest. Unless all members are committed to the cause, it is quite unlikely to be successful. Opposition from even a few members in the lodge would make matters difficult.

With the success of Lodge Epicurean in Geelong, one can prove that a lodge on the 'Epicurean model' can be formed in larger population centres. Certainly, one could easily envisage several in Australian capital cities. Of course, most lodges in Australia once had similar high standards to that of Epicurean, which has in reality travelled 'back to the future'. Nonetheless, given that most remaining active Freemasons in Australia have lowered their tolerance to current levels, few will probably be prepared to suddenly adopt the dues structure inherent in the 'Epicurean model'.

Be that as it may, even in a smaller country town, if enough lodge members have the will, standards can be lifted. Any lodge can pre-circulate its minutes and a summary of its correspondence. Any lodge can require all its visitors to enter prior to opening. What is to stop a lodge having a 'low cost' counter meal at the local hotel after a meeting instead of a festive board? Later, perhaps, the standard of the food may improve still further. Later still, good wines might be served. A local restaurant might be tried. The ladies might be invited to dine, as might potential candidates. Our small country lodge might even institute a Promotions Committee. It might also form an Education Committee. Perhaps, with the large number of candidates it is now getting, it might require a greater time between each degree. It might even require candidates to learn a few things in order to advance. Why couldn't any lodge start off increasing its standards, even by a few small steps? Perhaps more parochial members might even come with you as you change. This then, is the prescription for Masonic renewal.

*Change* is the key word. Unless Freemasonry in Australia is prepared to travel 'back to the future', then it will not have one.

## **Appendixes**

Appendix 1: Table of World Masonic Membership Movements, 1980–1990

Appendix 2: Extract from the 1993 Lodge Epicurean Annual Report

Appendix 1

APPENDIX ONE: WORLD MASONIC MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS : 1980 - 1990.

	1980	L.	1985	L.	%A	%B	1990	L	%C	%D	%E	%F	%G	%H	%I
<b>AUSTRALASIA</b>															
New Sth Wls	77508	834	62582	705	19	15	47812	617	23	12	38	26	93	88	77
New Zealand	38432	427	32000	416	16	.2	27000	376	15	9	29	11	90	76	71
Queensland	31768	467	28628	463	9	.9	24441	451	14	9	23	3	68	61	54
South Aust.	18406	210	14806	201	19	4	11000	186	25	7	40	11	88	73	59
Tasmania	7540	78	6313	78	16	0	5177	71	18	9	31	9	96	80	72
Victoria	76178	814	56000	748	27	8	41513	655	26	12	46	20	93	74	63
West.Aust.	16933	293	14799	275	13	6	11610	258	22	6	31	12	57	53	45
<b>CANADA</b>															
Alberta	15319	166	13623	159	11	4	12233	155	11	3	20	7	92	85	78
Br.Columb.	23003	173	21418	172	7	.6	19961	176	7	2	13	2	132	124	113
Manitoba	11406	101	9927	100	13	1	8245	90	17	10	28	11	113	99	91
New Bruns.	7655	49	7396	52	3	6	6770	52	9	0	12	6	156	142	130
Nova Scotia	10722	116	9711	115	9	.8	8957	115	8	.8	17	.8	92	84	78
Ontario	108848	647	99040	650	9	.4	89053	653	10	.4	18	.9	168	152	136
Prin.Ed.Is.	1289	16	1277	16	.9	0	1181	16	8	0	8	0	80	80	74
Quebec	12330	108	10050	102	19	6	8595	100	12	2	30	7	114	101	86
Saskatch.	12044	166	10368	152	14	8	8909	133	14	13	26	20	73	68	67
<b>U.S.A.</b>															
Alabama	68064	419	62415	401	8	4	55313	386	11	4	19	8	162	156	143
Alaska	.....	...	1992	14	..	..	1897	17	5	18	5	18	...	142	111
Arizona	16164	70	16113	71	.3	1	14620	70	9	1	10	0	230	226	209
Arkansas	47501	362	43691	350	8	3	38929	343	11	2	18	5	131	125	114
California	197834	638	174423	607	12	5	145319	521	17	14	27	18	310	287	278
Colorado	36550	134	30880	133	16	.7	27189	126	12	5	26	6	273	232	215
Delaware	8967	31	8223	31	8	0	7610	31	8	0	15	0	289	265	245
Dist.Col.	11224	39	8980	33	20	15	7544	29	16	12	33	26	287	272	260
Florida	83448	326	82422	328	1	.6	74962	324	9	1	10	.6	256	251	231
Georgia	93315	468	86093	464	8	.9	77426	450	10	3	17	4	199	185	172
Hawaii	.....	...	.....	...	..	..	2600	12	..	..	..	..	...	...	216
Idaho	11433	84	10016	83	12	1	8450	76	16	8	26	10	136	121	111
Illinois	157514	758	139608	716	11	6	123627	674	12	6	22	11	207	195	183
Indiana	149094	556	136966	545	8	2	120100	528	12	3	20	5	268	251	227
Iowa	65357	483	56001	454	14	6	46225	399	17	12	29	17	135	123	116
Kansas	71825	394	65212	365	9	7	52182	339	20	7	27	14	182	179	154
Kentucky	95641	463	89284	465	7	.4	81913	456	8	2	14	2	206	192	179
Louisiana	44972	285	41768	285	7	0	36201	285	23	0	20	0	158	146	127
Maine	39908	204	36649	200	8	2	32986	199	10	.5	17	2	196	183	168
Maryland	40854	130	36611	129	10	.8	32448	128	11	2	21	2	314	283	253
Massachus.	95933	338	83464	325	13	4	73652	314	12	3	23	7	284	257	234
Michigan	122364	505	104366	475	15	6	85816	448	18	6	30	11	242	219	191
Minnesota	49371	246	42632	233	14	5	35388	217	17	7	28	12	201	183	163
Mississip.	47672	302	44032	300	8	.6	38247	291	13	3	20	4	158	146	131
Missouri	96078	548	85773	515	11	6	73146	483	15	6	24	12	175	167	151
Montana	16653	131	14443	126	13	4	12199	121	16	4	27	7	127	115	101
Nebraska	33146	236	30621	226	8	4	24110	202	21	11	27	14	140	135	119
Nevada	7614	42	7570	43	.6	2	6979	43	9	0	8	2	179	176	162
New Hamps.	14196	80	12962	80	9	0	11906	78	8	2	16	2	177	162	153
New Jersey	73629	231	62598	212	15	8	54013	180	14	15	27	22	318	295	300
New Mexico	12608	69	11400	67	10	3	9763	67	14	0	23	3	183	170	146
New York	172696	886	141551	838	18	5	113344	764	20	9	34	14	194	169	148
Nth.Carol.	72966	392	72326	394	.9	.5	68410	392	5	.5	6	0	186	183	174
Ohio	233254	680	210678	669	10	2	185647	653	12	2	20	4	343	314	284
Oklahoma	63917	332	56621	311	11	6	47584	289	16	7	26	13	192	182	165
Oregon	30726	178	26847	168	13	6	22477	162	16	4	27	9	172	160	139

Pennsylv.	218286	587	200397	557	8	5	179685	525	10	6	18	11	371	359	342	
Rhode Is.	12306	45	11230	45	9	0	8930	43	20	4	27	4	273	250	208	
Sth.Carol.	74903	324	72533	328	3	1	66340	330	9	.6	11	2	231	221	201	
South Dak.	13694	144	12184	138	11	4	10219	120	16	13	25	17	95	88	85	
Tennessee	97672	383	93478	381	5	.5	84747	376	9	1	13	2	255	245	225	
Texas	215182	972	200880	960	7	1	174492	940	13	2	19	3	221	209	186	
Utah	5142	31	4373	31	15	0	3883	31	11	0	24	0	166	141	125	
Vermont	13256	98	11932	97	10	1	10617	94	11	3	20	4	135	123	113	
Virginia	70056	348	64103	357	8	3	59057	355	8	.5	16	2	210	180	166	
Washington	48904	281	41269	258	16	8	34545	250	16	3	29	11	174	160	138	
West Virg.	43298	157	39145	155	10	1	34880	152	11	2	19	3	276	253	229	
Wisconsin	42351	278	35778	262	16	6	29327	249	18	5	31	10	152	137	118	
Wyoming	10693	52	9724	52	9	0	8237	51	15	2	23	2	206	187	162	
<b>EUROPE</b>																
Austria	1700	38	1800	46	6	17	1900	49	5	6	11	22	44	39	38	
Finland	3900	88	4300	97	9	9	4650	109	8	11	16	19	44	44	42	
Germany	21015	370	23148	388	9	5	25341	396	9	2	17	7	56	60	63	
Iceland	1885	9	2209	10	15	10	2563	11	14	9	26	18	209	220	233	
Luxembourg	173	4	193	4	10	0	276	4	30	0	37	0	43	48	69	
Norway	15896	35	15937	37	.2	5	16079	37	.9	0	1	5	456	430	434	
Switzerland	3545	54	3663	60	3	10	3739	64	2	6	5	16	65	61	58	
Turkey	4392	62	5243	71	16	13	7036	90	26	21	37	31	70	73	78	
<b>OTHERS</b>																
Costa Rica	250	11	375	11	33	0	395	10	5	9	36	9	22	34	40	
Cuba	22400	326	19892	324	11	.6	20666	314	4	3	8	4	68	61	66	
Guatemala	941	28	825	28	12	0	910	31	9	10	3	10	33	29	29	
India	12623	241	13788	262	8	8	15054	277	8	5	16	13	52	53	54	
Israel	3100	59	3125	62	.8	5	3154	63	.9	2	2	6	52	50	50	
Japan	3879	18	3397	18	12	0	2989	18	12	0	24	0	215	189	166	
Paraguay	531	6	750	8	29	25	850	11	12	27	37	45	89	94	77	
Peru	4694	132	5950	145	21	10	6240	154	5	6	24	14	35	41	40	
Philippines	14855	196	16347	223	9	12	14307	244	12	9	4	20	76	73	59	
Puerto Rico	4925	71	4100	71	17	0	3800	71	7	0	23	0	69	58	54	
Taiwan	907	8	835	9	8	11	754	9	9	0	17	11	113	93	84	

**KEY:** 1980 = G.L. membership in 1980. L. = No.of lodges in 1980.  
1985 = G.L. membership in 1985. L. = No.of lodges in 1985.  
%A = percentage decline of membership,1980-1985.  
%B = percentage decline of no.of lodges,1980-1985.  
1990 = G.L. membership in 1990. L. = No.of lodges in 1990.  
%C = percentage decline of membership,1985-1990.  
%D = percentage decline of no.of lodges,1985-1990.  
%E = percentage decline in membership,1980-1990(10 YEAR PERIOD)  
%F = percentage decline in no.of lodges,1980-1990(10 YEAR PERIOD)  
%G = average lodge membership,1980.  
%H = average lodge membership,1985.  
%I = average lodge membership,1990.

**NOTE:** Figures in **BOLD** represent an INCREASE.

England: England's nominal membership is 600,000. They know how many *memberships* they have, but until their computerization is complete (due early 1992), they do not know their actual membership - as a result of a large proportion of multiple memberships under the English Constitution. The guessimate is about 300,000 actual members. Even so, overall membership of the E.C. has NOT fallen.

Scotland: Same position as England, with a nominal membership of 250,000. Scotland also has a life membership system which tends to inflate figures somewhat. Life members are counted statistically by Scotland but pay no current dues, and many are not active lodge members.

The 10 largest % reductions in membership: 1980-1990.

1.	Victoria	46%
2.	South Australia	40%
3.	New South Wales	38%
4.	New York	34%
5.	Washington, D.C.	33%
6.	Tasmania	31%
7.	Western Australia	31%
8.	Wisconsin	31%
9.	Quebec	30%
10.	Michigan	30%

Prepared by Kent Henderson, PGSwdB.  
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## Appendix 2

Extract from:

### 1993 REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF LODGE EPICUREAN N° 906

#### Progress of the lodge:

The following statistics show the progress of the lodge since its foundation in February this year—a very satisfying result, thus far:

#### Lodge attendance

Lodge meeting	Work	Members present*	Visitors present	% members present (all members)	% members present (excl. country members)	Total present
27 February	Consecration	23	63	65%	88%	86
27 April	Lecture	20	4	54%	71%	24
22 June	First degree	24	4	61%	80%	28
24 August	First degree	28	9	63%	80%	37
26 October	First degree	30	11	62%	76%	41
14 December	Lecture	28	3	60%	76%	31

\* includes First Degree candidates, as applicable.

Average member attendance for the year: 61% (all members)

Average member attendance for the year: 80% (excl. Country Members)

#### Lodge membership

Lodge meeting	Initiates	Joining	Resignations	Deaths	Total
27 February 1993 (consecration)	(35 petitioners)	nil	nil	nil	nil
27 April	nil	3	1	nil	37
22 June	2	nil	nil	nil	39
24 August	2	3	nil	nil	44
26 October	3	3	1	1	48
14 December	nil	nil	1	nil	47

Net membership increase, February to December 1993 = 12, representing a 26% increase over the year.

Dr Geoff Harrison, PJGD, Worshipful Master  
Kent Henderson, PGSwdB, Secretary





## FREEMASONRY AMONG AUSTRALIAN PRISONERS OF WAR

by Brian Burton \*

**‘Endow us with such fortitude that in the hour of trial, we fail not,  
but passing through the valley of the shadow of death ...’**

*And was there any other valley of the shadow of death like unto Changi Prisoner of War Camp, and the building of that Burma railway?*

These words from the Chaplain’s prayer in the third degree are carefully inscribed on the top of the roll of foundation members of the River Valley Prisoner-of-War Masonic Club, listing some 25 Masons from Australian and Malayan constitutions, from the English constitution, and from Yokohama and Jamaica.

The men of the Eighth Division, imprisoned by the Japanese after the fall of Singapore, cemented themselves together in a real life brotherhood. This was no exercise in philosophic theory. This was the testing of Masonic principles under harsh and cruel conditions, where there lived no hope. And yet, those men came to prove that through the help of the Great Architect of the Universe, and through their brotherhood, they were able to rise from the tomb of transgression to shine as the stars.

The story really begins on 2 February 1941, when the 22nd Brigade, part of the 8th Australian Division, known as Elbow Force, embarked on the huge, grey *Queen Mary* in Sydney Harbour. As the ship left for an undisclosed destination, assumed by the men to be the Middle East, the Masonic association began, as small groups identified each other, and gathered in one of the cabins, and just sat and talked. By the time they reached Singapore, there were forty of them.

Near the Cocos Islands, the *Queen Mary* left the convoy and headed for the Straits of Johore. The troops were disembarked at the Naval Base on Singapore Island, and then dispersed up along the Malayan peninsula for training.

The Masons soon sought out the Malayan lodges, like Lodge Elliott No 3557 EC in Malacca, when batches of khaki-clad figures often over-taxed the catering in the South, and sent the Stewards scurrying outside to obtain more food as the number of visitors grew. One New South Wales Mason, whose name and mother lodge have not been preserved, had no time for his third degree before leaving Australia, so arrangements were made for Lodge Elliott to raise him. The officers for the night were made up from New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia, all with differing ideas about perambulations.

To find a lodge, the men would hire a taxi, and ask the driver for the ‘rooma honta’, the haunted house.

But then, the Japanese attacked, and their war had to begin. After a seven-day battle for the island, the Allied forces capitulated, and Singapore was taken on 15 February 1942, twelve months after the 8th Division had occupied the peninsula. Apart from the 55,000 Allied troops who became guests of the Japanese, there were also about 3000 civilian internees, including about 250 Freemasons, who were able to take their lodges with them into prison—not in actual hardware but in their hearts.

One such civilian internee was WBro Baldwyn Lowick, Deputy District Grand Master, Eastern Archipelago, English Constitution, who had been given full authority from the District Grand Master because of illness. He tried to maintain the continuity of lodges as far as possible, but insisted that lodges would only meet for the transaction of business. No one was to be initiated. The lodges continued to meet, and kept a record of their meetings. Some 42 dispensations were given for regular lodge meetings, without regalia or furniture. The strongest lodge meeting under these conditions was Lodge St George No 1152 EC, Singapore.

\* WBro Rev Brian Keith Burton, BA, is a PM of his mother lodge, a Grand Lecturer, a full member of the Research Lodge of New South Wales, and a corresponding member of Lodge of Research No 218 VC. He is an ordained minister of the Presbyterian Church, and has served as a chaplain in the RAAF (with the rank of Flight Lieutenant) in the Viet Nam War, and as a prison chaplain. He is the author of two books, a novel about the prison system and a local history of the Corowa district. He has built his own home for retirement, makes furniture, and even a small pipe organ; he would love to restore a river boat, and (like Bro Sykes) has been a keen radio ham for 40 years.

The Australians were ordered to occupy the Changi barracks of the Gordon Highlanders, where they were left to their own devices until the Japanese could complete wiring them in. Then they were organised into working parties. Depression and a feeling of hopelessness began to grow as they realised what had happened. Then, they began to adjust. A concert party was organised. A sort of unofficial RSL began to care for the men. Lectures and classes on all sorts of subjects were organised.

And groups of Masons began to gather wherever they could find secrecy. Some met in the clock tower beside the barrack square on a Sunday afternoon, and they carefully proved every brother. They did nothing but talk, and listen as some Past Master recited part of the ritual. They discovered a copy of Fort Newton's *The Builders*, and they shared it round, each brother being asked to give a talk on the chapter he had read.

Several Masons living in the Roberts Barracks, which had become their hospital, decided to try to organise the informal groups for mutual support. They included Padre Benjamin and WBro Fred Stuart. Their first move was to gain the agreement and support of the Camp Commander, General Percival. When Padre Benjamin approached him, the General had just returned from Japanese interrogation.

General Percival, himself not a Mason, agreed to support the proposal, saying that it 'supplied yet another means of preventing the deterioration of character and morale which [had begun] to show itself in some parts of the camp', and he added: 'Anything which will assist in the preservation of the discipline for which, I believe, your Craft is universally noted, will undoubtedly prove valuable.' But he laid down conditions that were firmly adhered to, such as:

- there was to be no discussion of political or military matters,
- nor any discussion of conditions of imprisonment, and
- precautions had to be taken to prevent surprise interruption.

A deputation also called on the Australian's Group Commander, Colonel Collins, who was a Roman Catholic. He gave his permission for Masonic meetings, and even offered to provide some sort of alibi in case of discovery, because the Japanese had strictly forbidden any Masonic meetings in their routine orders.

So 47 brethren met in the Officers' Mess in the Roberts Hospital on 18 December 1942 to found what was at first called the Roberts Hospital Prisoner-of-War Masonic Association, and WBro Fred Stuart, of Ballarat Re-union Lodge No 392 VC,<sup>1</sup> was elected inaugural Worshipful Master.

This Prisoner-of-War Association met 21 times, before disbanding in May 1944. The largest attendance was 169, and the smallest the first meeting with 47. The average attendance was 84. During the first six months, there was a membership of 74 (40 Australian, 34 British) from 10 different constitutions, namely: English, Irish, Netherlandic (South Africa), New South Wales, Queensland, Scottish, Tasmanian, United States, Victorian, and Western Australian. Two hundred had attended the meetings, representing 175 lodges around the world.

Not having a Charter or Warrant, and having members from different constitutions, it was not possible to work any degrees, but all the degrees were exemplified in many different rituals. At first the meetings were held in the Command Church, and later moved into the St Luke's Church, Selarang. Since there was no Japanese restriction on religious worship, this venue was most convenient, as, at any sudden emergency, the Masonic meeting could easily become a church service led by Padre Benjamin.

They improvised what they needed. The working tools of the three degrees were made from the aluminium ceiling fan blades. A pair of wands had been doorway architraves. The hospital broom parted with fifteen inches to become a baton. An English brother, Pickersgill, painted tracing boards, before he was posted up country, winning his colours from natural sources, such as the soil around the camp.

Then they discovered that there was a representative of the United Grand Lodge of England present in the camp, and they had been operating within that Grand Lodge's jurisdiction without any permission. The representative was WBro H W Wylie, PGD (EC), Past Assistant District Grand Master of Eastern Archipelago. He was not very pleased, because he had heard that the Changi 'lodge' had been initiating candidates and working degrees. After carefully explaining that they were working as a Lodge of Instruction only, in order to 'make a daily advancement in Masonic knowledge', they received the blessing of WBro Wylie, who subsequently visited the Association on several occasions and even gave a lecture.

Many lectures were given on subjects such as the Two Pillars, the Origins of Freemasonry, Other Degrees, Masonry in Malaya, Masonry Down Under, and Signs and Symbols. But perhaps the best remembered lecture was by Brother Wylie himself, entitled *The Lesser Lights*. He described the three orders of architecture, the Corinthian, Doric and Ionic, but then came the ultimate strength of his lecture, and—I want to quote his ideas at length—he said:

All our work, any excellence of ritual, unbroken attendance, and all the ordinary attributes of human life, are as nothing unless the main principle on which we work is that of a brotherhood with the Fatherhood of God. The two are inseparable, Love being indivisible.

I make an earnest appeal to all brethren that while here, we embrace this finest of all Masonic opportunities, to exhibit those Jewels of the Craft about which we learn in lodge, and which are

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<sup>1</sup> The warrant of this lodge was returned on 7/9/82.

all epitomised in the Jewel of Charity. This virtue we all know and appreciate should be the main pillar of our Craft. It consists not only in the charity of giving of material effects, but in a daily exhibition of charity of mind, expression, speech, action and behaviour to all comrades in this Camp, whether senior or junior, and whether members of the Order or not.

We, as Freemasons, represent a force for all that is wise, strong and beautiful.

There are numberless occasions when, through various avenues, we may be able to strike a chord in some comrade's heart, be he Freemason or not, which may well cause him to stop and think most deeply. In many cases, we might assist him even in some fatigue, allay some anxiety of mind, or cure some resentment which might otherwise cause him hours, perhaps, of unnecessary suffering and brooding.

May it indeed be true of us all, that whenever we are known to be a member of the Craft, the World may know we are of those to whom the burdened heart may pour forth its sorrows, the distressed prefer their suit, whose heart is guided by justice and whose hand is extended by benevolence.

After the lecture, Padre Benjamin commented that it had been 'the finest sermon heard in this POW Camp'.

The Association continued the practice of a practical charity. Their monthly subscription was five cents, unless they were in hospital or up country. The money was used to provide for their brethren in hospital, since, on the Japanese principle, if they did not work, they were not paid. They also set up a Christmas Toy Fund for the children who were in the Gaol. And they conducted one Masonic funeral, when 40 of the brethren gathered around the grave of a young lad who had been wounded by a shell splinter, and developed cancer of the spine. At his last attendance, they brought him in on a stretcher, and stood him up along the wall beside the secretary's table. The minutes indicated that he was Bro J K Russell, a visitor to the Association. At the conclusion of the Military Funeral, the Masonic Ceremony was conducted by WBro Rev J J Benjamin and WBro F C Stuart.

Another interesting lecture was on the Scottish Constitution, during which it was argued that Scottish Freemasonry was much older than English Freemasonry. The Association secretary was quick to point out that this might have been a simple matter of the English not keeping permanent records, unlike the POW Masonic Association, which at that time was recording their minutes in quadruplicate to ensure their survival.

At first, the minutes were only kept in duplicate, hoping that after the war they might be deposited with the United Grand Lodge of England. But after the war, copies of the minutes and of relevant correspondence were returned to Australia and held by Lodge Liberation No 674 in Victoria. I have been provided with a copy, and intend to deposit these papers with the NSW Grand Lodge library for future reference and study.

Towards the end of their meetings, when the hope of freedom had grown much stronger, the Association appealed for a design for a medallion to commemorate their association, and they insisted that the year 1945 be left off. It was their firm intention to be back home with their loved ones in 1945. The winning design used the symbolism of the Changi Tree. This was a 45 metre high tree, standing on an isolated hill, so prominent that it was marked on Admiralty charts. Since it could have been used by Japanese artillery as a ranging mark, sappers destroyed the tree before Singapore fell. But during the years of captivity the tree began to grow again, so that by the time the war ended it was certain that the tree had not been destroyed, but would live. Hence the motto on the medallion—*Dissectus non mortuus*—broken, but not dead.

Then, there was the strange case of Mr Voorwinden. The Association was always careful to prove any new member and as the membership grew, they appointed two Past Masters to conduct the examination. But difficulty arose with the different constitutions. Mr Voorwinden, a Dutchman from Java, had been examined in his home lodge at Soerabaia, before the war commenced, and he claimed that he had been initiated under the Dutch Constitution, the Great East of the Netherlands, while he was in Changi prison, giving his mother lodge as Changi.

The initiation, without the knowledge of the English Grand Lodge representative, was a discourtesy, and according to Australian Constitutions, would have to be invalid. The Dutch were assumed to have similar regulations. But the Dutch were late arrivals in the Camp, and at that time they had no country of their own. It was argued that British Malaya was enemy-occupied territory. The Netherlandic Constitution had provision for field lodges, similar to those held on board ships, when seven Master Masons were required to be present. It was also pointed out that the candidate had a good Masonic knowledge, and that he had acted in good faith.

The regularity of this initiation was questioned by the Association. They referred the case to WBro Wylie, since they recognised only the English Grand Lodge jurisdiction and, on taking legal advice, WBro Wylie agreed with them that the initiation was irregular, and that Mr Voorwinden should be excluded from any future meetings. The correspondence on this interesting case is preserved with the minutes.

The anniversary meeting of the Association on 18 December 1943 was celebrated with their only South, when they were inundated with an attendance of 122 brethren. They had been instructed at the previous meeting to bring with them 'cups, small', because the banquet would not be that extravagant. They began to scrounge rice, and made the impossible request to the cooks to 'do something with it'. Some of the men who worked on the wharves were able to procure a native sugar called gula-Malacca, which was thrown in with the rice. They

even made their own coffee for the occasion. Rice was placed on a sheet of iron and a fire lit under it. When it was reduced to charcoal, boiling water was poured on it and at least it looked a bit like coffee!

The Association held its final meeting on 4 May 1944, when an emergency meeting was held in the Hospital office. They had been warned by their Australian Commander, Brigadier Galleghan, a member of their Association, that meetings should cease for security reasons.

A brother had been brought into the Camp Hospital. He had been sentenced to four years imprisonment in the infamous Outram Road Gaol in Singapore, for espionage. When he was arrested, a Masonic ritual was discovered among his possessions, which resulted in beatings and torture. Bro Wylie visited him, and heard from him a whispered warning that all Masonic activity should cease immediately, as the Japanese were about to launch extensive investigations. Furthermore, officers and men were about to be segregated and moved.

The River Valley Masonic Association was the inspiration of WBro Derby Robertson, a member of Lodge Geneva No 514, at Kyogle, New South Wales. He was an engineer with the 8th Division, and met up with Major Cyril Wild, who was a member of Lodge Yokohama No 1092 EC, in Japan.

When Singapore fell, Robertson was imprisoned in Changi for a short time, before being transferred to the River Valley Road Camp, where again, he met up with Cyril Wild. Because of his fluency in Japanese, Wild became General Percival's interpreter, and he was killed in a plane smash after the war, while working for the War Crimes Tribunal. Brothers Wild and Robertson called an inaugural meeting and 25 brethren from 23 different lodges attended, as mentioned at the beginning of this paper. They met in a small workshop which was used for religious meetings. They drew up a Charter, designed by Robertson, and decided to keep records.

They functioned for eight months until most of their members were transferred to the Railway camps. When Robertson left for the Burma railway, Wild hid the records of the Association under the front seat of his jeep, and Robertson was able to recover them as the war ended. He brought the roll of the foundation members back to his mother lodge, where they are now preserved.

While the secrecy of the Masonic meetings in Changi saved the brethren from Japanese persecution, yet their meeting was always forbidden, and in some other camps, the brethren were not so fortunate. In the POW Camp at Batavia, Java, early in 1942, the Japanese began to search out any Masonic activities, and most of the prisoners destroyed any papers or rituals that might incriminate them. But some were not so careful. The Japanese found them out, and brutally tortured them. The Japanese locked six suspects in a cell, and demanded information on what happened behind the closed doors of the lodge. They were not interested in rituals, because they were readily available from bookshops, but what they really wanted to know was the nature of Masonic business, and what plans were being prepared for world domination, because the Japanese were convinced that world Masonry was the greatest threat to their own ambitions for a Greater East Asia Empire. The Japanese would not believe that lodges had nothing to do with politics, or world plans, so they proceeded to apply pressure for information by inserting wooden spills soaked in petrol under fingernails, and setting them alight.

On leaving Australia, some Masons obtained certificates from their Grand Secretary, documenting their membership. Many Masons destroyed their certificates at the fall of Singapore, but some preserved theirs, at great risks.

Here are a couple of personal stories:

Bro Bob Monk joined Lodge Condobolin No 185 NSWC as a Lewis in 1935. When he enlisted, he was posted to 22nd Brigade, 8th Division, and sent to Malaya. There was an officer in his unit that he came to know well, who, one day, warned him to be careful about what he was sent to do, and he replied that he had been taught to be cautious. The officer replied that he was taught to be cautious, too, but at that time they were in the jungle training and there was no local Masonic activity. The night that Singapore fell, word flew around about the Japanese attitude to Freemasonry, so Bob destroyed the certificate that he had received on leaving Australia.

After a few weeks in Changi, he was sent to work on the wharves. One day, sitting having his lunch, he noticed that the chap beside him was reading a book. Bob asked him if he understood what he was reading, because he could see that it had something to do with Masonry. The fellow showed Bob the book, and told him that he certainly understood it. It was a copy of an English ritual, and eventually he presented Bob with the book. He was Bro Robb, of Lodge Kinta No 3212 EC at Ipah, who had been a volunteer in the Malayan army.

Bob kept that book with him until the end of the war. He covered it with white paper, and drew a Roman cross on the front, and printed the words 'Holy Bible' across it. Whenever the Japs searched his kit, and picked up the book, Bob would yell out: 'Prayer Book', and the Japs would leave it alone. It was the only book that he had through all his years of imprisonment, and he constantly read it. He believes that it kept him sane.

To finish his story—he was sent on a convoy to Indo-China, which was attacked by American submarines that destroyed all the ships except the one he was on and a destroyer. They limped into Saigon, and he was sent to work on the railway, possibly in Cambodia somewhere. When the war ended he made his way to Saigon, where no one was able to assist him to be repatriated to his homeland. He lived with a French family until General Slim came through with his Burma Forces, and his repatriation to Australia was arranged.

Bro W E Kirley joined Lodge Banksmeadow No 359 NSWC<sup>2</sup> as a Lewis in 1940. In April 1941, he was in Malaya with the 8th Division, when he attended Lodge Zetland in the East No 508 EC, at Singapore. He was subjected to a series of questions and investigations before they would admit him.

During his imprisonment, he was in the camp at River Valley, where he met an English officer who remembered him from attending Lodge Zetland in the East. His name was passed on to an elderly Scotsman from Victoria, who took the young Mason for a walk around the perimeter of the camp several times, questioning him about Freemasonry, and feeding him wrong answers. Eventually, he was accepted into the River Valley Masonic Association.

They had informal meetings, believing that they could not hold a lodge because they had no Constitution, and they all agreed to this. So they met and talked, but above all else, they felt that they had the sort of brotherhood that they had been deprived of because of their incarceration.

The final question then is why did they do all this? Why did they seek out their brethren, knowing that they were walking straight into dangerous territory? Why did they risk their lives for the sake of Freemasonry? And even further, why did they decline to work any degrees? Who would have known if they had initiated some new brother, to share something precious with him—they might all be dead within the month—none of them might survive the war. Would it matter that much, if they gained something from the working of a real degree rather than just an exemplification?

The point of view that they took was that they had no Charter or Warrant to display. Furthermore, they came from many different Australian lodges, and there was not a sufficient number from any one lodge to allow it to be constituted.

The final entry in the minutes of the Changi POW Association gives some light on the reason why they did what they did:

There being no further business, the closing prayer was given, and the lodge was closed. The brethren departing in harmony at 6 pm, being sorrowful at the thought that they had, perhaps, attended the last Regular Meeting of the Association; yet mindful of the Blessing of the G.A.U. Who had allowed us to have, during this period of stress, strain, and anxiety, so many happy evenings together, reviving the Spirit of the Craft, and sharing mutually in the benefits and joys of its Message.

And there were other reasons for them calculating the dangers.

It was an oppressively hot climate. Their clothes wore out and were not replaced. They suffered the pain of hunger. They were tired and dirty. But as they met together, they found peace and tranquillity. They were enclosed within a sanctuary of old familiar things. Their meetings were a reminder of things back home, before they had to face such privations, and also a hope of what might come again in the future.

To sit quietly among friends whom you could trust, and to hear those familiar words again, lifted a person out of the prison's walls and took them away from the wire. Day to day difficulties were put in their perspective, and a man was reminded of the possibility of the victory of mind over matter, and the final triumph of the human spirit. They had given up expecting help from the outside. They even began to doubt if the war would ever end. They watched their mates die from malaria and dysentery. They were sick from beri-beri. Drugs were not available, and the food they were offered would not replenish their strength. Their hope of survival was their own mental strength, their unswerving belief in the ancient landmarks.

Under such adverse and strange conditions, the Craft justified its own existence, not as any idle or curious theory, but as a living force. Those who survived owed it to the love and the care of some Brother, whether he was a Mason or not, and to the Fatherhood of God, however you might describe him.

The experience of Brotherhood under such extreme conditions was so strong and memorable, that on their return to Australia, the Masons of Changi came to see the Consecration of their own POW lodge, Lodge Liberation No 674, Victorian Constitution, on Monday 14 November 1949, when WBro Abramovitch was installed as Master. The lodge continues to meet to this day, using as its symbolic badge the Changi Tree and the motto, *Dissectus non mortuus*—Broken but not dead, and therein lies fertile ground for research that would provide the second chapter of the men who failed not in their hour of trial.

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2 This lodge met at the Sydney suburb of Mascot, until they handed in their warrant on 23 October 1986.



## OUR SEGREGATED BRETHREN, PRINCE HALL FREEMASONS

by Tony Pope \*

In theory, Freemasonry acknowledges no colour bar, but opens its doors to ‘just, upright and free men of mature age, sound judgement and strict morals’, regardless of race, colour or creed, provided they believe in the Supreme Being. In practice, this has not always been so,<sup>1</sup> and is not so today. In the United States of America a system of segregation developed and has been maintained for over 200 years.<sup>2</sup> From time to time isolated and unsuccessful attempts were made to change this situation. Now a more determined effort has been initiated and is gathering momentum. The acknowledged goal is not complete integration but mutual recognition and intervisitation.

This paper will outline the origins and separate development of Freemasonry among African-Americans, touch gently on the problems of regularity of origin and modern rules of recognition, and record the journey towards desegregation. Where distinctions are made on the basis of race or colour, the terms *Black* and *White* are used throughout this paper (except in direct quotations), as plain and neutral descriptions, devoid (one hopes) of offensiveness. The opinions expressed are those of the person to whom they are attributed. The personal opinions of the author, whether express or implied, are not necessarily shared by any organisation with which he is associated.

The principal participants in the modern situation are the *Black* Grand Lodges of Prince Hall Affiliation and the *White* Grand Lodges of the United States of America and (to a lesser extent) the Grand Lodges of Canada. The United Grand Lodge of England is an ‘interested party’, both historically and by its current pronouncements, which carry great weight with English-speaking Grand Lodges among the ‘spectators’.

The average Australian Mason knows nothing of Prince Hall. Those of us who have studied the subject over the past few years are in much the same position. There are three substantial handicaps for the Australian researcher who would determine the historical facts: first, the ‘tyranny of distance’, which effectively precludes the search for and examination of primary sources; second, the unreliability of many secondary documents, which include mistakes, personal bias and outright invention; third, the very real differences of historical outlook of *Black* and *White* Americans, their history having been written mainly by and for *Whites*. Nevertheless, some facts can be established beyond reasonable doubt, and others can be substantiated to varying degrees of likelihood, enabling the application of both logical reasoning and Masonic principles towards achieving a satisfactory conclusion.

\* WBro Tony Pope is a Past Master of the South Australian Lodge of Research, a member of Southern California Research Lodge, the Philalethes Society and the Phylaxis Society, corresponding member of lodges of research in England and Victoria, and editor of publications for the SA Lodge of Research and for AMRC. He has three unfulfilled ambitions in Masonry: to find a publisher for his book about Freemasonry in Tasmania; to be appointed representative of a Prince Hall Grand Lodge ‘near South Australia’; and to give a paper to each of the affiliates of AMRC—with four down and nine to go.

1 For example, in India—see generally Walker G E, ‘250 Years of Masonry in India’ (the Prestonian Lecture for 1979) in *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum* vol 92 pp172 *et seq* and *The Collected Prestonian Lectures 1975–1987*, Lewis Masonic 1988, pp83–103  
—and Germany, of which Gotthelf Greiner said in ‘German Freemasonry in the present era’ (1896 *AQC* 9:55 @72):

Brother J G Findel, of Leipzig, writes me: ‘Germany is divided into two parties: one with the principle of Humanitarianism, and the other the Christian principle.’ But cross currents would seem to exist, as I learn from Bro. E. Eberlein, W.M. of the Goethe Lodge at Poessneck, that the anti-Semitic feeling has invaded even those Lodges which profess the Humanitarian principle, and is often able to prevent the admission of Jews.

2 ‘As we enter the 21st century’, *North Carolina Mason*, March/April 1994, p1.



### Prince Hall and African Lodge

Two hundred and ten years ago, almost to the day, the Grand Lodge of England (Moderns) issued warrant number 459 to ‘African Lodge at Boston New England’.<sup>3</sup> The lodge was renumbered 370 in 1792<sup>4</sup> and, like all other lodges in the former American colonies under the Antients or Moderns, was erased from the rolls by the newly-constituted United Grand Lodge of England in 1814.<sup>5</sup>

The foundation Master of African Lodge was a man named Prince Hall. Much has been written about him—mostly based on imagination or conjecture. His date and place of birth, his parentage and his initiation are all subjects in dispute. William Grimshaw, a Grand Master of the *Black* Grand Lodge established in the District of Columbia as Union Grand Lodge, wrote that Prince Hall was born in Bridgetown, Barbados, West Indies, in 1748, the son of an Englishman and a ‘colored’ woman of French extraction.<sup>6</sup> This version was adopted in the *Prince Hall Masonic Year Book*, an official publication sponsored by the Grand Masters’ Conference of Prince Hall Masons of America,<sup>7</sup> and by the *White* author and Masonic researcher, Harold Voorhis,<sup>8</sup> among many others. None of this can be substantiated, and Grimshaw has been totally discredited as an historian.<sup>9</sup>

From more reliable sources, it would appear that Prince Hall was born no earlier than 1735, no later than 1742, and probably in 1737/8. Notices in Boston newspapers of his death in December 1807 referred to him as ‘aged 72’.<sup>10</sup> A founder of the Massachusetts Historical Society, Dr Jeremy Belknap, in a letter dated 1795, referred to Prince Hall as ‘a very intelligent black man, aged fifty-seven years’. A deposition dated 31 August 1807 reads: ‘I, Prince Hall of Boston in the County of Suffolk, Leather Dresser and Labourer, aged about 70 years...’<sup>11</sup> The question was considered in the 1906 *Proceedings* of the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, and preference was expressed for 1738 as the correct date of birth, based on the Belknap letter, but among the other dates calculated from various sources was one for 1742.<sup>12</sup>

His place of birth and parentage have significance on the issue of whether or not he was ‘freeborn’. That was almost certainly the reason for Grimshaw’s invention. Others have claimed Prince Hall to have been born in Maryland,<sup>13</sup> England, and Africa. The basis for England as his place of birth is slender but attractive. In 1899 William Upton, a Grand Master of the *White* Grand Lodge of Washington and Quatuor Coronati local secretary for the state of Washington, had the opportunity to study some documents in the possession of the *Black* John T Hilton Lodge, Massachusetts. One of these, known as Prince Hall’s Letter Book, contains a handwritten record of correspondence to and from Prince Hall, and its authenticity and the accuracy of some of it is confirmed by records of the Grand Lodge of England (Moderns). In this book is a copy of a letter from Prince Hall to Rowland Holt, Deputy Grand Master of the Moderns, dated 4 June 1789, in which he reported: ‘...received into the Lodge since August two members, namely John Bean and John Marrant, a black minister from home but last from Brachtown, Nova Scotia’.<sup>14</sup> The phrase ‘from home’ might, in Upton’s opinion, ‘lead some to look to England for his nativity’.<sup>15</sup> Joseph Walkes, author and editor of Prince Hall publications, referring to this letter and others in the letter book, commented:

...there is a very good chance that Prince Hall was from England for it seems strange that an uneducated Black man living in Boston during that time could have had the contacts in England that Prince Hall obviously had.<sup>16</sup>

The arguments for Prince Hall being born in Africa are no stronger. George Draffen of Newington, a Past Master of Quatuor Coronati Lodge, noted that Prince Hall seemed to have always referred to himself as an

3 On 29 (or 20) September 1784 in the Grand Lodge Register of Warrants and Patents, 1784–1812; see Draffen G, ‘Prince Hall Freemasonry’ in (1976) *AQC* 87:70 @ 75&86.

4 by order of Grand Lodge 18 April 1792: ‘That the numbers of all the Lodges on Record be brought forward in regular Succession, by filling up the dormant numbers, caused by the Lodges erased at sundry Times.’—Lane J, *Handy Book to the Lists of Lodges*, London 1889, p103—and listed in the *Freemasons’ Calendar* for 1793.

5 see table, ‘A list of lodges on the roll of the United Grand Lodge of England, ad 1814’ in Hughan W J, *Memorials of the Masonic Union*, revised edn 1913, pp132–51.

6 Grimshaw W E, *Official History of Freemasonry Among the Colored People of North America*, Washington, DC, 1903; reprinted by Books for Libraries Press, New York 1971, p69.

7 Draffen, *op cit*, p70.

8 Voorhis, H V B, *Negro Masonry in the United States*, New York 1940; *Facts for Freemasons*, Macoy, New York 1951, revised 1953, p135.

9 Walkes, J A Jr, *Black Square & Compass*, Macoy, Richmond 1979, p8; *A Prince Hall Masonic Quiz Book*, revised edn, Macoy, 1989, p1; Draffen, *op cit*, particularly @ pp71, 74, 85 & plates 1–3.

10 *Boston Gazette, Independent Chronicle*, Walkes, *Black Square & Compass*, p3; Draffen, *op cit*, p71.

11 Walkes, *Black Square & Compass*, pp3,4.

12 Walkes, *ibid*, p9; see also Upton W H, ‘Prince Hall’s Letter Book’, in (1900) *AQC* 13:54 @ 54.

13 Upton, *op cit*, p54.

14 *ibid*, p60.

15 *ibid*, p54.

16 *A Prince Hall Masonic Quiz Book*, revised edn, p11.

'African', and expressed the view that he was born free and seized in Africa as a youth and sold in America as a slave. He conceded that the youth might have been born into slavery in Africa, or that he might have been born a slave in America.<sup>17</sup> However, Walkes explained the use of the term 'African' as a preferred synonym for 'Negro':

Using the January 14, 1787 Petition of African Blacks to [the] General Court for aid in establishing an African Colony, which Prince Hall signed, as their basis, there are those who believe that Hall's place of birth was Africa. But it must be remembered that during this period the term "Negro" was seldom used by Blacks; hence such terms as "The African Church", "The African School", or "African Lodge" were more in keeping with what Blacks considered themselves.<sup>18</sup>

Draffen's conviction that Prince Hall was at one time a slave was based on his acceptance of a document of manumission as authentic and relating to the Master of African Lodge. The document in question was published in the *White* research magazine, *Philalethes*, of April 1963:

This may certify [to whom] it may concern that Prince Hall has lived with us 21 [*or possibly* 25] years and has served us well upon all occasions for which reasons we maturely give him his freedom and that he is no longer to be reckoned a slave, but has been always accounted as a freeman by us as he has served us faithfully upon that account we have given him his freedom as Witness our hands this Ninth day of April 1770.<sup>19</sup>

The document was witnessed by William, Susannah, Margaret and Elizabeth Hall and dated 'Boston 12th April, 1770'. It was from the papers of Ezekiel Price (c 1728–1802), in the Boston Atheneum Library, and was published as part of an article by John Sherman, Grand Historian of the *White* Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, who stated that William Hall (c 1696–1771) was a leather-dresser and property owner, and probably set up his freed slave, Prince Hall, in business as a leather-dresser. Harold Wilson, Grand Historian of the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of New York, disputed Sherman's assumption that the Prince Hall referred to in the manumission was the eponymous Master of African Lodge, commented that there were several men of that name in Boston in that period, and also pointed out that the document published was a facsimile of a private record kept by Price of his activities as a notary, and not an original notarised document.<sup>20</sup> Walkes made unsuccessful efforts to locate the original document and to obtain a public record of anyone named Prince Hall manumitted in 1770.<sup>21</sup> These points were reiterated by Jerry Marsengill, editor of the *Philalethes* magazine:<sup>22</sup>

Another case concerns the manumission certificate which appeared originally in the *Philalethes* magazine. It is a copy of the original which was made by Ezekiel Price for his records. As far as I personally know, no one has seen the original. Regardless of this, if the certificate is a true and exact copy, it does not prove that the certificate was issued to the 'Masonic' Prince Hall. More than one man named Prince Hall resided in and around Boston at that time.

Records show that during the War of Independence there were at least three soldiers and one seaman named Prince Hall, who came from Boston or its vicinity, and there were at least seven marriages of persons named Prince Hall. They could not all have been the same man.<sup>23</sup> There is no evidence that the future Master of African Lodge was born into slavery, and none that he was a slave after 1770. Therefore, there are no grounds to say that Prince Hall was not both freeborn and free at the time of his initiation. It matters not, Masonically, that he *may* have been a slave in the interim.

### **Initiation**

On the subject of the initiation of Prince Hall into Freemasonry, Draffen quoted the *Prince Hall Masonic Year Book*:<sup>24</sup>

On March 6, 1775, Prince Hall and fourteen other free Negroes of Boston were made Master Masons in an army lodge attached to one of General Gage's regiments, then stationed near Boston. This lodge granted Prince Hall and his brethren authority to meet as a lodge, to go in procession on St John's Day, and as a lodge to bury their dead, but they could not confer degrees nor perform any other Masonic 'work'.

For nine years these brethren, together with others who had received the degrees elsewhere, assembled and enjoyed limited privileges as masons...

Walkes frankly admitted that it is not definitely known when and how Prince Hall became a Mason, 'as documentation showing dates have not been found', but went on to quote from the Belknap papers (the source

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17 Draffen, *op cit*, p90.

18 *Black Square & Compass*, p4.

19 *A Prince Hall Masonic Quiz Book*, p2.

20 *ibid*, pp10 *et seq*.

21 *ibid*, pp14–17.

22 Introduction to *A Prince Hall Masonic Quiz Book*.

23 from various sources gathered by Walkes, *Black Square & Compass*; Draffen, *op cit*.

24 Draffen, *op cit*, p70.

of Dr Belknap's information presumably being Prince Hall, himself):<sup>25</sup>

... I must inform you that he is grand master of a Lodge of free masons, composed wholly of blacks, and distinguished by the name of the 'African Lodge'. It was begun in 1775, while this town was garrisoned by British troops; some of whom held a lodge, and initiated a number of negroes. After the peace, they sent to England, and procured a charter under the authority of the Duke of Cumberland and signed by the late Earl of Effingham.

Walkes went on to say:<sup>26</sup>

Harry E. Davis, in his history of Prince Hall Freemasonry [*A History of Freemasonry Among Negroes in America*, 1946], wrote that Hall had been initiated in Lodge 441 which was a military lodge working under the Grand Lodge of Ireland and attached to one of the regiments in the Army of General Gage, and that the Master was a "Brother J B Batt".

It is difficult to ascertain the validity of this. The minutes of African Lodge which have survived raise as many questions as they answer. Prince Hall Freemasonry accepts that date and counts its beginning from that time. Much confusion exists concerning that period. Blacks were formerly uneducated, being restricted by law from acquiring an education, with "Black Codes" legally restricting more than two or three Blacks from assembling or holding meetings. To put the entire period in proper perspective one would need to understand the racial conditions of the time. One can not judge the events of the period in the same context as one judges the early beginning of the Caucasian Colonist...

Draffen compiled a list of British regiments stationed in or near Boston in 1775 that included the 38th of Foot (South Staffordshires), which had a lodge warranted by the Grand Lodge of Ireland, number 441. A member of the lodge was John Batt, whose name was registered with the Grand Lodge of Ireland on 2 May 1771. He served in the regiment from 1759 until his discharge at Staten Island (New York) in 1777. Draffen commented:<sup>27</sup>

Any minutes of the lodge while working as a military lodge are lost and it is impossible to say if John Batt was the Master in 1775. It is equally impossible to say whether or not the meeting at which Prince Hall was initiated was held regularly under the lodge warrant or was a clandestine affair with John Batt 'initiating' some gullible Negroes and pocketing the money they paid him. None of those made masons by John Batt on 6 March 1775 are recorded as being members of the lodge in the registers of the Grand Lodge of Ireland. I do not say that this is what happened, merely that it is possible. On the other hand the difficulties of communication with Dublin in the middle of a civil war were enormous and the fact that Prince Hall and his friends were not registered in Dublin is, in itself, no proof that their admission was not perfectly regular.

### ***Before the warrant***

In a letter to William Moody, a member of Lodge of Brotherly Love and later Master of Perseverance Lodge, London, dated 2 March 1784, Prince Hall wrote:<sup>28</sup>

Dear Brother

[*paragraph omitted*]

...I would inform you that this Lodge hath been founded almost eight years and we have had only a Permit to Walk on St John's Day and to Bury our Dead in manner and form. We have had no opportunity to apply for a Warrant before now, though we have been importuned to send to France for one, yet we thought it best to send to the Fountain from whence we received the Light, for a warrant: and now Dear Br. we must make you our advocate at the Grand Lodge, hoping you will be so good (in our name and Stead) to Lay this Before the Royal Grand Master and the Grand Wardens and the rest of the Grand Lodge, who we hope will not deny us nor treat us Beneath the rest of our fellowmen, although Poor yet Sincere Brethren of the Craft.

Davis published a similar but longer version of this letter, dated 30 June 1784, reproduced by Draffen,<sup>29</sup> evidently not copied into the letter book and thus unknown to Upton. It is not completely clear whether these were separate letters or two versions of one letter, but the second version was received by the Grand Lodge of England prior to the issue of the warrant.<sup>30</sup> The most significant difference between the two is the statement in the later version '... and had no Warrant yet but only a Permet [*sic*] from Grand Master Row [*sic*] to walk on St John's Day and Bury our dead in form which we now enjoy.' Thus we have two versions of the origin of the permit or dispensation to African Lodge—Master Batt, of Lodge 441 IC, and John Rowe, Provincial Grand

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25 Walkes, *op cit*, pp3,4.

26 *ibid*, p4.

27 Draffen, *op cit*, p73.

28 Upton, *op cit*, p56.

29 Davis H E, *A History of Freemasonry Among Negroes in America*, 1946, pp33-34; Draffen, *op cit*, p75.

30 This may be deduced from the list of exhibits produced by Bro Haunch on 13 May 1976, when Bro Draffen gave his paper at Quatuor Coronati Lodge.

Master for North America (Moderns) from 1768 to 1787<sup>31</sup>—or there may have been two such permits, one from each source. A permit from Rowe may explain in part why Masons made in an Irish lodge should apply to England for a warrant, but does not explain why Rowe himself did not issue the warrant. Sherman, however, speculated:<sup>32</sup>

The phrase, ‘a permit from Grand Master Rowe’ has masonic implications, and seems to indicate that he recognized them as masons, but the word ‘Permit’ seems out of place here. One would expect it to be a ‘Dispensation’. On the other hand John Rowe, outside his masonic connection, was active in local politics. He had been a Selectman of the town of Boston for a number of years and a Representative in the Massachusetts Legislature and on 3 June 1781 he was elected Town Moderator.

The first death among the members of African Lodge No 1 was that of a Peter Beath on 23 February 1781, and this was recorded in the minutes. These show that the lodge then purchased a ‘Paul’ [pall] which the members could use thereafter when burying their dead. They were required to purchase a share for each one at the time of joining the lodge. It may have been necessary for them also to obtain a permit from the town authorities to go on parade and to hold a funeral as a group. *This is conjecture* [italics added] but it would explain how Prince Hall might have obtained a permit from John Rowe as a public official, but not in his masonic capacity. In his letter to Mr Moody, Prince Hall may have realized that his reference to the permit might be recognized at Grand Lodge as granting him local recognition as a freemason.

Henry Coil adopted this conjecture as fact and went a step further, announcing:

So far from *recognizing* the Negro Lodge No 1 at Boston, Provincial Grand Master Rowe, acting in his civil capacity as a town officer of Boston, issued a *denial* of lodge action or authority by granting them only a ‘a permet [*sic*] to march on St John’s day and bury their dead in form’. [his italics]<sup>33</sup>

If there were any substance in Sherman’s conjecture or Coil’s assertion, one would expect John Rowe (or, after his death, the individual Moderns lodges) to have advised the Grand Lodge of England of any objections to African Lodge having been granted a warrant. There has never been even the suggestion of a scintilla of evidence of such correspondence.

Robert Nairn, a Canberra researcher, commented:<sup>34</sup>

It must be concluded that London issued the warrant for a Lodge without reference to their own Provincial Grand Master in Boston. Perhaps this was due (later justified) to suspicions of strained relations over the War of Independence or due to delays in correspondence or perhaps London believed Rowe was not being fair to Prince Hall.

Ralph Castle, of Queensland, summarised the activities of the *White* lodges in Massachusetts during and immediately after the War of Independence, and pointed out:<sup>35</sup>

For the next eight years, 1784–1792, Massachusetts was divided under three Masonic authorities, all somewhat irregular. The semi-active St John’s Grand Lodge under England [Moderns], the unauthorized leadership of Joseph Webb of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Scotland, termed the Massachusetts Grand Lodge, and the schismatic Independent [Grand] Lodge of the Rising States Lodge. So there you have it in early 1784, when Prince Hall wrote to London...

Among the documents examined by Upton in 1899 were ‘a few tattered sheets of paper, upon which are written rough minutes of African Lodge from 1779 to 1787’. They appeared to be notes from which the lodge minutes could be ‘written up’ and, unfortunately, contained nothing of significance to our present quest.<sup>36</sup> Walkes demonstrated that *other* ‘minutes’ of African Lodge were inaccurate transcripts of lost originals, made no earlier than 1817 and probably dating from 1825. He concluded: ‘It is clear that the rewritten minutes of African Lodge cannot be used as [a] basis for Masonic research. They have been proved to be completely unreliable.’<sup>37</sup> This view was endorsed by Marsengill: ‘The few records which exist cannot be depended on. One such record is the minute book of African Lodge ... Since the minutes were rewritten (and most probably altered) by John Hilton, it is difficult to use them as a source of good evidence.’<sup>38</sup> Sherman, in an endnote to his paper ‘The Negro “National” or “Compact” Grand Lodge’, reported that a microfilm reproduction of the records

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31 Denslow W R, *10,000 Famous Freemasons*, vol 4, Macoy 1961, p76; Cerza A, ‘Colonial Freemasonry in the United States of America’ in (1977) *AQC* 90:218 @222; Draffen, *op cit*, p74.

32 Sherman J M, in a review of Charles H Wesley’s *Prince Hall, Life and Legacy*, in (1977) *AQC* 90:306 @ 311.

33 Coil H W, ‘Negro contentions and defences’, previously unpublished, but included in Sherman’s, ‘The Negro “National” or “Compact” Grand Lodge’, in (1979) *AQC* 92:148 @ 158.

34 Nairn R J, ‘Prince Hall Freemasonry’, *Transactions of the Research Lodge of New South Wales*, (1994) vol 13 #6, p109.

35 Castle E R, ‘An Australian Freemason’s view of Prince Hall Freemasonry’, *Phylaxis*, vol 10 #1, p6.

36 Upton, *op cit*, p55.

37 *A Prince Hall Masonic Quiz Book*, pp8, 27.

38 Introduction to *A Prince Hall Masonic Quiz Book*.

of African Lodge from 1779 to 1846 was made in 1960 (or 15 February 1950<sup>39</sup>), on the recommendation of the White Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, with the cooperation of the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Massachusetts.<sup>40</sup> Draffen<sup>41</sup> stated:

The earliest record of freemasonry among coloured people in the United States is to be found on a sheet of paper in the archives of African Lodge in Boston. The document is dated 6 March 1775 – the final digit is only just legible – and has the heading:

By Marster Batt wose made these brothers	
Prince Hall	Thomas Sanderson
Peter Best	Buesten Singer
Cuff Bufform	Boston Smith
John Carter	Cato Spean
Peter Freeman	Prince Taylar
Fortune Howard	Benjamin Tiber
Cyrus Jonbus	Richard Tilley
Prince Rees	

At the foot of the sheet are certain figures which would seem to show that on the same date, or previously, some fourteen men were made ‘Marsters’, three ‘Crafts’ and thirteen ‘Prentices’. A second sheet shows payments of 45½ guineas which would indicate an initiation fee of approximately three guineas. There is nothing to indicate whether or not all three degrees were conferred on 6 March 1775 but even if this were so it would be nothing to cavil at. It was quite customary for a lodge to confer all three degrees at one meeting in those days, and if the lodge was a military lodge then it might be almost essential for the lodge to confer all three degrees at one meeting – who could tell when the lodge would next be able to meet? The date, 6 March 1775, is important for it was but a few weeks before the first shot of the War of Independence was fired at Lexington, itself but a few miles from Boston.

Christopher Haffner, commenting on the date of the above entry, wrote:

‘This date has been contested in American research with the statement that the ‘5’ is a recent defacement of an original ‘8’. An early microfilm shows a figure too faint to read and the ‘8’ is assumed to have been correct from other pages accompanying the first sheet of paper.’<sup>42</sup>

On a separate occasion, he remarked:

‘Harold Voorhis wrote an article (which he never published) in which he disputed the date of Prince Hall’s initiation, and thus ‘proved’ that he must have been made outside a chartered lodge. (How is it that no-one else had noticed this previously, and that after Voorhis had handled the original document it was found to have been defaced?)’<sup>43</sup>

Of course, the fact that the ‘top’ figure is a 5 is no indication that the original figure was not also a 5; it depends on the motive of the person defacing the original—and, in any event, none of the above researchers has pointed to evidence authenticating the document or given its provenance.

Voorhis gave the same list as Draffen, but then claimed:<sup>44</sup> ‘The candidates paid fifteen guineas for Entering; seven for Passing; and three for Raising.’ He cited no source for this statement.

Among the rewritten minutes of African Lodge which Walkes found to be completely unreliable was a list of fifteen names, giving dates when each was ‘Maid Marster’, during the period 1778–81.<sup>45</sup> The list is headed ‘Prince Hall—Grand Marster 1778’, and of the other fourteen names about half are identical or very similar to those of the 1775 list given by Draffen and Voorhis. At the end of Sherman’s review of Wesley’s book are photographic reproductions of two documents, Appendixes 1 & 2, which appear to contain the lists ‘Prince Hall—Grand Marster 1778’ (Appendix 1) and ‘By Marster Batt wose made these brothers’

39 Sherman’s review, *op cit*, pp308,313.

40 Sherman J M, ‘The Negro “National” or “Compact” Grand Lodge’, in (1979) *AQC* 92:148 @ 171, n1.

41 Draffen, *op cit*, p72.

42 *ibid*, p83.

43 Haffner C, ‘The Antient Charges and Prince Hall’s Initiation’, in *Philalethes*, April 1992, p39, and *Phylaxis*, vol 19 #1 p18. Harold Van Buren Voorhis was initiated in a White lodge in 1920. By 1940 he was a strong advocate of the regularity of Prince Hall Masonry, publishing *Negro Masonry in the United States* in 1940, and including favourable comments in *Facts for Freemasons*, 1951 (revised 1953). In September 1943 he even presented a paper to the Prince Hall Lodge of Research of New York (*Phlorony*, vol 1, p35). According to Walkes, by 1963 Voorhis had made a ‘complete about face’ (*Black Square & Compass*, p128), and he, along with Alphonse Cerza, ‘by the very nature of the insensitivity of their writings towards Blacks, have created bitter feelings towards (regular) Freemasonry among Prince Hall Freemasons, and their works have been dismissed as biased’. (*A Prince Hall Masonic Quiz Book*, p10). Sherman in his review of Charles H Wesley’s *Prince Hall, Life and Legacy*, (*AQC* 90:306 @310), commented that Voorhis withdrew the 1949 (3rd) edition of *Negro Masonry in the United States* when he realised he had been misled by Grimshaw’s book.

This change of heart is not reflected in the 1951 and 1953 editions of *Facts for Freemasons*.

44 *Negro Masonry in the United States*, p11.

45 *A Prince Hall Masonic Quiz Book*, p8.

(Appendix 2).<sup>46</sup> Some entries are indecipherable, and some names are spelled differently or appear in a different sequence from those published by Draffen and Voorhis.

Prince Hall, in his first letter to William Moody, intimated that the lodge had met from 1776, and other evidence of it meeting before the issue of the warrant in 1784 are the by-laws dated 1779,<sup>47</sup> and a newspaper article in December 1782, to which Prince Hall responded with a letter signed as ‘Master of African Lodge No 1, Dedicated to St John’. It is apparent from Upton’s paraphrase of the first paragraph of Hall’s first letter to Moody<sup>48</sup> that the latter and his lodge had received and aided visiting brethren from African Lodge prior to March 1784. There is no clear evidence whether or not the lodge performed degree work before the issue of the warrant, but Hall’s letter implies that it did not.

### ***African Lodge No 459***

Although the warrant for African Lodge was issued in September 1784 it did not arrive in Boston until May 1787. The story of the delay may be ascertained from the letter book.<sup>49</sup> Since three of his brethren were in London when the warrant was issued, Prince Hall assumed that they would pay the fees and collect the warrant. When one of them, Prince Spooner, advised that they had not done so, Prince Hall sent £6.0.8 via a ship’s steward, Hartfield; asked Spooner to give the lodge’s hearty thanks to Brother Moody; and wrote direct to the Duke of Cumberland, promising:

I shall in all my lectures endeavour to advance the things as, by the blessing of God, may redound to the honour of the Craft, and also use that discipline in the Lodge as shall make the guilty tremble, and at the same time establish the true honest brother.<sup>50</sup>

In June 1785 Moody wrote to Hall, formally requesting that the lodge pay the fees and collect the warrant, the fees being £4.4.0 for the warrant, £1.1.0 for enrolment in the list of lodges and 10/6 for ‘the under Secretary’. Hall sent two letters in response, in August and December, explaining that he had sent the money via Hartfield on Captain Scott’s ship, and asking Moody to act on the lodge’s behalf. Moody replied that he had not received the money and Hartfield denied having been given any. Hall sent more,<sup>51</sup> and Moody wrote in March 1787, reporting that he had received the money, obtained the warrant and delivered it to Capt Scott. In May, Prince Hall proudly advertised the arrival of the warrant in a local newspaper, the *Columbian Centinal*, presumably to confound the wiseacres who had published a report about ‘St Black’s Lodge’<sup>52</sup> and had inserted the following advertisement:<sup>53</sup>

SIX SHILLINGS Reward. LOST, the CHARTER of a certain GRAND LODGE: Any person that has found the same, and will leave it with the Printers hereof shall be intituled to the above reward. P. H—LL, Grand Secretary.
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The warrant, which survived a fire in 1869, has been preserved. It bears the standard wording of an English warrant of the time, and appoints Prince Hall as Master, Boston Smith as Senior Warden and Thomas Sanderson as Junior Warden.<sup>54</sup> The Master wrote to William White, the Grand Secretary, thanking him for the warrant, and enquiring whether it empowered the setting up of a second lodge<sup>55</sup>—to which there is no recorded reply.

The by-laws of 1779 and the list of members included with it are of considerable interest. A photocopy of this document (Historical Correspondence File 28/A/1) in the possession of the United Grand Lodge of England has been supplied by John Hamill, librarian and curator, who describes the original as ‘a single folio now in a delicate condition’.<sup>56</sup> The original (as photocopied) measures approximately 12 inches by 7½ inches. This has been reduced to 65% of the area of the original for inclusion with this paper (*Appendix A*). A transcription is

46 *AQC* 90:306 @318,319.

47 a copy was sent to England in 1787, with a list of officers on the back (Upton, *op cit*, p59; Draffen, *op cit*, p86); this list, in the possession of the United Grand Lodge of England, does not appear to have been published. Voorhis (*Negro Masonry in the United States*, pp15–17) referred to an unidentified ‘record’ which, on the basis of information he extracted from it, appears to be identical.

48 ‘Thanks him and “the Wardens and Rest of the Brethren of your Lodge” for “kindness to my Brethren when in a strange land”.’ — Upton, *op cit*, p56.

49 Upton, *op cit*, pp57–59.

50 *ibid*, p57.

51 as he informed William White, 17 May 1787, *ibid* p59.

52 December 1782, Draffen, *op cit*, p74.

53 Voorhis, *Negro Masonry in the United States*, p20.

54 published in full by Voorhis, *Negro Masonry in the United States*, pp20–22, and *Transactions of the White American Lodge of Research*, New York, vol 1, #1, p65.

55 Draffen, *op cit*, p86.

56 personal correspondence Hamill—Pope, 16 February 1994.

given overleaf. The text of the document implies that the by-laws were adopted by the lodge before or during January 1779, and this implication has not been challenged. Probably Prince Hall wrote, signed and dated the document as indicated in the text—but only as far as the line ‘and in the year of our Lord 1779’.

**Transcription of by-laws of African Lodge, 1779, and list of members**

<p style="text-align: center;">The General Regutalions of the African Lodge</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p>As all Mosons are obliged to obey the morral law we therfore Exclud from this Lodge all stupid Athest and Irreligious libertines : yet at the same time we alow Everey man to Inioy his one Religion so that they be men of Honesty and Honour &amp; freeborn</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p>We admeet none but [<i>illegible</i>] of a Peaceble subjects to the civeil Powers were thay live free from all Plots and conspiraies against the Peace of the same</p> <p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <p>No member of this Lodge is sufered to be absent therefrom when worned to appear without given sum good Reson for his so doing or Pay the sum of three shillings as a fine to the Lodge</p> <p style="text-align: center;">4</p> <p>We admete none into this Lodge under the Age of Twentey one and haveing a tung of a Good Reporte for this Reson no man can be admitted a member of the same till he hath ben Propounded at lest one mounth that the Brethren may inquire into his charectter</p> <p style="text-align: center;">5</p> <p>All perferment amonge us is by Real worth and Personel merit only for fear of slander being Brought upon the Nobel order and a Disgrace to our Lodge</p> <p style="text-align: center;">6</p> <p>No man can be admitted a member of this Lodge for les money then three pounds and tow good Bondsmen for his good behover within and without the Lodge</p> <p style="text-align: center;">7</p> <p>When met in the Lodge we forbed all perfain Language all indecent behover in the Lodge under the Pelentey of paying to the Lodge the sum of ten shillings and be leiabel to be expeal'd for six monts</p>	<p>These and all other Laws that the Lodge shall think Proper to make you are to observe as true and sencear men from God that the Nobel Craft may not be Desgraced by your bad conducte by thouse that are Without ; Aman so let Be <b>Prince Hall Mr</b> in the Lodge Rume Boston Janurey [?15] 5779 and in the year of our Lord 1779</p> <p>The subscribers ar a Lest of the membres Masters [<i>this word is written in the left margin, sideways</i>] Cyrus [?] Forbes</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 30%;">Thomes Sarndson</td> <td style="width: 10%;">JW</td> <td style="width: 60%;">Intered a Prenteses</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Brister SI[?]ener</td> <td></td> <td>Cuff Buffom</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Prince Taler</td> <td></td> <td>Po[?]me[?] Speer</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Boston Smeth</td> <td>SW</td> <td>Phiplep Boston</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fotain Howard</td> <td></td> <td>Seoczes Speer</td> </tr> <tr> <td>John Carter</td> <td></td> <td>Coto Rusel</td> </tr> <tr> <td>John Meanes</td> <td></td> <td>Jorchy Cudmerch</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cato Underwood</td> <td>S<sup>i</sup></td> <td>John Bown</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Jube Hill</td> <td>Tr</td> <td>Sipeo Lard</td> </tr> <tr> <td>William Gorgi Gregrey</td> <td></td> <td>Bristol Merrandis</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Gorge Medelton</td> <td>JD</td> <td>Jemes Smeeth [?]</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Boston Fadey</td> <td></td> <td>James Horkens [?]</td> </tr> <tr> <td>John Brown</td> <td>SD</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Retcherd Pollord</td> <td>Mershel</td> <td>These are a true Lest</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ceser Speer</td> <td>PM</td> <td>of the Leving member of</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Prince Spooner</td> <td></td> <td>the Africon Lodge at Present</td> </tr> <tr> <td>John Hopte</td> <td></td> <td>thou there is a number absent</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>at this time : we shall</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Craftes</td> <td></td> <td>Collect for the found of</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ceser Fleet</td> <td></td> <td>Cherrety the Next Quarterly</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sipeo Dolton</td> <td>CI[?]rk</td> <td>meeting and send it the</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cear Cambel</td> <td></td> <td>first opertunity we can get</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pompey [?]eads</td> <td>Tiler</td> <td>after words</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3">after whishing His Royal Highnes our Nobel Grand and the Grond Lodge all Happness Hear and hereafter</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3">I Humbley Beg Leve to Subscribe my self your Humble</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3" style="text-align: right;">Servent &amp; B<sup>T</sup> <b>Prince Hall</b></td> </tr> </table>	Thomes Sarndson	JW	Intered a Prenteses	Brister SI[?]ener		Cuff Buffom	Prince Taler		Po[?]me[?] Speer	Boston Smeth	SW	Phiplep Boston	Fotain Howard		Seoczes Speer	John Carter		Coto Rusel	John Meanes		Jorchy Cudmerch	Cato Underwood	S <sup>i</sup>	John Bown	Jube Hill	Tr	Sipeo Lard	William Gorgi Gregrey		Bristol Merrandis	Gorge Medelton	JD	Jemes Smeeth [?]	Boston Fadey		James Horkens [?]	John Brown	SD		Retcherd Pollord	Mershel	These are a true Lest	Ceser Speer	PM	of the Leving member of	Prince Spooner		the Africon Lodge at Present	John Hopte		thou there is a number absent			at this time : we shall	Craftes		Collect for the found of	Ceser Fleet		Cherrety the Next Quarterly	Sipeo Dolton	CI[?]rk	meeting and send it the	Cear Cambel		first opertunity we can get	Pompey [?]eads	Tiler	after words	after whishing His Royal Highnes our Nobel Grand and the Grond Lodge all Happness Hear and hereafter			I Humbley Beg Leve to Subscribe my self your Humble			Servent & B <sup>T</sup> <b>Prince Hall</b>		
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*obverse*

*reverse*

NB The *obverse* of this document may have been written during or before January 1779, but the *reverse* was probably completed in 1787 (*see text*). A reduced photocopy of the original document is contained in *Appendix A* of this paper.

As shown, there follows a list of members, and a statement apparently addressed to an official of the Grand Lodge of England in terms consistent with the warrant for African Lodge having been granted. It refers to a forthcoming collection for charity, to be forwarded at the first opportunity. This is consistent with letters written by Prince Hall to William White, Grand Secretary, and Rowland Holt, Deputy Grand Master, dated 17 May 1787, both referring to sending a copy of the by-laws and list of members.<sup>57</sup> Voorhis mistakenly assumed that the whole document was created in 1779, and constructed elaborate hypotheses to avoid the consequent conclusion that the lodge made Masons before receipt of the warrant.<sup>58</sup> The list comprises 18 Master Masons other than Prince Hall, 4 Fellow Crafts and 11 Entered Apprentices. From the earlier list of 14 made with Prince Hall in 1775/8, nine names appear in the present list (allowing for variations in spelling)—eight of them as Master Masons and one, Cuff Buffo(r)m still an Apprentice! Given that the lodge was warranted in 1784 and the list supplied in 1787, there are no grounds *here* to suppose that the lodge was doing degree work before the warrant was issued.

<sup>57</sup> Upton, *op cit*, p59.

<sup>58</sup> *Negro Masonry in the United States*, pp15–17.

The spelling in the document is no better than that of some modern Australian undergraduates, but has been faithfully retained in the transcript for the purposes of comparison and study. The by-laws, termed ‘General Regulations’, are clearly derived from Anderson, but the spelling and omissions suggest that they were recorded from memory, rather than copied. It is evidence that here is no ‘hedge mason’, one of 15 ‘gullible negroes’ who went through a fraudulent ceremony and were swindled of their money by a fly-by-night army deserter in 1778, as some have claimed, but rather an intelligent man of limited education, who had spent a substantial time under instruction, or in private study of the Craft.

The words ‘regulations’, spelled ‘Regutalions’, ‘penalty’, spelled ‘Pelentey’, and ‘enjoy’, spelled ‘Jnioy’, or ‘Inioy’ (capital *I* and capital *J* are written the same) might suggest to a layman the possibility of mild dyslexia.<sup>59</sup> Note that in this list ‘Masters’ is spelled correctly, unlike in the lists previously mentioned. The officers listed are Senior and Junior Wardens, Secretary, Treasurer, Senior and Junior Deacons, Marshall, Clerk and Tyler (a Fellow Craft). An illegible word after the names of two Apprentices (Smeeth and Horkens) might be a misspelt ‘Steward’. The fact that the Tyler was a Fellow Craft suggests that not only Master Masons were *members* of the lodge, as is the case in America now. The office of Marshall is similar to that of Director of Ceremonies, but ranks below Junior Deacon. The purpose of a clerk, in addition to the secretary, is not indicated. The office of Deacon was unusual in a Moderns lodge and one wonders where Prince Hall got the idea—perhaps from a certain military lodge with an Irish warrant. Sinclair Bruce, in an appendix to his Prestonian Lecture on deacons,<sup>60</sup> said that the office was not unknown in America, and referred to a Moderns lodge in New York in 1771 which had *a* deacon. He went on to state that in present day American lodges the Junior Deacon performs the duties we allocate to the Inner Guard. He gave a list of Moderns lodges with deacons before the Union of 1813, but did not include any from America.

By-law (regulation) 6 reads (with spelling corrected): ‘No man can be admitted a member of this Lodge for less money than three pounds<sup>61</sup> and two good Bondsmen for his good behaviour within and without the Lodge.’ This was taken by a Bro Denis Scott<sup>62</sup> to refer to feudal bondage, the ‘no bondman’ requirement of the Old Charges and Anderson’s *Constitutions*. He asked: ‘Does this mean that Bondsmen were members of his lodge?’ Scott further assumed that Prince Hall was unaware in 1779 of the requirement that a Mason be ‘freeborn’. He was mistaken on both counts. The context of by-law 6 clearly indicates that ‘Bondsmen’ was used in the legal sense of a surety for good behaviour, and by-law 1 contains the phrase ‘men of Honesty and Honour & freeborn’. Curiously, Daniel Brathwaite, foundation Senior Warden of the Prince Hall Lodge of Research of New York, accepted the ‘freeborn’ requirement as a valid ‘landmark’ as late as 1943,<sup>63</sup> although Walkes asserted that Prince Hall lodges had always been prepared to initiate ex-slaves.<sup>64</sup> Bernard Jones, in his Prestonian Lecture, dealt fully with the requirement to be ‘freeborn’ or ‘free’. He referred to a court case in England in 1771–72 and commented:<sup>65</sup>

...Lord Mansfield directed judgment in which these words occur:  
the state of slavery...is so odious that nothing can be suffered to support it but positive law...I cannot say this case is allowed or approved by the law of England; and therefore the black must be discharged.

From that moment any slave arriving in England could say “I breath free breath”.

Nevertheless, it was not until 1845 that the United Grand Lodge of England changed the requirement from *freeborn* to *free*. However, this very change is a clear indication that the requirement was not a landmark. Christopher Haffner argued that we should not take the ‘freeborn’ requirement ‘legalistically’, on the basis that the Old Charges are exhortations, not regulations; we do not comply to the letter with others of the Old Charges—to initiate only *youths*; that every Mason must be his own Master (self-employed); that all Masons shall work honestly on working days (so Masons who retire from work must retire from Freemasonry); that the *parents* of candidates must be honest (and therefore investigated before ballot).<sup>66</sup>

From the letter book it is apparent that African Lodge faithfully sent contributions to the Grand Charity, via Capt Scott and others, but not all the contributions were received<sup>67</sup> and not all letters were acknowledged by the

59 Professor Wallace McLeod, after examining the photocopy and pointing out several errors in the transcript, commented: ‘But the exciting thing is the point you note—the incredible contrast between the careful calligraphy and the functional illiteracy. And I am tempted by the marginal dyslexia ... you suggest ...’ (personal correspondence McLeod—Pope, 4 May 1994).

60 Bruce S, “... not only Ancient but useful and necessary Officers...” The Deacons’, the Prestonian Lecture for 1985, *The Collected Prestonian Lectures 1975–1987*, p221 @ 256.

61 far more likely than the claims that Prince Hall and his brethren paid 15, or even 25, guineas each to be made Masons in 1775 or 1778, and still a goodly sum for the time and circumstances.

62 Scott D, ‘The Paradox of Prince Hall’, *Philalethes*, December 1991, p20 @ 22.

63 Brathwaite D o, ‘The Landmarks of Freemasonry’, *Phlorony*, vol 1 p9 @ 21, reprinted in 1988 *Propaedia* 85 @ 95.

64 *A Prince Hall Masonic Quiz Book*, p9.

65 Jones B E, “Free” in “Freemason” and the idea of freedom through six centuries’, in Carr H (ed), *The collected Prestonian Lectures 1925–1960*, p363 @ 373.

66 Haffner C, ‘The Antient Charges and Prince Hall’s Initiation’, in *Philalethes*, April 1992, p39, and *Phylaxis*, vol 19 #1 p18.

67 Upton reports that the lodge sent contributions ‘received in Nov., 1787; Nov. 1789; April, 1792; Nov., 1793; and Nov., 1797, besides others apparently not received. I am not aware that any other New England Lodge ever contributed to it at all.’—*op cit*, p59.



Grand Secretary. Hall sent the list of members of the lodge in 1787 and updates in 1792 (?), 1798 (16 new members since 1792), and 1802 (8 deceased & 18 new members). In 1792 the Grand Secretary asked Prince Hall to report on the other Moderns lodges in New England, 'as we have never heard from them since the commencement of the late war in America, or indeed, long before: and in case they have ceased to meet, which I rather apprehend, they ought to be erased from our list of lodges'. This implies that the Moderns Provincial Grand Lodge and John Rowe had not been in touch with England since 1775. Prince Hall responded with the information that two lodges had amalgamated 'since the death of their Grand Master, Henry Price'<sup>68</sup> and that a third lodge met regularly, and some of their members visited African Lodge. It is odd that the Grand Secretary did not mention to Prince Hall that African Lodge had been re-numbered earlier that year, and equally odd that Hall said nothing to the Grand Secretary about the recent formation of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts.

That African Lodge was not entirely ignored by *White* Masons is evident from Hall's letter to Moody (18 May 1787) thanking him for what is assumed to be a copy of Noorthouck's *Constitutions* of 1784, which Hall said he had shown to Masters of other lodges,<sup>69</sup> and from his statement (1792) that some members of Moderns lodge number 142 visited African Lodge. On the other hand, we have the report of the Rev John Eliot, *DD*, a member of the Massachusetts Historical Society, Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Fellow of Harvard College and a future Grand Chaplain of the *White* Grand Lodge of Massachusetts.<sup>70</sup>

There is much harmony between blacks and whites. We seldom have contentions, except in houses of ill-fame, where some very depraved white females get among the blacks ... otherwise, they do not associate. Even religious societies, those not of public fellowship, are separate in the town of Boston. And, what is still more remarkable, white and black masons do not sit together in their lodges. The African Lodge in Boston, though possessing a charter from England, signed by the Earl of Effingham, and countersigned by the Duke of Cumberland, meet by themselves; and white masons, not more skilled in geometry than their black brethren, will not acknowledge them. The reason given is that the blacks were made clandestinely in the first place, which, being known, would have prevented them from receiving a charter. But this enquiry would not have been made about white lodges, many of which have not conformed to the rules of Masonry. The truth is they are ashamed of being on equality with blacks.

(Belknap Papers, 1795)

In any event, when the several *White* lodges and Grand Lodges of Massachusetts got together in 1792 and formed the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, African Lodge was not invited to participate. The doctrine of 'exclusive territorial jurisdiction' was being developed in America at this time, and when the successors of Prince Hall and African Lodge No 459 formed their own Grand Lodge, they were declared clandestine on the basis of this doctrine. In turn, this rejection led to a counterclaim that Prince Hall and his brethren had formed a Grand Lodge in 1791, before the creation of the *White* Grand Lodge. If they had indeed formed a Grand Lodge, they concealed it in their correspondence with England. This claim of priority of origin should be kept in mind when examining subsequent events.

### ***Towards independence***

William Henry Grimshaw was a doorkeeper and library assistant in the main reading room of the Library of Congress.<sup>71</sup> In 1902 he sent a typewritten letter on official Library of Congress notepaper to the Grand Secretary of the United Grand Lodge of England and enclosed a typewritten copy of an alleged patent granted by the Earl of Moira to Prince Hall as 'Provincial Grand Master, with power to constitute and establish a provincial Grand Lodge in Boston, and other Lodges in America ...' dated 27 January 1790. Grimshaw requested a search of records to verify the issue of this document. Henry Sadler prepared a reply, which was sent under the hand of the Grand Secretary, pointing out a number of mistakes and anachronisms which clearly indicated that the document was not genuine.<sup>72</sup> When Grimshaw published his book, *Official History of Freemasonry Among the Colored People of North America*, in 1903, it contained a much-revised version of the 'patent', now dated 27 January 1791.

Although Grimshaw's 'patent' has been disavowed by Prince Hall researchers such as Harry Davis (1946) and Joseph Walkes (1979), the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Massachusetts claims to have been founded on

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68 As Ralph Castle, of Queensland, pointed out (in 'An Australian Freemason's view of Prince Hall Freemasonry', *Phylaxis*, vol 10 #1, p6), St John's Lodge No 1 united with St John's Lodge No 2 in 1783; these were the lodges Prince Hall referred to as numbers 42 and 88. Henry Price (1697–1780) was appointed Provincial Grand Master of New England (Moderns) in 1733. He formed the St John's Provincial Grand Lodge at Boston and chartered lodges in Massachusetts and neighbouring colonies. He served as Provincial Grand Master in 1733–37, 1740–43, 1754–55 and 1767–68, when he was succeeded by John Rowe, who served from 1768 until his death in 1787—Denslow, *op cit*, vols 3 & 4.

69 Upton, *op cit*, p61.

70 Quoted by Walkes in *A Prince Hall Masonic Quiz Book*, p22, and Sherman in his review of Charles H Wesley's *Prince Hall, Life and Legacy*, in (1977) *AQC* 90:306 @ 307.

71 *Black Square & Compass*, p8.

72 Terry Haunch, commenting on Draffen's paper, *op cit* pp84–87.

24 June 1791.<sup>73</sup> Walkes ascribed this date merely to ‘tradition’<sup>74</sup> and Voorhis described the event as ‘A general assembly of Colored Masons’ who ‘elected’ Prince Hall as Grand Master.<sup>75</sup> He cited no specific authority for this statement, but went on to say: ‘It was, in effect, a Provincial Grand Lodge.’

In support of this claim, he referred to Grimshaw’s ‘patent’ and to three instances where Prince Hall was styled ‘Right Worshipful’—a letter from the Grand Secretary of England dated 20 August 1792; a printed pamphlet of a ‘charge’ given by ‘the Right Worshipful Master, Prince Hall’ to African Lodge on 25 June 1792; and a letter from a Peter Mantore of Philadelphia, dated 2 March 1797, to ‘Right Worshipful Prince Hall’.<sup>76</sup> To these examples might be added another, a printed pamphlet of a ‘charge’ delivered to African Lodge on 24 June 1798 by ‘the Right Worshipful Prince Hall’, which is in the archives of the United Grand Lodge of England.<sup>77</sup>

However, the style ‘Right Worshipful’ does nothing to advance the claim to promotion. As we are well aware, to this day the ruler of a *Scottish* lodge is the Right Worshipful Master. The same usage was prevalent in Moderns lodges in the latter half of the 18th century<sup>78</sup> and occurred in the minutes of an Irish lodge as late as 1827.<sup>79</sup>

On the other hand, Upton reported an entry in the letter book, with details of a certificate issued to a Bro John Dodd, signed by ‘Prince Hall, GM’, ‘Cyrus Forbes, SGW’ and ‘George Middleton, JGW’, dated ‘Boston, February 16, 1792’.<sup>80</sup>

Pre-dating all of these is the title page of a printed pamphlet of a sermon by ‘the Reverend Brother Marrant, Chaplain’ on 24 June 1789, ‘at the request of the Right Worshipful the Grand Master Prince Hall, and the rest of the brethren of the African Lodge’.<sup>81</sup> This was John Marrant, ordained in England in 1785. Copies of the sermon were apparently sent to the Grand Lodge of England, but the elevation of rank on the title page seems to have received no official comment. ‘Grand Master’ coupled with ‘African Lodge’ suggests that this is merely a distinction drawn between Master Mason and Master of a lodge, sometimes encountered in the 18th century.

It appears that in 1797 Prince Hall issued warrants for two lodges, one in Philadelphia on 24 June and the other in Providence, Rhode Island, on 25 June.<sup>82</sup> Although this action certainly was not authorised by the warrant of African Lodge—and undoubtedly would have incurred the displeasure of the Grand Lodge of England (perhaps even expulsion and erasure) had it become known—Prince Hall may have been acting in good faith. Researchers such as George Draffen,<sup>83</sup> Joseph Findel,<sup>84</sup> Christopher Haffner,<sup>85</sup> Wallace McLeod,<sup>86</sup> Allen Roberts<sup>87</sup> and Harry Williamson<sup>88</sup> have cited examples of other lodges (some warranted and some claiming ‘time immemorial’ status) which have warranted other lodges.

William Bathurst gave an example of a group of three lodges at Chester in 1725 which *elected* their own Provincial Grand Master and sent their returns to London, showing the Provincial Grand Master, his Deputy and Wardens as the four principal officers of the senior lodge.<sup>89</sup> This was recognised by the Grand Lodge of England, in spite of the fact that appointment of a Provincial Grand Master was the prerogative of the Grand Master. Bathurst gave other examples of the ‘pocket Provincial Grand Lodge’, where it was contained within a single lodge, but exercised authority over other lodges.<sup>90</sup>

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73 Walkes, *A Prince Hall Masonic Quiz Book*, p33; Draffen, (1977) *AQC* 90:295; Voorhis, *Facts for Freemasons*, p137.

74 *A Prince Hall Masonic Quiz Book*. Walkes gave a ‘traditional’ list of Grand Officers as at that date: Prince Hall, GM; Cyrus Forbs, SGW; George Middleton, JGW; Peter Best, GTreas; and Prince Taylor, GSec. Peter Best’s name appears in both appendixes to Sherman’s review of Wesley’s book, but on the later list (1778–81) is recorded as ‘decist’, which accords with Sherman’s statement (*op cit*): ‘The first death among the members of African Lodge No 1 was that of a Peter Beath [*sic*] on 23 February 1781.’ It also accords with the fact that the name is omitted from the list of members accompanying the lodge by-laws of 1779 (*Appendix A*) and supports the contention that the attached list of members was that of 1787, not 1779. However, when I put this to Bro Walkes, he replied: ‘In the minute and financial book, 1781–1816 of African Lodge, on page 7 dated 1784 I find that Peter Best received cash from (the) box of 2.8 (whatever that means, shillings I would guess). Now since my listing has been typed on 9/9/81 by a friend from Boston, I do not know who died in February 23, 1781.’ (personal correspondence, Walkes—Pope, 1/7/94).

75 *Negro Masonry in the United States*, p27.

76 *op cit*, pp27–29.

77 Draffen, ‘Prince Hall Freemasonry’ in (1976) *AQC* 87:70, @ 86.

78 Gould R F, *History of Freemasonry*, 1st edn, vol 3, p464 footnote; Carr H, *Freemason at Work*, examples contained in answer to Q37, @ 225.

79 minute book of Lodge No 33 IC (Royal North British Fuzileers, 21st of Foot) in possession of the Grand Lodge of Tasmania.

80 Upton, *op cit*, p60.

81 Walkes, *Black Square & Compass*, p31.

82 Voorhis, *Negro Masonry in the United States*, p34; Draffen, *op cit*, p78.

83 Draffen, *op cit*, p76.

84 Findel J G, *History of Freemasonry*, English translation of 2nd edn, 1868, chapters on Germany.

85 Haffner C, ‘Regularity of Origin’ in (1983) *AQC* 96:111.

86 in commenting on Haffner, *op cit*, @ 130.

87 Roberts A E, ‘Black Freemasonry’, *Philalethes*, April 1989, p16.

88 Walkes, *A Prince Hall Masonic Quiz Book*, p30.

89 Bathurst, the Hon W R S, ‘The evolution of the English Provincial Grand Lodge’, (Prestonian Lecture for 1966), *Collected Prestonian Lectures 1961–1974*, Lewis Masonic, London 1983, @ 64.

90 *ibid*, p67.

Then, too, we have frequent examples of military or colonial warranted lodges, or a committee such as the *Leinster Committee* in New South Wales or the *Standing Committee* in Tasmania, issuing a dispensation for another lodge to be formed, pending an application to a Grand Lodge. Who can say with certainty that Prince Hall *knowingly* exceeded his authority?

Indeed, the letter book indicates that Prince Hall continued to write to England as from the Master of a constituent lodge to Grand Secretary. On 15 June 1802 he wrote:<sup>91</sup>

... my brethren of the African Lodge, which the Grand Lodge hath highly honoured me to take the charge, and have by the blessing of God endeavored to fulfil my obligations and the great trust you have reposed in me.

I have sent a number of letters to the Grand Lodge and money for the Grand Charity, and by my faithful brethren as I thought, but I have not received one letter from the Grand Lodge for this five years, which I thought somewhat strange at first; but when I heard so many were taken by the French, I thought otherwise, and prudent not to send.

Still without a reply from England since 1796, in August 1806 Prince Hall apparently instructed one of his brethren, Nero Prince, to send to Grand Lodge the returns of members for the past 10 years. This was his last entry in the letter book, and William Upton commented:<sup>92</sup>

This ends our manuscript, with a melancholy picture of the way the Grand Secretary's office was conducted at that time, and a more pleasant one of the faithful old Mason making Lodge returns to the last. Prince Hall died sixteen months later. Nero Prince succeeded him as Master of African Lodge.

In *Black Square & Compass*, Joseph Walkes said of Prince Hall:

Prince Hall Masonry began with a remarkable individual, Prince Hall, a man who was a credit to his race, his country, universal Freemasonry and himself.<sup>93</sup>

In order to measure the greatness of Prince Hall, one must review the written documents left by him, his petitions to the Senate and House of representatives of Massachusetts, his Letter Book and his Charges to African Lodge... His lack of a formal education, his bondage, and the racial conditions of the time merely enhance the character of this outstanding individual. His many accomplishments in overcoming all of these handicaps, and the abuses, mistreatment and often viciousness that was heaped on him, his lodge, and later the fraternity he founded, is more than proof that Prince Hall was indeed 'The Master'.<sup>94</sup>

In 'The Antient Charges and Prince Hall's Initiation', Christopher Haffner concluded: 'Without painting a hagiographic picture of Prince Hall, all that we know of this Mason is wholly admirable, and his achievements display him as a man who worked freely for the good of his own race and the whole of the community.'

Prince Hall died on 4 December 1807 and was interred with Masonic ceremony, but the several newspaper notices do not state where he was buried.<sup>95</sup> There is an epitaph on the back of the gravestone of Sarah Ritchery, who may have been Prince Hall's first wife. It reads: 'Here lies ye body of Prince Hall / First Grand Master of the Colored Grand Lodge of Masons in Mass. / Died Dec. 7, 1807'. The incorrect date of death suggests that the inscription was made years later. His last wife, Sylvia, was appointed 'administratrix' of his estate.<sup>96</sup> Draffen observed that the interment records were missing.<sup>97</sup> Many years later, a monument to the memory of Prince Hall was erected in the same graveyard; there is an attractive photograph of it in Roy Wells' book, *The rise and development of organised Freemasonry*, (1986) at page 149.

#### ***From Nero Prince to J T Hilton***

Upon the death of Prince Hall, Nero Prince succeeded him as Master of African Lodge. Grimshaw claimed that he was a white man, a Russian Jew. Draffen described this as 'one of his wilder stretches of imagination'.<sup>98</sup> According to Draffen, Bro Prince was raised in African Lodge in 1799; he was a baker who became a sailor and made two voyages to Russia between 1810 and 1812. He then entered the service of a Princess Purtossof and later joined the staff at the court of Tsar Alexander.<sup>99</sup> He died in Russia in 1825 (Voorhis) or 1833 (Draffen).

The next Master was George Middleton,<sup>100</sup> who had been recorded as Junior Deacon in the 1779/87 list, and was shown as 'JGW' on Bro Dodd's certificate in 1792. According to Voorhis, Middleton granted a warrant for another lodge in Philadelphia, Union Lodge No 2. He was succeeded by Peter Lew, who served from 1811 to

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91 Upton, *op cit*, p63.

92 *loc cit*.

93 Walkes, *Black Square & Compass*, p2.

94 *ibid*, p12.

95 *A Prince Hall Masonic Quiz Book*, p32.

96 *Black Square & Compass*, p6.

97 Draffen, *op cit*, p72.

98 *ibid*, p78.

99 *loc cit*.

100 Voorhis, *Negro Masonry in the United States*, p35.

1817 and warranted three lodges—Laurel No 5 and Phoenix No 6, both in Philadelphia in 1811, and Boyer Lodge No 1 in New York in 1812.<sup>101</sup> Voorhis did not cite his source, but it was probably one of the several rewritten ‘minutes’ of African Lodge, shown by Walkes to be inconsistent and unreliable. Other minutes show Boyer Lodge applying for a warrant in 1826.

Voorhis described Nero Prince, George Middleton and Peter Lew as Grand Masters. He asserted that a convention of ‘Negro Masons’ was held at Boston on 24 July 1808 with representatives of the three lodges—those of Boston, Philadelphia and Providence—present, at which Nero Prince was elected Grand Master, and the Grand Lodge was named ‘Prince Hall Grand Lodge’.<sup>102</sup> Dr Eugene Hopp<sup>103</sup> reported the date as 8 June 1808. These statements are at odds with reliable evidence. They are probably taken from a book headed ‘The Book of Records of the Grand African Lodge, No. 459, Boston, November 25, A.L.5825’. This book contains entries dated from 1807 to 1846. From the beginning to mid-1826 the handwriting is in a single hand, and an entry of 21 November 1825 indicates that John T Hilton was authorised to purchase a book and transcribe existing records into it. From mid-1826 onwards, the entries are in several different handwritings.<sup>104</sup>

On 5 January 1824, the then Master of African Lodge, Samson H Moody, wrote to ‘the Right Worshipful the Grand Master, Wardens and Members of the Grand Lodge of England’, petitioning for a renewal and extension of the ‘charter’ of African Lodge. Moody extended greetings from himself and ‘other Companions who have been regularly exalted to the Sublime degree of Royal Arch Masons’, some of whom he named, and gave details of the original warrant. He remarked that this warrant only permitted three degrees to be conferred, and sought authority to ‘confer the other four degrees’.<sup>105</sup> The signatories were Samson H Moody, WM; Peter Howard, SW; C A DeRandamie, JW (all Companions) and William J Champney, Secretary.<sup>106</sup> There is no record, in England or elsewhere, of any reply to this petition.

Finally, African Lodge accepted its isolation and declared its independence in a notice dated 18 June 1827 and published in the *Boston Advertiser* of 26 June 1827. The notice was headed ‘African Lodge No 459’ and signed by John T Hilton, RWM; Thomas Dalton, SW; Lewis York, JW; and J H Purrow, Secretary.<sup>107</sup> From 25 June 1827, the minutes of the lodge refer to ‘The African Grand Lodge No 459’ or ‘The Grand African Lodge’.<sup>108</sup> John Telemachus Hilton was the ‘Right Worshipful Master’ of the lodge at the declaration of independence and became the first Grand Master. It is difficult to determine precisely which details of the history of African Lodge were ‘revised’ by him.

### **Black Grand Lodges**

Walkes considered that Pennsylvania was the first independent *Black* Grand Lodge. It was established in Philadelphia on 27 December 1815,<sup>109</sup> well ahead of the declaration of independence by African Lodge at Boston in 1827. But Pennsylvania illustrates the problems of regularity of origin and historical accuracy which bedevil the whole Prince Hall scene.

It was in March 1797 that Peter Mantore wrote to Prince Hall and the brethren of African Lodge, congratulating them on their warrant, and reporting that there were 11 brethren in Philadelphia (including five Master Masons) who were ready to ‘go to work’. He named the brethren, and the lodges where some of them were *made*, and stated that they had been *tried* by five Royal Arch Masons. He wrote: ‘The white Masons here say that they are afraid to give us a warrant for fear the black men living in *Virginia* would get to be Free Masons, too.’<sup>110</sup> He added that he and his brethren would rather be under African Lodge, and asked that a brother be sent with the warrant, and expenses would be reimbursed.<sup>111</sup>

Prince Hall replied that he hoped the brethren had received the light of Masonry in a just and lawful manner. He continued as follows:<sup>112</sup>

If so, dear brother, we are willing to set you to work under our charter and Lodge No. 459, from London; under that authority and by the name of African Lodge, we hereby and herein [*or hereon*] give you license to assemble and work as aforesaid, under that denomination as in the sight and fear of God.

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101 *loc cit.*

102 *loc cit.*

103 Hopp E S, ‘Negro Lodges’, in *Masonic Papers*, vol 4, Research Lodge of Oregon (1982) pp303–308 @ 307.

104 *A Prince Hall Masonic Quiz Book*, p26.

105 In Ireland at this time, the Craft warrant was sufficient authority to confer additional degrees—Gould R F, *Military Lodges*, Gale & Polden, p155.

106 Letter in the archives of the United Grand Lodge of England, quoted by Draffen, *op cit*, p77.

107 Sherman’s review, p151.

108 *A Prince Hall Masonic Quiz Book*, p55.

109 *ibid*, p52.

110 In this context, it is interesting to note that Voorhis recorded (*Negro Masonry in the United States*, p33):

Israel Israel, a member of Royal Arch Lodge, No. 3, in Philadelphia (MM May 20, 1794 and GM of Pa 1803–1805) visited this lodge in 1797 and reported its existence to his Grand Lodge (minutes of March 6, 1797).

111 Upton, *op cit*, p63.

112 *ibid*.

I would advise you not to take in any at present till your officers and your Master be in[stalled] in the Grand Lodge, which we are willing to do when he thinks convenient, and he may receive a full warrant instead of a permit.

It will be noted that Prince Hall was writing as if he had assumed the authority of, at least, a Provincial Grand Master. Voorhis stated that the warrant was granted on 24 June and the lodge formally constituted by Prince Hall on 22 September 1797.<sup>113</sup> The lodge received a copy of the English warrant, and took the name African Lodge No 459 of Philadelphia. The first Master was Absalom Jones, mentioned in Peter Mantore's letter, but not among the 11 listed as *tried* Masons. According to Walkes,<sup>114</sup> Jones was a wholly admirable man. Born into slavery, he educated himself, purchased the freedom of his wife, bought a house, and finally purchased his own freedom. He went into business and studied for holy orders. He was ordained Deacon in the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1795, at the age of 49, and was ordained Priest in 1804. No one appears to have recorded where or when this just and upright man of mature age—but not freeborn—was made a Mason.

The minutes of the lodge from 27 December 1797 to 15 February 1800 have been preserved and William Upton published some interesting extracts.<sup>115</sup> This lodge, a Moderns lodge 'once removed', also had Deacons; there is no mention of a Marshall or a Clerk. On more than one occasion the lodge had visitors whose names and lodge numbers were recorded. Upton assumed the visitors to be *White*.

As previously mentioned, Voorhis stated that the successors to Prince Hall warranted three more lodges in Philadelphia: Union No 2, Laurel No 5 and Phoenix No 6, and Walkes concurred.<sup>116</sup> These four lodges formed the First Independent African Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, in 1815. In 1837, two lodges (Union No 2 and *Harmony* No 5—whatever happened to *Laurel* No 5?) broke away, or were expelled, and 'with others' formed the Hiram Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania.<sup>117</sup>

Meanwhile, it would appear that there were several lodges of *Blacks* in the city of New York. Hopp<sup>118</sup> stated that Prince Hall Grand Lodge (by which he meant African Lodge, of Boston) chartered lodges numbered 2, 3 and 4 in New York in 1826. Voorhis named similar lodges as Celestial No 2, in New York City; Rising Sun No 3, in Brooklyn; and Hiram No 4, in New York City.<sup>119</sup> He did not specifically state that they were warranted from Boston, but this was implied by the context. It is possible that First Independent African Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania also warranted lodges in New York.<sup>120</sup> Walkes mentioned only one lodge warranted from Boston, Boyer Lodge. According to Voorhis, Peter Lew issued the warrant for Boyer Lodge in 1812<sup>121</sup> but, according to the minute book written by John Hilton, application was made in January 1826 and the matter dragged on until at least August 1827.<sup>122</sup>

At least two Grand Lodges were formed in New York, Philanthropic Grand Lodge in 1844 (Sherman)<sup>123</sup> and Boyer Grand Lodge in 1845 (Walkes, Draffen).<sup>124</sup> Voorhis stated that Boyer, Celestial, Rising Sun and Hiram Lodges formed Boyer Grand Lodge, and made no reference to Philanthropic Grand Lodge.<sup>125</sup> The suspicion arises that Philanthropic Grand Lodge was considered by pro-Prince Hall researchers to have been clandestine, and that Sherman included it for that very reason, because in his view *all* were clandestine.

African Grand Lodge of Maryland was also organised in 1845 but the origin of the constituent lodge or lodges was not recorded by either Walkes or Draffen.<sup>126</sup> What of Rhode Island? Voorhis stated that Hiram Lodge No 3, of Providence, Rhode Island, was warranted by Prince Hall in 1797. It was composed of members of African Lodge who had moved there from Boston. In 1813 most of the members migrated to Liberia (established as a republic in 1847) and the lodge became dormant.<sup>127</sup> African Lodge warranted a second lodge at Providence in 1826, *Harmony* Lodge.<sup>128</sup> Hopp described this as a re-activation and renaming of Hiram Lodge.<sup>129</sup>

The gap in recorded activity in the various States between 1827 and 1845 may well have been caused by the Morgan affair which so devastated the *White* fraternity. Certainly, in Boston, African Grand Lodge had

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113 Voorhis, *Negro Masonry in the United States*, p34.

114 Walkes, *Black Square & Compass*, p29.

115 Upton, *op cit*, pp63–65.

116 Walkes, *A Prince Hall Masonic Quiz Book*, p52.

117 *loc cit*.

118 Hopp, *op cit*, p307.

119 Voorhis, *Facts for Freemasons*, p139.

120 see Sherman, 'The Negro "National" or "Compact" Grand Lodge', in (1979) *AQC* 92:148 @ 153.

121 Voorhis, *Negro Masonry in the United States*, p35.

122 Walkes, *A Prince Hall Masonic Quiz Book*, pp53–55; Sherman, *op cit*, pp 150, 151.

123 Sherman, *op cit*, p153.

124 Walkes, *A Prince Hall Masonic Quiz Book*, p34; Draffen.

125 Voorhis, *Negro Masonry in the United States*, p35.

126 Walkes, *A Prince Hall Masonic Quiz Book*, p34; Draffen.

127 Voorhis, *Negro Masonry in the United States*, p34.

128 *A Prince Hall Masonic Quiz Book*, p54.

129 Hopp, *op cit*, p307.

problems in the 1830s and 1840s. After a succession of Grand Masters, John Hilton was re-elected in 1836 and continued in office until 1847. Even Sherman paid tribute to him:<sup>130</sup>

He was an effective organizer, and if any one man deserves most of the credit for keeping it alive during the late thirties and early forties it was he. He called together the small circle of members remaining active for meetings at his home in the early forties and presided at them.

### ***A National Grand Lodge***

By 1847 there was considerable dissension between *Black* lodges and Grand Lodges in several States. In Pennsylvania there was intense rivalry between the Hiram Grand Lodge, which was gaining adherents, and the First Independent African Grand Lodge, which was losing members,<sup>131</sup> and in New York there was ill-feeling between the individual lodges.<sup>132</sup> With good intentions, African Grand Lodge issued a general invitation to attend a Grand Convention at Boston in June 1847. Who responded, and when, and precisely what took place is impossible to ascertain, but a National Grand Lodge of North America was formed, with jurisdiction over State Grand Lodges, and John Hilton was the first National Grand Master.

When the delegates from Boyer Grand Lodge returned to New York, that Grand Lodge refused to endorse the action of its delegates, which caused a schism, some members accepting a warrant from the National body and others re-organising as an independent Grand Lodge. The Hiram Grand Lodge of Delaware opposed the formation of a National Grand Lodge and issued a pamphlet attacking the legitimacy of African Grand Lodge.<sup>133</sup>

The National body proceeded to warrant the formation of Grand Lodges in States which already had one, and generally demonstrated that the ‘cure’ was worse than the ‘disease’. Not all State Grand Lodges were opposed to the ‘Compact’, however. African Grand Lodge accepted a warrant as Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, and proceeded to split the original African Lodge into three new lodges: Union No 1, Celestial No 2 and Rising Sun No 3.<sup>134</sup> The two rival bodies in Pennsylvania united under a warrant from the National Grand Lodge, as Grand Lodge for the State of Pennsylvania. This union was short-lived, and former members of Hiram Grand Lodge withdrew in 1849.<sup>135</sup> Former members of the First Independent Grand Lodge withdrew the following year.

Ohio withdrew from the Compact in 1868 and within a few years so did many other State bodies. The list given by Walkes<sup>136</sup> is formidable. Almost all the Grand Lodges that withdrew from the Compact eventually added the name Prince Hall to their titles, and now form part of the Prince Hall Affiliation. They take the view that the National (Compact) Grand Lodge was dissolved in 1877. Sherman and some other *White* researchers take a contrary view, pointing to documentary evidence that *someone* continued to operate under this title. According to John Hamill, there are still 27 Grand Lodges operating under warrants from the National Grand Lodge.<sup>137</sup>

Walkes and other voices from the Prince Hall Affiliation retort that these are clandestine, spurious and fraudulent. Certainly, there have been and still are *bogus* ‘Masonic’ groups among African-Americans as well as on the fringe of ‘mainstream’ Masonry. The National Compact is silent, having no access to the ears of ‘mainstream’ Masons.

### ***Prince Hall Affiliation***

The first *Black* Grand Lodge established beyond the confines of the United States was the Widow’s Son Grand Lodge of Canada, at Hamilton, Ontario. It later registered the name ‘Grand Lodge of Ontario’,<sup>138</sup> and now bears the title Prince Hall Grand Lodge, Province of Ontario. Walkes and Draffen both gave the date of establishment as 1851, but recent correspondence from the Grand Lodge itself claims 1856,<sup>139</sup> which is corroborated by Wallace McLeod.<sup>140</sup>

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130 Sherman, *op cit*, p152.

131 Sherman, *op cit*, p153.

132 Walkes, *A Prince Hall Masonic Quiz Book*, p59; Sherman, *loc cit*.

133 Sherman, *op cit*, p154.

134 Castle, *op cit*, p20, from his Prince Hall contact, Cleo W Wooten of Massachusetts.

135 Walkes, *A Prince Hall Masonic Quiz Book*, p52.

136 Walkes, *A Prince Hall Masonic Quiz Book*, pp70–73.

137 personal correspondence, Hamill—Pope, 16 February 1994.

138 Shaw B, *Grand Lodge of Alberta Bulletin*, June 1990.

139 Provisional Resolution, dated 13 August 1991, and letterhead of correspondence from J Dan Bancroft, PGM, to K W Aldridge, PGM, dated 16 August 1991 (copies obtained from Ralph Herbold, Southern California Research Lodge).

140 McLeod W E, Report of the Grand Historian, in the *Annual Communications of the Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario*, 1992, p92, based on the statement of J Lawrence Runnalls, ‘The Coloured Man in Freemasonry’, *Papers of the Canadian Masonic Research Association* (PCMRA), No 77 (1964), reprinted in LeGresley C E B (ed), *CMRA Papers*, Cambridge (Ontario) 1986, vol 2, pp1329–1343, at page 1335, to the effect that in 1851 a Bro T C Harnley was deputised by the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of New Jersey to erect lodges in the Province of Canada, and on 25 August 1856 three lodges so erected were formed into a Grand Lodge.

A Grand Lodge was erected in the Republic of Liberia in 1867 but, tragically, Freemasonry was extinguished in that country in 1980, when the Grand Master and other officers of Grand Lodge were publicly murdered. They were members of the government which was overthrown by a military coup led by army sergeant Samuel Doe, who issued a total ban on Freemasonry in Liberia. Five years later, President Doe was persuaded to lift the ban, and in 1987 the senior surviving Grand Officer, DGM Philip Brumskine, was installed as Grand Master. Since then, under his leadership and with the support of other Prince Hall Grand Lodges, he has begun a cautious restoration of the Craft in that country.<sup>141</sup>

Prince Hall Grand Lodge of the Commonwealth of the Bahama Islands was erected in 1951. Union Grand Lodge of Florida, established in 1870, now incorporates a Central American country within its jurisdiction, and is known as *Most Worshipful Union Grand Lodge Most Ancient and Honorable Fraternity, Free and Accepted Masons, Prince Hall Affiliation, Florida & Belize, Central America Jurisdiction*. The Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Alaska was organised in 1969, the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Nevada in 1980,<sup>142</sup> and the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of the Caribbean (based at Barbados) as recently as April 1993.<sup>143</sup>

Only ten States do not have a separate Prince Hall Affiliation Grand Lodge. Of these, three have one or more lodges warranted from other States: Wyoming from Colorado, Idaho from Oregon and North Dakota from Minnesota. California, which used to have subordinate lodges in Hawaii, now shares jurisdiction as The Prince Hall Grand Lodge of the States of California and Hawaii.<sup>144</sup> In Canada, the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Ontario has lodges in Quebec, and some of the other Provinces have lodges warranted from south of the border. Alberta has lodges from Minnesota, and previously had some from Washington State. Minnesota is also represented in Manitoba, and there are Washington lodges in British Columbia. Massachusetts has lodges in Trinidad and Tobago; until last year New York had lodges in Guyana, St Lucia, Dominica and Barbados, and may still have lodges in Guyana, St Lucia and Dominica.<sup>145</sup>

Ever since the American Civil War there have been National Compact or Prince Hall Affiliation lodges in military units, and their story was told at length by Joseph Walkes in *Black Square & Compass*.<sup>146</sup> The 1976 *Prince Hall Year Book* recorded more than 60 military lodges in England, Asia, Europe and the Canal Zone (Panama). Christopher Haffner listed more than 20 lodges in Guam, Hawaii, Japan, Korea, Philippines, Taiwan and Thailand between 1950 and 1981. He said of the modern military lodges:<sup>147</sup>

#### THE MILITARY LODGE CONCEPT

Perhaps the most important thing that is apparent is that, although called 'Military Lodges', these differ quite considerably from the early concept of such lodges under England and Ireland, as well as from that envisaged by the first rules for Prince Hall [National Compact] Military Lodges in 1865. The older concept is that such a lodge is attached to a regiment and moves with it to any part of the world; they have *travelling* warrants. The only reason that the newer lodges referred to in this paper are 'military' seems to be that they are located on military bases.

Haffner realised the implications, not only for his own District of Hong Kong and the Far East, but also for his United Grand Lodge, when he noted that there were (in 1981) *five* Prince Hall lodges in England,<sup>148</sup> and quoted a statement from *Phylaxis* that there were *White* brethren actively engaged in Prince Hall Masonry in the United Kingdom and parts of Europe.

#### **Blacks in White lodges**

On the evidence, few *Blacks* have been admitted to membership of *White* lodges. It may well be, particularly with the Prince Hall alternative, that few have applied, even in jurisdictions without a regulation specifically excluding *Blacks* from membership. Certainly, there are recorded examples of the rejection of men who appeared to be well-qualified, except for the colour of their skin, such as a group of *Blacks* who were not Freemasons, Prince Hall or otherwise, whose requests were denied by the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts in 1847.<sup>149</sup>

Voorhis was able to give only a brief list of *Blacks* in *White* lodges: a visitor to a lodge in New Jersey in 1838 and another to a lodge in Delaware in 1850; a man who was initiated in an Army lodge in 1846 so that he could serve as Tyler; and four men who were admitted to full membership, between 1867 and 1898, in lodges in Indiana, Massachusetts (2) and Vermont.<sup>150</sup>

141 *Phylaxis*, issues # 2, 1980; # 2, 1987; # 1, 1989.

142 Walkes, *A Prince Hall Masonic Quiz Book*, pp33–44.

143 Payne C F, 'Capsule History of Most Worshipful (Prince Hall) Grand Lodge of the Caribbean' in *Phylaxis*, vol 19 #3, p7.

144 *Phylaxis*, Spring 1994, p25.

145 Bro Payne (*op cit*) is not clear on this point.

146 and see Vrooman J B & Roberts A E, *Sword and trowel*, Missouri Lodge of Research 1964.

147 Haffner C, 'Notes on Prince Hall Masonry in the Far East', *Chater-Cosmo Transactions*, (1981) vol 3, pp109–147 @ 114.

148 Haffner, *op cit*, p110.

149 Walkes, *A Prince Hall Masonic Quiz Book*, p102, citing the *Proceedings* of the *White* Grand Lodge of Ohio, 1870, pp24 & 41.

150 Voorhis, *Negro Masonry in the United States*, pp75, 106. Now, in 1994, according to the Research and Development Committee of the *White* Grand Lodge of North Carolina: "There are regular African-American Masons. They are members of recognized lodges in

In 1904, Bert Williams, described as 'Negro comedian and song writer of the American stage', was made a Mason in a lodge in Scotland. When he died in 1922, the Grand Lodge of Scotland requested that a *White* lodge in New York (an actors' lodge) conduct a Masonic service for him, which they did.<sup>151</sup> There is no record of Bro Williams ever having applied to join a *White* lodge in America.

St Andrew's Lodge, of Boston, seems to have been an exceptionally enlightened lodge, having initiated at least nine *Blacks* in the mid-19th century. In 1871, eight of them applied to the *White* Grand Lodge of Massachusetts for a dispensation for a new lodge, to be called Thistle Lodge. The petition was rejected.<sup>152</sup>

In 1870 a group of Prince Hall Masons applied to the *White* Grand Lodge of New Jersey to be recognised and to be granted a warrant under that Grand Lodge, for a lodge to be called Cushite Lodge. The application was rejected.<sup>153</sup>

Because of this rejection, a group of *White* Masons presented a petition for a new lodge at Newark, New Jersey, to be called Alpha Lodge. The petition was granted and the lodge was formed with nine members, all *White*. At its first meeting, petitions were read from 13 candidates, 12 of them *Black*, including all the Prince Hall Masons who had petitioned for Cushite Lodge. At a subsequent meeting, before a ballot could be conducted, a representative of the Grand Master demanded and took possession of the warrant, on the grounds that it was alleged to have been obtained by deceit and misrepresentation. The matter was subsequently determined by Grand Lodge, and the warrant was restored by a majority vote of one.<sup>154</sup>

Of the 12 *Black* petitioners, nine were admitted and three rejected. In 1872, the first year of operation, all nine were initiated, passed and raised, as were three *White* applicants. There was considerable opposition from some of the other lodges in New Jersey. The nine members of Alpha Lodge who were former Prince Hall Masons applied for a warrant for another lodge, Surgam Lodge, but this was refused. Five years later, one of them became Master of Alpha Lodge, the first *Black* Master in a *White* jurisdiction. From statistics obtained from Voorhis, between 1871 and 1938 the lodge had 198 members, 19 of them *White*, 176 *Black*, plus '2 Indians and 1 Hindu'.

Jack Chasin reported in 1943 that members of Alpha Lodge visited a *White* lodge in New York and were welcomed.<sup>155</sup> Ernest Rubin quoted Charles Gosnell, Grand Master of the *White* Grand Lodge of New York, as saying in 1970:<sup>156</sup> 'From time immemorial we had a few black men in our ranks. Some years ago, in upstate New York, one received a fifty year medal.'

In contrast, Walkes wrote, in *A Prince Hall Masonic Quiz Book* (page 88):

From time to time this writer has received letters from members of Alpha Lodge No 116, bitterly complaining of the treatment they receive at the hands of Prince Hall Freemasons, who treat them as clandestine. My standard reply is: there is no reason for a Alpha Lodge No 116 so long as there is a Prince Hall Grand Lodge of New Jersey. They are treated like second class citizens when they travel outside of the State of New Jersey. Mainstream Freemasonry doesn't want them, and Prince Hall Freemasonry rejects them! Also, over the years, I have received letters from mainstream members of the Craft stating that they attended communications with Alpha Lodge with none expressing that sitting in Lodge with Blacks was a 'fraternal experience' but rather a curiosity.

Voorhis recorded only two Grand Lodges that took any action because of the existence of Alpha Lodge, although others expressed disapproval. In 1872 the Grand Lodge of Delaware instructed its lodges to have no Masonic intercourse with Alpha Lodge No 116 of New Jersey. In 1908 the Grand Master of Mississippi severed fraternal relations between his Grand Lodge and New Jersey. His letter read, in part:<sup>157</sup>

Yours of August 25th., advising me that negroes are initiated and affiliated in your Grand Jurisdiction is received.

Our Grand Lodge hold differently. Masonry never contemplated that her privileges should be extended to a race, totally morally and intellectually incapacitated to discharge the obligations which they assume or have conferred upon them in a Masonic Lodge. It is no answer that there are exceptions to this general character of the race. We legislate for the race and not for the exceptions.

We hold that affiliation with negroes is contrary to the teachings of Masonry, and is dangerous to the interest of the Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons.

Fraternal relations were quietly resumed 20 years later, although Alpha Lodge still thrived.

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New York, New Jersey, Vermont, California, Virginia and many other states.'—*North Carolina Mason*, March/April 1994, p6. The report does not state how many African-American Masons, or how many lodges.

151 Denslow W R , *10,000 Famous Freemasons*, vol 4, Macoy 1961, p327.

152 Voorhis, *Negro Masonry in the United States*, p108; Walkes, *A Prince Hall Masonic Quiz Book*, p101.

153 Voorhis, *ibid*, pp78–80.

154 Voorhis, *ibid*, pp88–93.

155 *Phlorony*, vol 1 (1943), p46.

156 Rubin E J, 'Masonic observations of Prince Hall lodges', in *Masonic Papers*, vol 4, Research Lodge of Oregon, (1982) pp 294–302 @ 297.

157 Voorhis, *Negro Masonry in the United States*, p101.



To this list Walkes added the Grand Lodge of Oklahoma, which severed relations in 1910 but later resumed relations on the understanding that all Masons from New Jersey except members of Alpha Lodge would be welcomed in Oklahoma lodges, and then, 30 years later, he continued:<sup>158</sup>

*Proceedings* for February 14, 1940:

The Grand Lodge of Oklahoma again discovered the existence of Alpha Lodge No 116, at Newark, and again severed fraternal relations with the Grand Lodge of New Jersey, but these were resumed again on February 11, 1942.

He also quoted the Grand Master of the *White* Grand Lodge of Texas, commenting on Article XV of the Constitutions and Laws of that Grand Lodge, as saying in the Texas *Proceedings* for 1947:<sup>159</sup>

I suppose it is wholly unnecessary for me to point out that it is the law of our Grand Lodge that the Grand Lodge of Texas does not recognize as legal or Masonic any body of Negroes working under any character of charter in the United States without regard to the body granting such charter, and that this Grand Lodge regards all Negro Lodges as clandestine, illegal and un-Masonic and this Grand Lodge regards as highly censurable the course of any Grand Lodge in the United States which shall recognize such bodies of Negroes as Masons.

Walkes concluded: 'Therefore, this would mean that although the Grand Lodge of Texas recognizes the White Grand Lodge of New Jersey, a censure of that grand body is implied over the existence of Alpha Lodge No. 116.'

That bigotry is still alive and well is illustrated by an item in the *Virginia Masonic Herald* of October 1989 (reproduced in full as *Appendix B*). Grand Master Cabell Cobbs found it necessary to intervene on behalf of a *Black* candidate who had twice been rejected on the ballot on racial grounds.<sup>160</sup>

In 1990 the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of South Africa, responding to an article in the *California Freemason*, wrote:

The Grand Lodge of South Africa has never discriminated against persons of colour and in fact it has the proud record of leading Masonic protest against such practices in South Africa.

In 1977 the Grand Lodge of South Africa chartered and consecrated two lodges, namely Lodge Perseverance No 126 and Lodge Phoenix No 127. The charters of the Grand Lodge do not permit discrimination.

The founding members of these two lodges were former members of Prince Hall Lodges in South Africa who desired to be full participants and accepted into Freemasonry in South Africa. Further, members of these lodges have advanced to be holders of Grand Rank in the Grand Lodge of South Africa.

He concluded: 'The Grand Lodge of South Africa is very proud of its leadership in this.'<sup>161</sup> Perseverance meets at Cape Town and Phoenix at Kimberley.<sup>162</sup>

According to Bob Nairn and Juan Alvarez of New South Wales, there had been 40 brethren in two lodges chartered by the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, and they returned their warrants and were accepted *en masse* by the Grand Lodge of South Africa.<sup>163</sup> Denys Luckin, a South African who moved to Tasmania, provided a more detailed report, including moves from as early as 1972, and the Grand Lodge's approach to the government. He outlined the re-initiation, passing and raising of the 40-odd Prince Hall Masons, the consecration of the two lodges and installation and investiture of officers by the Grand Master, and added:<sup>164</sup>

Initially, it was not known how the new Freemasons would be received by the Lodges of the sister Grand Lodges, and they were instructed not to undertake any fraternal visits until the sister Grand Lodges [England, Ireland and Scotland, whose District and Provincial Grand Lodges share the territory with the Grand Lodge of South Africa and a single lodge of the Grand East of the Netherlands] accepted their regularity, which they eventually did.

Voorhis mentioned a *Black* lodge under the Canadian Grand Lodge of Nova Scotia. In 1856 five 'regularly initiated' *Blacks* were granted an English warrant for a lodge in Nova Scotia, and transferred to the Grand Lodge of Nova Scotia in 1869.<sup>165</sup> He commented:

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158 Walkes, *A Prince Hall Masonic Quiz Book*, p83.

159 *ibid*, p87.

160 in the US, three Grand Lodges permit a negative ballot to be appealed to the Grand Master and set aside if the rejection was on the grounds of race, creed or colour, or for reasons other than moral fitness—Cobbs C F, 'Where are we now?', *Philalethes*, April 1994, p32.

161 *California Freemason*, September 1990, p13.

162 *Yearbook*, 1991.

163 Nairn, *op cit*, pp113 & 127.

164 Luckin D M, 'Negro Freemasonry' in *Transactions of the Hobart Lodge of Research*, vol 39 # 5, p9 (1986).

165 Voorhis, *Negro Masonry in the United States*, p108.

For many years it did good work, when it was in the hands of capable brethren and when they confined their candidates to men of Color. About 1910, however they started accepting petitions from any man, and no matter where he resided, whether in Nova Scotia or British Columbia, and occasionally from the United States. About this time the Secretary got short in his accounts too. After an investigation by Grand Lodge, the Charter was forfeited in June, 1916, and the lodge has not functioned since.

In the Grand Lodge of Alberta *Bulletin* of June 1990 was an article by RWBro Bob Shaw, DDGM, District 10. It revealed that Bro Shaw was originally a Prince Hall Mason who was required to 'repudiate his membership in that Craft' to join 'Alberta Masonry'. In his article on Prince Hall Masonry in Canada, Shaw said:

Our current position is that Prince Hall Masons would have to sever all ties with Prince Hall Masonry and then take all three degrees in our Lodges. Whatever your feeling toward black men who are Prince Hall Masons and their Craft, you cannot currently sit in lodge with a Prince Hall Mason. Our Grand Lodge does not recognize that body of Masons. The traditional view held in Canada is that the situation is wrong but it is an American domestic problem. Fortunately, in Canada there is no Masonic colour barrier. To have one must be a violation of the spirit of Freemasonry and we have many black Masonic brethren in the Craft.

Voorhis enumerated 'just a few of the many cases' of *Whites* admitted to Prince Hall Masonry.<sup>166</sup> They included a group of 26 men of Italian parentage who joined a New York lodge between 1908 and 1910, a group of four *Whites* who joined a Prince Hall lodge in Georgia in the 1860s, and a case in Michigan where a lodge had agreed to elect a *White* applicant of good repute—but someone dropped a black ball into the ballot.

For a short time there was an entire lodge of *Whites*, except for the Secretary, who happened to be the Grand Secretary of the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of New York. The lodge was warranted in February 1870. Its returns for that year showed 25 members, almost all of them with Jewish names. By 1874 the lodge had changed allegiance. The *Proceedings* of the Prince Hall Grand Lodge for that year reported: 'Progress Lodge No 12, New York City, changed to Shakespear Lodge No 750 under the Jurisdiction of the New York Grand Lodge (white).'<sup>167</sup>

It is two centuries too late for the admission of *Blacks* into mainstream lodges to be the answer in the United States, and even in Canada, which does not share the same history of refusing to admit *Blacks* to the Craft. Nevertheless, the creed of both branches of Masonry demands that the option must always be open. As Allen Roberts said:<sup>168</sup>

We should never refuse to accept a petition from any good man because of his race, creed, religion or color. In the case of Black men, however, we should inform them about Prince Hall Masonry and its need for good leaders. These men should then be left to make their own choice with no persuasion in any way on our part.

The answer for today is a compromise, the recognition of Prince Hall Masonry as regular and equal, allowing intervisitation and whatever other exchanges of mutual respect and appreciation may be required and agreed. For the future, perhaps generations in the future, lies the ideal of merger, the creation of lodges as they should have been from the start, and are in fact in other parts of the world inhabited by a mix of races.

## PART II—THE JOURNEY TOWARDS RECOGNITION

### Fraternal co-existence

From as early as 1845 there were attempts to obtain recognition of Prince Hall Freemasonry, in order to establish fraternal links. In 1845 Boyer Lodge presented a memorial to the *White* Grand Lodge of New York, seeking recognition, and was rejected.<sup>169</sup>

In 1868 a petition signed by 72 members of the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Massachusetts was submitted to the *White* Grand Lodge of Massachusetts for recognition. Grand Master William S Gardner made a detailed investigation and scholarly report which was unfavourable to the application, and the petition was denied. The whole investigation is documented in Mackey's *History of Freemasonry* and has been much quoted elsewhere. William Upton described it as 'the ablest attack upon the Negro Masons we have seen', and Harold Voorhis commented: 'An examination of the report will show that it will not withstand the test of the "square and level".'<sup>170</sup>

A Prince Hall petition to the Grand Lodge of Ohio in 1869 was unsuccessful. Six years later a *White* lodge presented a resolution to the Grand Lodge of Ohio, proposing that the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Ohio be

166 Voorhis, *Negro Masonry in the United States*, pp49–51.

167 Walkes, *Black Square & Compass*, p139.

168 Roberts A E, 'Black Freemasonry', *Philalethes*, April 1989, @ p17.

169 Voorhis, *Negro Masonry in the United States*, p43; Walkes, *A Prince Hall Masonic Quiz Book*, p101.

170 Voorhis, *loc cit*.

accorded fraternal recognition if it agreed to change its name to African Grand Lodge and confine its work to 'persons of African descent'. The resolution was put to the vote in 1876,<sup>171</sup> and was lost 332 to 390.<sup>172</sup>

A few years earlier, support for the Prince Hall quest for recognition had come from a surprising quarter, the research of the German historian, Findel. His *History of Freemasonry* was first published in 1861. Writing of the development of the Craft in Massachusetts, he said:<sup>173</sup>

Besides these Grand Lodges with their daughters, there had been established during the war, Lodges of colored people, which worked separately. It was long doubted whether these were legally constituted, until Br. Dr. R Barthelmess of Brooklyn, demonstrated from the history of their first beginning, that such was the case, so that their recognition can no longer with any show of reason, be withheld.

He went on to give an account of African Lodge and the formation of African Grand Lodge, and mentioned that Prince Hall's correspondence, including the Letter Book, had been published in the German Masonic magazine *Bauhütte* in 1861. Concerning 'exclusive territorial jurisdiction' in the United States, he said:<sup>174</sup>

The right of district, which permitted but one dominant Grand Lodge to exist in each state, and interdicted single lodges from joining any other foreign masonic superior power, was suffered in 1809 to pass into a law, though narrowmindedness and the love of power gave it birth.

These sentiments so pleased and heartened Prince Hall Masons that Lewis Hayden, Grand Master of the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, bestowed honorary membership and rank of Grand Master on Findel, sent him the appropriate regalia, and dedicated his own book, *Masonry Among Colored Men in Massachusetts*, to Findel.<sup>175</sup>

The Prince Hall Grand Lodges of Ohio, Massachusetts, Missouri and New York began to seek Masonic recognition abroad, with some measure of success, as reported by Gould in his *History of Freemasonry* a few years later:<sup>176</sup>

These coloured or "lesser Grand Lodges," have been more or less recognised as legally constituted bodies in France, Italy, Germany, Hungary, Peru and Liberia ...

I am inclined to think that the claim of the Black Mason to be placed on a footing of equality with the White one, is destined to pass through a somewhat similar ordeal in America, to that which has been (in part) undergone by the famous Jewish question in Germany.

To the list of foreign recognitions, Walkes added the Dominican Republic,<sup>177</sup> and O H Biggs, of Tasmania, added Switzerland, but cited no authority.<sup>178</sup>

The next move was made in the far northwest of the United States. In 1897 there was no Prince Hall Grand Lodge in the State of Washington. Two Prince Hall Masons who lived there wrote to the *White* Grand Lodge and asked if a way could be devised to permit them to visit a lodge in that State. One Past Grand Master is reported as saying: 'Throw it in the wastebasket.'<sup>179</sup> After some debate, the request was referred to a committee under the chairmanship of the Grand Senior Warden, William H Upton. He was California-born and the other two committee members, the Grand Secretary and a Past Grand Master, hailed from Kentucky and Alabama—on the face of it, not a committee likely to favour racial integration.

However, Upton, a Superior Court judge and a student of Masonry, made a careful and comprehensive study of Prince Hall Masonry, and his findings convinced the other members of the committee. They reported back in 1898 with a series of resolutions which were printed *verbatim* in Mackey's *History of Freemasonry*,<sup>180</sup> and which may be summarised as follows:

- 1 Neither race nor colour is a proper test of fitness of a candidate.
- 2 Washington lodges and their members are entitled to recognise, as brother Masons, *Blacks* who have been initiated in lodges which trace their origin to African Lodge No 459.
- 3 Having regard to social conditions and preferences, if regular Masons of African descent wish to establish lodges (and eventually a Grand Lodge) in Washington, wholly or mainly for brethren of their own race, and regulated according to the landmarks and Masonic law, then the Grand Lodge of Washington would not regard this as an invasion of jurisdiction.

The Grand Lodge of Washington adopted the resolutions unanimously, and elected Upton Grand Master, but he was obliged to spend his year defending the action of his Grand Lodge against the outcry from other American Grand Lodges, not all from the south. After 17 Grand Lodges had severed relations with Washington,

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171 Walkes, *A Prince Hall Masonic Quiz Book*, p162.

172 Gould R F, *History of Freemasonry*, 1st edn, vol 3, p464.

173 Findel J G, *History of Freemasonry*, English trans of 2nd edn, London, 1868, @ 370.

174 Findel, *op cit*, p518.

175 Walkes, *Black Square & Compass*, p101.

176 Gould, *loc cit*.

177 Walkes, *Black Square & Compass*, p100.

178 Biggs O H, 'Negro Masonry' in *Transactions of the Hobart Lodge of Research*, vol 7 # 5, p10 (1954).

179 1991 *Proceedings of the White Grand Lodge of Washington*, p218.

180 1921 edition, vol 6, p2008.

the following year a resolution was passed (with only three dissentients): 'upholding our historic contentions, but consenting to waive them in practice'. The only benefit from this debacle was the publication of the original report, in pamphlet form, entitled *Light on a dark subject*, and in extended form by Upton as a book, *Negro Masonry, being a critical examination*.

Upton felt so strongly about the issue that he assigned publication rights to the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, and made a provision in his will that no monument should be erected over his grave until *Black* and *White* Masons could stand beside it as brothers.<sup>181</sup> Among the ways in which Prince Hall Masons have honoured Upton is to name lodges after him, in Montana (since defunct), South Carolina and Washington State.<sup>182</sup>

A second fiasco was to occur in Boston almost 50 years later. In 1947 a committee reported to the *White* Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, acknowledging the legitimate origin of the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Massachusetts. The committee did not recommend formal recognition or intervisitation, merely an acknowledgment of legitimacy. The committee's report was adopted. As with Washington, so with Massachusetts. Other Grand Lodges withdrew recognition and in 1949 Massachusetts rescinded its resolution.<sup>183</sup> Ralph Castle commented: 'How can men of high mind and heart surrender principles to expediency...?'<sup>184</sup>

Twenty years later, *White* brethren of Massachusetts wrote an open letter to their Grand Lodge:<sup>185</sup>

... The 1949 committee report concluded with the pusillanimous decision that unity and harmony are vastly more important to the Fraternity than debates about Negro Freemasonry. This statement, questionable then, today is clearly untrue.

... In 1947, the Grand Lodge had the courage and the moral conviction to do what was right rather than what was most expedient. Since 1949 it has remained intimidated, lacking the wisdom to realize that what is righteous and just will survive any storm...

Let us remember that all that is necessary for injustice to prevail is that good men do nothing.

...

The letter was signed by Masters, Past Masters and officers of four lodges, and three brethren who bore 'outside' appointments—the editor in chief of the *Christian Science Monitor*, the president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and Commissioner of the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination.

### ***Recognition in the United States***

Times were already changing. From a cautious beginning in Wisconsin in 1960 and a brave practical application of brotherhood in Connecticut in 1966 have grown the present positive moves in many parts of the United States and Canada. In recent years the situation has become more complex and, for the sake of clarity, in this section of the paper, events will be recorded according to the type of action taken, rather than follow a strictly chronological sequence. This section will rely heavily on articles in the Fall 1993 issue of the Prince Hall research journal *Phylaxis*, to supplement the information available from *White* sources, and is particularly indebted to the scholarly paper presented to the Phylaxis Society by John B Williams, FPS, 'Recognition of Prince Hall Grand Lodges in America'.<sup>186</sup>

*Black* and *White* Grand Lodges in Wisconsin began formal discussions, moving cautiously towards an accord. In Connecticut the *Black* and *White* Grand Lodges jointly sponsored a 'Brotherhood-in-Action' community programme, in which they were joined by the (Roman Catholic) Knights of Columbus and the (Jewish) B'nai B'rith. The two Masonic bodies also combined in a blood-donor scheme, together with Eastern Star, Rainbow, DeMolay, Shrine and Red Cross groups.

After 12 years of contact, the *White* Grand Lodge of Wisconsin felt sufficiently confident to amend its *Code*, to make it crystal clear that it had no colour bar, and three years later it endorsed a report that the doctrine of exclusive territorial jurisdiction was not a barrier to fraternal recognition. In 1977 the *Whites* of Wisconsin acknowledged the legitimacy of Prince Hall Masonry. Then, in 1980, the *White* Grand Master proposed to the *Black* Grand Master that they consider complete integration—a merger of the two Grand Lodges. As John Williams put it: 'This bold step was too much for the Prince Hall Grand Lodge. Fraternal recognition was their immediate goal.'

After 23 years experience of working together outside the temples, *Black* and *White* Masons in Connecticut felt that they could work harmoniously inside, at least to the extent of visiting each other. In September 1989 the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Connecticut made a formal request for fraternal recognition. The preliminaries were

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181 achieved in 1991, as reported later in this paper.

182 Walkes, *A Prince Hall Masonic Quiz Book*, p96, *Black Square & Compass*, p138.

183 Williams J B, 'Recognition of Prince Hall Grand Lodges in America' in *Phylaxis*, Fall 1993, p17.

184 Castle, *op cit*, p21.

185 Walkes, *A Prince Hall Masonic Quiz Book*, p93.

186 Any factual statement (as opposed to expression of opinion) to which no other source is attributed, is derived from Bro Williams' paper, or from the *Proceedings* of the particular Grand Lodge referred to.

quickly attended to, and on 14 October 1989 both Grand Lodges met separately and voted to extend fraternal recognition and visitation rights to the other. If the *Whites* prayed for courage to stand fast and not wilt before the storm, as Washington and Massachusetts had before them, their prayers were answered. Only one Grand Lodge went so far as to withdraw recognition.<sup>187</sup> The response of other Grand Lodges varied.

A month after Connecticut Masons agreed to recognition and intervisitation, Nebraska Masons went a step further. The *Black* and *White* Grand Lodges granted full, complete and unrestricted Masonic recognition of each other.<sup>188</sup> From Connecticut, the *White* Deputy Grand Master attended a Northeast Conference, at which Prince Hall Masonry and racism in Masonry were discussed, and the *White* Grand Master attended the Conference of Grand Masters of North America, in Utah, where he gave an address on 'Connecticut and Prince Hall Masonry' which was well received.<sup>189</sup> *Black* and *White* Masons visited each other in lodge and Grand Lodge on a number of occasions, with many expressions of good will.

By the end of 1990, Washington State and Wisconsin had joined Connecticut and Nebraska in establishing fraternal relations in their own States. In Washington it was made clear that the Master of a lodge could invite a Prince Hall Mason or any other visitor to perform degree work, provided it was 'Washington' work.<sup>190</sup> Early in the new year Colorado was added to the growing number. In April, Minnesota agreed to mutual recognition, but the *White* Grand Master instructed his brethren that intervisitation could not be implemented until both Grand Lodges had agreed on proper identification methods. There is no Prince Hall Grand Lodge in North Dakota, but there are lodges warranted by the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Minnesota. Consequently, the *Black* Grand Lodge of Minnesota and the *White* Grand Lodge of North Dakota recognised each other in June 1991.

As in North Dakota, there is no Prince Hall Grand Lodge in Idaho but there is a lodge warranted from elsewhere, the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Oregon. The difference is that in Oregon, unlike Minnesota, the *Black* and *White* Grand Lodges have not reached fraternal accord. Therefore, the *White* Grand Lodge of Idaho risked censure when it entered into negotiations with the *Black* Grand Lodge in neighbouring Oregon. In September 1991 a special committee reported to the Grand Lodge of Idaho that they recommended full recognition of the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Oregon, on the Nebraska pattern, stating: '*In our research during the past year we find no Masonic Law, regulation, or custom which provides for partial recognition of a Grand Lodge; it is either regular and entitled to recognition or it is not entitled to any recognition at all.*' The recommendation was adopted. The Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Oregon had already accorded full recognition in June, subject to reciprocity.

At last the conditions could be met for a headstone to be placed on the grave of William Upton. In June 1991 the Grand Lodge of Washington and the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Washington met in special communication and then, together, an estimated 400 Masons, *Black* and *White*, marched to the graveside for the ceremony. Also present were four descendants of Past Grand Master Upton, a grandson, a granddaughter and two great-granddaughters. Following the invocation by the *White* Grand Chaplain, the Prince Hall Grand Lecturer gave the keynote to the dedication ceremony, the oration was given by the *White* Grand Orator and the benediction by the Prince Hall Grand Chaplain. In the words of Brother Clemon Modisett, the Prince Hall Grand Lecturer, 'Our meeting today to lay the headstone upon Brother Upton's grave is evidence that his work was not in vain. His dream is now realized! His request is now fulfilled!'<sup>191</sup>

In October 1991, the Grand Master of the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Washington wrote to the United Grand Lodge of England regarding the possibility of opening communications between the two Grand Lodges. The reply was to the effect that it would be more appropriate, initially, for England to confer with the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Massachusetts. Such talks have been instituted, and are continuing.<sup>192</sup>

Juan Alvarez reported (November 1993) that the *White* Grand Lodge of Connecticut is in the process of extending recognition to all Prince Hall Grand Lodges that establish fraternal relations with the *White* Grand Lodge of their own State, but this had not been achieved when the Pantagraph *1994 List of Lodges, Masonic* went to press. For the record, the *White* Grand Lodge of Idaho seems to have been the first to recognise a second Prince Hall Grand Lodge; the *1994 List of Lodges, Masonic* credits Idaho with recognition of Oregon and Washington.

John Williams, commenting on the general situation, remarked that *White* Grand Lodges that have extended recognition appear to be firm and resolute in maintaining their position. He added:<sup>193</sup>

This is not to say that resolutions granting recognition to Prince Hall Grand Lodges has not met with a degree of opposition and will not continue to do so.

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187 or two (*Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Utah*, 1991, p93), or none (Williams J B, *op cit*, p18).

188 Norman Senn, of Alberta's Fiat Lux Lodge of Research, reported (March 1990) that Nebraska GM John McHenry described this as including 'freedom to apply for affiliation across the two bodies'.

189 as an aside, jazz fans may be pleased to learn that Brother Lionel Hampton was speaker at a Connecticut 'Brotherhood-in-Action' meeting in September 1990, and expressed his wish that joint recognition in Connecticut would be emulated throughout the world.

190 *Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Washington*, 1991, p32.

191 *ibid*, p221.

192 personal correspondence Hamill—Pope, 16 February 1994.

193 Williams, *op cit*, p20.

As has been pointed out [by Joseph A Walkes Jr], 'There are those within our beautiful fraternity [Prince Hall] who want the status quo to remain, that want no dealings with Whites, who are just as racist and bigoted as some of our counterparts.'

On the other hand there are legal as well as moral imperatives forcing the issue of mutual recognition between Black and White Masons ... A Past Grand Master and lawyer from Virginia [Cabell F Cobbs] makes a legal case for acceptance of Prince Hall Masonry because 'we are seeing a steady march of the law, legislative and judicial, to eliminate discrimination from our social fabric, be it private or public.'

There is hope that the all-male standing of the fraternity may stand, but ipso facto segregation will not long survive...

### *Intermediate measures*

Several Grand Lodges or Grand Masters, while not extending formal recognition to a Prince Hall body, made the decision to permit their members to visit lodges in jurisdictions where Prince Hall Masons might be visiting. These included New Hampshire in 1991,<sup>194</sup> Montana<sup>195</sup> and California<sup>196</sup> in 1992, and the Canadian Grand Lodges of Manitoba (specifically for visiting in Minnesota and North Dakota)<sup>197</sup> and British Columbia (for Washington).<sup>198</sup> Some other Grand Lodges do not find it necessary to make a separate provision, because their practice, on the question of regularity of persons present in a lodge they visit, has always been to accept the judgement of the Master and the sovereignty of the Grand Jurisdiction in which they visit. Others would consider this attitude naive and insist on protecting their visiting members from Masonic association with members of a body not recognised by the visitors' Grand Lodge. These conflicting practices existed in the United States and elsewhere, even before the modern question of Prince Hall visitors arose. Most British and Australian Grand Lodges, for example, have long specified the circumstances under which their visiting members must politely leave the lodge they are visiting.<sup>199</sup>

In December 1991 the Grand Lodge of Belgium, where American NATO troops were stationed, requested the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Massachusetts to discuss a treaty of friendship.<sup>200</sup> A committee appointed by the Grand Lodge of New York sought contact with the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of New York.<sup>201</sup> The results of these moves, like the outcome of similar initiatives in California, Kansas and Rhode Island, are not yet known.

Alaska took a different approach. In an article in that Grand Lodge's publication, *North Star*, the Grand Master wrote:

Brethren, many of you have expressed an interest in granting some type of fraternal recognition to Prince Hall Lodges in this state. Others have said, 'No way.'

For this Grand Lodge to legally recognize Prince Hall we will have to make some constitutional changes to our Masonic Code. This will take 2 or 3 years to accomplish.

Therefore, the purpose of this article is to determine how many of you would like to see fraternal recognition granted to Prince Hall Lodges. If the majority of you would like to recognize Prince Hall, we will draft resolutions to make the necessary changes in our code.

However, if the majority do not want to grant this recognition, there is no reason to waste a lot of time on an issue that will be defeated. Let us know how you feel. The opinion of all Master Masons is welcome.<sup>202</sup>

In Iowa, a committee reported back to its Grand Lodge after talks with a committee from the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Iowa, with the recommendation that Grand Lodge wait until England should act upon the request from the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Washington for recognition.<sup>203</sup> They were either unaware of England's response or chose this method to sit on the fence. Even more peculiar was the recommendation of the Grand Master of Massachusetts in 1990 that it would not be advisable to 'go against the United Grand Lodge of England', which had not recognised Prince Hall Grand Lodges,<sup>204</sup> a sentiment which amazed Past Grand

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194 *Proceedings* of the Grand Lodge of Utah, 1991, annual report of the fraternal relations committee, p93.

195 *Proceedings* of the Grand Lodge of Saskatchewan, 1993, p48.

196 *Proceedings* of the Grand Lodge of Canada (in Ontario), 1992, p220; Nairn, *op cit*, p114.

197 *Tasmanian Mason*, June 1992.

198 *Proceedings* of the Grand Lodge of Canada (in Ontario), 1992, pp106, 220; *Phylaxis*, Winter 1993, p19.

199 but see the argument of PGM Cabell F Cobbs, of Virginia, in 'Principles of Grand Lodge Recognition', presented to the Phylaxis Society on 4 March 1993, (*Phylaxis*, Fall 1993) in which he concludes (p8):

It would appear ... that the United Grand Lodge of England and several of our American jurisdictions are ... in error in forbidding or limiting visitation of their members to lodges holden under those Grand jurisdictions which have fully recognized or established visitation rights with Prince Hall Grand Lodges in their respective states and provinces. Under any Masonic authority of which I am aware, it is the law of a particular Grand jurisdiction which governs the legitimacy of Masons and Masonic visitations within its jurisdiction.

200 Williams, *op cit*, p20.

201 *Proceedings* of the Grand Lodge of Saskatchewan, 1993, p49.

202 *North Star*, April 1993, quoted by Ralph Herbold, SCRL *Fraternal Review* no 673.

203 *Phylaxis*, Winter 1993, p20.

204 *Proceedings* of the Grand Lodge of Canada (in Ontario), 1992, p228.

Master Kenneth Aldridge, of Quebec, among others.<sup>205</sup> Michigan, also, decided to 'wait and see'.<sup>206</sup>

### *Adverse responses*

In 1989 the *White* Grand Master of Louisiana, a brother by the name of Love, quickly issued an edict severing all fraternal ties with Connecticut—but no one else followed suit. Observers are not in agreement on subsequent events.<sup>207</sup> However, the 1993 *Proceedings* of the Grand Lodge of Louisiana indicate the following: the edict was approved by Grand Lodge in 1990, just before Bro Love handed over to the new Grand Master, Bro Tidwell. At the end of his year, Bro Tidwell recommended that the edict be revoked and a 'Grand Master's statement of position' on clandestine and irregular Masonry be published and forwarded to all Grand Jurisdictions. This recommendation was approved unanimously by Grand Lodge, but the incoming Grand Master, Bro McDuffie, decided to delay implementation of the recommendation. At the end of his year, Bro McDuffie submitted a resolution to restore recognition to Connecticut. The resolution was defeated at the 1992 annual communication. The incoming Grand Master, Bro Delaney, thereupon issued an edict, reiterating that Connecticut members were not permitted to visit Louisiana lodges, and prohibiting Louisiana members from visiting lodges in *recognised* jurisdictions where a Connecticut visitor was also present. At the annual communication in 1993 this edict was considered by the Committee on Masonic Law and Jurisprudence, which ruled that the edict was effective during his term of office, but would only be effective thereafter if approved by the delegates at the annual communication. It was not approved by the delegates. Instead, they voted in favour of resolution number 1993-6, to rescind the original edict and issue a position statement, just as Bro Tidwell wanted in 1991. It would appear that for technical reasons this resolution, although successful, would have to be re-submitted in 1994 and then obtain a two-thirds majority vote. The 1994 *Proceedings*, when available, should contain the answer.<sup>208</sup>

When the *White* Grand Lodge of Idaho recognised the *Black* Grand Lodge of Oregon, the *White* Grand Lodge of Oregon was not pleased. Grand Master Ivan Rinck said:<sup>209</sup>

We have no rules against black men petitioning in our fraternity. We do have black members. In fact, the Senior Warden of Research Lodge No. 198 of Oregon is a black brother.

I had a letter from one of our members asking me to send him a list of all black members in Oregon, with names and addresses and phone numbers. My reply to him was, 'We do not keep records of the color of our members, our petitions do not ask the question and we have no desire or reason to know.'

I further related to that brother that his question about color was un-Masonic. If Prince Hall members want to belong with us they should join us in our regular lodges.

... Many brothers in this jurisdiction, and others, try to convert this problem to a black and white issue, which it is not. The facts are simple: the Grand Lodge A.F. & A.M. of Idaho now recognizes two Grand Lodges in Oregon when we do not.

Grand Master Rinck declared Idaho's action 'an unlawful invasion of Oregon's exclusive territorial jurisdiction' and severed relations with Idaho in December 1991. Cabell Cobbs, a Past Grand Master of the *White* Grand Lodge of Virginia and a strong advocate of recognition of Prince Hall Grand Lodges, described Oregon's action as based on jurisdictional grounds rather than obstructionism.<sup>210</sup> The Oregon entry in the *1994 List of Lodges, Masonic* reads: 'At publication the Grand Lodge of Oregon does not recognize the Grand Lodge of Idaho.'

Georgia severed relations with Idaho in 1992, in support of Oregon, a fact duly noted in the *List of Lodges, Masonic*. The Grand Master of Georgia instructed his lodges that no visitor from a Grand Jurisdiction which had granted recognition to Prince Hall Masonry was permitted to visit a lodge in Georgia without his permission. A resolution was also passed in Georgia that '[We] strongly disapprove and condemn the action of any other Grand Lodge' which thereafter makes such recognition.<sup>211</sup>

Several other southern *White* Grand Lodges took steps to register their disapproval, short of the withdrawal of recognition. West Virginia, by successive edicts of the Grand Master, has forbidden brethren to visit lodges in the jurisdictions which have recognised Prince Hall Grand Lodges.<sup>212</sup> South Carolina declared its position in a resolution adopted in 1992:

It has been the position of this Grand Lodge for many years that Prince Hall Grand Lodges are clandestine and visitation by South Carolina Masons is forbidden. South Carolina has recognized only

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205 position paper presented at the 'All Canada' Conference, 1992.

206 *Proceedings* of the Grand Lodge of Canada (in Ontario), 1992, p229.

207 *Phylaxis*, vol 19 # 3, 1993, p20 would appear to be correct, but see also: *Proceedings* of the Grand Lodges of Canada (in Ontario), 1992, p225; Utah, 1991, p93; Washington, 1991, p142; Saskatchewan, 1993, p45.

208 *Proceedings* of the Grand Lodge of Louisiana, 1993, pp22, 48, 55, 57, 110.

209 *Phylaxis*, vol 19 # 3, 1993, p21.

210 Cobbs C F, 'Principles of Grand Lodge Recognition', *Phylaxis*, Fall 1993, p3.

211 *Fraternal Review* No 636, Southern California Research Lodge, 15 October 1991.

212 *Proceedings* of the Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario, 1993, p253.

one Grand Lodge in each Grand Jurisdiction as Regular; however, we have recognized the right of any Grand Lodge to establish relations with whomsoever they desire. Because of these recent actions all South Carolina brethren should be alert if visiting in one of the above mentioned Jurisdictions. Should a Mason from a Lodge considered to be irregular be present, the South Carolina Mason must excuse himself and leave.

The *White* Grand Master of Mississippi reported that he had attended the Grand Masters Conference in Utah, and continued:<sup>213</sup> ‘We learned that some states are making what we feel are radical changes, reducing memory work required, and recognizing masonry we consider clandestine.’ He subsequently issued a letter warning his brethren that if they visited lodges in Connecticut or Nebraska and encountered *Black* Masons, it would be their responsibility to determine if they were Prince Hall or ‘regular’ Masons; they were not to converse with or sit in any lodge with Prince Hall Masons.<sup>214</sup> Kentucky took similar action.<sup>215</sup>

### *American problems*

There can be no doubt that racial bigotry still exists in the United States, and not only in the south. That it still finds its way into Masonic lodges is attested by *Black* and *White* Americans,<sup>216</sup> as well as by visitors.<sup>217</sup> Indeed, it is confirmed by some of the pronouncements of some of the Grand Lodges. However, not all of the problems concerning recognition of Prince Hall Grand Lodges can be ascribed solely to bigotry.

We have seen that there remain questions of the regularity of initiation of Prince Hall and his brethren, and of the propriety of some of the actions by African Lodge and its Master—which are more convincingly answered by the issue of the warrant from the Grand Lodge of England, and by demonstrating that greater irregularities than these, by other lodges and Masters, have been healed, forgiven or quietly overlooked, rather than by attempting to prove regularity and propriety, point by point. Similarly, the irregularities in the formation of the various Prince Hall Grand Lodges in the 19th century are in some instances excusable on the ground of necessity, and with others the ‘crime’ is much less than that of those ‘regular’ Grand Lodges which categorically denied the privileges of Freemasonry to *every* African-American on the basis of race. Surely it would be better for the Craft as a whole if all concerned could forget the past, and concentrate on the present and the future. No evidence of present irregularity has been advanced.

There remains, however, a question of Masonic jurisprudence yet to be resolved in some States. That is the American doctrine of exclusive territorial jurisdiction. Some Grand Lodges, such as Virginia, have no problem with this particular issue because their constitutions provide for the possibility of sharing jurisdiction by mutual consent.<sup>218</sup> As Henry Coil pointed out, exclusivity has not been practiced uniformly by American Grand Lodges, which have been prepared to make exceptions when they chose.<sup>219</sup> All that is needed is the will to change.

Of course, not all have the will, or the capacity, to change, but even in the south Grand Lodges are at least discussing the problem and some members are speaking out in favour of it, as evidenced by the Southeastern Masonic Conference, held at Atlanta, Georgia, in August 1993. Even more encouraging is the decision by the Grand Master of North Carolina to organise seminars to re-educate his brethren. This training includes admissions of racial intolerance, that until recently the *Code* prohibited the admission of African-American applicants, and that there are no *Black* members of North Carolina lodges, but encourages members to receive ‘regular’ African-American Masons from other jurisdictions as visitors, and to welcome petitions from African-Americans. It teaches something of the history of Prince Hall and the development of Prince Hall Masonry—not

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213 *Proceedings*, 1991, p13.

214 *Proceedings*, 1991, of the *White* Grand Lodge of Minnesota, p87.

215 *Proceedings* of the Grand Lodge of Canada (in Ontario), 1992, p225.

216 extracts from a letter published in the *Wisconsin Masonic Journal*, December 1993, Letters to the Editor, have a ring of truth:

I am a lost member of Forest Lodge No 130 F&AM of Wausau, Wisconsin. I say lost because I haven’t sat in the lodge since September 1984. That obviously requires an explanation. I was a soldier: my military duties took me away from Wausau and my home in Wisconsin to a small southern town that will remain nameless.

I sought affiliation with the local lodge and was welcomed with open arms. That is until I declined membership in another local “fraternal” organisation. We have all heard of this group. They wear their bed linens instead of sleep on them ... I moved again and eventually ended my travels and Army career here in Augusta, Georgia. I don’t sit or participate in lodge here either. At one lodge I was not even allowed into the hall. It all has something to do with the Wisconsin Grand Lodge allowing cross visitation with Prince Hall Masons.

So here I am, a lost member of Forest Lodge ...

I would love to return home to Wisconsin again, but ... for now I will stay here and enjoy my memories of Freemasonry and what it meant to me. Its teachings have served me through a very rough nine years—Donald M Herrmann Jr.

reprinted by Ralph A Herbold, Southern California Research Lodge, 1 April 1994;

and an article in the *North Carolina Mason* (‘Race and Freemasonry’, March/April 1994, at p7) includes the following statement:

Masonry is a reflection of our society. The history of our country is a history of racial intolerance. Masonic racial intolerance is not a North versus South issue. In fact, official and unofficial racial intolerance was and is practiced in Northern lodges as well as Southern lodges.

217 Wallace McLeod and John Hamill, to name two.

218 Cobbs, ‘Principles of Grand Lodge Recognition’, p6; Seymour J, ‘Prince Hall Affiliated: Legitimate—we should recognize’, Minutes of the Southeastern Masonic Conference, Georgia, August 1993, p39.

219 Coil H W, *Coil’s Masonic Encyclopedia*, Macoy 1961, entries for *American doctrine* and *Louisiana*.



very accurately, but the mistakes are mostly favourable to Prince Hall—and falls just short of advocating recognition.<sup>220</sup> And in the northwest, Bob Jensen, Master of Walter F Meier Lodge of Research, summarised as follows:

When I see all the differences in opinion on the Prince Hall recognition question, I realize that some of us will always be seeing Brotherhood in a different light ... [Let] me say that I am proud of Washington State and all the others that have recognized Prince Hall Masonry. I have enjoyed a number of meetings with my Prince Hall Brethren, and have learned from them. I now believe I have a better understanding of what Masonry should be.<sup>221</sup>

Robert Nairn put the issue squarely in his paper in Sydney last year:

There must be a method of granting recognition which over-rides these problems of historical regularity or at least considers them to be of less importance. Surely the most relevant questions are: 'Are they good Masons?' [and] 'Do they reflect Freemasonry's principles today?'<sup>222</sup>

Cabell Cobbs added the weight of his legal training:

Aside from the moral and legal aspects of recognition of Prince Hall Masonry and the compelling argument that its regularity and genuine Masonic structure has been established by two hundred years of history, it is submitted that any scholarly and unbiased examination of its origins, its Masonic practices, and its attachment to the principles which the so-called regular Grand Lodges espouse, make it clear that it is entitled to reception as a full and honorable partner in the spectrum of our Fraternity.<sup>223</sup>

Preston Pope, chairman of the Prince Hall Recognition Committee which worked with its 'mainstream' counterpart in Connecticut, said:

... the separation between Masons across the country should never have occurred in the first place. It was wrong then and it is still wrong today ... I am proud to say to the Freemasons of Connecticut, Well Done, Brothers, And Rightfully So.<sup>224</sup>

Joseph Walkes pointed out that the issue has not been fully resolved:

Until such time as the Prince Hall Freemason can knock on any Masonic Lodge door in the United States, and be allowed entry, then American Freemasonry will remain a mockery.<sup>225</sup>

### ***Recognition in Canada***

There is only one *Black* Grand Lodge in Canada, the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Ontario, established in 1856. It is the second-oldest Grand Lodge in Canada—only the Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario is older, by one year. The Prince Hall Grand Lodge also has lodges in Quebec, and some American Prince Hall Grand Lodges have lodges in some of the other Provinces of Canada.

Masonic protocol requires the junior Grand Lodge to petition the senior for recognition. The Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Ontario, being the second-senior, foresaw complications with this, and took the unprecedented step of declaring that it would agree to exchange fraternal recognition and intervisitation with any of the Grand Lodges in Canada (which it listed) if that Grand Lodge should so desire.

Among the leading *White* advocates in Canada of the regularity of Prince Hall Grand Lodges are PGM Kenneth Aldridge, the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Quebec, and Prof Wallace McLeod, a PM of Quatuor Coronati Lodge and Grand Historian of the Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario. In 1992, after papers had been presented by these two, and others, a resolution was presented at the 1992 annual conference of the nine independent Grand Lodges of Canada and the English and Scottish District Grand Lodges of Newfoundland, as follows:<sup>226</sup>

The Conference of Grand and District Grand Lodges of Canada held in Winnipeg on March 21, 1992, unanimously recommends the acceptance of Prince Hall Grand Lodges, as approved by the Conference of Prince Hall Grand Lodges, as being regular Masonic Grand Lodges.

The representatives of the nine Grand Lodges and the two District Grand Lodges passed the resolution unanimously, and it was taken back to the various Grand Lodges. This was an acknowledgement of regularity, not a recommendation for recognition of a specific Prince Hall Grand Lodge.

The resolution was presented to at least seven of the nine Grand Lodges at their next communication, and Alberta, Manitoba and Canada (in Ontario) formally adopted the resolution. Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova

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220 'As we enter the 21st century', *North Carolina Mason*, March/April 1994, pp1, 6&7.

221 Jensen B J, 'Be Ye All Of One Mind ...', in *Masonic Contemplations*, Lodge of Research No 218, Melbourne 1994, p148.

222 Nairn R J, *op cit*, p115.

223 Cobbs C F, 'Principles of Grand Lodge recognition', *Phylaxis*, Fall 1993, pp6,7.

224 Pope P L, (PGM, Chairman of Prince Hall Recognition Committee, Connecticut) 'The Freemasons of Connecticut', *Phylaxis*, Fall 1993, p21.

225 Walkes J A, 'Opening address, 20th anniversary Phylaxis Society', *Phylaxis*, Fall 1993, p3.

226 *Proceedings* of the Grand Lodge of Alberta, 1992, p111; of the Grand Lodge of Canada in Ontario, 1992, pp36, 105; and others.

Scotia and Prince Edward Island have gone further. In September 1993, the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Quebec reported:<sup>227</sup>

The situation in Canada is that the Grand Lodges of Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Quebec all recognize the M.W. Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Ontario and Jurisdiction. *The recognition has included the exchange of Grand Representatives.* [italics added] To say that the recognition reaction was positive would be a gross understatement. Inter-jurisdictional lodge visits have been numerous and the reports fed back to this office indicate that meetings were attended with high levels of emotional brotherhood. Nothing in the history of the Grand Lodge of Quebec has so captured the genuine spirit of brotherhood as these history-making inter-lodge visits.

The Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Ontario has lodges only in Ontario and Quebec,<sup>228</sup> but its members have now been accorded the right to visit 'mainstream' lodges in four Provinces. Three others, Alberta, Manitoba and British Columbia, have Prince Hall lodges warranted from Minnesota and Washington—where *Black* and *White* Grand Lodges have reached accord. Two of these three Canadian Grand Lodges (Manitoba and British Columbia) already permit their members to visit American lodges where Prince Hall Masons may be present. Advance news from the 1994 annual communication of the Grand Lodge of New Brunswick includes a recommendation of the fraternal relations committee for recognition of the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Connecticut. Further moves may be contemplated. No problems have arisen in Canada, so far.

### **England**

The official attitude of the United Grand Lodge of England is that the present practices of Prince Hall Grand Lodges appear to be regular, but their origins were unconstitutional, even by the standards in force at the time of origin.<sup>229</sup> For most of this century, England has required as one of its 'basic principles' that for a Grand Lodge to be recognised by England it must have a regular origin, defined as having been 'established lawfully by a duly recognized Grand Lodge or by three or more regularly constituted Lodges'. This creates a substantial barrier to recognition by England of Prince Hall Grand Lodges, a barrier which England is attempting to surmount by discussion with the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, the offspring of African Lodge No 459 and progenitor of the other Prince Hall Grand Lodges.

Meanwhile, in June 1990 the United Grand Lodge of England warned its members that (from its point of view) Prince Hall Grand Lodges were 'unrecognised', and that brethren visiting North America should be more than usually alert to avoid sitting in lodge with brethren under unrecognised Grand Lodges. This warning was followed, in March 1991, with a specific instruction that until further notice brethren should not visit lodges under the Grand Lodges of Connecticut, Wisconsin, Nebraska and Washington. Brethren from those Grand Lodges would still be welcome to visit English lodges. The following June the Grand Master, HRH The Duke of Kent, added Colorado to the list, and said:<sup>230</sup>

We all hope it will not be long before a solution to this particular problem is found, but in the meantime bans like this, which are not imposed lightly, are essential if we are to continue to adhere to the basic principles for Grand Lodge recognition. The principles are important as guardians of Masonic regularity, and I wish those concerned well as they work to preserve Freemasonry as we and other regular Grand Lodges know it.

Thereafter, England added names to the list as they occurred. In April 1991, the *White* Grand Lodge of Massachusetts hosted a meeting of representatives of the *White* Grand Lodges of Colorado, Connecticut, Nebraska, Washington and Wisconsin with representatives of the United Grand Lodge of England. From several sources it appears that views were frankly, even forcefully, exchanged, but the problem was not resolved.

Historically, a number of English-speaking Grand Lodges have adopted the English 'basic principles', and therefore the natural inclination to follow England's lead in recognition of Grand Lodges is reinforced by this agreement of 'principles'. It so happens that South Australia is among those which have adopted the first of them, which provides this writer with an excuse to examine the pronouncement in some detail.

There is a preamble to the English list:

Basic Principles for Grand Lodge Recognition  
*Accepted by Grand Lodge, September 4, 1929*

THE M.W. The Grand Master having expressed a desire that the Board would draw up a statement of the Basic Principles on which this Grand Lodge could be invited to recognize any Grand Lodge applying for recognition by the English Jurisdiction, the Board of General Purposes has gladly complied. The result, as follows, has been approved by the Grand Master, and it will form the basis of a questionnaire to be forwarded in future to each Jurisdiction requesting English recognition. The

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<sup>227</sup> personal correspondence Aldridge—Pope, 15 September 1993.

<sup>228</sup> personal correspondence McLeod—Pope, 4 May 1994.

<sup>229</sup> personal correspondence Hamill—Pope, 16 February 1994.

<sup>230</sup> *Quarterly communication*, UGLE, 12 June 1991, p193.

Board desires that not only such bodies but the Brethren generally throughout the Grand Master's Jurisdiction shall be fully informed as to *those Basic Principles of Freemasonry for which the Grand Lodge of England has stood throughout its history*. [italics added]

There follows a list of eight 'principles', of which numbers 2–8 are indeed principles of Freemasonry which have been practiced by the *United Grand Lodge of England* since the Union in 1813. Whether they were *all* uniformly practiced prior to that date by both the Grand Lodges forming that Union is open to debate, but that is not germane to the issue. Nor is the fact that the Grand Lodges of Ireland and Scotland have adopted a list similar to principles 2–8. What is significant is that Scotland has not adopted the leading item, regularity of origin, as a 'basic principle' for Grand Lodge recognition. Wisely, Scotland has left the question of origin undefined, providing room for variation where it might be justified. George Draffen of Newington said of this:<sup>231</sup>

That does not, of course, necessarily mean that the Grand Lodge of Scotland does not take account of the question of origin in dealing with requests from new Grand Lodges for recognition. It may be that Scotland, in making no mention of origins, was influenced by a letter sent to a Grand Master Mason in about 1878 by Albert Pike ... [who] wrote: 'There must come a time, in the nature of things, when enquiry into the original title of a Masonic Power is barred by lapse of time ...'. Pike was here referring to something that had taken place as recently as in 1845, some thirty years before the date of his letter. It is well-known that laws may become time-barred or fall into desuetude.

Some Grand Lodges have a regularity-of-origin requirement worded slightly differently from that of England. For example, the list used by the Grand Lodge of Alberta, called '*rules*', not 'basic principles', requires that the Grand Body seeking recognition 'has been lawfully established by three or more regularly constituted Lodges; *by this Grand Lodge* or by a Grand Body recognized by this Grand Lodge' [italics added]. South Australia, while omitting the English preamble, echoes the first of the English 'basic principles' *verbatim*.<sup>232</sup>

1. Regularity of origin; i.e. each Grand Lodge shall have been established lawfully by a duly recognised Grand Lodge, or by three or more regularly constituted Lodges.

This 'rule of three' has provided material for several interesting papers, as to its origin, practice and validity,<sup>233</sup> but its only relevance at this point is in the English requirement, as adopted by South Australia and others, as a 'basic principle'. It cannot accurately be described as one of 'those Basic Principles of Freemasonry for which the Grand Lodge of England has stood *throughout its history*', because England has not always adhered to it. The prime example is the French National Grand Lodge [GLNF], formed by two lodges which broke away from the Grand Orient of France in 1913, and immediately recognised by England. As Cyril Batham pointed out:<sup>234</sup>

It is sometimes contended by opponents of regular Freemasonry that as this Grand Lodge [GLNF] was founded by only two lodges it cannot be considered regular, as the conditions for Grand Lodge recognition stipulate a minimum of three founding lodges. As these conditions were not introduced until 1929, however, they obviously could not apply in 1913, and so the argument is groundless.

Luxembourg claims a foundation date of 1868, but was only recognised by England in 1969.<sup>235</sup> According to Wallace McLeod, it was formed by a single lodge.<sup>236</sup> Among the other Grand Lodges formed by fewer than three lodges, subsequently recognised by England, are Georgia (formed by two lodges in 1786), New Hampshire (two lodges in 1784) and Rhode Island (two lodges in 1791).<sup>237</sup> New Jersey was neither warranted by another Grand Lodge nor erected by a group of lodges—it was formed by an assembly of Masons in 1786—but it has been recognised by England.<sup>238</sup> In New York, a committee was appointed in 1787 to consider methods of forming an independent Grand Lodge. The committee concluded that its Provincial Grand Lodge was already acting independently, and required only a change of name.<sup>239</sup> England has since recognised this accidentally-formed Grand Lodge. South Australia also recognises all these Grand Lodges, even though they do

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231 in comments on Christopher Haffner's paper, 'Regularity of Origin', (1983) *AQC* 96:111 @ 134.

232 Conway M, 'International Masonic relations: an overview', delivered to the South Australian Lodge of Research 18 February 1994, in press.

233 in particular, see Lionel Seemungal's remarks in (1977) *AQC* 90:300, commenting on Draffen G, 'Some aspects of International Masonic Law and customs', (1975) *AQC* 88:85.

234 Batham C N, *Freemasonry in England and France*, AMRC 1993, p188.

235 Henderson K W, *Masonic World Guide*, Lewis Masonic 1984, p205.

236 *Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Canada (in Ontario)*, 1992, p92, relying on *Coil's Masonic Encyclopedia* (1961) p389.

237 Henderson, *op cit*, pp277, 294; Haffner C, 'Regularity of origin' in (1983) *AQC* 96:111 @ 117; Seemungal L A, in (1977) *AQC* 90:300.

238 Henderson, *op cit*, p295.

239 Henderson, *op cit*, p298.

not meet the requirements of the first 'basic principle'. So do the other Australian Grand Lodges, with the exception that New South Wales and Western Australia do not recognise Luxembourg.<sup>240</sup>

All but one of these examples occurred well before the English pronouncement of 1929. Clearly, they were not taken into account when the 'basic principles' were formulated. It may merely be a question of semantics. John Hamill writes:<sup>241</sup>

For England to go the same way [as Connecticut, Nebraska and the others] would require us to stand our *Basic Principles for Grand Lodge Recognition* on their head. If principles are to mean anything they cannot be set aside for expediency's sake.

Perhaps 'basic principles' is the wrong phrase. Perhaps Alberta's 'rules' is a better term. We do tend to be rather rigid about *principles*, but more flexible about *rules*. If a *principle* is something England has always adhered to, as intimated in the preamble to the English list, then by definition the first item on that list cannot be a principle, since England has ignored it so often, at least prior to 1929. On the same basis, South Australia is precluded from calling the first item on their list a principle. A list of rules may well *include* a list of principles, plus other rules. If we call the list *rules*, we may then amend or even delete those which do not consist solely of a dogmatic statement of principle.

Alternatively, if the semantic argument is not acceptable, we may bravely admit: 'We got it wrong. When we formulated the principle, we did not word it correctly. We gave it a retrospectivity which did not accord with historical fact. We may have erred in other ways. It may be that the principle, as worded, is only valid as a criterion for Grand Lodges which are erected *after* the date of this pronouncement, not for those formed a century or more ago. Let us re-examine the principle itself, and see if we can improve upon our wording of it.'

Perhaps England and the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Massachusetts have already examined this approach. Only time may tell. Wallace McLeod, as Master of Quatuor Coronati Lodge, remarked on Christopher Haffner's paper on regularity of origin: 'We always like to think that the premier Grand Lodge is itself immutable, at least so far as essentials are concerned, and that it is the arbiter of regularity. Yet Bro Haffner's collection of precedents makes it clear that English Freemasonry is evolving too.'<sup>242</sup>

### ***Australasia***

The six Grand Lodges of Australia and the Grand Lodge of New Zealand share a common heritage and geographical region, and consequently make intermittent attempts to achieve a measure of uniformity within the group. For example, each Grand Lodge makes its own provisions for determining recognition and maintaining fraternal links with other Grand Lodges of the world, but liaison between members of the Australasian group is the responsibility of a designated brother, the fraternal relations co-ordinator. In recent years, this office was filled by RWBro Frank Oldfield, of Victoria, until his death in 1992, and is now held by RWBro Murray Yaxley, of Tasmania.

In April 1994, officers of all the Australasian Grand Lodges came to Adelaide for the installation of a new Grand Master of South Australia. A few hours prior to the Grand Installation, fraternal relations representatives of the seven Grand Lodges met under the chairmanship of Bro Yaxley, with Prince Hall Masonry as one topic on the agenda. Before dealing with the agenda items, the chairman reviewed the procedure for granting recognition, and the representatives unanimously agreed that:

[If] an application for recognition is received by any one Grand Lodge, a copy be forwarded to the Coordinator and he circularise all other Grand Lodges to see if they have received an application. The Coordinator then seeks a response from each Grand Lodge regarding its attitude towards granting the recognition, investigates the matter, and advises all Grand Lodges of his recommendation. If the Coordinator recommends granting recognition, all should then follow to make recognition uniform, at least to the point of recommending to [the Board of General Purposes] that recognition be granted.

In each of these Grand Lodges, except South Australia, it is the Board of General Purposes which makes the decision on recognition, subject to the Grand Master's approval. In South Australia, the decision is made directly by the Grand Master. The delegates further agreed that each Grand Lodge should have two documents readily available—guidelines for recognition of Grand Lodges; and a 'Declaration of Principles' of the Grand Lodge.

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240 *List of Lodges, Masonic*, Pantagraph Publishing Co, Bloomington, Illinois, 1994.

241 personal correspondence Hamill—Pope, 16 February 1994.

242 Haffner C, 'Regularity of origin' in (1983) *AQC* 96:111 @ 129. A curious example of evolution is the recognition of the National Grand Lodge of Greece by England in September 1993; seven lodges of the Grand Lodge of Greece broke away in 1986 and formed the National Grand Lodge; England continued to recognise the older Grand Lodge of Greece for another seven years, until it became involved in political activity in 1993, whereupon England de-recognised the older Grand Lodge and, three months later, declared the breakaway Grand Lodge to be *regular in origin*, and granted recognition—*Quarterly Communication* of the United Grand Lodge of England, 8 September 1993, pp496, 503.

Prince Hall Masonry was item 9 on the agenda. It was pointed out that undoubtedly Prince Hall Masons come to Australia and New Zealand, particularly as sportsmen and as members of the US armed forces.<sup>243</sup> The question was posed: 'Morally, how can we exclude them from our lodges?' It was the general opinion of the representatives that Prince Hall Masons should be allowed to visit Australasian lodges, in the same way as other visitors, and that Australian and New Zealand Masons should be permitted to visit Prince Hall lodges. It was agreed that any American Mason should be asked for a current dues card and then tested in the normal way.

The Grand Lodge of Tasmania acted swiftly on the recommendation. On the instruction of the Board of General Purposes, in May the Grand Secretary issued a notice to all lodges, to be read to all brethren, which included the following item:

#### RECEPTION OF AMERICAN MASONS

It is normal for American brethren to carry a current dues card. After the brother has presented the dues card he should be tested in the normal way. All American brethren including members of Prince Hall Lodges should be treated in the same way.

The second part of the April recommendation, permission to visit Prince Hall lodges, has not resulted in any specific instruction to Tasmanian brethren. They are well-informed about contemporary Masonic events around the world, by their lively newspaper, the *Tasmanian Mason*, and have a standing instruction to consult the Grand Secretary or the Fraternal Relations Officer, before visiting overseas. Implementation of this part of the recommendation, therefore, would depend on what advice the Fraternal Relations Officer (Bro Yaxley) would be prepared to give. Personal enquiry elicited the following: 'My advice would be to visit only if invited and accompanied by a Prince Hall Mason.' With regard to visiting a lodge overseas where a Prince Hall visitor is present, Bro Yaxley takes the pragmatic view: '... if the WM of the lodge is happy with his individual visitors, then the visitors ought to be happy with each other.'

In Queensland, the Board of General Purposes received the report at their April meeting and supported the recommendation at the Grand Communication in June, whereupon it was adopted. No written instruction has been issued to lodges, but a reliable source reports that the United Grand Lodge of Queensland has no objection to Prince Hall Masons visiting, subject to the usual requirements, regardless of the fact that the Prince Hall Grand Lodges have not been formally recognised by Queensland. On the other hand, Queensland brethren are only permitted to visit lodges in jurisdictions where there is formal recognition.

The South Australian Liaison Officer for Fraternal Relations expressed a minority opinion, that Australasian Grand Lodges should wait until the result of talks between the United Grand Lodge of England and the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Massachusetts is known. He has since stated that he does not intend to make a recommendation to his Grand Master. In New Zealand, the matter was referred to their Fraternal Relations Committee in May, and the committee merely agreed to keep the matter under review.<sup>244</sup> Contacts in New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia have reported no action as yet, so there is a possibility that one or more will also decide to admit Prince Hall visitors.

Who else in the world but Australians would be prepared to ignore protocol, precedent, and Masonic jurisprudence completely, and without a qualm, if they conflict with an innate sense of justice and fair play? It remains to be seen whether any problems arise from this attitude, and whether others will follow the lead set by Tasmania and Queensland.

#### CONCLUSION

There will always be some doubts in relation to the origin of Prince Hall Freemasonry. On the one hand, it must be accepted that Prince Hall was a free man when he was initiated, and there is no evidence that he was other than freeborn. On the other, there is no conclusive proof that the initiation itself was regularly conducted—something which could be said of many an 18th-century Mason. If there were irregularities before September 1784, it is strongly argued that any such irregularities were cured by the issue of the warrant for African Lodge. The attacks on the validity of the warrant itself are twofold: that England had no right to issue the warrant; and that it was obtained by deception. The argument in support of the first objection is weak, and of the second is pathetic.

There is some substance in some of the claims of irregularities after the issue of the warrant. It may be that there were degree workings conducted before receipt of the warrant at Boston in 1787, but returns of membership were faithfully made and the Grand Lodge of England did not demur. It is possible that Prince Hall sometimes acted as if he had the authority of at least a Provincial Grand Master, but the enforced isolation of African Lodge, and the example set by some of his alleged betters, mark these complaints as petty. There is no doubt that Prince Hall led his brethren well for 30 years, that he and they understood and lived their Freemasonry, and were a credit to the Craft.

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<sup>243</sup> for example, on one occasion in mid-July 1994 there were 5000 US servicemen docked at Fremantle, Western Australia, and then at Hobart, Tasmania.

<sup>244</sup> letter from the Grand Secretary, dated 2 August 1994.

Technical irregularities in the formation of Grand Lodges derived from African Lodge cannot be denied. It does not make them regular to point out irregularities in the formation of *other* Grand Lodges now accepted as regular. What it does do is support the contention that they are being discriminated against on the basis of race, that whatever legitimate objections there may be are tarnished by illegitimate and shameful motives. If, after 200 years of discrimination and isolation, brethren of the Prince Hall Affiliation are regular in their conduct and beliefs, they deserve better than that. How many of us could have kept the faith in such circumstances? It is submitted that they have earned the right to forgiveness, over and over again, for the sins of their forefathers—real or imagined. That really is the key to acceptance, the undisputed fact that modern Prince Hall Masons have the same qualifications as ‘mainstream’ American Masons, the same organisational structure, work the same ritual, and share the same beliefs.

Those lodges and Grand Lodges which truly practice Masonry admit worthy men to their ranks regardless of skin colour or alleged ‘race’, and thus there are some *Blacks* in ‘mainstream’ lodges and some *Whites* in Prince Hall lodges, but the proportion is very small. The ideal solution would be the merger of both Orders, and a complete intermingling of *Blacks* and *Whites*, but it is impossible to set back the clock 200 years. In many instances, with the best will in the world, this would not be harmonious because of cultural and social differences. It would also be asking too much of the Prince Hall brethren, to forgive the slights and discrimination of two centuries, and to place their trust so completely in the hands of the *White* majority, by surrendering their autonomy. ‘Mainstream’ Freemasonry will have to earn that trust in the coming years.

The practical solution at this stage is for both Orders to agree that the other is regular, and to accord each other the privileges of fraternal recognition, to visit and get to know each other, and to work together. It will take time and understanding, forgiveness and good will on both sides. The good news is that a start has been made, and that those involved are standing firm against opposition—which is not as virulent as it was a century ago.

The actual number of recognitions so far is quite small. In the United States it involves only seven Prince Hall and eight ‘mainstream’ Grand Lodges, but some of these extend beyond State boundaries. The straightforward recognitions are between the ‘mainstream’ and Prince Hall Grand Lodges of Colorado, Connecticut, Minnesota, Nebraska, Washington and Wisconsin. The more adventurous recognitions are between ‘mainstream’ North Dakota and Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Minnesota, and ‘mainstream’ Idaho and the Prince Hall Grand Lodges of Oregon and Washington. In Canada, the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Ontario has exchanged recognition with four of the nine other Grand Lodges, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, and New Brunswick has extended beyond national boundaries to exchange recognition with the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Connecticut. This is a total of 28 acts of recognition. A full list of Grand Lodges of the Prince Hall Affiliation is given in *Appendix C*, showing lodges warranted outside State boundaries, and recognition exchanged to date.

Reaction in other ‘mainstream’ Grand Lodges has varied from withdrawal of recognition, to forbidding members to visit in ‘offending’ jurisdictions, or merely warning members to withdraw from lodges where Prince Hall Masons are also visiting, but some ‘mainstream’ Grand Lodges place no restriction on visiting, or have varied their regulations to permit visiting where Prince Hall Masons are present.

In Australasia, at least two Grand Lodges have sidestepped the legal tangle and declared by their actions that they consider all American Prince Hall Grand Lodges to be regular. Without requiring formal exchange of recognition, Queensland and Tasmania are prepared to admit Prince Hall Affiliated American Masons to their lodges on the same basis as ‘mainstream’ American Masons, and the Grand Lodge of Tasmania will allow its brethren to sit in lodge with Prince Hall Masons overseas. Others may follow suit.

Why should Australia be concerned in the Prince Hall quest for acceptance? Because the *de facto* exclusion of African-Americans from regular Freemasonry is a blatant breach of one of our inviolable principles, and we all share in the shame. Let us remember with the Psalmist:

**Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.**



## Appendixes

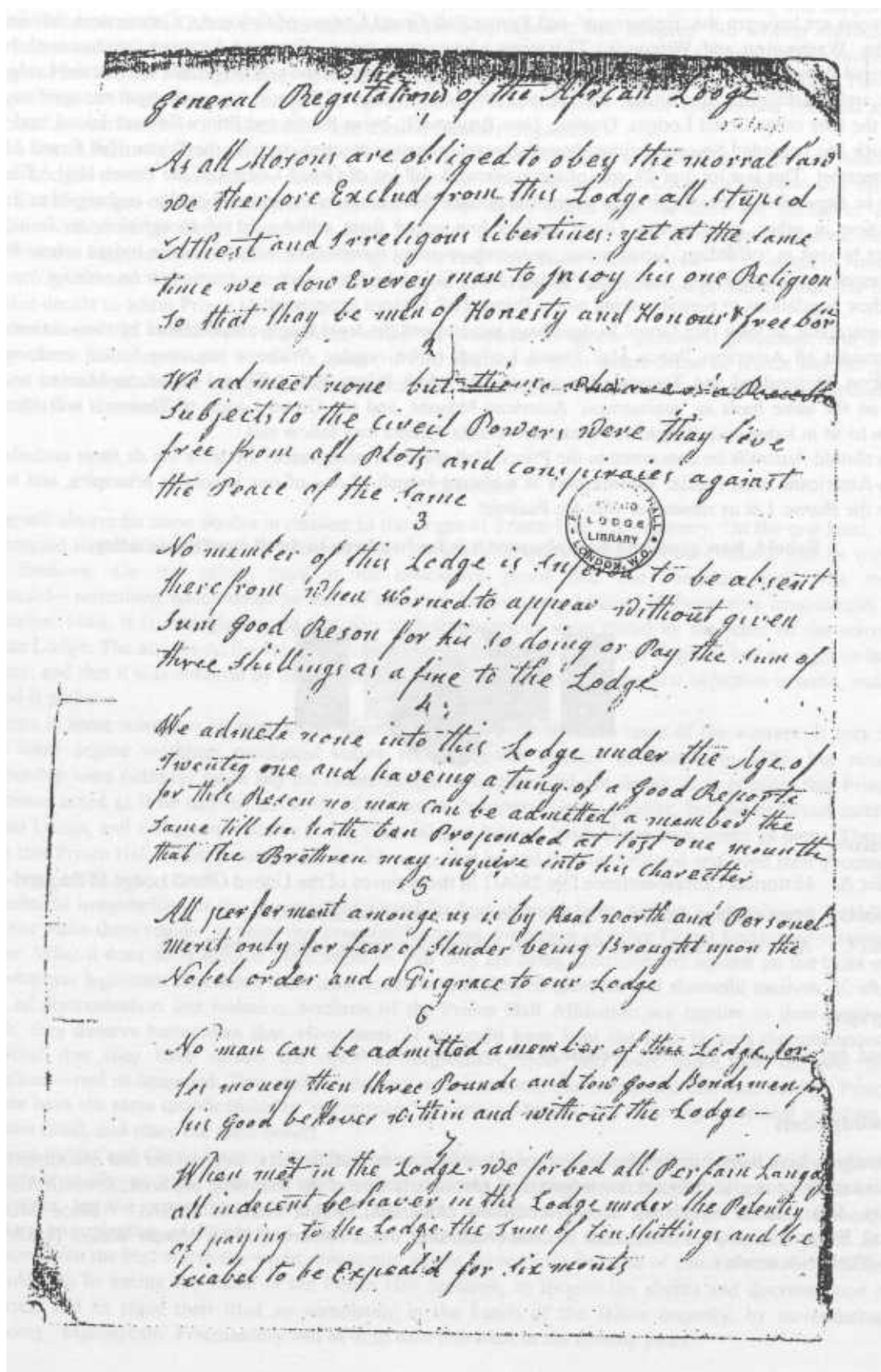
- Appendix A Historical Correspondence File 28/A/1 in the archives of the United Grand Lodge of England
- Appendix B Press clipping from the *Virginia Masonic Herald*, October 1989
- Appendix C A list of Grand Lodges, Prince Hall Affiliation, showing recognitions to date

**Bibliography**

*[Supplied, but omitted by the editor because of the very full footnotes.]*

**Acknowledgments**

Many brethren have helped in the compilation of this paper, contributing facts, suggestions and encouragement, and their assistance is gratefully acknowledged, and particularly that of the following brethren: Kenneth Aldridge (Canada), John Hamill (England), Kent Henderson (Australia), Ralph Herbold (USA), Wallace McLeod (Canada), Robert Nairn (Australia), Jack Neilson (Australia), Allen Roberts (USA), Joseph Walkes (USA) and Murray Yaxley (Australia).



Historical Correspondence File 28/A/1 in the archives of the United Grand Lodge of England, a single folio with writing on both sides.



These and all other Lands that the Lodge shall think  
 proper to make you are to observe as true and  
 sincere men from God that the Noble Craft may  
 not be Desgraced by your bad conduct by those  
 that are without: A man so let the Prince Hall be  
 in the Lodge Bunc Boston January 14 1799  
 and in the year of our Lord 1799

The Subscribers or a List of the members

Grand Master

Thomas Farndson M<sup>r</sup>  
 Brother Sayer  
 Prince Tiler  
 Boston Smith S<sup>r</sup> W  
 John Howard  
 John Carter  
 John Meares  
 Cato Underwood S<sup>r</sup>  
 Luke Hill M<sup>r</sup>

Masters

Entered a Preceptors

Cuff Buffum  
 Obannan Spear  
 Phileas Boston  
 1200 Spear  
 Cato Bunc L  
 Forchey Cudmanch  
 John Brown  
 Simeo Land  
 Bristol Meranda  
 James Fritchell  
 James Horkeans Stand

William Gorge Gregory  
 Gorge Medelton S<sup>r</sup> D  
 Boston Tadey  
 John Brown S<sup>r</sup> D  
 Richard Pallord Marshall  
 Caser Spear P<sup>r</sup> M  
 Prince Spooner  
 John Hoyle

Crafters

Caser Fleet  
 Simeo Dalton Clerk  
 Coar Lambel  
 Pompey Leads Tiler

These are a true List  
 of the Living members of  
 the African Lodge at Bunc  
 there is a number absent  
 at this time: We shall  
 collect for the found of  
 Charity the next quarterly  
 meeting and send it the  
 first opportunity we can go  
 after words

after wishing His Royal Highness our Grand and  
 the Grand Lodge all Happiness Heav and hereafter  
 I humbly Beg leave to subscribe my self your Humble  
 servant B<sup>r</sup> Phileas Hall

From a photocopy supplied by WBro John Hamill, librarian and curator,  
 subsequently reduced to 65% of the area of the original.

## Appendix B

From the *Virginia Masonic Herald*, October 1989

### FROM THE GRAND EAST

*M.W. Cabell F. Cobbs, Grand Master  
Grand Lodge A.F. & A.M. of Virginia*

Recently, it was necessary to set aside the ballot in a Northern Virginia Lodge and order the acceptance of a black petitioner who met every moral and character test for admission in the Lodge and Craft. Brethren who had voted adversely to him both inside and outside Lodge declared that their rejection was motivated by racism.

On appeal by the Worshipful Master, I personally investigated the matter, set aside the law and directed a reballot. I attended the stated communication at which the petition was once more called up for action. No one present other than the vouchers and the investigating committee knew the petitioner. The committee report was favorable. I called upon anyone present to give any reason for the rejection of this man, an officer in our armed forces, a Sunday School teacher in a large white church and a man whose probity seemed beyond question. No reason was forthcoming. Once again, he was rejected, and it was clear the sole reason was his color. Accordingly, I again set the ballot aside and directed the Secretary to record the individual's election to receive the degrees in Masonry. On August 7, he was initiated an Entered Apprentice in the presence of some seventy Brethren and now is being instructed on his catechism.

Our ballot is both secret and sacred, and I regard it as such. But when it is deliberately cast, not for reasons of morality or fitness, but as a tool of bigotry and prejudice, the ballot loses its sacred character and is properly subject to cancellation. Here, it was evident it had been so misused.

As we approach the ballot box, we each make our due guard to remind ourselves of our Masonic obligations, the seriousness of our vote and the principles by which we, as RAISED men, have voluntarily elected to be governed.

First and foremost among these tenets is BROTHERLY LOVE, and by its exercise, our beautiful ritual declares:

...we are taught to regard the whole human species as one common family the high, the low, the rich and poor, who as created by one Almighty Parent, are sent into the world to aid, support and protect each other. On this principal, Freemasonry unites men of every country, sect, and opinion, and conciliates true friendship among those who might otherwise remain at a perpetual distance.

If brotherly love has any vitality; if our teachings are meaningful to us; if hypocrisy and deceit are truly unknown among us, then racism can play no part in our balloting. The blackball cannot be used as a shield behind which to hide our prejudices, our petty quarrels, or that splenetic hatred which seems so often to infect our deliberative processes. On the other hand, if we merely intend to pay lip service to the tenets of our profession and to make the noble works of our ritual a meaningless recitation, then we will neither survive, nor deserve to survive.

Many Brethren disagree. They look upon the ballot as a sword with which to strike out at supposed enemies, an instrument of retribution against those at whom they are angered, and as a way of secretly evening the score against some unsuspecting Brother. Thus, we have seen Lodges in which every candidate is blackballed sometimes for years; Lodges in which some old curmudgeon seeks either to have his way or to punish a supposed transgression by blackballing innocent persons. Of course, he always lets the Lodge know what he is doing! It is no fun unless everyone is aware of why the blackball is cast. And that is the case here, how many Brethren we have who do not seem to have the least knowledge or attachment to the principles of our Order!

If the foregoing does not satisfy these Brethren (And I do not expect it will), then let me state that Federal law prohibits a tax-exempt organization from discriminating against applicants on the grounds of race, color, or creed. We are such an organization and, if we lose our tax-exempt status, our Masonic Home, our Grand Lodge, our Lodges, and all our income, be it from dues, donations, or what have you, will be subjected to taxation. The Home's Endowment presently stands at \$22,000,000, its physical plant in the tens of millions, our Grand Lodge in the millions, and the buildings, etc. of our various subordinate Lodges in the hundreds of thousands and perhaps millions.

Loss of our tax-exemptions would be ruinous, and I will not risk it happening in order to pander to the prejudices of a few. If, therefore, one cannot accept my setting aside the ballot adverse to a black petitioner on the grounds of Freemasonry's universal brotherhood, then let him accept it on the basis of Federal law and the stringent penalties to be incurred if discrimination is permitted. Take your choice, either way, the evidence of discrimination was apparent. My duty was clear, and whenever is established that the ballot is being so grossly misused, I shall not hesitate to set it aside.

## *Appendix C*

### A list of Grand Lodges, Prince Hall Affiliation

<i>State/Country</i>	<i>Founded</i>	<i>Location of other lodges</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Alabama	1870		
Alaska	1969		
Arizona	1920		
Arkansas	1873		
Bahamas	1951		
California	1855	Hawaii	now combined jurisdiction of the two states
Canada (Ontario)	1856	Canada (Quebec)	☒ full recognition with Quebec, 1993 ☒ full recognition with New Brunswick, 1993 ☒ full recognition with Nova Scotia, 1993 ☒ & with Prince Edward Island, 1993
Caribbean	1993		
Colorado	1876	Wyoming	☒ recognition & intervisitation, own State, 1991
Connecticut	1873		☒ recognition & intervisitation, own State, 1989 ☒ & with New Brunswick, 1994
Delaware	1849		
Florida	1870	British Honduras	now combined jurisdiction of Florida & Belize
Georgia	1870		
Illinois	1867		
Indiana	1856		
Iowa	1881		
Kansas	1867		
Kentucky	1866		
Liberia	1867		extinguished 1980, restoration commenced 1987
Louisiana	1863		
Maryland	1845		
Massachusetts	1791	Trinidad & Tobago	or various dates up to 1827
Michigan	1865		
Minnesota	1894	Canada (Alberta & Manitoba), North Dakota	☒ recognition & intervisitation, own State, 1991 ☒ and with North Dakota, 1991
Mississippi	1875		
Missouri	1865		
Nebraska	1919		☒ full recognition, own State, 1989
Nevada	1980		
New Jersey	1848		
New Mexico	1921		
New York	1845	Guyana, St Lucia, Dominica (?)	
North Carolina	1870		
Ohio	1849		
Oklahoma	1893		
Oregon	1960	Idaho	☒ full recognition with Idaho, 1991
Pennsylvania	1815	South Africa (until 1977)	
Rhode Island	1858		
South Carolina	1867		
Tennessee	1870		
Texas	1875		
Virginia	1865		
Washington, DC	1848		
Washington State	1903	Canada (British Columbia)	☒ recognition & intervisitation, own State, 1990 ☒ full recognition with Idaho, 1993
West Virginia	1877		
Wisconsin	1925		☒ recognition & intervisitation, own State, 1990

Several Grand Lodges also warrant military lodges stationed in England, continental Europe, the Far East and elsewhere.

The Grand Lodge of Tasmania and the United Grand Lodge of Queensland permit visits by all American Prince Hall Masons.

**AUSTRALIAN MASONIC RESEARCH COUNCIL  
TREASURER'S REPORT**

**Statement to 30 June 1993**

	\$	\$
balance brought forward from previous statement (1992 Conference)		2562.91
<u>Receipts</u>		
Conference fees .....		4036.00
QCCC Ltd, purchase of publications.....		838.92
Affiliation fees, collected from constituent bodies.....		670.00
Proceeds, sale of publications.....		1548.22
<u>Disbursements</u>		
Secretarial expenses.....	446.84	
Printing expenses.....	170.00	
Catering and rent for 1992 Conference .....	5532.80	
Bank fees .....	69.69	
Stamp duty.....	5.00	
Bank account debit tax .....	10.10	
Bank account deposit tax.....	10.06	
Publishing expenses.....	2800.00	
balance carried forward at 30/6/93 .....	611.56	
	9656.05	9656.05

**Statement to 30 June 1993**

balance brought forward at 1/7/94.....		611.56
<u>Receipts</u>		
Subscriptions received from affiliates re Batham Tour, 1993 .....		10457.15
Proceeds, sale of publications.....		8022.70
Affiliation fees collected from constituent bodies.....		690.00
<u>Disbursements</u>		
Expenses (travelling) re Batham Tour.....	7148.00	
Secretarial expenses.....	1652.61	
Printing expenses.....	70.00	
Publishing expenses.....	8306.50	
Sundries .....	40.00	
Bank fees .....	64.94	
Stamp duty.....	2.50	
Bank account debit tax .....	18.60	
Bank account deposit tax.....	12.45	
balance at 30/6/94.....	2465.81	
	19781.41	19781.41

**Statement to 30 June 1993**

	\$	\$
balance at 1/7/94 brought forward.....		2465.81
<u>Receipts</u>		
Affiliation fees from constituent bodies .....		200.00
Proceeds, sale of publications.....		45.00
<u>Disbursements</u>		
Secretarial expenses.....	127.65	
Printing of letterhead .....	275.00	
balance at 17/8/94.....	2308.16 CR	
	<hr/> 2710.81	<hr/> 2710.81

**Reconciliation Statement:**

The balance of \$2308.16 is held in ANZ Bank, 81 King William Street, Adelaide, account number 015 010 4018 31323.

Cash at bank .....		2308.16
balance as per statement .....	2308.16	
	<hr/> 2308.16	<hr/> 2308.16

**Unrealised Assets:**

- 1 Stock of unsold books
- 2 Affiliation fees due at 30/6/94.

**Outstanding Liabilities:**

- 1 Outgoing publication expenses
- 2 Expenses in relation to 1994 Conference.

*Bryn Hitchin*

Bryn Hitchin, BA, Dip Acctng, PM  
Treasurer, AMRC

## AUSTRALIAN MASONIC RESEARCH COUNCIL

# CONSTITUTION

*as approved at the inaugural general meeting, 14 June 1992*

### **Name**

- 1 The name of the organisation shall be the Australian Masonic Research Council, hereinafter referred to as the council.

### **Aims**

- 2 The aims of the council shall be:
  - 2.1 To promote Masonic research and education within Freemasonry on a national basis.
  - 2.2 To act as a liaison body between its affiliated Masonic research lodges and chapters.
  - 2.3 To organise any research lodge conference which its affiliates may sanction.
  - 2.4 To organise and coordinate any national tour by a Masonic speaker as its affiliates may require.
  - 2.5 To publish the proceedings of its conferences, and any Masonic research publication its committee may approve.

### **Membership**

- 3 Membership shall be open to any regular research lodge, research chapter or research body warranted or sanctioned by a recognised Grand Lodge, Grand Chapter or Grand body within Australia, hereinafter referred to as affiliates. What constitutes a body engaged in Masonic research shall be determined by the committee.
- 4 The committee may admit overseas research lodges or chapters to associate (non-voting) membership on such terms as it may resolve, hereinafter referred to as associates. It may also admit other regular lodges, chapters or Masonic bodies, not engaged in Masonic research, to associate membership, whether Australian or foreign.

### **Meetings**

- 5 The council shall convene or caused to be convened conferences of affiliates and associates every two years (or at no greater interval than three years), and at each such conference a general meeting of affiliates shall be held.
- 6 Each such general meeting shall elect a committee to hold office until the following meeting, shall set the level of annual subscription payable by affiliates and associates until the following meeting, and deal with any other matters placed before it.
- 7 Any question arising between meetings may at the discretion of the committee, or on the request of three affiliates, be put to a postal ballot of affiliates. In the case of a postal ballot, every affiliate shall be entitled to one vote.

### **Committee**

- 8 The committee elected at each general meeting shall, subject to the decisions of any general meeting, manage the affairs of the council until the next ensuing such meeting.
- 9 The committee shall consist of:
  - 9.1 President
  - 9.2 Immediate Past President
  - 9.3 Two Vice-Presidents
  - 9.4 Secretary
  - 9.5 Assistant Secretary
  - 9.6 Treasurer
  - 9.7 Convener (of the next ensuing conference).
- 10 No affiliate shall provide more than two members of the committee.
- 11 A general meeting may, when appropriate, appoint such other officers as may be required from time to time.

- 12 In the event of a casual vacancy on the Committee, the affiliate of which the former committeeman was a member shall nominate a replacement to serve in the vacated office until the next general meeting. In the event of the said affiliate declining to act under this clause by notice in writing to the Secretary or President, then the President (or, in his absence, the Secretary) shall appoint a member of any affiliate to serve.

#### **Auditor**

- 13 An auditor, who shall be a member of an affiliate, shall be appointed at each general meeting and serve until the subsequent general meeting.

#### **Voting**

- 14 Each affiliate shall be entitled to four votes at any general meeting.
- 15 Any affiliate may appoint, by notice in writing to the council secretary, any of its members attending a general meeting to exercise any or all of its voting entitlement. In the event of none of its members being so present, it may apportion by proxy any or all of its voting entitlement to any other Freemason attending the said general meeting. A register of those appointed by affiliates to exercise their voting entitlements shall be prepared by the Secretary prior to the commencement of a general meeting.
- 16 The chairman of a general meeting shall exercise a casting vote in cases of an equality of voting.

#### **Quorum**

- 17 The quorum at general meetings shall be seven members of affiliates holding voting rights, representing not less than three affiliates.

#### **Finance**

- 18 The financial year of the association shall be 1 July until 30 June.
- 19 The Treasurer shall operate a bank account in the name of the council, and cheques drawn upon the account shall require the signatures of any two of the following: President, Secretary, Assistant Secretary and Treasurer.
- 20 Immediately prior to each general meeting the Secretary and Treasurer shall prepare a comprehensive statement of the financial affairs of the council since the previous such meeting.
- 21 Such financial statements for the period elapsed since the previous general meeting shall be duly audited and presented to each general meeting.
- 22 The income and property of the council, however derived, shall be applied solely to the promotion of the aims of the council, and no portion thereof shall be paid or transferred either directly or indirectly to any affiliate, or any individual member of an affiliate.
- 23 The council shall not pay to any affiliate, or individual member of an affiliate, any remuneration in money or in kind, other than as reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses on behalf of, or authorised by, the committee.
- 24 Nothing in the foregoing provisions of this constitution shall prevent the payment in good faith of a servant or member of an affiliate of the council, of remuneration in return for services actually rendered to the council by the servant or member of an affiliate, or for any goods supplied to the council by the servant or member of an affiliate in the ordinary course of business.

#### **Alteration to the Constitution**

- 25 Alteration to this constitution shall be possible only at a general meeting of the council, and shall only be considered after two months notice has been circulated to all affiliates, and shall require a two-thirds majority of votes at a general meeting to be successful.

#### **Dissolution**

- 26 The council may be dissolved if:
- 26.1 a resolution to that effect has been carried by a two-thirds majority vote of a general meeting, provided that two months notice of motion has been circulated to all affiliates; or
- 26.2 two successive duly convened general meetings have failed to achieve a quorum.
- 27 In the event of dissolution, all records, property, funds and other assets shall, after meeting all obligations of the council, be transferred to another non-profit body or bodies operating in Australia in the field of Masonic research and education.

### **Division of responsibility for publications**

- Motion: The division of responsibility for the publication of a book by AMRC shall be as follows:
- 1 Each affiliate participating in the venture shall:
    - (a) place a firm order for a specific number of copies, in advance of publication, and honour that commitment;
    - (b) have exclusive distribution rights within its jurisdiction or sphere of influence;
    - (c) be responsible for promotion within its sales area; and
    - (d) pay AMRC the full wholesale price before delivery of the order.
  - 2 AMRC shall:
    - (a) have sole copyright in the book;
    - (b) organise the editing, printing and publishing of the book;
    - (c) limit the number of copies published to the total ordered in advance by the affiliates plus a quantity within the means of AMRC to pay;
    - (d) sell the book wholesale to participating affiliates, and either retail or wholesale to persons or bodies outside the sales areas of participating affiliates;
    - (e) set the wholesale price at no more than cost plus 25%, inclusive of delivery charges, and recommend a retail price (and AMRC itself shall not sell by retail below that recommended price within six months of the date of publication); and
    - (f) be responsible for the cost of general promotion, and for specific promotion outside the sales areas of participating affiliates.

Duly proposed, seconded and carried, 14 June 1992: *see minutes of inaugural meeting.*

### **Division of responsibility for Conferences**

- Motion: The division of responsibility for a Conference shall be as follows:
- 1 The host affiliate shall:
    - (a) be responsible for the programme, venues, catering and other arrangements (except the agenda of the committee and annual general meetings) and the costs so incurred;
    - (b) determine fees and other charges;
    - (c) be responsible for promotion within its own Grand Lodge's jurisdiction, and for collection of fees from residents within that jurisdiction.
  - 2 The Convener of the Conference shall be responsible for coordination and cooperation between the host affiliate and AMRC, including the supply of all necessary information to the Secretary of AMRC for dissemination to the other affiliates.
  - 3 AMRC shall:
    - (a) arrange the agenda of the committee and annual general meetings, and the presentation of research papers within the framework allocated by the host affiliate;
    - (b) inform affiliates, and promote the conference outside the jurisdiction of the host affiliate;
    - (c) pay all promotional expenses incurred outside the scope of the host affiliate's responsibility;
    - (d) collect fees from outside the host's jurisdiction, and forward them (less 10%) to the Convener; and
    - (e) subsequently publish a report of the Conference and the research papers presented.

Duly proposed, seconded and carried, 14 June 1992: *see minutes of inaugural meeting.*



## Proposal for publication of Conference papers and proceedings

by Tony Pope, Research 216, South Australia

### **Introduction**

Modesty should not deter us from recording the first Masonic research conference in Australia. However limited the numbers interested in the event, now or in the future, it is our duty to record it for that rare and peculiar breed, the Masonic historian. To that end, the Council ought to consider providing free copies to the National Library and the legal deposit units of the various State libraries, as well as making the record available for purchase by interested parties.

This paper offers various points and suggestions, for consideration of the Council, as to contents and format of such a publication, as well as on its preparation, printing and distribution.

### **Contents**

It is suggested that the following be included in the publication:

- 1 An account of the formation of the Council, and the events which led to that formation (including reference to the visits of Brothers Cryer and Hamill, and the decision to publish *Masonic Perspectives*).
- 2 A report of the Cryer and Hamill tours.
- 3 The Conference—
  - (a) President's opening address;
  - (b) Secretary's report, including on the publication of *Masonic Perspectives*;
  - (c) Financial statement;
  - (d) Conference programme.
- 4 **The research papers presented at the Conference.**
- 5 The banquet address.
- 6 Appendixes—
  - (a) The Constitution, as adopted at the Conference;
  - (b) Minutes of the AGM;
  - (c) List of affiliates and associates, with 'directory' entries as outlined in Annexure 'A';
  - (d) List of those attending the Conference;
  - (e) Style sheet for authors of papers submitted for publication (see Annexure 'B').

### **Format**

The number of copies to be printed, cost of production, and the time which would elapse between the Conference and distribution are important factors in deciding the format of the publication. Taking into account the nature of the publication and the general lack of interest in the fraternity, we cannot expect to sell more than 100 copies, or to be able to charge more than \$10 retail. Ideally, publication should be within 6 months of the Conference. Each of these factors indicates that we should not look for a commercial production such as with *Masonic Perspectives*.

It is possible, by what has become known as **desktop publishing**, to print and publish an attractive report quickly and economically, in any quantity desired. For example, **this paper** has been prepared on an IBM-compatible computer, using the word-processing program *Microsoft Word*, and printed on a laser printer.

It should be possible to find a brother in each State who has access to an IBM-compatible computer, and is prepared to type in a few pages of text. The results of these separate contributions could be collated and edited on a single computer, and the result printed on a laser printer on good quality A4 paper. These '*master pages*' or '*artwork*' would then be photocopied as double-sided pages (using either a private or commercial photocopier) in the desired quantity. Various covers and methods of binding are available, but the simplest and probably the cheapest for our purpose is a translucent plastic cover and stiff plastic slide-on spine (available at the Conference for examination). The paper, cover and spine are all available in the proposed size, A4.

### ***Preparation***

It does not matter greatly what word-processing program each contributor uses, because it is generally possible to 'convert' from one to another. It is recommended that the text be entered with a minimum of formatting (see Annexure 'B'), as the editor will have to remove all existing formatting before imposing a single style on the whole publication.

It would be a fair division of labour if each speaker is responsible for obtaining within his own State a computerised copy of his paper, and the Committee arrange for all other items to be supplied (Conference reports, appendixes, etc). In each case the material should be supplied in electronically stored form (diskettes) and a typed or printed version (see Annexure 'B'). The Assistant Secretary might be an appropriate choice as collator, to gather material from authors and forward it to the editor. The editor would be responsible for formatting the text, editing and proofreading. He would then print the 'artwork' and forward it to the brother responsible for photocopying. It would probably be most efficient if one brother was responsible for copying, binding and distributing the publication — and who better than the Secretary?

The following is a suggested timetable:

<b>31 July</b>	All material to be supplied to the collator, and forwarded by him to the editor by this date.
<b>30 September</b>	All artwork to be printed and forwarded for photocopying. Orders to be placed by the affiliates before this date.
<b>15 November</b>	Publication ready for distribution.

### ***Publication***

Since printing and publication would be in our own hands, we could print the exact number of copies required. So that we know precisely the quantity required, **affiliates should place a firm order prior to photocopying.** If demand arose, we could do a second or subsequent printing (on the same basis) quite easily.

### ***Summary***

It is recommended that:

- 1 AMRC publish a report of the inaugural conference, including an account of the formation of the Council and the papers presented at the conference.
- 2 The publication be produced (as far as possible) by our own brethren by desktop publishing, using IBM-compatible computers, laser printer and photocopier.
- 3 Brethren be appointed to collate, edit, photocopy, bind and distribute the publication.
- 4 The number of copies be determined by the orders received from affiliates prior to photocopying, plus such copies as the Council decides to distribute direct.

Attachments: Annexures 'A' & 'B'

Distribution: All affiliates

Duly proposed, seconded and adopted, 14 June 1992: *see minutes of inaugural meeting.*

AMRC style sheet and other information for authors

**A Submission of papers and articles for publication**

- 1 To reduce time and expense of publication, papers and articles should be submitted on a computer diskette, accompanied by a printed copy.  
The diskette (which will be returned) should be either 5.25-inch (360k or 1.2 Mbyte) or 3.5-inch (720k or 1.4 Mbyte), formatted for use with an IBM-compatible microcomputer (PC).  
The accompanying printout must be clearly legible.
- 2 By prior agreement, a typewritten copy of an article may be accepted, for AMRC to arrange for computer entry. If so, the article should be typed on A4 bond paper, single sided, with double line spacing, indented paragraphs, and at least a 2-inch (5 cm) margin on one side. The typescript must be black and clearly legible.

**B House rules**

In general, spelling, punctuation and style will be in accordance with the *Macquarie Dictionary* and the Commonwealth *Style Manual*. Where these are inadequate for a specialised subject, AMRC editors will, with experience, develop house rules for a general AMRC style sheet, and make this available to potential contributors.

The following rules will apply (subject to any contrary direction by the Council):

**Masonry, Mason, Masonic, Freemasonry, Freemason** — initial capital when referring to speculatives and non-operatives, but NOT for operative (working) masons.

**Antient** — used only to refer to the 'Antients' Grand Lodge, as part of the full name adopted by other Grand Lodges, and where it is a direct quotation.

**Styles, titles, postnominals, contractions and abbreviations generally** — NO full stop, and NO space between initials (for example: VWBro Brown, MA, DipMED, PDGSupt). A space is used between initials of a name (RWBro A N Other, PGW).

**C Style for bibliographies/references**

Book references — the information required includes:

author or editor (*all in capitals*)

title (*hardcopy should be underlined in ink, indicating italics*)

edition (*other than the first; ignore impression and reprint dates*)

place of publication

publisher

date of publication.

**Thus: HAMILL J M: Masonic Perspectives, Belmont, Australian Masonic Research Council, 1992.**

References to *articles* in books or periodicals require the following:

author(s) (*all in capitals*)

title of article (*in single quotation marks*)

title of book/periodical (*underline in ink, indicating italics*)

if a book — edition, place of publication, publisher

if a periodical — volume, part or issue number

date

pages.

**Thus: THORNTON P T: 'History — why we haven't learned its lessons', Masonic Impressions, Melbourne, Lodge of Research 218 VC, 1990, pp 16–23.**

*or*

**CRYER N B: 'The adventures of a Masonic author', Propaedia, February 1991, pp 9–15.**

## **Directory of associates**

**RSA** Lyceum Lodge of Research 6882 EC  
**VIC** Southern Cross Chapter of Improvement (A&AR)

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### **LYCEUM LODGE OF RESEARCH 6882 EC**

**This associate meets at Freemasons' Hall, Clarendon Circle, Johannesburg, South Africa on the third Wednesday of February, April, June, August, October and November (Installation) at 7.30 pm.**

**All communications to the Secretary:** WBro Rodney Grosskopff  
PO Box 1476  
Parklands 2121  
South Africa.  
fax: 27-11 880 5398.

### **SOUTHERN CROSS CHAPTER OF IMPROVEMENT (A&AR)**

**This associate meets at Emulation Hall, 3 Rochester Road, Canterbury (Melbourne) quarterly, on the 5th Thursday of the month at 7.30 pm.**

**All communications to the Secretary:** T R (Rex) Little  
PO Box 46  
Nunawading 3131  
Victoria  
phone: 03 878 7670.

## Directory of affiliates

<b>NSW</b>	Canberra Lodge of Research & Instruction (ACT) Newcastle Masonic Study Circle Research Lodge of New South Wales 971
<b>Qld</b>	Barron Barnett Lodge 146 Toowoomba Lodge of Instruction W H Green Memorial Masonic Study Circle W H J Mayers Memorial Lodge of Research
<b>SA</b>	South Australian Lodge of Research 216
<b>Tas</b>	Hobart Lodge of Research 62 Launceston Lodge of Research 69
<b>Vic</b>	Chisel Lodge 434 Lodge of Research 218
<b>WA</b>	Western Australian Lodge of Research 277

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### CANBERRA LODGE OF RESEARCH & INSTRUCTION

**All communications to the Secretary:** WBro Neil Morse  
PO Box 26  
Civic Square 2608  
Australian Capital Territory  
phone: 06 286 3482.

### NEWCASTLE MASONIC STUDY CIRCLE

**All communications to the Secretary:** WBro Neil Keats  
93 Joslin St  
Kotara 2289  
New South Wales  
phone: 049 57 5139.

### RESEARCH LODGE OF NEW SOUTH WALES 971

**This affiliate meets at the Masonic Centre, 279 Castlereagh St, Sydney, five times a year, on the first Tuesday in March (Installation), May, July, September and November.**

**Meetings are usually in the First Degree;** dress is dinner suit and regalia. Visitors are welcome. There is a charge for refreshment from all present.

**Full membership** is \$30 a year.

**Correspondent members** are accepted from all recognised jurisdictions; fee \$12 a year.

**Publication:** *Transactions*, 5 issues per year, with the notice paper.

Papers for presentation in lodge are welcome; copies, double spaced should be sent to the Secretary for consideration by the Publications Committee.

**All communications to the Secretary:** VWBro W M Caulfield, PDGDC  
17 English Ave  
Castle Hill 2154  
New South Wales  
phone: 02 634 4987.

### BARRON BARNETT LODGE 146 QC

**This affiliate meets at the Memorial Masonic Centre, Ann St, Brisbane, six times per year, on the third Wednesday of odd months at 7.15 pm — January, March, May, July, September, November (Installation).**

**Meetings are tyled** and dress is formal (summer dress September to April); all Masons are welcome as visitors; no charge for festive board.

**Membership open only to Past Masters;** fees \$12.50, dual \$8.50, aged \$4.60, plus GL dues.

**Publications:** Lectures with the summons.

**No formal correspondence circle,** but lectures sent to interested persons at \$10 per year.

**All communications to the Secretary:** RWBro K G W Wells, PDGM, Kellerman Lecturer  
11 Stadcor St  
Wavell Heights 4012  
Queensland  
phone: 07 266 7086.

### TOOWOOMBA LODGE OF INSTRUCTION

**This affiliate meets at the Masonic Centre, Neil St, Toowoomba, for research purposes at 7.30 pm on the first Thursday of each month except January.** It is not a warranted lodge, but meets under the sanction of Fidelity Lodge 357 QC.

**Publication:** *The Beacon*, distributed with the summons.

**All communications to the Secretary:** RWBro K Zimmerle, PJGW  
P O Box 3366  
Toowoomba Village Fair 4350  
Queensland.

### W H GREEN MEMORIAL MASONIC STUDY CIRCLE

**This affiliate meets at the Masonic Centre, Walker St, Townsville, quarterly, on the fifth Thursday of the month.**

**Publication:** *Lampada*, distributed with the summons.

**All communications to the Secretary:** WBro A R Grant, PJGD  
P O Box 476  
Townsville 4810  
Queensland  
home phone: 077 71 2452.

### W H J MAYERS MEMORIAL LODGE OF RESEARCH

**This affiliate meets at the Masonic Centre, 8 Minnie St, Cairns, five times a year, at 7.30 pm on the second Friday of March, May, July, September and the first Friday of November (Installation).** It is not a warranted lodge, but works under sanction of Gregory Lodge 50H QC. Brethren wear neat casual dress, without regalia. There is no charge for refreshments.

**Membership is open to Master Masons** (fees Town members \$7, Country \$6.50) and to other research bodies with a reciprocal arrangement for exchange of publications.

**Publication:** *The Lectern*, distributed with the summons.

**All communications to the Secretary:** RWBro A C C Nielsen, PJGW  
P O Box 6527  
Cairns 4870  
Queensland  
home phone: 070 51 2023.

## SOUTH AUSTRALIAN LODGE OF RESEARCH 216

**This affiliate meets at the Masonic Centre, North Terrace, Adelaide, six times per year, on the third Friday of even months at 7.30 pm — February, April, June, August, October (Installation, 6.30 pm), December.**

**Meetings are tyled**, and opened in the degree appropriate to the lecture; dress is black or white tie, or dark lounge suit, and regalia. Visitors are welcome; there is a charge of \$2.50 for refreshments.

**Full membership:** open to Master Masons who are members in good standing of a Craft lodge in SA or NT; annual fees are \$60, country members \$50 (which includes cost of publications).

**Correspondence Circle:** membership is open to Master Masons in good standing, and to lodges and Masonic bodies or groups, under the jurisdiction of GLSA or of a GL in amity with GLSA. It is anticipated that from October 1994 there will be three grades of annual subscriptions: A—\$15 (summons and inserts only); B—\$25 (annual book only); C—\$40 (for everything).

**Publications:** prior to 1992, the lodge published a monthly magazine, *Propaedia*, but has changed to a 10-page A4 insert in the summons (*Gleanings*) and, commencing in 1994, an annual book (*Propaedia*). The lodge exchanges publications with most of the affiliates of AMRC and a number of overseas research lodges.

**All communications to the Secretary:** WBro S K Brindal, DipMed, PGSwdB, Kellerman Lecturer  
120 Waterport Road  
Port Elliot 5212  
South Australia  
home phone: 085 542 947.

## HOBART LODGE OF RESEARCH 62 TC

**This affiliate meets at the Masonic Temple, 3 Sandy Bay Rd, Hobart (GL fax 002 238159), quarterly, at 7.30 pm on the third Friday of March (Installation), June, August and November.**

**Meetings are tyled;** visiting Master Masons are always welcome as honorary members, and brethren below the rank of Master Mason are invited on appropriate occasions; preferred dress is dinner suit, black tie, or lounge suit. A donation is usual at the Installation festive board.

**Full membership:** (Class A) is open to local Master Masons in good standing and associated lodges; fees \$10 per year, *in advance*.

**Corresponding membership:** (Class B) is open to Master Masons; fees \$20 per year, *in advance*.

**Publications:** *Transactions*, 4 issues per year, cost included in subscription. Questions submitted in writing to the Secretary by August will be answered at the November meeting.

**All communications to the Secretary:** WBro David Griffin  
Research  
c/- 3 Sandy Bay Rd  
Hobart 7005  
Tasmania  
home phone: 002 49 5191.

## LAUNCESTON LODGE OF RESEARCH 69 TC

**This affiliate meets at the Masonic Temple, Brisbane St, Launceston, five times a year at 7.30 pm on the second Friday of February, May, July (Installation), August and November.**

**Meetings are tyled**, and opened in the degree appropriate to the lecture. Dress is dinner suit. Master Masons are welcomed as visitors. There is no charge for refreshment.

**Full membership** is open to Master Masons in good standing in a Tasmanian Craft lodge, fees \$30 per year.

**Correspondence Circle:** subscription for Australian members \$20, overseas \$25.

**Publication:** *Proceedings*, included with the summons.

There is a Rhetoric Lodge of Instruction, held under sanction of Launceston Lodge of Research, which meets in the library at the Launceston Temple at 7.30 pm on the second Tuesday of each month, for Master Masons; dress: street clothes without regalia.

**All communications to the Secretary:** WBro S G Taylor  
109 Talbot Rd  
Launceston 7250  
Tasmania  
home phone: 003 442707.

### CHISEL LODGE 434 VC

**This affiliate meets at Kerang at 8 pm on the third Thursday of each month from January to July and in November, for research, and has a dual Installation with Kerang Lodge 100 VC on the first Saturday in September.**

**Meetings are tyled** in the required degree; dress is formal/informal. Visitors are welcome. There is no charge for refreshment. There is no correspondence circle, and lectures are not published.

**All communications to the Secretary:** RWBro A R Trebilcock, PJGW  
P O Box 1  
Kerang 3579  
Victoria  
home phone: 054 52 1464

### LODGE OF RESEARCH 218 VC

**This affiliate meets at the Masonic Temple, 300 Albert St, East Melbourne, on the fourth Friday of each month from March to November at 7.30 pm; the Installation is in October.**

**Meetings are tyled and opened in the First Degree.** Dress is dinner suit. Visitors are welcome. A charge of \$5 is made for dinner.

**Full membership:** open to Master Masons who are subscribing members of a Craft lodge in Victoria; fees for metropolitan members are \$60, country members \$40.00. The lodge has recently introduced the title Fellow of the Lodge of Research, and this is honorary.

**Correspondence Circle:** various categories of membership; Australia members \$25; overseas \$US22.50, £12.50.

**Publications:** the transactions are published annually as a book, with a change of title each year, and a one-page insert with each summons is entitled *Thoughts for the enquiring Mason*.

<b>Communications to the Secretary:</b>	WBro M Moore	<b>or for CC:</b>	WBro G Love
	11/621 Toorak Rd		P O Box 2018
	Toorak 3142		St Kilda West 3182
	Victoria		Victoria
	home phone 03 822 7479		bus. 03 282 5187.

### WESTERN AUSTRALIAN LODGE OF RESEARCH 277

**This affiliate meets at the Masonic Temple, Terrace Road, Perth, monthly from March to November (Installation in March), on one of the last three days of the month; visitors are received at 8 pm.**

**Meetings are tyled and all lectures are given in the Third Degree;** members and visitors pay \$5 for a two-course supper.

**Full membership:** open to Master Masons who are subscribing members of a Craft lodge under GLWA, but the Master and Wardens must be Past Masters; fees \$25 pa.

**Correspondence Circle:** open to Masons in good standing, and to lodges and groups in amity with GLWA; fees \$25 pa.

**Study group:** open to all members; meets monthly, on the second Sunday.

**Publications:** *Transactions*, printed booklets of lectures, sent to members three times a year.

**Communications to the Secretary:** WBro David Wray, PAGDC  
11 Spinaway St  
Craigie 6025  
Western Australia  
phone: 09 401 6017.