

General Information, volumes 1 & 2

Chapter 1

Introduction

Aims and objectives

The principle aim of this book is to assist in placing the Masonic visitor in a lodge where he is a stranger (but one which he is permitted to visit) with the least difficulty and the greatest comfort. It is intended, also, that the book should be useful to the student of Masonry, instructive to the inquiring non-Mason, and pleasurable to the armchair traveller.

Masons who have experienced the Craft only in the vicinity of their own homes may well imagine that Freemasonry is the same worldwide, but it requires only a visit to one's nearest Masonic neighbour to realise that this is not so. The traveller soon discovers that there are many subtle or obvious differences in organisation and administration, in the wording and presentation of ritual, and in customs and procedures.

Indeed, he may find that there are bodies claiming to be Masonic, which are so different that they hold beliefs and follow practices contrary to his own. For this reason, there are guidelines and instructions provided by the Mason's own governing body (generally, but not universally, called Grand Lodge), and these must be adhered to by the individual Mason. This book in no way encourages a Mason to stray beyond such guidelines and instructions. However, since there is no universally accepted list of approved Masonic bodies—or the converse, an agreed list of disapproved bodies—information in this book is not confined to Masonic entities approved by the reader's own.

The structure of this book

The subject of universal Freemasonry is so large that even a general work such as this cannot be contained comfortably in a single volume. Since more than half the Freemasons—and Grand Lodges—of the world are to be found on the American continent, it is they who are the subject of the first volume. The second encompasses the rest of the world.

Some variations in Masonry are common to a group of jurisdictions, whether linked geographically, historically or by language. Where it is convenient to provide information once, applicable to several jurisdictions, this device has been employed in order to avoid repetition. Consequently, it is not practicable to list jurisdictions sequentially in alphabetical order. The first level of grouping is geographical, by continent; the second by groups with common history or procedure; the third by geo-political division; and finally by jurisdiction, employing an alphabetical sequence within categories where convenient. Consequently, the *Table of contents* is an essential tool, not merely a conventional preliminary appendage.

Those who read this work for pleasure, or from interest in Freemasonry universal, may well commence at the beginning of volume one and work steadily through to the end of *volume two*. But those whose interest is in a particular location are advised to adopt the following procedure:

1. Read *Part 1—General information for travelling Masons*;
2. Turn to the *Part* containing the subject jurisdiction, and read the general remarks of that *Part*;
3. Turn to the *Section* containing the subject jurisdiction, and read the general remarks of that *Section*;
4. Finally, read the entry for the territory of the subject jurisdiction.

Basic questions answered

Probably the foremost factor which dissuades travelling Freemasons from visiting is ignorance of whom, where, when and how they may visit. Each of these basic questions is addressed in detail in this book.

Whom?

The vexing problems of *regularity* and *recognition* are discussed in *chapter two*. In summary, a travelling Mason may visit any lodge or body, anywhere in the world, provided the host is willing and attendance is not forbidden by the guest's controlling body.

Some visitors may be interested in a particular aspect of Masonry, such as the provision of charitable assistance, places of historical interest, libraries, or research lodges and societies. These are mentioned wherever they occur. Lodges which work in a language other than that of the jurisdiction are also recorded.

Where?

If Freemasonry exists in a country, state, or other geo-political entity, anywhere in the world, it is described in this book. The name, address and other details of controlling bodies are supplied. If a Grand Lodge does not have a separate administrative office, this is noted and the address of the Grand Master or Grand Secretary provided. In some instances, similar particulars are provided in relation to individual lodges, especially if this information would be difficult for the travelling Mason to obtain from other sources. Some lodges vary their meeting places, and in some instances details of such lodges are provided.

When?

Frequency of lodge meetings varies widely, from more than once a week to fewer than four times per year. There are still a few lodges which regulate their meeting dates according to the full moon, a relic of earlier times when moonlight was an aid to travel. Often, lodges in an area recess at particular times each year, for a few weeks or several months, usually in periods of extreme temperatures, but sometimes for other reasons. Meeting times and days are equally wide-ranging, from morning to evening, and every day of the week, including Sunday in rare instances. The subject is addressed throughout the book, either in general terms for a particular area or jurisdiction, or specifically in relation to individual lodges.

How?

How to prepare for Masonic visiting, how to conduct oneself as a visitor, and how to obtain the greatest benefit from visiting, are all questions answered in this book. To obtain these answers, the potential visitor should study the book in the manner recommended above (see *The structure of this book*), and follow its advice.

These days, many Masons have access to computers and the so-called Information Super-highway, and an increasing number of lodges and Grand Lodges acknowledge this by providing official websites and email addresses. Since there is no single directory containing this information, these details (so far as are known) have been included in this book. Such details are subject to change, of course—perhaps more quickly than geographical addresses, and telephone and facsimile numbers (also provided).

Some Masonic terms considered

Words and phrases used frequently in a Masonic context may have different applications in some Masonic jurisdictions. Some of these are clarified here, in relation to their use in this work.

Charter/Warrant

These terms are synonymous, as noun and verb. *Charter* is preferred in North America and *Warrant* is more usual in other Anglophone areas. They refer both to the act of authorisation to erect a subordinate body, as in a Grand Lodge permitting the formation of a new lodge under its aegis, and to a document containing that authorisation. A lodge with interim permission to operate is said (particularly in the USA) to be under dispensation (UD).

Constitution/Jurisdiction/Obedience

These are largely interchangeable. Broadly speaking, *Jurisdiction* is the most widely used term in North America; *Constitution* (although this has an entirely different meaning, as well) is favoured in Britain and much of the (former) British Commonwealth; and *Obedience* is the choice of European and Latin-American Masonic bodies. They all describe an autonomous Masonic body, such as a Grand Lodge or Grand Orient,

and its area of control and influence. Thus: 'A lodge under the *Jurisdiction* of Vermont', 'The English *Constitution* is represented in Australia by lodges in Queensland and Victoria', or, to a Frenchman, 'Which is your *Obedience*?'

Recognition/Regularity

These terms, and the nouns *recognised* and *regular*, are not synonymous. They are discussed in detail in *chapter two*. As far as possible, the terms *regular* and *irregular* are avoided here, in describing a lodge or Grand Lodge.

Inclusions and omissions

As with any reference work, information supplied at the time of publication is liable to become outdated, sooner or later. In the Masonic world, where there is no Supreme authority, but a host of autonomous Grand bodies, it is impossible to forecast what will still be in date twenty, or even two, years after publication.

Therefore, although it is earnestly hoped that this guide will be generally reliable for many years to come, the reader is advised to check statistical and administrative details with more recent sources as the years go by. For example, the number of lodges and Masons in a particular jurisdiction will not be static; and sooner or later the address, telephone/facsimile, and email/website details will be varied. Grand Lodges themselves will be born and die. In many instances, these changes may be ascertained from a Mason's own Grand Lodge, or by reference to such works as the annual *List of lodges, Masonic*, published by the Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Co, of Bloomington, Illinois, and to the material supplied by the Masonic Service Association of North America, or (increasingly) by reference to the Internet.

Consequently, much detail of an ephemeral nature has been deliberately omitted, in favour of historical facts, information about customs and practices, and other data not readily available elsewhere. And since the principal aim of this book is to aid the visitor and not, for example, to facilitate a permanent transfer from one jurisdiction to another, specific information on subjects such as dual and plural membership, and what period of time must lapse between degrees, is omitted also.

The basic assumption

The basic assumption of the entire text of this guide is that the visitor will have no previous experience or knowledge of Masonic practices outside his own jurisdiction. Of course, for many visitors this will not be the case. Nonetheless, such an assumption is obviously necessary.

Chapter 2

Regularity and Recognition

The terms 'regular' and irregular' are used to describe individual Masons, their lodges, and their Grand Lodges or other ruling bodies. 'Recognition' (and its verb, 'recognise') are used to describe the relationship between Masonic ruling bodies. These terms are often confused, with 'regular' being treated as a synonym for 'recognised', which it is not.

Regularity

Every autonomous Masonic body has its own tests of regularity, based on its perception of its own character. Thus, each Grand Lodge considers itself to be regular, and requires its constituents to abide by its criteria, whether clearly defined or not. Consequently, every Mason considers himself to be regular because he (or even she!) was 'regularly' initiated in a 'regularly' constituted lodge, chartered by his (or, indeed, her) Grand Lodge.

Within the closed system of the autonomous Grand Lodge, determination of regularity—or its converse, irregularity—is a relatively easy process, and entirely valid. Problems arise when the definition of 'regularity' of one autonomous body is applied to another autonomous body, because 'regularity' is a factor in determining whether Grand Lodge A should 'recognise' Grand Lodge B, and vice versa.

Recognition

If two autonomous Grand Lodges wish to establish and maintain a fraternal relationship with each other, it is customary for them to 'recognise' each other by formal treaty. This usually involves a comparison of the two systems, to determine if they meet each other's criteria for recognition. Each Grand Lodge has its own list of requirements which, in most cases, may be summarised as follows:

- (a) Regularity of origin;
- (b) Regularity of conduct; and
- (c) Autonomy.

Each of these requirements will be examined further, below.

If the two Grand Lodges recognise each other, they are said to be 'in amity', and they usually allow intervisitation at lodge and Grand Lodge levels, some form of cross-membership, and mutual assistance. In most cases, they also exchange representatives. This does not require a member of Grand Lodge A to physically relocate to the territory of Grand Lodge B. What occurs is that Grand Lodge A suggests one of its own members as representative of Grand Lodge B 'near' Grand Lodge A. If B concurs, that member of Grand Lodge A is so appointed, and a reciprocal arrangement is made regarding a member of Grand Lodge B. Such Grand Representatives, if they do their jobs conscientiously, can be of great assistance to travelling Masons of the appropriate jurisdictions.

Over the years, groups of Grand Lodges have formed, where they each recognise most (if not all) of the others in the group. Some of these associations have acquired formal names, but the largest of them has no such designation. This is the group led by the three 'home' Grand Lodges of England, Ireland and Scotland, which includes: the six Grand Lodges of Australia; 10 Grand Lodges in Canada; 51 (and arguably more) in USA; and substantial numbers of others throughout the world. In this book, this group is referred to as 'mainstream'.

Mainstream Grand Lodges

Not all 'mainstream' Grand Lodges recognise all other 'mainstream' Grand Lodges. For a Grand Lodge to fall into the 'mainstream' category, it is essential that some of the group recognise it, and that the others do not consider this recognition to be so unacceptable as to provoke an extreme response. From time to time, some members of the group will withdraw recognition from others in the group for some perceived infringement, without affecting the general status quo. Consequently, it is impossible to determine precisely how many Grand Lodges are members of the group or, in some cases, to say whether or not a particular

Grand Lodge qualifies for the designation 'mainstream'. But, nevertheless, the group as a whole is clearly identifiable by the term 'mainstream'.

Mainstream 'Basic Principles of Recognition'

In 1929 the United Grand Lodge of England formulated what it called 'Basic Principles for Grand Lodge Recognition', which (it stated) it had always applied to the question of recognition of another Grand Lodge. The Grand Lodges of Ireland and Scotland each adopted a similar—but by no means identical—list. Other Grand Lodges have their own lists, again, not identical—and some have adopted the English list. The following are typical requirements of such a list:

1. The Grand Lodge shall have been regularly formed ('regularity of origin').
2. Belief in the Supreme Being is an essential qualification for membership within the jurisdiction.
3. Candidates are obligated on, or in view of, the open Volume of Sacred Law.
4. The membership of the Grand Lodge and its lodges consists exclusively of men, and no Masonic intercourse is permitted with women's lodges or mixed-gender lodges.
5. The Grand Lodge is an independent, self-governing body with sole jurisdiction over the Craft degrees of Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft and Master Mason.
6. Discussion of religion and politics within the lodges is totally prohibited.
7. An open Volume of Sacred Law, the square and compasses (the three great lights of Freemasonry) are always exhibited while a lodge or the Grand Lodge is open.
8. The principles of the Ancient Landmarks, customs and usages of the Craft [*all undefined*] are strictly observed.

Even with such a list, there is room for disagreement, for different interpretations (especially when translating between one language and another); and some Grand bodies omit one or more of these provisions, or add others.

Regularity of origin

The requirement that a Grand Lodge be regularly formed—that it be regular in origin—refers to a sort of 'apostolic succession', that the subject Grand Lodge must be able to trace its ancestry back to one or more of the 'home' Grand Lodges of England, Ireland or Scotland (or, conceivably, to some equally venerable origin). The ways in which a Grand Lodge may be formed are outlined in *chapter three*, where it is explained that the terms 'Grand Lodge' and 'Grand Orient' merely describe differing forms of Masonic government. Therefore, Grand Orients and Grand Lodges coexist within the mainstream.

Organisations which are unable to trace their origins in this way, such as the International Free and Accepted Modern Masons, however regular in conduct, are unable to qualify for mainstream recognition.

Regularity of conduct

Requirements 2–4 and 6–8 of the above list all relate to regularity of conduct. A candidate for recognition by a mainstream Grand Lodge must fulfil all these requirements. If the candidate has failed to comply in the past, but has since altered its conduct to meet the requirements, it may be eligible for recognition if it is perceived to be sincere, and unlikely to 're-offend'. Any substantial breach of any of these requirements by an existing member of the mainstream group is likely to result in mass withdrawals of recognition, unless quickly recanted.

Autonomy

Requirement 5 refers to autonomy. Recognition between Grand Lodges is essentially a process conducted between equals, and the mainstream perceives this as being between self-governing trigradal bodies. Thus, a multi-degree body such as a 33° Supreme Council of the Ancient and Accepted (Scottish) Rite does not qualify. Neither does a trigradal Grand Lodge which is subordinate to a multi-degree Supreme Council, nor does a District, Provincial or State Grand Lodge that is controlled by a superior trigradal Grand Lodge. However, longstanding recognition of the trigradal 'St John' Grand Lodges under the eleven-degree Swedish Rite system indicates that some accommodation is possible in this regard.

There is another aspect of autonomy not specifically addressed in the above list, but observable in

practice. In the USA it takes an extreme form, where it is called 'exclusive territorial jurisdiction'. At its most extreme, it considers all Masons physically within the geographical location of a Grand Lodge to be under its jurisdiction, whether or not they are members of a lodge under that jurisdiction, and extends this claim to non-Masons in respect of their potential as candidates for Masonry. It regards any other Masonic body within the geographical limits as *ipso facto* irregular, and clandestine. The 'principle' has not always been applied consistently, and many of its proponents have an escape clause that provides for an agreement to share territory. Elsewhere, a modified form is observed among mainstream Grand Lodges, relating only to Grand Lodges in a common geographical area. In such cases, even if both Grand Lodges meet the other criteria for recognition, usually only one will be recognised unless both agree to share the territory.

Other groups of Grand Lodges

Some groups exist in isolation from the mainstream. These include:

- The Grand Orient of France, and its allies in Europe and elsewhere.
- The *Droit Humain*, otherwise known as Co-Masonry, which is universal.
- The Orders exclusively female, based in England or Europe, worldwide.
- Several groups of Grand Lodges emanating from the USA, which will be enumerated later.

Other Grand Lodges are to be found entirely within the mainstream, forming identifiable sub-groups for various purposes of mutual interest, such as: the Grand Lodges of Australasia; the Scandinavian Grand Lodges of the Swedish Rite (see *chapter five*); and those 51 American Grand Lodges sometimes known as 'George Washington', which (most of the time) all recognise each other.

The New World provides several examples of groups intersecting the mainstream group. The Inter-American Masonic Confederation (*Confederación Masónica Interamericana*), and the sub-group within it, the Confederation of Symbolic Masonry of Brasil (*Confederação de Maçonaria Simbólica do Brasil*) consist largely of Grand Lodges that are widely recognised by (other) members of the mainstream group.

Mainly in North America, but with representation worldwide, is the group of 46 Grand Lodges of Prince Hall Affiliation (PHA), not to be confused with a group of Grand Lodges subordinate to a 'National' Grand Lodge, known as Grand Lodges of Prince Hall Origin (PHO). This situation will be clarified later. Suffice it to say here that the 46 Grand Lodges of Prince Hall Affiliation are no longer entirely isolated, and are gradually being accorded recognition by mainstream Grand Lodges worldwide. Eventually, they may be considered part of the mainstream group; at present they intersect it.

The Grand Lodge of France (GLdF) is in a different category. In the early part of the 20th century, although never recognised by the 'home' Grand Lodges, it was widely recognised by mainstream US Grand Lodges. Then recognition was withdrawn for reasons we shall not examine here, and the Grand Lodge of France was completely isolated from the mainstream group. At present, mainstream scholars and students of Masonry are divided on the issues of whether or not the Grand Lodge of France is regular in origin and present conduct, proponents and opponents being largely divided by the Atlantic Ocean. Now that the Grand Lodge of France is unrecognised by the mainstream group, the presence in the same country of a Grand Lodge securely in the mainstream, the French National Grand Lodge (GLNF), increases the difficulty of re-establishing recognition, in the absence of an agreement between the GLNF and the GLdF.

Ancient Landmarks

The phrase 'Ancient Landmarks' (often 'the Landmarks') occurs frequently in Masonry, including in the mainstream list of principles of Grand Lodge recognition. The 'Ancient Landmarks' were first mentioned in print, in a Masonic context, in 1723, but no attempt was made to define them. The concept was widely explored in the latter half of the 19th century, and numerous lists of Landmarks have since been devised and promulgated by writers and Grand Lodges. The best known is a list of 25 by an American, Albert Mackey, subsequently refuted by another American, Roscoe Pound.

It is generally agreed that a Landmark must be (a) something which existed from time immemorial (and therefore before the earliest memory of Masons alive in 1723, when the topic was mentioned in print), and (b) must be such that its absence would change the fundamental nature of Freemasonry. The difficulty lies in defining the fundamental nature of Freemasonry. Scholars are unable to agree on where, when, how and by

whom Freemasonry was formed. And Freemasonry today means different things to different men, even to members of the same lodge.

For the purposes of this book, it is assumed that modern speculative Freemasonry is derived, directly or indirectly, from English and Scottish operative stonemasons of the late Middle Ages; that its purpose is to assist good men to become better men; and that its members seek to 'unite in the grand design of being happy and communicating happiness'. But even these assumptions are subject to dispute.

Many Grand Lodges have adopted a list of Landmarks, no two identical, and many of them subject to the criticisms outlined above. Other Grand Lodges have not ventured to list the Landmarks, and some scholars have expressed the opinion that to define a Landmark is to alter it. Nevertheless, virtually every Grand Lodge (whether it defines Landmarks or not), refers to the Landmarks in its ritual, or in a list of criteria for recognition of other Grand Lodges. The authors themselves were each required to assert, as Master-Elect of a lodge, that they were 'well skilled in the Ancient Charges, Regulations, and Landmarks [*undefined*] of the Order'.

Rules for visiting

There are four rules common to most mainstream Grand Lodges, relating to visiting in recognised or unrecognised jurisdictions, and these are summarised in *chapter six*. The first of these, which is concerned primarily with the question of recognition, from the point of view of the visitor, is explored in rather more detail here. It has four aspects, to each of which there may be exceptions, as follows:

- A Mason may only visit constituent lodges under a Grand Lodge recognised by his own—unless both Grand Lodges provide otherwise.
- If a Mason owes allegiance to two Grand Lodges, then he may only visit lodges in a third jurisdiction recognised by both—unless all the Grand Lodges involved permit otherwise.
- If a Mason, Brother P, lawfully visits a lodge in another jurisdiction, and finds another visitor lawfully present, whose Grand Lodge is not in amity with Brother P's Grand Lodge, then Brother P must withdraw—unless Brother P's Grand Lodge and the host's Grand Lodge both permit otherwise. Increasingly, Grand Lodges are adopting the 'when in Rome' provision, permitting their visiting brethren to comply with the practice of the host lodge, ignoring any conflict with their own previous requirements.
- A lodge may only admit visitors from jurisdictions formally recognised by the host Grand Lodge—unless the host Grand Lodge has instructed its lodges otherwise.

The safest course is for the mainstream visitor to obtain advice from his own Grand Lodge prior to visiting. If this is not practicable, he should abide by the strictest version of the above rules. It is important to keep this advice in mind when reading this book, because it provides visiting information about lodges and Grand Lodges which may not be recognised by the reader's own Grand Lodge.

Grand Lodges in this book

The authors are both mainstream Masons. Their first concern is to provide information that will assist Masons with whom they may lawfully sit in lodge, 'their Brothers'. Next, they seek to help those with whom 'their Brothers' may lawfully sit in lodge, 'their Brother's Brothers'. This requires detailed treatment not only of all mainstream Grand Lodges, but also all Grand Lodges of groups, some of whose members are recognised by some mainstream Grand Lodges. For example, both authors owe allegiance to the mainstream United Grand Lodge of Victoria, which is in amity with the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Connecticut, which in turn recognises all other Grand Lodges of Prince Hall Affiliation. Therefore all 46 Grand Lodges of Prince Hall Affiliation are included, with as much detail as was obtainable at the time of going to press, and could be included in accordance with the size constraints of this volume.

There are many other Grand Lodges which do not fit the above categories. These are mentioned in passing, to inform the student and to alert the traveller. None of this information is included as encouragement to visit where it is not lawful.

Chapter 3

Masonic Government

There are two main types of Masonic government, the Grand Lodge and the Grand Orient. Both systems have their similarities, and their differences. It is useful for the travelling Mason to be aware of these differing structures, as he is likely to meet both.

The Grand Lodge

This is by far the most common form of Masonic government. It is a superintending, or pinnacle, governing body, and it possesses certain distinguishing characteristics. The four main features of a Grand Lodge are:

- It consists of free and equal representation of its constituent lodges.
- It is independent, sovereign and self-governing, formed and maintained by the Masons of its jurisdiction.
- It assumes, through written constitutions, all legislative power over its constituent lodges, and many administrative and judicial powers.
- It is controlled by a Grand Master elected by its membership, and Grand Lodge Officers, all of which are responsible to it.

There are a number of other characteristics of a Grand Lodge, but for the purposes of comparison with the Grand Orient system, the four listed will suffice.

Types of Grand Lodges

The term Grand Lodge is but a convenient title for central Masonic government. The structures of Grand Lodges, while similar, are certainly not the same. The nature of each Grand Lodge depends to a large extent on its Masonic descent and inspiration. Grand Lodges derived directly from the United Grand Lodge of England tend to be appointive in nature, while those that are American-derived tend to be elective. Many European Grand Lodges, particularly those whose inspiration was originally French, tend to be appointive under various forms of the Grand Orient system.

Appointive Grand Lodges

In an appointive Grand Lodge, its members consist of all Past Masters of all constituent lodges, incumbent Masters and Wardens, and all present and past Grand Lodge Officers (who must usually be Past Masters in any case). Membership of these Grand Lodges therefore tends to be very large. The Grand Master is elected by the Grand Lodge membership, and the Grand Master himself (subject to certain conventions) appoints most Grand Lodge officers. In many jurisdictions using this system (and England is a well known example), while the Grand Master is elected, in practice there is invariably only one candidate for the position, with the nominee determined by senior Grand officers. In England and Ireland, the Grand Master is often a Prince of Royal Blood, or a Peer of the Realm, and unopposed re-election of the Grand Master is the common pattern. Therefore, the appointive system offers the ordinary Mason little participation in the selection of his highest leaders. On the other hand, through a very large Grand Lodge membership, it does allow a wide participation in the legislative government of the Craft. Grand Lodges of direct English descent, such as in India, New Zealand, Australia, and some in Canada, for the most part follow the Appointive System.

Elective Grand Lodges

In an elective Grand Lodge, its members are drawn from the equal representation of its constituent lodges. Usual practice is for each lodge to elect from among its Past Masters a small number of Masons (usually two or three) to represent it in the Grand Lodge. In some jurisdictions, the Master and his two Wardens are the statutory choices. In turn, the members of the Grand Lodge elect the Grand Master and senior Grand officers (generally the Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master, the two Grand Wardens, the Grand Secretary, and Grand Treasurer). In some elective Grand Lodges, most or all Grand officers are elected in this manner. However, by convention the highest Grand Lodge offices are usually progressive. A Junior Grand Warden, for example, could reasonably expect to be elected Senior Grand Warden in the next year, and so on. Grand

Masters under this system often hold office for only one year, and Grand officers generally cease to hold Grand rank once their term has expired. The elective system is most prevalent in the United States, and under American-inspired Grand Lodges such as Japan, Finland and the Philippines.

Grand Lodges—governmental variations

There are several variations to both the appointive and elective Grand Lodge systems. Some could be described as partly-elective or partly-appointive. In some elective Grand Lodges there are several Grand officers that are appointed, and in some appointive Grand Lodges there are officers who are elected. There is even the occasional example of an English-derived Grand Lodge which is elective, but otherwise follows the usual English form of Masonic government.

The Grand Orient

The Grand Orient form of Masonic government possesses many inherent differences to Grand Lodge structures. It is of French origin and is, in effect, a Masonic oligarchy. A Grand Orient usually comprises a Grand Master and a council. The Grand Master is always appointed by the council, and the council has the sole power to appoint any member to it, with the result that it is entirely a self-perpetuating body. The net outcome of this system is that it excludes the effective voice of far more than it includes. The ordinary Mason, therefore, has no say whatsoever in Masonic government under a Grand Orient. Historically, this system has faced many challenges from within and without. Within mainstream Masonry, those jurisdictions using a Grand Orient system have seen it modified to make it more democratic and representative.

Grand Orients and Supreme Councils

Often a Grand Orient is subordinate to a Scottish Rite Supreme Council. As explained in the preceding chapter, this presents a substantial barrier to recognition by autonomous trigradal bodies (Grand Lodges). Other Grand Orients control a Scottish Rite system within their jurisdiction, and some are entirely separate from the Scottish Rite. The 'Basic Principles of Recognition' of mainstream Grand Lodges do not discriminate against the name 'Grand Orient', nor the Grand Orient form of government, and several Grand Orients are securely within the mainstream group: for example, those of Brasil, Italy and the Netherlands.

The wariness of many mainstream Masons and Grand Lodges towards Grand Orients in general is not because of the form of government, nor principally in relation to association with the Scottish Rite. It is because the Grand Orient of France (GOdF) is perceived by them to be atheistic, anti-religious and politically partisan, all examples of irregularity of conduct. The GOdF is probably the largest Grand Orient in the world, and has sympathisers among other Grand Orients and, indeed, Grand Lodges. The foregoing may explain why many Grand Lodges in Europe are Grand Lodges by name, but not by form of government, which is generally a modified Grand Orient system.

The Modified Grand Orient

As has already been mentioned, the Grand Orient structure has rarely endeared itself to its mass membership. The historical result of these pressures has been modifications to the system in many areas. This has resulted in the Grand Council being indirectly (sometimes directly) elected by the wider membership of its jurisdiction. An example of one form of modified Grand Orient is explained in *volume two* under the heading of *Greece*. Of course, there are others. The modified Grand Orient system does compare more closely with the Grand Lodge system. However, Grand Orients still usually have more influence over their composition than does a Grand Lodge, in terms of personnel. Under a traditional Grand Orient, Masters of lodges are sometimes elected for life, until they die or retire; and there are some modified Grand Orients that still endorse this procedure. Often the range of candidates available for election to the Master's chair in any of its constituent lodges is governed by Grand Orient statute. It is therefore necessary for such a candidate to have Grand Orient patronage.

How Grand Lodges form

A brief look at the origins of the various Masonic jurisdictions, in a broad sense, will provide a greater insight into the relations that exist between the Grand Lodges of the world. It is these relationships initially expressed in fraternal recognition, that are crucial to an understanding of the worldwide Masonic fraternity.

For any Freemason, particularly one who visits outside his own jurisdiction, such an historical examination will be of value. Grand Lodges either form or evolve in one of the following ways:

Evolution from obscurity

With most of the oldest Grand Lodges, it is impossible to determine origin except through conjecture, because of a lack of contemporary records or other reliable evidence. The Grand Lodges of England, Ireland, and Scotland fall into this category. In the cases of England and Scotland, records exist of the formation of their respective Grand Lodges, but it is only speculation as to the actual origins of Freemasonry in Britain, even the claim that it evolved from operative sources.

There are more recent Grand Lodges for which records are virtually non-existent, especially in South America and Europe. Some of these may have evolved from a combination of operative sources and influences from other Grand Lodges (such as French and German Masonry), while for others their inspiration is so diverse as to make the tracing of origin impossible.

Schism

Not a small number of Grand Lodges have been formed by breaking away from some other Grand body. Sometimes reunion is effected, while in other cases the breakaway body has eventually superseded the original. Schisms can be internal or external. An internal schism, the most common form, occurs when a group of lodges breaks away from the parent body and forms a new Grand Lodge in the same geographical area. This form of schism immediately involves a territorial dispute, regardless of any other causes or effects, and as such it is usually hard to heal. The Masonic histories of Denmark and Germany afford examples of healed internal schisms, whereas those of France and Brazil attest to continued Masonic division.

External schism is a rare occurrence. It happens when a group of lodges under a particular Grand Lodge, but outside its basic geographical area, breaks away without permission or agreement, and forms a new Grand Lodge. This form of action is uncommon, simply because secession can usually be achieved amicably, unless some fundamental differences in principles or procedures have occurred between the two bodies. The division of one country into two or more separate countries has seen this form of schism occur. Examples are to be found in the Masonic histories of various Central American countries, and more recently in Europe.

In terms of Masonic recognition, the general rule is that if the parent body is considered to have remained regular, a schismatic body will find recognition difficult to obtain without the parent's consent. Only if the parent body was, or subsequently becomes, irregular will the schismatic body be in a position to claim recognition. For amplification of the terms 'recognition' and 'regular', see the preceding chapter on *Regularity and Recognition*.

A convention of lodges

This method of Grand Lodge construction is the most common, and occurs when a group of warranted lodges (not less than three) in a new area, meet in convention to form a Grand Lodge with the blessings of their parent jurisdictions. Upon this having been effected harmoniously, the new Grand Lodge generally attracts wide recognition. Recent examples are the formation of the Grand Lodge of Newfoundland and the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Alberta, both in 1997. There have been occurrences in the past whereby poor communications or a lack of general understanding have resulted in a new Grand Lodge being formed without the immediate blessings of its former Masonic authorities. While initially forming an external schism, these rare occurrences are usually rectified. The formations of the Grand Lodges of Japan and New Zealand are examples of this occurrence.

A District Grand Lodge

In this case, a group of lodges under one Grand Lodge, geographically remote from its parent, gains permission to form a local Grand Lodge type of organisation, while still retaining its original allegiance. This form of local Masonic government is called a 'Provincial' or 'District' Grand Lodge, and provides local Masonry with a fair measure of autonomy. Such intermediate governmental structures have been progressively set up by the Grand Lodges of England, Ireland and Scotland This has occurred as the result of local desire, bad communications in years gone by, and because the vastness of the parent Grand Lodges has made it a practical necessity.

In a number of cases, the local District or Provincial Grand Lodge eventually feels the desire for complete Masonic autonomy, whereupon a new sovereign Grand Lodge is formed. The usual progression of events in the past has been that when a British colony became politically independent, its Masonic offspring therein followed the same course. Nevertheless, there are still many countries, notably in Asia and Africa, where District or Provincial Grand Lodges have chosen to remain under allegiance to England, Ireland or Scotland.

Several District Grand Lodges

This category of Grand Lodge formation is an extension of the one above and is far more common. It occurs when lodges under Districts or Provinces of more than one parent Grand Lodge unite to erect a single new Grand Lodge. Most Australian Grand Lodges were formed in this way. It has been, and still is, quite common for foreign lands to possess lodges warranted from England, Ireland and Scotland, and these lodges have in the past united to form one new Grand Lodge. Sometimes this is only achieved with some difficulty, as the accommodation of rituals and procedures usually has to be achieved first.

A general assembly of Masons

This method of forming a Grand Lodge is not common, and examples are restricted to North America. It involves Masons meeting together as individual members of the Craft, not as lodges or lodge delegations, and thereupon establishing a new Grand Lodge. This procedure was sometimes found to be expedient in North America, as the Craft in this area spread so rapidly that it was not uncommon for any new area of settlement to possess lodges warranted from a variety of sources. Wherein this was the case, it was sometimes found that this method was the easiest rather than involving many different Grand Lodges as sponsors.

A charter from a parent Grand Lodge

This method is rare. It occurs when a Grand Lodge actually charters a daughter Grand Lodge, rather than the lodges in a new area agreeing at convention, or in a general assembly, to form a new Grand Lodge. The direct chartering of the Grand Lodge of Tennessee by the Grand Lodge of North Carolina provides the most celebrated example of this method.

A union of Grand Lodges

In this method, two or more previously independent Grand Lodges within the one geographical area unite to form a single Grand Lodge. In some countries, a number of Grand Lodges have evolved, or have been established through schism. It is not particularly rare, where this situation exists, for two or more of these Grand Lodges to unite to form a single new Grand Lodge. Sometimes such a union will, in effect, heal an internal schism. In any event, such a union, particularly if it unites *all* Masonry within one country, generally is conducive to wide fraternal recognition. The formation of the United Grand Lodges of Germany, originally by two Grand Lodges, and later joined by three others, forms an interesting example of this method.

Lodge-splitting

This has found occasional usage, notably in South America, and sometimes in Europe. It occurs when one lodge splits itself into three new lodges, and these three then form a Grand Lodge. Often, this is not achieved regularly. A relatively recent convention of the Craft is that a new Grand Lodge must be formed by at least three lodges. Herein lies the reason for lodge-splitting as a means of approved Grand Lodge formation.

Chapter 4

Politics, Religion, Race, and the Masonic Visitor

Politics

Mainstream Freemasonry is insistent that the Craft be kept clear of politics, but the wording—and interpretation—of the prohibition varies from one jurisdiction to another. This book is not the place for a review of these variations, nor for an exposition of an ideal interpretation. Advice to the visiting Mason is simply this: If you should happen to encounter an interpretation or practice that does not conform with yours, do not participate; do not attempt to ‘set them straight’; and if you feel too uncomfortable to stay, politely take your leave.

Religion

It is clear from surviving manuscripts that English operative Masonry demanded that Masons practice the national religion, which was Christianity—Roman Catholicism in the early period, and Protestantism after the Reformation. When speculative Masons formed the premier Grand Lodge in 1717, a change gradually occurred. During the next 100 years, Freemasonry was opened to non-Christians and the ritual was changed accordingly. Modern English rituals still contain a few Christian references, and the Christian Bible is still the prescribed Volume of Sacred Law (VSL). The sacred writings of other monotheistic religions are accorded the same title, Volumes of Sacred Law, but usually make their appearance in English lodges only when required by Masons of that particular faith. Other jurisdictions show some variations from English requirements and practice, and it is often necessary for non-Christian Masons to exercise forbearance where they encounter unthinking Christian bias in ritual, practice or personal contact.

Except in Scandinavia, where the Swedish Rite is exclusively Christian, all mainstream Grand Lodges are open to members of all monotheistic faiths, and in jurisdictions such as those of Israel, India and Turkey, there are multiple VSLs in use as standard practice. In addition to the Bible of the Christians may be found the Tanach (Jews), Koran (Muslims), Zend Avesta (Parsees), Granth Sahib (Sikhs), Rig Veda, Bhagavadgita (Hindus), and others. In recent years, Scandinavian Grand Lodges have relaxed their restrictions slightly, to admit non-Christian Masons as affiliating members, and the German Grand Lodge which works the Swedish Rite (GLLFvD) is prepared to initiate non-Christian candidates, although the ritual remains firmly Christian.

The discussion of religion is prohibited in mainstream lodges but, as with politics, wording and interpretation of this prohibition vary somewhat. Consequently, similar advice is offered to visitors whose interpretation differs from that of the host.

Race

The precepts of Freemasonry are clearly against any distinction on the basis of racial origin, but Masonic history abounds with examples of racial discrimination.

The three ‘home’ Grand Lodges have never had a policy of racial discrimination but, as Masonry spread in Africa and Asia with the expansion of the British Empire, there was a definite reluctance to admit non-Europeans to the lodges. We may surmise that this was for a number of interlocking reasons: rulers and subjects were distinguishable by skin colour, language, customs, and usually by social status, wealth and religion. All of these would tend to militate against harmonious assimilation. In India, for example, the first non-European initiates were high-ranking Moslems and Parsees (it was not understood that, at its ‘highest’ levels, Hinduism is monotheistic). And, in Germany in particular, some Grand Lodges discriminated against Jews, presumably on a combined basis of race and religion. To their credit, some Grand Lodges not in the mainstream group have a better record than the mainstream on the issue of race.

In most parts of the world, widespread racial discrimination is no longer practised in Masonic lodges, and some Grand Lodges have taken positive steps against discrimination. For example, in South Africa, where the laws of *apartheid* made an arbitrary division of citizens into Whites, Coloureds, and Blacks for the purposes of segregation, the Grand Lodge of South Africa obtained an exemption from the government. In 1977 it warranted two lodges in Cape Town and Kimberley, the founding members of which were former

members of two lodges chartered by the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania. As a result, these brethren were accepted throughout the five Masonic jurisdictions in that country.

The exception is in the United States of America, where Freemasonry has been divided on largely racial lines for more than two centuries, a situation which only now is in the process of being rectified. The reform, which was begun after World War Two, is leading not directly to unification, but merely to recognition of some Grand Lodges, with rights of intervisitation in every case, and additional rights in some cases. An historical summary of this situation is contained in the section on the United States of America. At the time of going to press, 19 of the 46 Grand Lodges of Prince Hall Affiliation had exchanged recognition with 27 of the 51 mainstream US Grand Lodges and with all mainstream Canadian Grand Lodges except Newfoundland and Ontario; the United Grand Lodge of England had recognised 13 of those same 19 Grand Lodges of Prince Hall Affiliation, and nine other mainstream Grand Lodges were in amity with one or more.

It follows that all visitors to North American lodges should be aware of their own Grand Lodge's position with regard to recognition, and also to rules on visiting where other visitors may be regarded as 'unrecognised'. Mainstream Masons whose appearance is not 'White' may experience some difficulty in visiting in mainstream US jurisdictions which have not recognised any Prince Hall Grand Lodge. Most of these are in the southern United States, and while most southern Grand Lodges have taken positive steps to ensure that 'regular visitors of color' are accepted in their lodges, there remains the Master's prerogative to exclude visitors who 'might disturb the harmony of the lodge', which in some jurisdictions may be exercised on the objection of a single member. Perhaps the best advice is to call at the Grand Lodge office, with suitable accreditation, and proceed from there. In this book, the authors merely state their perceptions of the facts; their opinions have been published elsewhere.

Chapter 5

Rites and Rituals

It is not uncommon for a Mason who has never visited a lodge outside his own area or jurisdiction to assume that all Masonic ceremonies are similar to those with which he is familiar. On reflection, this view is not unnatural, particularly with the younger Mason. Of course, nothing could be further from the truth. Indeed, the visitor will invariably find that observing other ways of working will be a highlight of Masonic visiting.

The divergences of the Craft degrees as worked around the world are not few. If one were to inform an English Mason that in the United States lodges mostly open and close their proceedings in the third degree, stunned silence might well be the initial response. Many an American Mason would have similar feelings if informed of the English system. However, despite such divergences, all Craft ceremonies have much in common, in basic content if not in form.

Content and form

The content of the Craft degrees as worked around the world is fairly similar, regardless of which ritual may be used. Every jurisdiction practices the three degrees of Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft and Master Mason. The legend of the third degree, the modes of recognition, and the general teachings of the Order are all constants. It is quite true to say that any Masonic visitor, no matter which jurisdiction he belongs to, will (language excepted) readily relate to and basically understand any Craft ceremony he comes to view in his travels. The content may be in a different order of arrangement from that with which he is familiar and there may be a few strange additions or omissions, but he will understand what is taking place without any difficulty. In short, the wordings of the rituals around the world may be re-ordered and somewhat different, but the overall context and teachings of each degree ceremony are the same.

It is the form of the Craft ceremonies which can, and often does, vary widely. By 'form' is meant the order of parts of the ceremonies, the movements of officers and candidates, variations in the modes of recognition, in receiving visitors, in opening and closing the lodge, in lodge layout and seating arrangements—the list is quite a long one. In order to appreciate these diversities, a detailed study of ritual history is needed, and such a study is well outside the scope of the intentions of this discourse. Nonetheless, it will be useful for the travelling Freemason to have some insight into the major Masonic Craft rituals in current usage, and where he is likely to encounter them. However, it is not the intention here to go into great detail. Aside from the obvious restrictions in this area, of which every Mason will be aware, a thorough detailing is outside the parameters of this guide. The aim here is to place a visitor comfortably inside a 'strange' lodge, not to detail minutely what he will experience once inside.

Rite and Ritual

The terms 'rite' and 'ritual' will be well known to most Freemasons. While there is some Masonic disagreement as to the exact meaning of each term, basically a *rite* is a series of progressive degree ceremonies, and a *ritual* is the wording pertaining to the ceremonies. In common Masonic usage, however, the word 'ritual' is used to collectively describe the three Craft degrees, while 'rite' is used to describe a system of degrees beyond the Craft, or which includes the Craft degrees. Examples of a rite are the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite (a system of 33 degrees), and the Swedish Rite (a system of 11 degrees).

Rites and rituals by location

There are in excess of one hundred different Craft rituals in use in mainstream Masonic jurisdictions, many of which are very similar. In England alone, in excess of fifty are in use, but almost all of these are quite similar in both content and form. In some jurisdictions, the Craft ritual used is standard by Grand Lodge decree, while in others many are permitted and are in use. It is, however, possible to locate Craft rituals geographically to some extent.

England

The most prevalent English ritual is *Emulation*. Others include *Stability*, *Taylor's*, *West End*, *Logic*, *Bristol*, and many more. With the possible exception of the Bristol ritual, the differences in the various English workings often devolve on only a few changed words, and only the well-versed observer will notice the differences between one English ritual and another. England has never laid down any fixed or single Grand-Lodge-approved ritual for use in its lodges. The emergence of English Masonry from operative to speculative would have precluded such a possibility, although English ritual forms were largely standardised, within certain parameters, subsequent to the English Masonic union of 1813. For the purposes of the discussion following, English-form Craft ritual will be used as the basis for comparison. For those unfamiliar with the English-form, the Master Mason will find that most Masonic libraries possess copies of the *Emulation* working, whether unofficial or (since 1969) approved by the *Emulation Lodge of Improvement*, in London.

Scotland

As the student with the inclination to read Scottish Masonic history will readily discover, Scottish Masonry evolved from operative to speculative in different ways, and at a slower pace, than in England. Scottish ritual has retained a few more operative traits than its English counterpart, as well as several features lost to the English when English ritual was standardised after 1813. As with England, there is no set Scottish ritual, and several versions are in use, all of which are reasonably similar to each other, but dissimilar to English versions. In several Scottish rituals, the third degree tends to be somewhat more dramatic than the English, with the Hiram legend being acted out to a much fuller extent.

Ireland

Irish Freemasonry has two distinctive features that set it apart from England and Scotland. Firstly, Irish ritual is officially uniform as laid down by the Grand Lodge of Ireland, and secondly, unlike many other jurisdictions, prior to 1997 Irish ritual has not been permitted to be printed in any form. One might readily consider uniformity of working and lack of a printed ritual to be incompatible, but this problem was overcome by the creation of a body known as the Grand Lodge of Instruction, established by the Grand Lodge to oversee its ritual, to impart instruction, and to encourage and sponsor exemplifications of the Craft degrees. Membership of the Grand Lodge of Instruction is restricted to acknowledged experts in Irish ritual, who have Grand Lodge status. This body authorises Classes of Instruction that are under the control of approved instructors, and not associated with particular lodges. A major variation of ritual is, nonetheless, tacitly permitted to exist in the southern province of Munster, for historical and traditional reasons, and this much resembles the Bristol working. Again, Irish forms differ to some extent from both English and Scottish practices, but the content remains quite similar. Additional details concerning Irish ritual can be found in *volume two* of this work.

British Commonwealth countries

Masonry in all British Commonwealth countries largely derives directly from English, Irish, and Scottish practices. Many of these countries still possess a large number of lodges warranted directly from London, Dublin, and Edinburgh, working either English, Irish, or Scottish rituals. Nonetheless, in a number of Commonwealth countries, indigenous Grand Lodges have been formed. India uses English-form ritual (with adaptations). Tasmanian ritual is virtually pure *Emulation*, while most other Australasian rituals are quite similar to it, yet also exhibit a few Irish and Scottish influences. Canada, while having great British influences in the rituals of most of its Grand Lodges, is not without considerable ritualistic influence from the United States, and geographically this is quite understandable. Many Canadian Grand Lodges permit their constituent lodges to work either an English-form ritual, often known as Canadian work, or an American Webb-form ritual, also known as York Rite. The strength of allegiance to one or other of these forms tends to vary between Canadian jurisdictions.

Europe and Scandinavia

This area of the world is probably the most ritually diverse. From the introduction and dispersion of Freemasonry in Europe, great innovations have taken place in ritual practices. The European, historically, took some delight in varying Craft ritual into several differing forms. Interested Masons can research these occurrences at their leisure, but it is the current situation which must be the subject of outline here. In

addition to British and American rituals used in Europe (and these are largely used only in English-speaking lodges), there are five main indigenous workings which must be discussed briefly, as follows:

1. French Rite: This Masonic system was originally formulated under the Grand Orient of France. It was at its outset predominantly Christian in character until modified to largely omit its religious traits when the Grand Orient 'sank into irregularity' (see under *France* in *volume two*). It consists of the three Craft degrees, plus four 'higher' degrees, giving a total of seven. The Grand Orient originally formed the rite about 1786 (and evidently revised it about 1801) as part of a policy of stabilising its profusion of higher degrees. Several GLNF lodges have in recent years adopted the French Rite Craft degrees, having first purged them of agnostic irregularities. The French Rite Craft ceremonies are of very great beauty, and it has been said that it is really the Rectified Scottish Rite simplified.

2. Ancient and Accepted Rite: This degree system is more commonly referred to simply as the 'Scottish Rite', although it has nothing historically or ritualistically to do with Scotland. There is not much difference in the content of this rite as practiced in Europe, and its content in English-speaking countries. The rite is composed of thirty-three degrees, of which the first three are the Craft degrees. It originated in France and was developed further in America. Not surprisingly, the three Craft degrees of the rite are French-type. Except in a few European and Latin countries, the rite is completely separate from the Craft, and jurisdictions such as those of Britain and America confer their usual Craft degrees and the Mason possessing them may later, if he wishes, petition to join a 'lodge' under an appropriate Supreme Council, to receive the Ancient and Accepted Rite or 'Scottish Rite' degrees (the fourth degree onwards). In many European jurisdictions, most in Latin America and Mexico, and a few lodges in Canada and USA, the Craft degrees worked are, in fact, the actual French-form Scottish Rite Craft degrees. In form, the Scottish Rite Craft degrees practiced are fairly similar between those jurisdictions using them. However, there are somewhat wider variations in use for degrees above the third. The rite as practiced in the British Isles is quite Christian in character, whereas these Christian aspects have been largely removed from European, Latin and American forms.

3. The Rectified Scottish Rite: This rite is the third of the major French-derived degree systems currently in usage. It consists of the three French-form Craft degrees and several higher degrees as an extension. The title of the rite is largely self-explanatory. It appears to have originated about the late 1770s in an effort to purge the higher degrees of the more objectionable features of the Rite of Strict Observance, a German-inspired incursion into European Masonry. Beyond the Craft degrees, the Rectified Scottish Rite is very Christian in character, and its central theme is the legend of the Knights Templar.

It is necessary to expand upon the three French-derived rites by way of comparison in terms of the Craft degrees. The three Craft degrees used in French Rite, the Scottish Rite and the Rectified Scottish Rite are not particularly dissimilar, in the same way as, for example, the various English rituals in current usage are not greatly dissimilar. Of course, the workings of the three Craft degrees in Europe does vary somewhat between jurisdictions, and between rites. The French-type Craft degrees derive from England in the earliest times of speculative Masonry, and maintain many operative-style features no longer found in British workings. Typical of the gamut of European Craft rituals are such things as the use of a 'Chamber of Preparation' for candidates (and ritual forms associated with it which are quite unknown in English-speaking rituals), the 'Chain of Union', the extensive use of lengthy catechetical lectures, and a very dramatic third degree.

4. The Schroeder Ritual: Schroeder was a prominent German Mason of the eighteenth century. Along with many other Masons of his time, he was concerned with the 'excesses and innovations' through which Continental Masonry was passing. He decided to rectify this situation by translating into German the earliest English ritual to which he had access, and adding to it his own philosophical thoughts, together with some French-type practices. Aspects of Schroeder ritual are thus comparable to the French-type Craft rituals. The Schroeder ritual is discussed under the headings of *Germany* and *Austria* in *volume two*. It needs to be added that Schroeder ritual is certainly not the same throughout German-speaking Masonry, having been altered, mostly in minor ways, in different jurisdictions over the years.

5. The Swedish Rite: The fifth main European system to warrant discussion is the Swedish Rite. It is a system of eleven degrees, of which the first three are the Craft degrees. The Swedish Rite system is

explained in some detail under the heading of *Scandinavia* in *volume two*. In content, the three Swedish Rite Craft degrees do vary somewhat more than those of Britain and Europe generally. For example, the third degree legend under the Swedish Rite deals largely with Adoniram, rather than with Hiram Abif.

The dispersion of European ritual

Under the French National Grand Lodge, the Rectified Scottish Rite Craft degrees, the Scottish Rite Craft degrees, the French Rite Craft degrees, and the English Emulation ritual are all worked, with the first two predominating. There are also a small number of French-chartered lodges using American Webb-form rituals.

In German-speaking lodges in Germany, Austria and Switzerland, Schroeder-form ritual is largely used, although one of the German Grand Lodges prescribes the Swedish Rite. All the Scandinavian countries use the Swedish Rite, except that the Grand Lodge of Finland uses a translation of the New York Webb-form ritual.

The Netherlands, Belgium, and French-speaking Swiss lodges largely work in either the Scottish Rite or Rectified Scottish Rite Craft degrees, with the former predominating. Greece and Luxembourg use French Rite-derived Craft ritual. Those English-speaking lodges warranted in Europe tend to work an English ritual, or various American Webb-form rituals. Again, it needs to be stated that, with the exception of the Swedish Rite, the various European Craft rituals are not dissimilar between themselves.

Central and South America

In this area of the world, the Scottish Rite or Rectified Scottish Rite Craft degrees (largely in Spanish or Portuguese) are the most widely worked. The Scottish Rite degrees from four to thirty-three are available in all jurisdictions under various Supreme Councils. German-speaking lodges in South America work the Schroeder ritual, while there still remain a useful number of English-speaking lodges warranted from the three British Constitutions, using the expected rituals. The few English-speaking lodges warranted under indigenous Grand Lodges in Central and South America work what they call the 'York Rite'. In fact, in most common usage in these lodges is English-form ritual, with Emulation being favoured, although in some a Webb-form ritual is used.

North America

Throughout most of the United States, the Webb-form ritual is used. The term 'Webb-form' must be considered broadly as, like English ritual, there exist minor variations in form between the rituals of the American Grand Lodges. A few eastern American jurisdictions, such as Pennsylvania, never 'adopted' the Webb ritual, but use a ritual which could possibly be described as being closer in character to Scottish or Irish forms. The Canadian situation has already been outlined. In Mexico, only the York Grand Lodge of Mexico uses Webb-form ritual. Information on rituals used by Grand Lodges of Prince Hall Affiliation are included under the appropriate Grand Lodge headings. Most are based on Webb forms.

Africa and Asia

Many of the lodges located in these two continents hold warrants from London, Dublin or Edinburgh, and work the expected rituals. There are a growing number of French-speaking lodges in Africa, sponsored initially by the French National Grand Lodge, and now under indigenous Grand Lodges. The Grand Lodge of South Africa works the Dutch (Rectified Scottish Rite-type) ritual (with some adaptations). There also remain a few lodges in Zimbabwe still holding charters from the Netherlands. The Grand Lodges of Japan and Philippines both use a Webb-form ritual.

A final comment

The visitor will now perhaps appreciate that Craft ritual in current usage around the world is not as diverse as he may have imagined. Indeed, in broad terms, it is possible to say that there are only seven Craft ritual forms that he is likely to encounter, namely: the English-form, Scottish-form, French-derived form, Schroeder-form, Irish-form, Webb-form and Swedish-form.

Chapter 6

History and Limitations of Masonic Travel

The habit of Freemasons to travel and to visit other lodges, or even affiliate with them, is one of the oldest and most widely practiced customs of the Craft. In operative times, well before the emergence of the speculative Craft as we now know it, Masons were itinerant workers who were forced to travel to renew their employment as each building project was completed. This fluid nature of the operative craft led to the formation of trade societies, known as lodges, to protect the professional integrity of their occupation, and to enhance the moral and social practices of their members. It is surmised, not without some evidence, that the modes of recognition were originated in the operative period as a means of identifying the genuinely skilled Mason who came to visit a lodge in search of work.

It is therefore reasonable to deduce that the tendency of Masons to visit other lodges is a very old custom indeed. Many of the oldest extant Masonic manuscripts contain charges associated with visiting, and the reception of visitors.

Visiting as a right

As has just been outlined, the right to visit and sit in every regular lodge is one of the oldest Masonic customs. This custom hinged on the theory that all lodges are only divisions of the 'Universal Brotherhood'. Indeed, in some areas of old, visitors could even vote at lodge meetings.

However, the growth and spread of the Craft saw many variations in forms and procedures develop, and the evolution of the Grand Lodge system as we know it today. In turn, this necessitated that the concept of visiting as a right undergo changes. The movement towards qualification of the right to visit appears to have begun in the early eighteenth century. There are records of lodges in this period setting out limitations to visiting, in terms of the number of visits a non-member Mason could make to a lodge in a twelve month period; and limiting the types of meeting a visitor could attend. Certainly, by the end of the eighteenth century, visiting had ceased to be a right, but rather a privilege.

Visiting as a privilege

The situation today is that visiting is a privilege; indeed, one of the greatest privileges of Masonic membership. A Mason has no absolute, prescriptive right to visit a lodge of which he is not a member. However, visiting as a privilege is most definitely encouraged and welcomed in almost every jurisdiction. A Freemason in good standing will always encounter Masonic hospitality and brotherhood in his travels.

The limitations on visiting today

There are four basic limitations on visiting in the Masonic world today. The first two, as listed below with explanations, are common to every regular jurisdiction, while the last two are less prevalent. They are:

1. **Recognition.** The basic rule is that a mainstream Mason may only visit in a jurisdiction recognised by his own; that if he owes allegiance to two Grand Lodges, he is bound by the restrictions of both; and if he encounters a visitor from a jurisdiction not recognised by his own, he must leave. Some jurisdictions vary these requirements, or provide exceptions to each of these aspects. The situation is examined more fully in *chapter two*.
2. **The Master's prerogative.** It is, by custom and often by Grand Lodge statute, the prerogative of the Master of a lodge to refuse to admit any visitor if he is not satisfied that he is a regular Mason of good standing; or he feels that such a proposed visitor will disturb the harmony of his lodge. The former power is only occasionally used as a matter of necessity; the latter very rarely. Nevertheless, the prerogative power of the Master of a lodge is wide. And in some jurisdictions, any *member* present may object to a particular visitor being admitted.
3. **Business meetings.** Under some forms of Masonic practice, business meetings are held separately from meetings held for degree conferment. Where this is the case, visitors are often excluded from the former, but never the latter. Similarly, in some jurisdictions where ordinary lodge business and degree

conferments are held in the space of a single meeting, visitors are sometimes not admitted until after the lodge has completed the business part of its activities.

4. *Visiting by invitation.* In some jurisdictions, notably England, it is usual for visitors to receive an invitation from a lodge member. In other areas, while such a restriction does not exist with respect to ordinary meetings, it does apply to Installation meetings. These practices are not adhered to without reasons, and they will be examined when we come to discuss those jurisdictions concerned.

Chapter 7

The Procedures of Visiting

There are ten steps, or procedures, involved in successful Masonic visiting, most of which are sequential. They move from obtaining the appropriate documentation, to the actual seating of a visitor in a strange lodge. These steps must be followed before a visitor can be admitted into a lodge wherein he is not known, and their whole purpose is to establish the *bona fides* of a true and lawful brother.

Step One: Advise your own Lodge Secretary

The first step is to inform your own lodge secretary of your desire to visit outside your own jurisdiction, and to provide him with details of your travels. He will liaise with your Grand Lodge office to procure all the necessary documents, and obtain advice. Quite possibly, the Grand Representatives of the jurisdictions concerned will be able to help with advice and introductions.

Step Two: The Procurement of Masonic Documentation

To establish himself as a true and lawful brother to the satisfaction of his hosts, the visiting Mason must first produce the appropriate documents which will attest to his past and current membership of the Craft. The following documents should be carried by a Mason seeking admittance into any regular lodge wherein he is not personally known:

A Grand Lodge Certificate, or Diploma: Every Grand Lodge issues this, or similarly named, documentation. It is a credential provided to the Master Mason to prove in writing that he is a regular Mason. It invariably contains the dates appropriate to his admission into the Craft, the signature of his Grand Secretary, the Grand Lodge Seal, and his signature.

A Receipt of Dues: It is not enough for a visiting Mason to produce his Grand Lodge Certificate when seeking admission to a strange lodge. While his Certificate provides proof that the person named on it is a Freemason, it does not prove that he is a current financial member of a lodge. To be 'a Mason in good standing' is the usual Masonic terminology describing a financial member. Some jurisdictions provide their financial members with a receipt of dues as a right, while others provide it only on request.

The Dues Card: The Dues Card is a form of receipt of dues provided by lodges under a number of jurisdictions, notably in North America. This is considered in these jurisdictions as the most important Masonic 'passport'. Indeed, in the United States, lodges have little interest in sighting a Grand Lodge Certificate, but no visitor will enter their Temples without first producing a Dues Card or satisfactory equivalent. In lieu of a Dues Card or other direct form of receipt of dues, a recent lodge summons (notice of meeting), or letter of introduction may suffice.

In addition to the largely compulsory documents detailed above, it is recommended that a visitor also carry and, if necessary, present the following additional documents:

A Letter of Introduction: Many Grand Lodges provide a letter of introduction to intending visitors through their Grand Lodge office. Such letters carry the Grand Secretary's recommendation, and all the Masonic details of its bearer. It can usually be used as a substitute for a 'receipt of dues' if personally carried. Some Grand Secretaries will forward a visitor's 'letter of introduction' direct to the Grand Lodge under which he proposes to visit, thus giving its Grand Secretary warning of the visitor's imminent presence.

A Passport: All foreign travellers carry a passport and, while it is rarely called upon for Masonic purposes, it has the effect of attesting to its bearer's actual identity.

There are other Masonic documents issued by some Grand Lodges. Many provide a Past Master's Certificate to appropriately qualified Masons. Past Masters are advised to carry this document, or similar documentation, especially if they wish to witness an Installation ceremony in full, in those jurisdictions wherein only Installed Masters may witness certain parts of it.

Visitors who are below the rank of Master Mason will not yet have received, nor be entitled to receive, their Grand Lodge Certificates. However, they can usually obtain appropriate documentation from their Grand Secretary's office prior to departure from their own jurisdiction.

It is as well to mention that Masons in this category may not be able to visit in some jurisdictions. English-speaking and Continental Freemasonry, in particular, usually restrict visiting between themselves to

holders of the Master Mason degree. Jurisdictions working a Webb-form ritual have a similar restriction. Even in those jurisdictions where such a Mason may be permitted to visit, limitations often apply. Such a Mason is strongly advised to consult with his own Grand Lodge office prior to departure. It may even be possible for him to receive degrees by courtesy in another jurisdiction. The matter of courtesy degrees is dealt with later in this section.

Step Three: Check for Recognition

There are publications which carry lists or charts showing which Grand Lodges recognise which other Grand Lodges, but the safest procedure is to obtain a list from your own Grand Lodge. At the same time, ascertain your Grand Lodge's policy or instructions regarding what to do if you encounter visitors from an unrecognised jurisdiction (refer also to *chapters two and six*).

Step Four: Visit the Grand Lodge Office First

The recommended form of making contact, and of advising a particular Grand Lodge of your presence in its jurisdiction, is in person. Most Grand Lodges are based in the capital city, or principal city, of a country or area. As such a city usually doubles as the main point of entry into the area, a visit to the local Grand Lodge office is generally quite practicable. On visiting a Grand Lodge office, a visiting Mason can always be assured of full assistance. Indeed, should a visiting Mason be in need of advice or assistance of any nature, not necessarily Masonic, he can always find it amongst his brethren in the Craft, no matter in which country he may find himself.

Step Five: Direct Lodge Visiting

As a second preference, to be used if for some reason a visit to the appropriate Grand Lodge office proves impossible, a visitor may be able to use the information contained in this book to attend a lodge meeting directly. However, due to the restrictions of space it has not been possible to list the details of lodges in every jurisdiction. In addition, it is appreciated that several Grand Lodges have warranted lodges outside their geographical jurisdiction, so that a visit to the appropriate Grand Lodge office may not be possible. This particularly applies to lodges in Africa and Asia under the British Grand Lodges. Meeting details or contact points for most of the lodges in such areas are included in this book.

Step Six: A Letter to a Grand Lodge

As a last alternative to make contact, a Mason proposing to travel Masonically can write a letter to the Grand jurisdiction he is to visit, seeking advice. However, this method should only be used as a last resort, if the appropriate Grand Lodge office cannot be personally visited, or if no details concerning constituent lodges are available. If this approach is to be undertaken, such a letter must be sent via your own Grand Lodge office. Such a letter should be addressed to the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge concerned; and should contain your name and address and full Masonic details, together with your places of residence in its jurisdiction and the dates applicable to your itinerary.

Any such letter must be directed via your own Grand Lodge office for several reasons. Firstly, and most importantly, correspondence directed through a Mason's own Grand Lodge office assures the Grand Lodge being asked for advice that the inquiring brother is indeed a regular Mason deserving of receiving the desired assistance. Secondly, by directing a letter through your own Grand Lodge office, your Grand Secretary can enclose an accompanying letter of support, which in turn will ensure a useful and speedy reply. It needs to be added that if a Mason sends a letter direct to any foreign jurisdiction, he is unlikely to receive a response. Thirdly, it must be appreciated that Grand Lodges get enough mail as it is, and letters from hundreds of inquiring visitors will exacerbate this situation. Clearly then, this whole matter is one of Masonic protocol, and protocol must be followed. Any letter that is to be sent must be arranged well before your planned departure, to ensure a reply is received in time for your visit.

Step Seven: Know your own Ritual

As will be appreciated, it is necessary for visitors to undergo a Masonic examination prior to entering a strange lodge. It is, therefore most desirable for Masonic travellers to be fully conversant with their home ritual and, in particular, with the examination procedures used by lodges under their home Grand Lodge.

This knowledge will be of great assistance to the visitor. While rituals and examination procedures do vary around the world, the modes of recognition and basic ritual content are not dissimilar. Therefore, a

Mason with adequate knowledge of the practices in his own jurisdiction will experience no trouble elsewhere.

Step Eight: Arrive Early

Having completed all the above procedures as appropriate, you are now in a position to visit. It is essential that you arrive at your chosen lodge meeting at least half an hour prior to its commencement. This will enable you to complete the remaining procedures as detailed below. Arriving late may prevent you from visiting.

Step Nine: 'Strict Trial and Due Examination'

Having arrived at the lodge you wish to visit, your first task is to advise its Tyler of your presence, and present to him your Masonic credentials as already detailed. However, it is necessary that in addition to presenting these documents, an unknown Mason seeking to visit a lodge undergo a personal examination. A travelling Mason must be prepared for this eventuality.

In Masonic terminology, this process is called '*Strict Trial and Due Examination*'. Both amount to the same thing. Either means the ascertainment that a stranger is a Freemason, or he is not. The nature of Freemasonry does not allow documentary evidence alone to be the final testament as to whether a man is a Freemason. It is possible, although unlikely, that a person seeking admission may be carrying false or stolen documents. There have been occurrences in the past of unqualified persons, or imposters, seeking admission to lodge meetings.

An imposter may be a person who has never been a Mason, one who is under suspension or expulsion from a lodge or one whose Grand Lodge is not recognised. A Mason who cannot prove that he is in good standing may also be prevented from visiting.

The procedures of Masonic examination and recognition vary throughout the world, and these differences are based on ritual divergences. However, these procedures are all designed to achieve the same ends, and provided a Mason is well acquainted with the practices of the Craft in his own jurisdiction, he should experience little difficulty elsewhere. As we discovered in *chapter five*; while the forms of Masonic rituals around the world vary somewhat, the content is reasonably similar.

In most jurisdictions, Masonic examination is carried out by an examining committee appointed by the Master of the lodge either formally or on an *ad hoc* basis as the need arises. This committee may consist of the Master himself and his two Wardens, two or three Past Masters, or a small number of senior lodge members. In some areas, the examination is carried out by the lodge Tyler.

In most jurisdictions the examination, while thorough, is informally presented. It is usual for the examiners to select features of Masonic knowledge at random, even to the point of requiring information out of sequence from each of the three degrees. This practice tends to uncover the 'Parrot Mason', or fraud with a good memory. Some committees even ask quite broad questions such as: 'Tell us all you know about how you were raised to the degree of a Master Mason', although this is rare. In some jurisdictions, notably Ireland and those of the United States, visitors may be required to repeat the Tyler's Oath. The wording of this Oath is contained under the heading of the *United States*. As a final comment, it can be readily said that provided the man under examination is indeed a true and lawful brother, he will be discovered and acknowledged as such. The reverse, of course, is also true.

Step Ten: Avouchment and Vouching

In Masonic terminology, 'Avouchment' is the lawful information which a Mason provides to the lodge he seeks to visit, and the actual procedures which allow him to sit therein; 'Vouching' technically means a Mason being able to state that he has 'sat in open Lodge' with another. Therefore, if a Mason visits a lodge wherein he knows one or more of its members and has sat in open lodge with them, they will vouch for him, and he will not need to pass a 'Strict Trial and Due Examination'. Where he is unknown, after he has presented his credentials and has been examined, the Examining Committee or one of its members will vouch for him.

The avouchment procedures of lodges vary widely between jurisdictions, but are all designed to evince to the lodge membership that the visitor is Masonically entitled to be present. In some jurisdictions, the visitor will enter after the lodge is opened. In others, he will be present from the beginning, and all visitors will be asked to rise to be vouched for by a member present, prior to the lodge opening. Unknown Masons will have already passed an examination. In Ireland and the United States jurisdictions, this is accompanied by what is

known as 'purging the lodge'. This practice will be detailed in its proper place later in this book. All these procedures pose no problems for the true and lawful brother, and they will certainly be of interest to the Mason who has not experienced them before.

In other jurisdictions, notably those of direct English descent, visitors will be vouched for inside the lodge while the visitor himself remains outside, to be admitted after he has been cleared. Many lodges using this form of vouching often accompany it with a card system, whereupon the visitor (having been properly examined) records his name, lodge and Masonic rank on a card, which is then passed inside the lodge and read out. Upon the name of each visitor being read, the member vouching for the named visitor will stand and signify his assent to the Master.

All these forms of avouchment will be more fully explained later, as they apply to the jurisdictions in which they are used.

Courtesy Degrees

Most mainstream Grand Lodges of the world, upon a written request from a recognised Grand Lodge, will confer 'courtesy degrees' upon a Mason from that jurisdiction. 'Courtesy degrees' is the term used to describe the conferment of degrees upon a Mason from another jurisdiction, in a lodge under a host jurisdiction. In many cases, only the second and third degrees can be conferred, but some jurisdictions, notably in the United States, will confer any or all of the three Craft degrees by courtesy.

A Mason travelling to another country or area, and who has not taken all the three Craft degrees, may wish to have a degree, or degrees, conferred upon him in another jurisdiction. This course of action may well suit a Mason who has been transferred to another locality in the course of his employment. For courtesy work to be carried out, a Mason will need to be in the host jurisdiction for at least several months. A quick tourist visit rarely affords enough time for courtesy work to be effected.

A Mason wishing to receive a degree by courtesy must follow a standard procedure. The steps to be undertaken are as follows:

1. On a brother's behalf, his lodge secretary will write to his Grand Lodge office, informing his Grand Secretary of the brother's desire in the matter. The letter will set out all the relevant details including the country to be visited by the brother, his residence therein, his current Masonic rank, and the dates of his residency.
2. Assuming that:
 - (i) a recognised Grand Lodge exists in the country to be visited by the brother;
 - (ii) this jurisdiction will normally conduct courtesy work;
 - (iii) his Grand Secretary is satisfied that the brother's circumstances and reasons warrant the conferment of a courtesy degree; and
 - (iv) the ritual forms used by the proposed host jurisdiction are somewhat comparable with local practice; then the brother's Grand Secretary will communicate with the Grand Secretary in the jurisdiction concerned, requesting that he act on behalf of the brother.
3. Invariably, such a request will be met, and the host jurisdiction will prevail upon one of its constituent lodges close to the place of temporary residence of the brother, to confer upon him the appropriate degree, or degrees.
4. The brother's Grand Secretary will then be informed of the arrangements made by the hosting jurisdiction, and he will see that this information is passed back to the brother. Generally, the brother will be contacted by the hosting jurisdiction, or hosting lodge, and informed of the final arrangements. This will occur after he has taken up residency within its area.

Courtesy degrees, when conferred, have the full force of the conferment of degrees in the normal way. Upon receiving the Master Mason degree, a brother's home Grand Lodge will issue him his Master Mason's Certificate.

The Limitations of Courtesy Conferments

Several limitations apply to the conferment of courtesy degrees. Firstly, Grand Lodges require that a brother

receive degrees in his own language. Therefore, unless a particular Mason is suitably bilingual, it is most unlikely that an English-speaking jurisdiction would permit one of its members to receive a courtesy degree in a non-English-speaking lodge. For example, the United Grand Lodge of England is unlikely to permit one of its members to receive a degree, by courtesy, in say, Sweden.

Secondly, as we have already mentioned, the type of ritual used by the proposed host jurisdiction is taken into account. Should the ritual concerned be somewhat removed from the brother's home ritual, then courtesy work may not be permitted. However, as a general rule, it can be stated that English-speaking jurisdictions will permit courtesy conferments between themselves.

The fees for the conferment of courtesy degrees, where they occur, are usually collected from the Mason concerned by his home Grand Lodge, but in a minority of cases the candidate will be called upon to pay a fee to the lodge doing the work. If this matter arises, the brother concerned will be informed accordingly by his home Grand Lodge. A brother visiting a lodge for the purposes of receiving a courtesy degree will not, of course, have yet received his Grand Lodge Certificate. His own Grand Lodge will provide him with other appropriate travel documents, and he will be alerted to any Masonic examination procedures that he may encounter.

Useful Masonic Literature

There is a range of Masonic literature available that will be of use to the travelling Freemason. Most Grand Lodges publish a list of lodges in some form. The English, Irish and Scottish Grand Lodges annually produce a *Year Book* containing, amongst other information, the meeting details of all their constituent lodges, including all those located in foreign countries. The *Jahrbuch* (yearbook), published every year by the United Grand Lodges of Germany and the *Annuaire* of the French National Grand Lodge (GLNF) perform similar functions.

Many of the American Grand Lodges also publish a list of lodges, variously called a *Roster*, *Directory*, and a variety of other names. However, some of the smaller US Grand Lodges simply produce their lodge meeting details towards the rear of their annual Grand Lodge *Proceedings*.

A number of jurisdictions regularly publish a magazine or other periodical for general distribution to their members. Most are produced bi-monthly or quarterly. They contain a wealth of information concerning the jurisdictions that publish them, and they will be of interest to the travelling Mason. Most are available on annual subscriptions. Travellers desiring to purchase such a subscription can make inquiries at their own Grand Lodge office, and arrangements will be made with the jurisdiction concerned on the brother's behalf. In addition, most Grand Lodge libraries around the world subscribe to a range of foreign Masonic periodicals, and these are readily available for consultation by the intending visitor.

Chapter 8

The Matter of Affiliation

It is far from uncommon for Freemasons to seek membership in more than one lodge. However, the laws of the various mainstream Grand Lodges are certainly not uniform in this area. When a Mason wishes to affiliate with a second lodge in his own jurisdiction, this is usually referred to as dual membership. When he seeks to join a third or fourth lodge, this is termed plural membership. In some jurisdictions the transfer of membership is permitted within it. The whole question of affiliation presents matters which must be carefully outlined.

The Demit or Clearance Certificate

When a member of a lodge withdraws from membership, Masonic law and custom decrees that he receive a Demit, or Clearance Certificate, subject to certain pre-conditions. *Demit* is the Masonic terminology largely used in North America, while many other areas refer to it as a *clearance certificate*. Both designations mean the same thing, and testify that the holder:

- (a) is a regular 'unaffiliated' Freemason;
- (b) has resigned from the lodge named in the demit;
- (c) is clear of all dues and fees payable to that lodge; and
- (d) has not been suspended or expelled from Freemasonry.

The holder of a demit is thus an unaffiliated Mason, and a member of no regular lodge. In most jurisdictions, demits are issued automatically as a right upon the lawful cessation of membership, while in a few they are only issued on request. By old custom, it is the duty of every Mason to belong to a lodge and contribute to its work and financial support. Consequently, it is the usual rule that where a Mason fails to join a new lodge within twelve months of being demitted, he loses all his Masonic privileges, including the right to visit. However, in some jurisdictions Masonic privileges cease immediately the demit is issued, while in others the unaffiliated Mason retains the privilege to visit a lodge once in any twelve months. In all jurisdictions, it is only by the presentation of a demit, or similar documentary evidence, that an unaffiliated Mason may again seek membership of a lodge.

The unaffiliated Mason

The demitted, or unaffiliated, Freemason is in a position to join another lodge. Nevertheless, his demit alone, while an essential prerequisite, is insufficient for the purpose. No matter which lodge he seeks to join, or where, he first must be accepted as an affiliate by its members. This usually requires a ballot of members and often an inquiry into the person concerned. It is generally simpler rejoining a lodge in one's own original jurisdiction, than in affiliating with a lodge in another. In the latter case, it is usual that the lodge considering such an application will first refer the matter to its Grand Lodge. In some cases, the Grand Secretary will then seek the advice of the Mason's original jurisdiction, prior to approving the affiliation. The actual mechanics of affiliation varies between jurisdictions, but it is universally provided that a Mason affiliating from one Grand Lodge be required to sign or affirm loyalty to his new Grand Lodge and its laws.

Dual and plural membership

The practices of Grand Lodges with regard to dual and plural membership are quite diverse, particularly in America. These practices can be placed in categories:

- *Single Membership Grand Lodges*. This category of Grand Lodge provides that its members can belong to only one lodge within its jurisdiction. In order to join a second lodge, the member must resign from the first. In some jurisdictions, this is made difficult by the imposition of residential requirements, whereupon a Mason must belong to a lodge located in proximity to his residential address. Some American Grand Lodges, and some European Grand bodies, require single membership.

- *Dual Membership Grand Lodges.* These Grand Lodges provide that members may belong to two lodges, but no more. In some, dual membership is restricted to the membership of two lodges within the jurisdiction, but more commonly a dual membership Grand Lodge will permit its members to belong to only one lodge in its own jurisdiction, and one other lodge in some other recognised jurisdiction.
- *Plural Membership Grand Lodges.* These Grand Lodges permit their members to belong to more than two lodges if they wish—in other words, as many as they like. Quite obviously, if a Grand Lodge permits plural membership, it also permits dual membership. However, some jurisdictions do place some restrictions on pluralism. In some, only single or dual membership is permitted within its jurisdiction, while plural membership is allowed outside it.

Of course, before a Mason can achieve dual or plural membership outside his own jurisdiction, both Grand Lodges concerned must permit the relevant practice. An important point to note in membership by affiliation is that each Mason will be bound by the laws of the jurisdiction in which he resides, as well as that of which he was a member. Where a Grand Lodge does not permit plural, or dual, membership, the affiliating Mason will need to resign his original membership in order to effect his new affiliation. Any Mason considering dual or plural membership should seek the advice of his own Grand Lodge prior to any action.

It is possible to group Grand Lodge practices in this matter loosely into geographical areas. In Europe, most jurisdictions do not permit plural membership, but many do allow dualism outside their own obedience. The three 'Home' Grand Lodges, together with those of Australasia, all permit plural membership. In Central and South America dual membership is far more common than plural. In Canada, most favour plural membership, while in the United States all systems are in use. The practice of specific Grand Lodges is listed in the American annual publication, *List of Lodges, Masonic*, to be found in most Masonic libraries.

Transfer of Membership

This practice is rare in the Masonic world. A small number of jurisdictions, notably in the United States, permit members who have moved their residence within the jurisdiction to transfer their membership from one lodge to another without demit. This does not mean that the receiving lodge has no vote in the reception of its new member. This procedure has arisen as the result of an American practice whereby in some jurisdictions individual lodges have Masonic custody of candidates and affiliates located within their immediate vicinity. Therefore, a person seeking to join the Craft in such a jurisdiction is virtually 'zoned' to a certain lodge, or small choice of lodges. It is under such circumstances that transfer of membership has been approved.

Life Membership

There are various forms of life membership systems used in the Masonic world. Some jurisdictions have adopted provisions in their Constitutions to accommodate this practice. In some, the status is granted for appropriately long service to the Craft. A Mason gaining 'life membership' is no longer required to pay any dues, although he is still deemed a 'financial member'. By definition, therefore, a life member has no need of a demit. In some jurisdictions, the term 'honorary member' is substituted, although in these the voting rights of the member are sometimes removed as a result. In the United States and Scotland, life membership is often purchased by the member. This is achieved by him paying a substantial sum in advance. A more accurate description would probably be an advance payment of dues for life. Actually, the term 'life membership' is something of a misnomer. A member's tenure in the Craft can be concluded through suspension or expulsion. In order to affiliate elsewhere, a life or honorary member will usually be given a certificate or card attesting to his status. It should be noted that only a few Grand Lodges use a life membership system, and those that do have found problems associated with it.

Research lodges

Research lodges fall into a special category as far as affiliation is concerned. The vast majority of Grand Lodges that do not permit dual or plural membership exempt research lodges from these restrictions. Many research lodges, in addition to possessing normal members, also have what is often known as corresponding

or associate members. These members are not full members as such, and do not possess voting rights. However, they do pay a fee, which enables them to attend as a member rather than as a visitor, and to receive all the normal correspondence and literature the research lodge may produce. Corresponding membership allows for Masons not resident near the lodge to still be involved in its activities.

Chapter 9

Other Masonic Degrees and Rites

We enter here a difficult area to detail effectively for the travelling Mason. In each recognised jurisdiction the visitor will invariably find a large number of rites and degrees in addition to Craft Freemasonry. In some areas many are indeed viewed from elsewhere as being excessive. However, in attempting to document the area of fraternal relations between Grand Lodges and the 'additional' Masonic Orders of the world, and those between the Orders themselves, we reach a most complex situation, which virtually requires a book of its own to detail effectively. As a result, it is not intended to venture far into this subject in this book.

The major rite 'beyond the Craft' practiced in the Masonic world is the Ancient and Accepted Rite (also called the Scottish Rite, although it has nothing historically or ritualistically to do with Scotland). This rite consist of 33 degrees, of which the first three are the regular Craft degrees. This rite has been briefly looked at already in an earlier chapter, and forms the extent of the discussion that we will undertake concerning it, except as it applies in the United States, Mexico and Latin America generally. The Scottish Rite in these areas will be examined later in this volume.

The two most popular degrees practiced outside the Craft in English-speaking Masonry are the degree of the Holy Royal Arch and of Mark Master Mason. In the British Isles these two degrees are worked either as an extension of the Craft, or are governed by separate Grand Lodges controlling them. In the United States, they are worked as part of the York Rite, a discussion about which will be undertaken later under that heading.

Other degrees and orders worked under varying forms of Masonic government in the Masonic world include the Royal and Select Masters, the Ark Mariners, the Order of the Secret Monitor, the Order of Knights Templar, the Red Cross of Constantine, the Holy Royal Arch Knight Templar Priests, the Allied Masonic Degrees, and several others.

Most Grand Lodges recognise, or simply permit their members to belong to, many other degrees, rites and orders within their jurisdictional area. However, often some of these orders are not in any way countenanced by other jurisdictions. This is certainly an area of 'Mason Beware'. A particular order in any foreign jurisdiction may well have the same name, and the outside look similar to an Order in a Mason's home jurisdiction, but still be irregular from his point of view.

A Mason who is a member of a particular Degree, Rite, or Order beyond the Craft in his home territory, and who wishes to visit such an Order in another part of the world, *MUST* strictly adhere to certain procedures before attempting to do so.

He must:

- Check with the sovereign body of the Order of which he is member to ascertain if it recognises a sister body in the area he proposes to visit.
- Check with his own Grand Lodge office that such a visit will be in order as far as his Craft Grand Lodge is concerned. Generally, if the regular body of which he is a member in his own home area approves, his Craft Grand Secretary will approve also.
- Under no circumstances attempt to visit an Order beyond the Craft in another part of the world unless he has first checked that it is recognised and that it is permissible for him to visit.

GENERAL INFORMATION, volume 2

Introduction

This is the second volume of a two-volume work designed to function—primarily for the Masonic traveller, but also for the studious (or just plain curious) reader—as a guide to the many and varied autonomous groups which comprise universal Craft Freemasonry.

The two volumes are designed to be used together. The first volume contains an introductory 46 pages of well-nigh essential advice and general information, covering topics which include:

- Regularity and recognition
- Forms of Masonic government
- Politics, race and religion
- Rites and rituals
- History and limitations of Masonic travel
- Procedures of visiting.

Shortage of space precludes repetition of most of that advice in this volume.

Both volumes are divided into *Parts* and *Sections*, on a geographical basis, with each *Part* generally relating to a continent, and each *Section* to a portion of that continent. Within these divisions, states and countries are usually listed alphabetically, and under each state or country heading is given information about the lodges and Grand Lodges or other Masonic groups to be found there. It will be appreciated that, because of this layout, the *Table of Contents* at the beginning of each volume is an essential reference tool for both the traveller and the armchair student.

Those who read this work for pleasure, or from a general interest in universal Freemasonry, may well choose to use it conventionally, reading through from the first page of volume 1 to the last page of volume 2. However, those whose interest is in a particular location are advised to adopt the following procedure:

1. Read *Part 1—General information for travelling Masons*, in volume 1;
2. Turn to the *Part* and *Section* containing the relevant state or country, and read the general remarks under those headings;
3. And only then read the entry for the particular territory or Masonic jurisdiction.

This will improve comprehension and, hopefully, avoid misunderstandings. The information supplied includes: a brief history of Freemasonry in each area; details of governing Masonic bodies in the area and (in many instances) how to communicate with them; notes for visitors; and, in some instances, details of lodge meeting times and places.

Every care has been taken to provide accurate information, but it will be appreciated that nothing is permanent: organisations change premises; telephone and facsimile numbers, and Internet addresses, are altered; new lodges and Grand Lodges are born, and old ones die. Equally important, the places a visitor may lawfully visit may also change. Masonic travellers are strongly advised to obtain advice from their own Obedience, about any proposed Masonic visiting, before commencing their journey.

Regularity and recognition

Readers are referred to chapter two of volume 1 for an explanation of the concept of *regularity*, and its use as a criterion for *recognition* between autonomous Masonic bodies. Suffice it to say here that every person or group claiming to be Masonic starts with the premise that he—or she—or they is/are *regular*. The authors are no exception to this. But they have (for the most part) attempted to avoid expressing judgement on the regularity, or irregularity, of others. The reader must be guided by the pronouncements of the body to which he—or she—has promised obedience.

Most autonomous bodies of Masons practicing the Craft or Symbolic degrees (*Blue Masonry*) are termed Grand Lodges or Grand Orients. The distinction is largely in the form of government, and of itself contains no intimation of regularity or irregularity. In this book, a general reference to *Grand Lodges* may be taken to include *Grand Orients*, unless the context indicates otherwise.

Grand Lodges, then, tend to form associations or groups, containing bodies which largely agree on criteria for recognition, and which—for the most part—are happy for their members to intervisit. Many such

associations have a name, and often an acronym, such as Grand Lodges of Prince Hall Affiliation (PHA), Grand Lodges of Prince Hall Origin (PHO), *Confederação de Maçonaria Simbólica do Brasil* (CMSB), and *Confederación Masónica Interamericana*. Some Grand Lodges may happily belong to more than one such association. Some belong to groups without a formal group name. The largest and best known of these is the group which includes the premier Grand Lodge of the world, the United Grand Lodge of England, together with the Grand Lodges of Ireland and Scotland, six Grand Lodges in Australia, ten in Canada, fifty-one (or arguably more) in USA, and many others throughout the world. For convenience, in this book this officially-unnamed group is termed *mainstream*.

The authors are both mainstream Masons. Their first concern is to provide information that will assist Masons with whom they may lawfully sit in lodge, 'their Brothers'. Next, they seek to help those with whom 'their Brothers' may lawfully sit in lodge, 'their Brother's Brothers'. This requires detailed treatment not only of all mainstream Grand Lodges, but also of all Grand Lodges of groups, some of whose members are recognised by some mainstream Grand Lodges. For example, both authors owe allegiance to the mainstream United Grand Lodge of Victoria, which is in amity with the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Connecticut, which in turn recognises all other Grand Lodges of Prince Hall Affiliation. Therefore the 'overseas' lodges of all PHA Grand Lodges are included in this volume, with as much detail as was obtainable at the time of going to press. Also included are details of certain Grand Lodges which the authors consider likely to receive mainstream recognition within the useful lifetime of this book.

There are many other Grand Lodges which do not fit the above categories. These are mentioned in lesser detail, to inform the student and to avoid confusion by the traveller. None of this information is included as encouragement to visit where it is not lawful.

CLIPSAS, AMIL, SIMPA and CATENA

Broadly speaking, Grand Lodges may be divided into two categories:

- (a) Those which restrict membership to men who believe in a (the) Supreme Being, and do not permit the discussion of politics or religion in lodge; and
- (b) Those which vary one or more of such requirements.

Category (a) Grand Lodges generally describe each other as *regular* and category (b) Grand Lodges as *irregular*. Category (b) Grand Lodges, which also consider themselves regular, often describe themselves as *liberal* (accepting women as Masons), or *a-dogmatic* (not requiring a religious belief), with the implication that others are *conservative*, or *dogmatic*. Grand Lodges of all descriptions will often endorse and claim to adhere to the 'Anderson *Constitutions*', placing different interpretations on the same words, or failing either to differentiate between the two editions of that work by the Rev Dr James Anderson or to note the textual variations of editions subsequent to his death.

A substantial number of the Grand Lodges of category (b) are members of CLIPSAS (*Centre de Liaison et d'Information des Puissances maçonnique Signataires de l'Appel de Strasbourg*), an association which was founded in January 1961 on the initiative of the Grand Orient of France and the Grand Orient of Belgium. It works in French, is open to male-only, female-only and mixed-gender Grand Lodges, organises international meetings and has a secretariat in Brussels. In 1998 it numbered 44 Grand Lodges worldwide, with about 90,000 members between them. Of these, the Grand Orients of France and Belgium accounted for some 40,000 members. These two Grand Orients were unhappy with the voting system of 'one Grand Lodge—one vote' (particularly because a majority of member Grand Lodges required a belief in a 'Higher Being') and tried to introduce proportional representation. Having failed the attempt, they both quit CLIPSAS in mid-1998. Most of the other members remained in the association, which continues to be the largest such organisation of category (b) Grand Lodges.

There had been an earlier breakaway, in 1996, which resulted in the formation of AMIL (*Association Maçonnique Intercontinentale et Libérale*), with nine members. When the Grand Orients of France and Belgium quit CLIPSAS in 1998, they organised SIMPA (*Secrétariat International Maçonnique des Puissances Adogmatiques*), another association with similar aims but with limited authority and proportional representation. SIMPA, which requires its members to state that belief in a 'Higher Being' is *not* a requirement for admission to Freemasonry, has 25 members, drawn from AMIL, CLIPSAS and elsewhere.

CATENA (Latin for *chain*, referring to the European Masonic practice of the chain of brotherhood), was formed in 1961 by Dutch, German and Austrian mixed-gender Grand Lodges, but works in English. It is more restrictive in membership than CLIPSAS:

- It accepts only one member Grand Lodge per state or country;
- Member Grand Lodges must abstain from political and religious affairs;
- Although membership is open to male-only, female-only, and mixed-gender Grand Lodges, the single-gender Grand Lodges must be willing accept CATENA *visitors* of either gender to its lodges; and
- There is also a requirement with regard to belief in a 'Supreme Reality', but it is not clear whether this equates precisely with the mainstream requirement of belief in a (the) Supreme Being.

The organisation called CATENA 'confines itself to the study of Freemasonry in general and to its philosophical and esoteric aspects in particular, leaving the member Obediences to operate in their jurisdictions as they think appropriate'. Most of the ten members of CATENA are also members of CLIPSAS.

Visiting

Among most mainstream lodges, visiting is a privilege, not a right. That said, a visiting Mason from another jurisdiction who can establish his *bona fides* may be assured of a warm welcome almost everywhere he goes. The limitations on visiting, and the methods of establishing identity and qualifications, are dealt with in some depth in volume 1. They are mentioned but briefly here.

Generally, a mainstream Mason may only visit in a jurisdiction in amity with his own. Admission may properly be refused if the visitor cannot substantiate that he is a Mason in good standing (has paid his dues) in his own jurisdiction, or if it is considered that his presence would disturb the harmony of the lodge. In some jurisdictions, business meetings are held separately from degree conferments, and in many such cases only the business meeting is on a fixed and advertised date. In many European lodges, particularly those which meet weekly, most meetings feature a lecture or discussion; in such cases, the visitor would need to have a working knowledge of the language used, to gain real benefit from attending. In other jurisdictions, notably England, visiting is usually by invitation of the Master or a member of the lodge.

For all these reasons, it is wise to seek advice well in advance, and taking some (or all) of the following steps will go a long way towards ensuring a satisfactory visit:

- Advise your own lodge secretary of your intentions, so that he may communicate with your Grand Lodge on your behalf;
- Obtain and take with you proof of your rank and current membership;
- Check that your Grand Lodge is in amity with the Grand Lodge(s) you intend to visit;
- Read whatever you can about Freemasonry in the area you intend to visit. In addition to *Freemasonry Universal*, you may be able to obtain from a Masonic library historical or current publications from that jurisdiction;
- On arrival in the state or country, contact the Grand Lodge office before visiting any lodges;
- If unable to contact the Grand Lodge office, information in this book may enable you to contact a lodge in the 'target' area;
- Make sure you know your own ritual (while the 'proving' may be based on a different ritual, a sound knowledge of your own may well overcome any doubts of your *bona fides*);
- Arrive at least 30 minutes early and advise the Tyler, so that you may be 'proved' without inconveniencing your hosts.

In many jurisdictions, a visitor is not expected to pay for any refreshments provided, but it is as well to offer, and also to be prepared to contribute to the charity box or a raffle.

All that having been said, be assured that there is no other organisation in the world where you can walk into a room full of strangers, anywhere on the surface of the globe, and immediately be welcomed and honoured as a friend and a brother. Happy visiting!