

# HARASHIM

חרשים

No. 81: March 2019

ISSN 1328-2735

The quarterly magazine of the  
Australian and New Zealand  
Masonic Research Council.



*Harashim*, Hebrew for *Craftsmen*, is a quarterly newsletter published by the Australian and New Zealand Masonic Research Council, in March, June, September and December each year. It is supplied to Affiliates and Associates electronically in PDF format. It is available worldwide as a PDF as an email attachment, upon application to the Editor at [morsemasonic@gmail.com](mailto:morsemasonic@gmail.com). *Harashim* may be read online at <https://issuu.com/harashimed>

### Copyright and reprinting

Copyright is vested in ANZMRC and the author of any article appearing in *Harashim*.

Affiliates and Associates are encouraged to reprint the entire newsletter (at their own expense) and circulate it to their own members, including their correspondence circles (if any) and to supply copies to public and Masonic libraries within their jurisdictions.

Individual items from any issue may be reprinted by Associates and Affiliates, provided:

- The item is reprinted in full;
- The name of the author and the source of the article are included; and
- A copy of the publication containing the reprint is sent to the editor.

Anyone else wishing to reprint material from *Harashim* must first obtain permission from the copyright holders via the editor.

***Unless otherwise specified, authors submitting original work for publication in Harashim are deemed to grant permission for their work to be published also on the Internet websites of ANZMRC <http://anzmrc.org> and <https://issuu.com/harashimed>***

### Contents

Affiliate and Associate members are encouraged to contribute material for the newsletter, including:

- Their lecture programs for the year;
- Any requests from their members for information on a research topic;
- Research papers of more than local interest that merit wider publication.

The newsletter also includes news, reports from ANZMRC, book reviews, extracts from other publications and a readers' letters column, from time to time.

If the source of an item is not identified, it is by the editor. Opinions expressed are those of the author of the article and should not be attributed to the Council.

Material submitted for publication must be in a digitized form by e-mail, or memory stick addressed to the editor, Neil Wynes Morse, PO Box 6080, Mawson ACT 2607 Australia. Or email to [morsemasonic@gmail.com](mailto:morsemasonic@gmail.com)

Clear illustrations, diagrams and photographic prints suitable for scanning are welcome, and most computer graphic formats are acceptable. Photos of contributors (preferably *not* in regalia) would be useful. ***Contributors who require posted material to be returned should include a stamped, self-addressed envelope.***

### General correspondence

All other correspondence, including about purchase of files and books, should be directed to: The Secretary, ANZMRC. Brendan Kyne, 7 Devon Ave Coburg Vic 3058 or [<lordbiff@hotmail.com>](mailto:lordbiff@hotmail.com)

# ANZMRC DIRECTORY

## ANZMRC People

President	Kerry Nicholls	Hunterville, NZ
Immediate Past President	Neil Morse	Farrer, ACT, Australia
Vice-President	Ian Green	Launceston, Tasmania, Australia
Vice-President	Phil Ivamy	Nelson, NZ
Vice-President	David Slater	Higgins, ACT, Australia
Secretary	Brendan Kyne	Melbourne, Victoria, Australia
Asst. Secretary	Colin Heyward	Waipawa, NZ
Treasurer	Harvey Lovewell	Cairns, Queensland, Australia
Digital Library Co-ordinator	Ed Robinson	Wellington, NZ
Information Officer	Pete Grounds	Melbourne, Victoria, Australia
Conference Convenor 2020	Glenn Summerhayes	Dunedin, NZ
Webmaster	Don Ray	Chisholm, ACT, Australia

## ANZMRC Affiliate (Voting) Members

The Research Lodge of Ruapehu 444 NZ	Palmerston North, NZ
United Masters Lodge 167 NZ	Auckland, NZ
Midland District Lodge of Research 436 NZ	Timaru, NZ
Hawke's Bay Research Lodge 305 NZ	Hawke's Bay, NZ
Top of the South Research Lodge 470 NZ	Nelson, NZ
The Research Lodge of Otago 161 NZ	Dunedin, NZ
Research Lodge of Wellington 194 NZ	Wellington, NZ
Research Lodge of the Taranaki Province 323 NZ	New Plymouth, NZ
Research Lodge of Southland 415 NZ	Invercargill, NZ
The Waikato Lodge of Research 445 NZ	Waikato, NZ
Masters and Past Masters Lodge 130 NZ	Christchurch, NZ
Research Chapter No 93 NZ	Auckland, NZ
Hobart Lodge of Research 62 TC	Tasmania, Australia
Newcastle Masonic Study Circle	NSW, Australia
Discovery Lodge of Research 971 NSW&ACT	NSW, Australia
Victorian Lodge of Research 218 VC	Victoria, Australia
Barron Barnett 146 QC	Queensland, Australia
WHJ Mayers Memorial Lodge of Research	Queensland, Australia
Granville Preceptory No 53 SC	NSW, Australia
Linford Lodge of Research	ACT, Australia
WH Green Memorial Masonic Study Circle,	Queensland, Australia
Western Australian Lodge of Research 277 WA	Western Australia, Australia
Grand Lodge Masonic Learning Group	South Australia, Australia
Middle Chamber Society	South Australia, Australia
The Chisel Lodge 434 VC	Victoria, Australia
Launceston 69 TC	Tasmania, Australia

### ANZMRC Associate (Non-Voting) Members

Groupe de Recherche Alpina	Switzerland
Centro Iberico de Estudios Masonicos,	Spain
South Carolina Masonic Research Society	USA
The Masonic Society,	USA
The Phylaxis Society,	USA
Kellerman Lodge 1027, NSW	NSW, Australia
Dr. R K R Cama Masonic Study Circle	Mumbai, India
Nairobi Lodge of Instruction	Nairobi, Kenya
Lyceum Lodge of R 8682 EC	Jo'burg, South Africa
Mount Faber 1825 SC	Singapore
Lodge of Research 200 [CC] IC	Ireland
Quatuor Coronati Research Lodge-Bayreuth	Germany
Irish Masters Lodge 907 IC (Jamaica)	Jamaica
Circolo di Correspondenza della QC	Italy
Southern California Research Lodge	USA

UPDATE \*\*\* UPDATE \*\*\* UPDATE \*\*\* UPDATE

There has been a change of Secretary at the Research Lodge of Otago No. 161. The 'new' Secretary/Treasurer is WBro. Kyle Parnell who can be contacted at [researchotago161@gmail.com](mailto:researchotago161@gmail.com)

### IN THIS ISSUE:

Legals	1
ANZMRC Directory	2
President's Page	4
Feature Article: <i>Historians and Conspiracy Theories</i>	5
On the Square: ANZMRC Lecture tour 2019	12
Mason, collector and all-round nice chap	14
Gone?, But Not Forgotten: An Update	14
Sneak Peek: A two part upcoming blog	15
<i>We are barking up the wrong tree: The Future of the Craft in Victoria &amp; Australia)</i>	21

## PRESIDENT'S PAGE

Since our last Harashim a lot has happened and thanks are due to many people who have been working quietly away in the background.

Thanks a million to you all and a special thanks to our supporters who make ANZMRC successful.

Many hours have been spent in various tasks to bring to all a number of exciting innovations and events.

Firstly your website is a work in progress and as you may have noticed we are continually adding and updating areas of it with ability to use PayPal for payments in the latter stages of testing before it goes live.

Secondly the 2019 Tour by our visiting lecturer is in the advanced stages of planning and it appears from the interest generated we have a tour that is going to touch on possibly eight countries.

Please support the tour engagements with family and friends because Brother Mike enjoys wider audience participation and will encourage you to express your viewpoint – no matter how controversial.

The tour book 'On the Square – The Reflections of a Masonic Orator' will hopefully be available to you on the website prior to the presentations, however having been afforded the luxury to read it I can worthily recommend it to all – not only Freemasons.

Thirdly the 2020 conference is on track to be an exciting event with many ideas under consideration but could I ask if anyone has any ideas that they feel could be included let us know.

This not only applies to the conference but to ANZMRC generally. We are always open to suggestions for improvement.

This is your council and your input makes it work.

Once again thank you to all for your patience and understanding while we complete our transitional process. Make a point to check the website at least once a week and give us your thoughts.

Kind regards  
Kerry.

*Harashim* March 2019

## *HISTORIANS AND CONSPIRACY THEORIES*

Submitted by Dr Bob James.

### REVIEWING ANDERSON'S 1723 'CONSTITUTIONS' AND SOME OTHER BOOKS ABOUT CONSPIRACY THEORIES INVOLVING 'FREEMASONS.'

The increasing number of books about fake news and conspiracy theories demonstrates there is easy money to be made from un-proven assertions. But the fact that the world's largest corporations are publicly scrapping with governments over control of information indicates that there is an important issue buried here. Perhaps those apparently frivolous books are part of a war for control of 'the New World Order'?

I'm interested in the connections between 'fake news' and real-time history, in particular with regard to three groups which feature prominently in modern conspiracy theories – 'the Jews', 'Catholics' and 'the Freemasons'.

The past is a neglected educational resource and too valuable to be left in the hands of people who only see opportunities for personal gain, be they liberal democracies, dictatorships or entrepreneurs. Historians are in a unique position as potential whistle blowers on false claims. Unfortunately, in too many cases, historians have been among the ranks of partisans when 'the past' has been used as a weapon. Indeed, the idea of objective scholarship is a comparatively recent idea. Distorted and falsified records of events are common in our news broadcasts. Can historians be relied on to provide correctives or are they the means whereby some lies have become accepted history?

Defining one's terms would seem a necessary first step to counter 'misleading' information and to outflank ambiguity but in the present case it is an early warning signal about difficulties ahead. Defining 'a Catholic Pope' or a 'Grand Master of Freemasonry', for example, is very easy; defining a lowly member, 'a Jesuit', is easy – he is/was a member of the Society of Jesus. A definition of 'a Catholic' is less easy since a baptised person can lapse or convert, so a useful definition would be 'a **current** member of the Church'. A definition of a 'Freemason' should be equally straight forward – a **current** member of 'the Masonic Order' – but it has long been considered unnecessary to even attempt a definition. Historians have been roundly criticised for asking a colleague the simple question: 'When you use the word 'Freemason' who or what do you actually mean'?

In the 'Jewish' case, numerous definitions exist. The word has referred to a culture, a genetic pool, a polity, and sometimes a strict dependence on the Torah. The 'Chosen People' is a phrase often associated with people of the Jewish faith, but can 'people' be part of a useful definition?

### PERFECTIBILITY AND MASONIC CONSPIRACIES

The alleged 18<sup>th</sup> century shift to a more rational view of the world – the Enlightenment - occurred just as the youngest of my three groups, 'the Society of Free-Masons', was getting started. Around that time, major conflicts over 'divine revelation' and 'the correct path to salvation' supposedly became more about human rights, freeing natives from primitivism and the benefits of trade, 'the rule of law' and 'modern' education. 'Freemasons' have claimed to be both a major cause and a result of that shift. Initiated brethren have often posed the question, 'what is a Freemason?' but only so they can give the answer that every

'brother' has been 'a truth seeker' or was already a paragon of virtue. They never mention that the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century was also 'the golden age of the charlatans.'<sup>1</sup>

Most if not all struggles are about power, wealth and vanity. The publicly-given reasons alter according to need but interestingly many contain the same dominant idea which applied before 'the shift' – that humans can be measured by some external standard, and can be improved, and indeed, should be perfect. This is very clear in the case of my three groups. In 2009, the then Pro-Grand Master of English Freemasonry, Lord Northampton, wrote of his fellow Masons: '*We are all Brothers on this same journey, a journey leading to self-knowledge, and ultimately perfection.*'<sup>2</sup> And elsewhere in the literature:

*(Perfection) is a term that every Freemason can relate to as part of their understanding. The zeal to achieve perfection is a core value of the masonic practice. Many instances of the word turn up in masonic language...*<sup>3</sup>

Perhaps the best-known 20<sup>th</sup> century Jesuit, Teilhard de Chardin worked on what a contemporary philosopher called a 'profoundly eclectic' vision of perfectibility. In Passmore's words:

*'To an extraordinary degree... Teilhard built into a single system almost all the main forms of perfectibilism... He was a mystic: perfection consists in union with God. He was a Christian: perfection depends on Christ's working in man through evolution. He was a metaphysician: perfection consists in the development to its final form of that consciousness which is present, according to Teilhard, even in elementary electrons. He believed in perfection through science... through social change...'*<sup>4</sup>

Among people of the Jewish faith, the idea of perfection is endlessly debated. Even at its most transcendental, it is bound to geography and to politics and has no clear potential for resolution. God, in Exodus, apparently described 'the Jews' as 'stiff-necked' and said 'he' was perplexed about what to do with them. Viorst, a self-described 'Jewish scholar and journalist', argued in 2002<sup>5</sup> that 'stiff-necked' remained appropriate for citizens of Israel - stubborn, strongly self-opinionated, unwilling to compromise and convinced 'they' had a unique connection to the divine – all of which, he said, has led to reaction and internal division:

*"When [PM Yitzac] Rabin signed the Oslo Accords, religious Jews seemed to lose all interest in bridging their differences with Jewish secularism." (Viorst, pp.214-215). In retrospect, it is clear the anger that produced (his) assassination [in 1995] had been simmering not just since 1967 but since the schism between religious and secular Jews during the Enlightenment...' Further: In (the modern State of) Israel, the issue that basically divides Mizrachi [moderate religious Jews] from Haredin [the ultra-orthodox] is not outward appearance: it is still the age-old messianic question... (Theologically, the Haredi) believe they are still in exile...(their) rabbis who make policy still maintain that without the Messiah, Israel is a Jewish heresy. (p.183)*

The idea of 'our' perfectibility began life as an assertion that humans were unique among animals in that they were made 'in the likeness of God' and were 'in conversation' with 'Him'. A personal choice for doing good here on earth would be rewarded with an after-life in a heavenly paradise. Initially a uniqueness available only to humans 'of royal blood', civilisation's alleged 'progress' led to a variety of interpretations of who was to be saved and by what means. James Billington, well-credentialed US historian, was thinking of individual 'brothers' when he put '*the Masonic quest for perfection*' at the

<sup>1</sup> P Maciejko, *The Mixed Multitude*, U of Penn, 2011, p.219.

<sup>2</sup> Pro-GM Lord Northampton, 'Whither Directing Our Course?', 2009, reprinted in *Harashim*, April, 2018, p.11.

<sup>3</sup> Website <Universal Freemasonry – To the Glory of God>, 11/2017.

<sup>4</sup> J Passmore on Teilhard, quoted by J Brooke, 'Visions of Perfectibility', *Jnl of Evolution and Technology*, 14 (2) August, 2005, p.8.

<sup>5</sup> M Viorst, *What Shall I Do With This People?* Free Press, 2002.

centre of his 1980 study of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century revolutionaries: ‘*Throughout the inventive revolutionary era, new symbols and societies seemed to be searching for **le point parfait**: “the perfect point” within a circle of friends. These were the strangely appropriate names of two leading Masonic lodges that flourished in Paris during the Reign of Terror.*’ Leading participants in the French Revolution narrowed the focus of popular sovereignty – ‘the perfect point’ - from a National Assembly to an executive of twelve, five, three and finally one man, Napoleon Bonaparte.<sup>6</sup>

During Billington’s research, a similarly well-credentialed US scholar, Margaret Jacob, was concluding that, despite being constantly accused of being seditious, the importance of ‘Freemasonry’ was as the incubator of cosmopolitanism and of a new collective sensibility: ‘*(An anonymous French writer in Brussels in 1744 asserted that it was seeking to establish) a universal and democratic republic which would also hold in common all that the earth and its inhabitants are capable of producing.*’ She argued that Continental observers saw sedition in what was only a shift in attitude: ‘*(The) lodges on the Continent were replicas of British lodges (which) brought with them forms of governance and social behaviour developed within the distinctive political culture of that island ... Only in Britain (did men vote) within a constitutional structure and at a national legislative assembly, where voting was by individual and not by estate or locality. ... Only in the lodges men also became legislators and constitution makers...*’<sup>7</sup> A kind of pragmatic perfection, her view of ‘Freemasonry’ was the mythical Whig view of 18<sup>th</sup> century Britain. She assumed ‘Freemasonry’ became globally popular because of its intrinsic features. Other scholars have similarly not bothered to examine the context or to establish a more coherent basis on which to ground their assumption of popularity.

The last decade and a half have seen enormous shifts towards more realistic Masonic history, exposing how little progress had been made previously. Robert Peter, a European scholar, in 2016 introduced five volumes covering the period 1717 to 1813. His diagnosis that ‘British Masonic research’ is yet ‘in its infancy’ acknowledged that the failings he goes on to point to relate to work done after his cut-off date. The previous three centuries and its hundreds of thousands of books, sermons, reviews and ‘re-interpretations’ had, in his view, produced:

- \* ‘Hermetically- sealed Masonic universes’, ‘one-dimensional hagiographies’ and the use by Masonic authors of other Masons as both ‘primary and secondary sources’ (p.xiv)
- \* ‘Many misconceptions about eighteenth-century adoption lodges’ [which allowed female participation] have been ‘frequently repeated in the scholarly literature’;
- \* a failure to integrate ‘the religious history of Freemasonry’ into eighteenth-century scholarship.’ (p.xviii)

He noted that

- \* ‘Many scholarly works still exaggerate the secular aspects of masonic ideology and practice at the expense of its mythic, ritualistic and religious dimensions’;
- \* ‘The lack of statistical data...has hardly changed in the last twenty years with regard... (to) Freemasonry in the British Isles’ (p.xix)
- \* English-language scholarship has been ‘largely Anglo-Centric’; (p.xx); with very little on Scottish, and nothing on Welsh Freemasonry (p.xxxi)
- \* ‘Historians of Freemasonry – many of whom are members of the Order – have paid less attention to the inconsistencies between masonic idealism and practice because their goal was to highlight how successful Freemasons were’. (p.xxiv-v)

<sup>6</sup> J Billington, *The Fire in the Minds of Men*, Basic Books, 1980, p.24.

<sup>7</sup> M Jacob, *Living the Enlightenment*, OUP, 1991, p.21.



\* ‘The watchwords of masonic rhetoric and idealism...were frequently repeated in masonic sermons, lectures and official publications...’

He observed that ‘naturally, masonic practice is much more ambivalent and contradictory...’; (p.xxiv-v) and that in particular:

\* ‘The fourth volume sheds new light on the intolerant attitudes of certain (Grand) lodges towards ‘the Other’, that is, discrimination against people of low social standing and differing political opinions.’ (p.xxv-vi), and

\* ‘Freemasonry in the British Isles was fractured and polarised during the long eighteenth century’ (p.xxvii)

This is quite a list but is still incomplete. In real-time, ‘Masonry’ was never hermetically-sealed off from its context, and the motives for brethren writing as though it was are worth emphasising. ‘Freemasonry’s’ originating document, the ‘Constitution’ of 1723 set the trend. ‘The Society of Free-Masons’ which it announced was shaped by its context. The Constitution was written for its context. Both have claimed that it was not. Subsequent pronouncements issued in its name, and even many in opposition, have adopted that assertion. The context has changed enormously but the approach has persisted – that ‘Freemasonry’ was entitled to claim to be aloof from or immune to its real-time world. As Scottish scholar David Stevenson noted in 2000 the founders of the ‘Society of Free-Masons’ were players in local and in global politics. They were directly involved in life-and-death struggles, including with ‘the Jews’ and the Roman Catholic Church – whose partisan statements, and that of their interpreters need to be seen in the same light.

Neither the Society nor its founding publication have been assessed as needs-based productions for a specific context, with particular intent. Rarely has the document been assessed for its truthfulness, nor have its consequences been adequately examined.

## THE FOUNDING DOCUMENT

I use a capital ‘F’ for ‘Freemasonry’ to indicate that I’m referring to an organisation, originally named the ‘Society of Free-Masons’, for which grammatical rules insist on capitalisation. The founder members chose the capitalised form in 1723 when they endorsed the text of its author, the Reverend James Anderson. Benjamin Franklin’s 1734 reprint of this single work has recently been introduced on-line in the following way: ‘*This is the seminal work of American Masonry, edited and published by one of the founding fathers, and of great importance to the development of colonial society and the formation of the Republic.*’<sup>8</sup> This sentence encapsulates all that has gone wrong with the historiography of this remarkable phenomenon. What was ‘a Society’ has become an infinitely elastic concept, ‘American Masonry’, and Franklin’s personal motivations have been buried under three centuries of subsequent hubris.

The 1723 document did not assert a new system of governance, nor did it have anything useful to say about secrecy, nor did it advocate a more open approach to knowledge. Its only references to secrets are to the geometry used by operative stone-masons from mediaeval times. The book’s title page describes the ‘Society of the Free-Masons’ as ‘that most Ancient and Right Worshipful FRATERNITY’, which is to say that it refers to a specific kind of organised society - a fraternity – not to a faith, or an ideal but specifically to a FRATERNITY.<sup>9</sup> (His emphasis) The text, however, provided the basis for a completely different entity, one which was not a fraternity, nor even an organised society, but an ‘it’ which had been in existence for 5723 years, that is, for the assumed life of ‘the world’. It is not enough now for

<sup>8</sup> On-Line Electronic Version of ‘The Constitutions of Free-Masons’, orig 1734 in Philadelphia, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, date ?.

<sup>9</sup> J Anderson, *Constitutions of the Free-Masons*, orig 1723, re-published many times, incl 1855, New York.

commentators like Stevenson to say that claiming Adam as the Society's ancestor was just the way they thought (or spoke or wrote) back then.<sup>10</sup> There is a lot built on this first, silly assertion:

p.1 *'Adam, our first parent...must have had the Liberal Sciences written on his heart...'*

One 'Liberal Science' in particular:

p.2 *'...we find the principles of it ... have been drawn ... into a convenient Method of Propositions, by observing the LAWS of PROPORTION taken from MECHANISM. ...No doubt, Adam taught his sons GEOMETRY...'*

'It' is then entitled 'the Royal Art' for no apparent reason. As buildings became larger and more solid 'it' became 'masonry', then 'Masonry' in which notion is included all branches of building:

p.8 *'So that the Israelites, at their leaving Egypt, were a whole kingdom of Masons, well instructed, under the conduct of their GRAND MASTER MOSES, who often marshalled them into a regular and general Lodge...'*

pp.25-26 *'The old records of Masons afford large hints of their lodges, from the beginning of the World, in the polite nations, especially in times of peace, and when the Civil Powers, abhorring Tyranny and Slavery, gave due scope to the bright and free genius of their happy subjects; for then always Masons, above all other Artists, were the favourites of the Eminent, and became necessary for their grand undertakings in any sort of Materials, not only in Stone, Brick, Timber, Plaster; but even in Cloth or Skins, or whatever was us'd for Tents, and for the various sorts of Architecture. Nor should it be forgot, that PAINTERS also, and STATUARIES, were always reckoned good Masons, as much as BUILDERS, STONE-CUTTERS, BRICKLAYERS, CARPENTERS, JOINERS, UPHOLDERS or TENT-MAKERS, and a vast many other Craftsmen that could be nam'd, who perform according to GEOMETRY, and the Rules of BUILDING...'*

His assertions about more recent and historically-known personages are no more reliable:

eg p.41 *'...we have much reason to believe that King CHARLES II was an ACCEPTED FREE-MASON, as every one allows he was a great Encourager of the CRAFTSMEN.'* (All emphases in original)

This 1723 document was a political manifesto intended to establish parameters and to attract gentry support. The men involved were all seeking to enhance their connections with members of the very corrupt Hanoverian regime, and thus their status in London's influential communities. For 'the Society' to be received favourably and not suppressed – an important consideration – the text had to meet specific political requirements in an environment where scrutiny of public documents was intense. Its hyperbolic language was deliberate and driven by the same political motivations:

*To proclaim and encourage VIRTUE...has been the endeavour of FREEMASONRY from the earliest periods to the present day.*

*When the wild savage leaped from his den, in all the horror of barbarian ferocity; and men knew no rights but those of the strongest: FREEMASONRY, shackled but not destroyed, exerted itself in filial tenderness, parental regard, an adoration of some deity, and gratitude for benevolent actions...and we plainly perceive that MASONRY has in all ages been the great criterion of civilisation...*

*FREEMASONRY (or VIRTUE, its Christian name) ventured to correct the ferocious manners of men, to tame their savage cruelty, convoke their synod, frame their laws, and with a sort of magic power convert the lawless robber into the peaceful citizen...<sup>11</sup>*

<sup>10</sup> D Stevenson, *James Anderson: Man and Mason*, Heredom, Vol 10 (2002), pp.110-111.

<sup>11</sup> Editorial, 'The origin and Design of Masonry', *Freemasons Magazine*, 1 June, 1793, p.9.

Its ode to the English/British Empire, describing its people as the happiest, best governed and nicest anywhere, is an assertion of what was required of anyone wishing to join those self-describing as already the best and brightest of those people, ie, 'Freemasons':

p.47 '*And now the FREEBORN BRITISH NATIONS, disentangled from foreign and civil Wars, and enjoying the good fruits of Peace and Liberty, having of late much indulg'd their happy Genius for Masonry of every sort, and reviv'd the DROOPING LODGES OF LONDON, this fair METROPOLIS flourisheth, as well as other parts, with several worthy PARTICULAR Lodges, that have a quarterly COMMUNICATION and an annual GRAND ASSEMBLY, wherein the FORMS and USAGES of the most ancient and worshipful Fraternity are widely propagated, and the ROYAL ART duly cultivated, and the CEMENT of the Brotherhood preserv'd...(etc)...*'

This text was for Anderson and his group their definition of 'Freemasonry' and a wish-projection of what 'it' was to be. The group hoped that though '*Masonry of every sort*' might flourish, their 'view' would obscure and de-legitimise any other possible definition. It was perhaps a statement of their current practice, but it was also a weapon in a propaganda campaign. The stipulations of a 'quarterly communication' and an 'annual Grand Assembly' stand out as solid elements within a mass of vagueness. These were to be immediately enforceable. They were subsequently used to differentiate 'true' from 'false' Freemasonry. If they had applied pre-1717, these requirements alone would have disqualified the biblical groupings used to reach that conclusion. The 1723 'Charges' and 'Rules' contained other defining characteristics intended to rule out women, atheists and 'stupid libertines' from membership and were intended to provide authority for the expulsion of non-complying members. These criteria would also have disqualified historical 'Masons' if retrospectively applied.

The strictures on intending members have been taken as self-fulfilling prophecies, as proof that lodges set up by this 'London Grand Lodge', contained only men who exemplified the intended characteristics and abhorred those condemned. By extension, 'Freemasonry' has been projected as an enlightened, rational materialist operation, always progressive and forward-looking, in all situations and times. Such conclusions are, of course, logically untenable, which subsequent real-time history has shown. The on-line editor of the Franklin reprint correctly noted the two faces of the founding document: '*The document suggests that Masonry, in its modern Anglo-American form, was rooted in Old Testament exegesis...and contemporary Protestant ideals of morality, merit and political equality.*' A great deal of rhetorical weight has been placed on the connection between 'the ancient' and 'the modern' but it is a weight which confuses faith with logic and myth with science. A belief in the value of pre-Christian stories as sources of wisdom and moral lessons does not release 'modern' believers from superstition, or support claims that 'Freemasons' are engaged in reason-based learning. 'Freemasonry' cannot be both a product of an 18<sup>th</sup> century, allegedly rational thought and of persons and events from 'the beginning of the world'. The idea that it can be remains unusually persistent. In 2018, Lodge Middle Harbour, Sydney, hosted a talk advertised, against a backdrop of a photo of Stonehenge, thus:

*The Genuine Secrets of Freemasonry Rediscovered*

*Discover Lost Secrets of Freemasonry and the Universal Symbols concealed in Craft ritual. Learn Genuine Secrets of the Ancient Master Masons (that pre-date the establishment of the Grand Lodge by Millenia) and gain a true understanding of the ancient origins of Freemasonry.*

Whatever its claims for universality the 1723 text has been taken up and used in politico-religious wars. Its contradictory format burnt itself into the works of later authors. Whenever this 'history' has come under sceptical attention – Stevenson called it 'absurd' – it was already too late. Repetition had turned the 1723 assertions from promotional propaganda into received wisdom, albeit a wisdom which could be

manipulated. For three centuries 'Freemasonry's' assertion of a '*tradition more ancient than Christianity*' as 'its' source has been regarded by partisans as un-challengeable proof that 'it' was an early expression of 'deism' or 'natural religion' and therefore an enlightened break with a superstitious Christianity, mainly Catholic past. Any 'ancient Jewish' references are ignored or carefully managed.



# ON THE SQUARE

The Reflections of a Masonic Orator



The 2019 ANZMRC tour is taking shape.....

The ANZMRC, or Australian and New Zealand Masonic Research Council is the organisation which links most of the research lodges and chapters throughout Australia and New Zealand. Bro Kerry Nicholls, as President, and Bro Colin Heyward, both in New Zealand, have combined with their colleagues in Australia, Bros Brendan Kyne, Neil Morse and Kent Henderson to organise the biennial tour of the group by a visiting lecturer. In the intervening year a conference is held – last year in Melbourne (2018) and next year in Dunedin (2020). The tour has welcomed a number of top-level Masonic speakers and writers over the years, primarily from the United Kingdom and Europe. This year the guest visiting lecturer will be Bro Dr Mike Kearsley. Mike is PAGDC under UGLE and PDGDC in GLNZ. He is a Prestonian lecturer (2014), a Kellerman lecturer (2017), past Grand Orator for Middlesex, former editor of *The Square* Magazine, a full member of the Quatuor Coronati lodge 2076, a Norman Spencer prize winner and much more. He has presented to Masonic audiences throughout the world, and the UK, and is a member or honorary member of lodges under four constitutions. He is no stranger to New Zealand as he started his Masonry with the Hawera Lodge 34, was an associate of Masters and Past Masters in Christchurch, was a member of the Lodge Avon orchestra and is currently a member of the Mt Maunganui Lodge and an associate of two New Zealand research lodges. He and his wife, Anne, have a home and family in Papamoa, Bay of Plenty, though they have been domiciled in Surrey, England for the last few years. In his career Mike began a teaching career at Hawera High School and then Christ's College, Christchurch. He worked for IBM NZ, Alexander Stenhouse and Marsh McLennan as well as running his own business from offices on the Terrace, Wellington for a number of years. He is also no stranger to Australia and his daughter now lives in Melbourne after surviving the Christchurch earthquake.

Mike's tour will likely run throughout August, September and October 2019 and at this point will include Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, most of Australia and almost all of New Zealand. It will involve perhaps 30 different presentations and many thousands of miles. Each centre is offered one, or more, of 12 different presentations which are also available as separate chapters in a tour book which is sold to defray tour costs. Mike normally presents his lectures on behalf of his chosen charity, DEBRA, the charity for people whose skin doesn't work. They have benefited with donations in excess of \$15,000 a year for the last 6 years – so he has been busy! It is hoped that many presentations will be opened to wives and friends.

The presentations will be interesting to everyone - covering Masonic scandals such as the Roberto Calvi affair and the Morgan Affair, to some of the interesting characters in Freemasonry – Casanova, Cagliostro, John Soane, Aleister Crowley, historical events such as the Union of 1813 and the Masonic involvement in foundation stones, a paper suggesting that King Solomon’s temple never existed – and if it did, it wasn’t where it was supposed to be, and also a paper for the Royal Arch companions which tries to lift some of the confusion experienced with the modern ritual – all with the help of the Wizard of Oz (a different Oz). All the presentations are full PowerPoint, and Mike has a reputation for being both humorous, informative and very entertaining. His motto is ‘I don’t mind if you disagree, but I will be upset if you are bored’.

Mike has another love – music – and is currently principal tuba with the British Airways band. He admits that his friends are not surprised that there is even more hot air to be had from him!

If there is a presentation near you, you don’t want to miss it.....





## BRO MICHAEL WHITE

### MASON, COLLECTOR, BOOKSELLER AND ALL-ROUND NICE CHAP



I believe that there are more than twenty serious masonic collectors in Australasia. Surely all will have come into contact with Bro Michael White, *aka* Great Masonic Books, at some stage. I am saddened to advise that Bro Michael is currently seriously ill and has been admitted to a hospice.

## GONE?, BUT NOT FORGOTTEN . . .

### AN UPDATE

It is obvious that the whereabouts of the Cashmere tracing Boards were a 'masonic secret' for they featured prominently in the reports of the opening of the new Christchurch masonic centre. Here are links to some of the media reports.

<https://www.facebook.com/100007749527829/videos/2232629277005368/>

<https://www.tvnz.co.nz/one-news/new-zealand/exclusive-look-newly-opened-freemasons-lodge-in-christchurch-v1>

<https://www.radionz.co.nz/news/national/380433/new-freemasons-centre-part-of-modernisation-drive>

## A SNEAK PEEK:

With a view to promoting masonic research and discussion, I have included the following upcoming blog post by Bro Karen Kidd. It is in two parts; the first relates to a recent announcement by UGLE and the second gives a background.

---

### PART THE FIRST

Atheism is not contagious.

I promise you, it isn't.

It seems, however, that some brethren in lodges under the United Grand Lodge of England aren't so sure. These whispering brothers have spent the better part of six months worried that maybe - just maybe - they'll soon have to endure the presence of Brothers who were initiated believing but later decided there is no god.

And, to hear these brothers - not me - tell it, if this problem isn't resolved, it will lead to the UGLE becoming just like those so-called "godless," "atheistic" Masonic orders in France.

Human sacrifice, dogs and cats living together, mass hysteria . . . <sup>12</sup>

I wish I was making this up.

For folks who have no idea what I'm talking about, the UGLE is one of many orders upon the planet that require candidates for admission believe in a Supreme Being or Power. A new UGLE policy about gender reassignment issued last summer, in addition to selective reading of official statements issued since, has some brethren in the UGLE convinced that this is the atheists' backdoor into their Lodges. Which, apparently, 1) atheists are eager to find and 2) is a bad thing.

The scuttlebutt began when the UGLE announced its "gender reassignment policy"<sup>13</sup> this past August to line up with the UK's Gender Recognition Act of 2004 and the Equality Act of 2010. The policy says that a Brother who is initiated into a UGLE lodge as a man and who later undergoes gender reassignment and identifies as a woman is allowed to remain.

"A Freemason who after initiation ceases to be a man does not cease to be a Freemason," the UGLE's announcement in the Aug. 1 issue of its magazine, *Freemasonry Today*, rather poetically said.

The UGLE announcement lead to one of the more cringe-worthy headlines in years<sup>14</sup> (The *Guardian* is like that) but one would think it would have just ended there. It didn't.

---

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JmzuRXLzqKk>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.freemasonrytoday.com/ugle-sgc/ugle/ugle-publishes-its-gender-reassignment-policy>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/aug/01/freemasons-to-admit-women-but-only-if-they-first-joined-as-men>



What started as a whisper campaign between brothers and in online chat ultimately surfaced in a letter to the editor in the September edition of *The Square* magazine, written by “A thoughtful Brother ‘M Mason’” (Seriously? Didn’t we get over pseudonymous letters to the editor in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century?). The letter pointed up the “larger problem” of “the decline in the belief in God” and that the gender reassignment policy suggests “those who change their minds after becoming a member but no longer believe should be quite safe.”

“Simply apply the rules for gender reassigned men and then the belief-reassigned brothers can all ‘come out’ as being no believers and without a VSL and happily be members,” the anonymous letter said. “If an Obligation is required then they can simply affirm in front of all present. For UGLE to do otherwise to those who are belief-reassigned masons would seem to me also to be discrimination.”

It seems having “belief-reassigned” Brothers around is an issue for this “thoughtful Brother.”

The UGLE decided it was necessary to respond to this pseudonymous letter, which UGLE Grand Secretary David Staples did in his own letter to the editor in the December edition of *The Square*. Staples wrote that the UGLE got legal advice for “this difficult area regarding gender reassignment,” that lay members weren’t consulted “because complying with the law is mandatory” but that “we fully support the right of Masons to hold diverse views, provided that they ensure their actions are courteous and lawful.”

Staples didn’t directly mention the fears of “thoughtful Brother,” and others like him, about a bloom of belief-reassigned members in their lodges but what he did say about complying with the law being “mandatory” alarmed more than a few.

The same month that Staples’ letter was published in *The Square*, *Freemasonry Today* published a Q&A by UGLE Head of Legal Services Donald Taylor about the order’s gender reassignment policy<sup>15</sup>. Taylor, like Staples, didn’t address the question about belief reassignment - neither seemed at all eager to address that - but Taylor did include this little chestnut:

“The law in this area is liable to change, and policy and guidance may be amended from time to time.”

Which he clearly intended to be in reference to gender reassignment but the whispering Brothers latched onto it and repurposed it as a reference to the belief-reassignment policy that they feel must be in the works. The bottom line of these assumptions appears to be that having a belief-reassigned Brother in Lodge is worse than having a female Brother in lodge.

Mercy!

Just for full disclosure, the order to which I belong requires applicants evince belief in a supreme power before they are admitted. I asked, there’s no policy about what happens if/when/ever a Brother stops believing in a supreme power but there probably would be a conversation. Rules are not made until they are broken and, anyway, my observation is that Brothers who belief-reassign (the editors love it when I invent verbs) either keep quiet about it or as quietly leave. It’s a situation that seems to take care of itself.

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.freemasonrytoday.com/ugle-sgc/ugle/donald-taylor-explains-why-ugle-developed-a-gender-reassignment-policy>

If you haven't noticed by now, I don't feel this is a real issue. I tend to equate belief-reassignment in Freemasonry, even in the "dogmatic" orders that require belief in a Supreme Being or Power, to suddenly losing an arm or leg. Many orders - though not all - won't accept an applicant in a wheelchair, otherwise crippled or even just missing a finger joint because that applicant would not be up to the rigors of the ritual.

However, I have personal experience with what happens when a Brother admitted hale and strong at their initiation becomes less so sometime after. I'm not so nimble as I was when I was entered more than a decade ago but I know that I won't be kicked out, even if I become even more infirm. It's how I was admitted that matters, not what tricks life plays me.

It seems to me that belief-reassignment could be treated the same way, that a Brother initiated with belief in a Supreme Being or Power but who later comes to believe otherwise could be allowed to remain. So why is this an issue? Really?

That answer - the real one - is a subliminal thing that has nothing to do with words the whispering brethren actually utter. As one Brother recently and succinctly put it in one online forum: "For all those brothers in the throes of this debate, I really wish you would stop pretending this is about faith and protecting - or not - the requirement of belief in a supreme being or power. Because it isn't about that at all."

He's right.

What it's really about is Republican - classically defined, not the party-type thing here in the U.S. - politics and how to keep it quarantined in places that have no monarch; specifically across the channel in France.

And even that isn't what people think it is. In my next blog, I'll try to provide some historical context of what this debate really is about.<sup>16</sup>

Meanwhile, just keep chatting among yourselves.

.....  
PART THE SECOND

The story usually is retold like this: Protestant minister Frédéric Desmons in 1877 "strenuously urged" the Grande Orient de France remove from its constitution and its rituals all reference to the Great Architect of the Universe (G.A.O.T.U.). The GOdF approved the idea and it was done. The United Grand Lodge of England, in a valiant effort to defend faith and the landmarks of Freemasonry, withdrew relations from the GOdF, as did almost the rest of the Masonic world.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Consider also: <http://freemasonsfordummies.blogspot.com/2018/08/england-issues-transgender-policy.html>

<sup>17</sup> <https://books.google.com/books?id=Xj4wAQAAMAAJ&pg=PA167&lpg=PA167&dq=UGLE+Grand+Orient+of+France+Fr%C3%A9d%C3%A9ric+Desmons&source=bl&ots=FCmjmSbkjB&sig=ACfU3U0MyZ4uYX7OENvzdcm6x0E4VhxprA&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwi4xKmwnN3gAhUIrVQKHUr3C944ChDoATAHegQIAxAB#v=onepage&q=UGLE%20Grand%20Orient%20of%20France%20Fr%C3%A9d%C3%A9ric%20Desmons&f=false>

The above story is why members of the dogmatic orders, those that require belief in a Supreme Being or Power, too often refer to the GOdF and other adogmatic orders as “godless” and “atheistic.”

Those insults have stuck.

Trouble is the story isn't true, not even on its face. And yet it is retold even by those who should know better and by those who may know the truth but who want to maintain the result of the story; which I'll just start calling “the lie.” The point of the lie is to justify continued quarantine of Republican sentiments inside France and to keep other belief-minded Freemasons, particularly those in the United States, on board.

And, nope, I'm not suggesting a tin-foil-lined conspiracy theory. Better Masonic historians than me have known the truth for generations. However, the rank and file in Freemasonry, sad fact be told, pay little attention to Masonic historians and the front-office folks very often would rather the lie be maintained.

That said, I can cram the truth into a single blog only by oversimplifying what really did happen. So, in an effort to head off the frenzy of mad keying, I'll admit up that I am well aware of what I'm leaving out<sup>18</sup>. What I'm leaving in will be, I hope, inspiration enough for folks who want to know more to go in search it.

The dates, names and other details in the lie are accurate, in keeping with the strategy of passing off lies by wrapping them in a few truths. Lodges of the GOdF did meet in a General Assembly<sup>19</sup> in September 1877 during which a motion, No. IX, was made by a Lodge (not Desmons, but he's coming soon) to replace certain words from the order's constitution. The motion was to remove the phrase “Its principles are the existence of God, the immortality of the soul and human solidarity” and replace it with “Its principles are absolute liberty of conscience and human solidarity.”

A majority at the assembly voted in favor of the change and Desmons (there he is) wrote up the report and read it aloud. That was about all Desmons had to do with the motion, which did not - not even one little bit - advocate the suppression or removal of the G.A.O.T.U. from French Masonic Ritual or the order's constitution. As WBro. Alain Bernheim noted in 2011<sup>20</sup>:

“Whoever wrote that Desmons favored the suppression of the G.A.O.T.U. likely never read what he said. The G.A.O.T.U. was not mentioned once in his report which concluded with the words: ‘Considering that Freemasonry is not a religion, that consequently it does not have to assert doctrines or dogmas in its Constitution, [the General Assembly] approves motion No. IX’.”

There's a considerable amount of backstory I could get into and any number of relevant rabbit holes I could run down but, again, this is a blog not a book. Instead, I'll point out that the Third Republic was a

---

<sup>18</sup> For the chorus out there that wants to make this a so-called “Landmark” - or even “First Landmark” issue . . . it is no such thing. That could be its own blog.

<sup>19</sup> The correct word is “Convent.” In English, think “convention.”

<sup>20</sup> “Etudes Maconniques - Masonic Papers” in “My Approach to Masonic History”, an address delivered May 26, 2011 in Sheffield before members of the Manchester Association for Masonic Research. The address is available online here: [http://www.freemasons-freemasonry.com/bernheim27.html#\\_ednref39](http://www.freemasons-freemasonry.com/bernheim27.html#_ednref39)

thing in 1877<sup>21</sup>, bringing with it many ideas, including freedom of conscience and “laïcité.”<sup>22</sup> The latter often is referred to as secularism as a way of life, rather than one’s life being predicated upon one’s faith, or lack thereof.

The point wasn’t to suppress faith but to recognize it as a personal matter that should have no bearing upon a person’s livelihood, position in life, qualification to become a member of a fraternal order or anything else. The motion of 1877 was to make faith a “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy within the GOdF by removing belief in a Supreme Being or Power as a membership requirement.

And. That. Was. All.

Meanwhile, across the channel in the United Kingdom, what had been for decades an overwhelming anxiety to keep Republican ideas - in the United States, France, where ever else they cropped up - in check got kicked up a few dozen notches with the rise of the Third Republic. English Freemasons in particular self-recruited into the crusade to keep French ideas in France and, with Third Republic ideas entrenched in Freemasonry, brethren in the U.K. took up the additional challenge.

One little bit of back story here: In 1875, two years before the GOdF General Assembly motion, the UGLE entered into fraternal relations with the Grand Orient of Belgium, despite the GOdB having actually removed “To the glory of T.G.A.O.T.U.” from its statutes. The UGLE didn’t become bothered about that until it decided to make it an issue and severed relations with the Belgian order in 1921.

To be clear, tensions between British - particularly English - and French Freemasons are rooted in the French Revolution and decades of instability in France. French Masonic refugees in the U.K. often didn’t care much for how cosy the UGLE was - and is - with the Monarchy, the aristocracy and the Anglican Church while English Freemasons didn’t care for what they saw as “mysticism” among French Freemasons.<sup>23</sup>

In March of 1878, the UGLE had its own con-fab and adopted a resolution that included this run-on sentence:

“That the Grand Lodge, whilst always anxious to receive in the most fraternal spirit the Brethren of any Foreign Grand Lodge whose proceedings are conducted according to the Ancient Landmarks of the Order, of which a belief in T.G.A.O.T.U. is the first and most important, cannot recognise as ‘true and genuine’ Brethren who have been initiated in Lodges which either deny or ignore that belief.”<sup>24</sup>

Leaving aside the canard about belief in a Supreme Being or Power being a landmark - hey, I can blog again - the rest of the UGLE resolution seems to entirely misunderstand the 1877 French motion. Except

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/6A733D1171E40763635E10C18FB102F5/S0020859000001759a.pdf/the-official-social-philosophy-of-the-french-third-republic-leon-bourgeois-and-solidarism.pdf>

<sup>22</sup> <http://fordham.universitypressscholarship.com/view/10.5422/fso/9780823226443.001.0001/upso-9780823226443-chapter-25>

<sup>23</sup> See Andrew Prescott's "A Body without a Soul? The Philosophical Outlook of British Freemasonry 1700–2000," a paper Prescott gave during conferences for Free University of Brussels, the Cornerstone Society and the Canonbury Masonic Research Centre beginning in 2003. A version of this paper is available online here:

<http://www.freemasons-freemasonry.com/prescott13.html>

<sup>24</sup> See Robert Freke Gould's "The History of Freemasonry" (J. Beacham, 1886) Volume III, page 26

there was no misunderstanding, not really. This was the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, not the 14<sup>th</sup>. The UGLE front office knew then, just as they know now, what the 1877 motion was about. The reasons for this “misunderstanding,” and the subsequent promulgation of the lie, are deeper and far more complex than the UGLE resolution would suggest.

So what happened?

In a nutshell the UGLE, anxious to keep French ideas and politics - especially the antimonarchical<sup>25</sup> and anticlerical bits - confined, was as anxious to get other Grand Lodges in the world on board. Going after French Republicanism would not convinced many of those Grand Lodges, especially those in the United States where Republican politics - classically defined, not the political party - are much appreciated.

Framing the 1877 motion as an attack on faith would.

And so it went. The rest of the Masonic world largely bought into the lie and the great schism happened. It persists to this day.

Yup, the above is an over simplification. Those who want to continue to believe the lie won't care and those who want to learn more can go elsewhere and learn it from better folks than me. However, I will remind everyone of this: knowledge brings with it responsibility. You might have believed the lie before but now you know better.

Don't blame me, I'm just the messenger.

And I advocate nothing. I'm not saying the UGLE and the GOdF should make nice or anything thing like that. Their official relations are no business of mine, they can do whatever they want.

I would, however, recommend that individual brethren in the dogmatic and adogmatic orders have more respect for each other and recognize the right of all the orders to exist. Choice, above all else, should be respected. Candidates who believe in a Supreme Being or Power have lodges they can enter and candidates who don't can find lodges that will accept them. It's a system we know can work largely because it does.

And Humanity is in greater need of perfection than God is in need of glory. There is plenty of room for lodges that do one, the other or both.

Y'all be cool.

.....

---

<sup>25</sup> Yes, I hear you over there in Ireland but I really would like to bring this home in less than 10,000 words.

# WE ARE BARKING UP THE WRONG TREE

## The Future of the Craft in Victoria (and Australia)

- Kent Henderson\*\*

To begin, one needs to set out what Freemasonry is about, and to do that one needs to look at the context in which organised Freemasonry was created – some 300 or more years ago. If we accept that modern Freemasonry, as we largely know it, was an evolution of the old Operative Stonemason lodges (and there are several alternate theories), then the context of the time is explicable. Stonemason's lodges (*guilds*, if you like) had two functions. One was to train members, starting as apprentices – eventually becoming master masons – in the skills of the trade. The second was to teach morality and ethics. The context here is that 300 plus years ago society as it then existed, outside the gentry and clergy, was largely illiterate. There was no schooling available to the masses – the only education available was, effectively, through a trade organisation.

The rudimentary ceremonial of Freemasonry, which has come down to us (and 'developed' over the years) was originally largely practical, but progressively became more educational and to some extent, esoteric. That is what it was designed to be. So when we return to considering what Freemasonry is about, as it was originally promulgated, a large number of what I consider unfounded 'definitions' can be dismissed. Freemasonry was designed to be a moral and ethical education society. Its primary function was to teach, as I suggest it still is.

One could reasonably argue that in today's very secular society, where few people have even read a *Volume of the Sacred Law*, the ancient function of Freemasonry is as relevant as it has ever been. Certainly, in my view, there are more a few men, and younger men too, looking for something beyond the materialistic society into which they have been born. Freemasonry can fulfil that need – provided it can overcome the various issues which I shall discuss below – and that is far from certain.

Modern English-speaking Freemasonry (shall we say over the last 150 years) has progressively moved away from its original function as primarily an educational institution. English-speaking Freemasonry has largely evolved itself into two functions, namely the learning and presenting of ceremonial by rote, and the raising and dispersing of charitable funds. Both these functions, although not without virtue in themselves, have not served English-speaking Freemasonry well, I contend.

The 'proof' if you will, is in the massive progressive decline in membership in English-speaking Freemasonry over the last, say, forty years. At its peak in the late 1960s there were about 120,000 Freemasons in Victoria alone; today there are 8,300 – and the decline continues. It is estimated that, given the old-age demographics of its current membership, Freemasonry will cease to exist within 10 years. There are undoubtedly some external reasons for this numerical decline – certainly *Service Clubs* such as Rotary and Lions have also seen long-term falls in membership. Nonetheless, English-speaking Freemasonry has been its own worst enemy in many ways. I have written several papers over the years examining this problem/phenomenon, beginning with my 1994 Kellerman Lecture: *Back to the Future – A Prescription for Masonic Renewal*.

In that paper I noted that, while English-speaking Freemasonry was diminishing in membership, the same was not occurring in European Freemasonry, where the Craft was more *exclusive* and primarily focused on Masonic education. One of the key features of European Freemasonry is that all ritual is read – predominately from manuscripts on the pedestals of the WM, SW and JW, and that Masonic education is an ongoing priority. No rote learning. This has many obvious advantages, and means that new members can be immediately involved in ceremonial. In European Masonry, the three Craft degrees are seen as the beginning of one's journey. Indeed, in some European lodges each of the three degrees is worked once per year only... In English-speaking Freemasonry, the three degrees are seen as the 'conclusion' – to be constantly re-worked – the *Masonic Waltz*: 1,2,3 – 1,2,3. Where has that got us?

In the now 25 years since my 1994 paper, English-speaking Freemasonry has continued its inexorable numeric decline, whereas European Masonry over the same period has seen modest growth (by choice) of 2-3% per year. Clearly, if gaining and retaining membership is your most important objective, then paying attention to European Masonry is obviously a very good idea, particularly in view of the fact that every effort (and there have been a great many) by various English-speaking jurisdictions has demonstrably failed to stem an unrelenting downward membership slide.

A big feature of European Masonry, and its greatest key to success, is one word –involvement. 20 members in total is considered a sizable lodge in Europe; but at every meeting there will be 19 present and one apology for unavoidable absence. How so? Because every member is involved; he has an office or a job to do. Some years ago, when visiting a Lodge in London, I sat at the Festive Board with a brother from Norway. Naturally, I asked him how his lodge in Oslo was going. "Very well", he said. I then asked him if his lodge had much in the way of resignations. "Ahh", he said..."Yes, we did have a resignation once, it was back in 1933..."

Let us look at involvement here. We may well have a lodge of, say, 50 members, but only, maybe, 20 turn up to meetings. The rest – uninvolved, and all resignations waiting to happen. Why should they turn up? They have seen the *Masonic Waltz* more than a few times before. I know more-than-a-few Past Masters who will only attend IF they have a job, or a charge, to do. And, of course, young Masons, with no involvement, will only sit in pews for a short time before they disappear! I know that some lodges do try to involve a young Master Mason by giving him a charge to learn, obviously expecting he has the time to learn it! Maybe, but most probably not.

It needs to be added that the oft-quoted mantra that there be no 'innovation in the body of Masonry' is a complete furphy. Such has happened constantly, in every jurisdiction, over the years. The examples are legion. Way back in 1906 the then Grand Master of Victoria, Dr Walter Balls-Headley, gratuitously decided to change the angle of the Second Degree hailing sign (quite erroneously if you know the sign of a Craft Installed Master, or a Mark Master Mason...). In the *Final Charge* in the First Degree, another Grand Master decided to change the phrase *the sceptre for the trowel* to the *sceptre for the gavel* – and so on.

The Craft ritual, or rituals, in use does not really matter, as such. Of course, there are significant differences in FORM, but not all that much in essential CONTENT, across the Masonic world. The point is this. While the ritual used in Uruguay, or Russia, or Germany, or Scotland, or Victoria may be 'different' – a Master Mason still has learnt the same system of morality. He is still a true Master Mason.

That is why we recognise the Grand Lodges of Uruguay, Russia, Germany, Scotland, and so on! In Victoria, given our long-standing obsession with uniformity of ritual, of slavishness to *Form*, and to rote learning, we are now in severe danger of Masonic extinction. **We must change, and quickly.** I shall return to this shortly...

Now, based on my 1994 paper, together with a few like-minded Freemasons, we formed two new lodges – Lodge Epicurean No 906 (in Geelong) and Lodge Amalthea No 914 (in Melbourne), and later Lodge Cornucopia No 927 (at Warragul). All three still exist. The focus of these new lodges, which I called *European Concept Lodges*, was what I described as the ‘Three Great Pillars’, namely quality ceremonial, quality dining, and quality Masonic education. Certainly, the last two (with one or two exceptions) were very largely absent from lodges in Victoria at that time, or indeed, Australia generally – not to mention in places like the USA and Canada, which had, and continue to have, a similarly severe ongoing membership decrease.

Lodge Epicurean and Lodge Amalthea, in particular, changed the focus away from just ceremonial, particularly with Masonic education, by encouraging new candidates to undergo an extensive verbal and written course for each of the three degrees prior to progressing. There is no doubt that, in their initial years at least, this change of Masonic emphasis was relatively successful, in terms of membership retention. But I can now state that, over the longer term, it was a failure. The reason – the boredom with strict uniformity of ritual, from which even we could not escape. The complete lack of flexibility this dictates strenuously works against the involvement of newer members.

In most of English-speaking Freemasonry (England and Scotland excepted) strict uniformity of ritual had long since been the norm and, in my view, effectively the key reason for membership decline. Interestingly, perhaps to some extent as a result of the perceived initial success of the Epicurean and Amalthea Masonic Education Programs, and that ‘Masonic Education’ had become *buzz words* in Australian Freemasonry generally as the *holy grail* to thwart membership decline, Grand Lodges started to become converts.

So, in Victoria, the ‘answer’ to Masonic education – the perceived panacea to new members taking their three degrees and promptly disappearing into the ether – was to institutionalise Masonic Education, by forming the *Masonic Advancement Program* (MAP) and enshrining it in its Masonic *Constitution* – let us have more absolute, enforced uniformity! This program, which I begrudgingly supported when it was introduced as being ‘better than nothing’, involved a candidate being required to attend an education session after taking each degree, whereupon a ‘walk through’ of the ceremony he has recently undertaken was explained. Attendance is enforced, as a candidate cannot gain his next degree until he has attended the previous MAP. While I did have, and retain, very severe doubts about the compulsory nature of the program, I have long believed that for a brother to continue sitting in a lodge room, it does greatly help if he understands why he is sitting there. But that will not stop him resigning. While I still believe Masonic knowledge helps, there are a number of other crucial factors in play as well. Certainly, the quality of MAP presentations I have attended have been very variable, from excellent to (mostly...) not very good.

In short, the Victorian MAP program has been in place since 2010. So, one would imagine that over the nine years that have elapsed since then we would be seeing, at least, a slowdown in membership decline, or at least an increase in the retention of new members? Sadly, neither. Another abject failure, if judged by



the need of membership retention. Masonically-knowledgeable ex-Master Masons are about as useful as any other ex-Master Mason.

Another great failure of the past in Victoria was the so-called *Lodge Mentor Program* of a few years back, seen at the time as yet another *panacea*. Lodges were required to appoint a mentor, to ‘hold the hand’ of young Masons. It never worked, as it was still up against the corrosive power of uniformity of ritual – nothing could be allowed to stop the *Masonic Waltz*.

Before looking further at ‘failures’, and possible solutions, if you will, it is interesting to briefly examine the one English-speaking jurisdiction where a decline in membership has been less dramatic than elsewhere – England. While English Freemasonry has also seen a significant decline in membership over the last forty years, proportionately it has been considerably less than in the likes of Australia, Canada and America. Why? There are probably several reasons for this.

Firstly, English lodges have very largely maintained a high standard of dining after meetings over time – where in other Jurisdictions the ‘Festive Board’ in the average lodge has largely declined from the banquet of pre-WWII years to the ‘cold sausages rolls and limp sandwiches’ often seen today. Anecdotally, ‘dining lodges’ seem to be ‘doing better’ in Victoria than those that are not; but they remain a small minority.

Secondly, English lodges largely meet less frequently – three or four (occasionally five) times per year is the norm, as opposed, for example, to the average Victorian lodge which meets monthly (and have two or three rehearsal nights per month, too! Sigh...) – bearing in mind that in today’s society men, particularly young men, are often ‘time poor’.

Thirdly, English *Lodges of Instruction* (which are much more common than in Victoria) tend to concentrate on substance rather than form. This is largely a feature of the fact that there is no prescribed English Ritual, and that (at best count) more than 50 are in use in England and Wales (and more than a few in Scotland). Conversely, where there is one prescribed ritual, as in Victoria, it is the *form* that is considered the most important. This slavishness to conformity is in my view, in itself, the greatest contributing factor to membership decline.

Fourthly, English Masonry has, to a huge extent, turned itself into primarily a charitable organisation, whose first and foremost aim is to raise as much money as possible to donate (which appropriate fanfare...) to a wide variety of charities. This it has achieved in spectacular fashion, raising (and dispersing) literally millions of pounds per year. One can expect, when attending any lodge in England of any description, whether as a member or visitor, to be given an ‘envelope’ to receive your expected donation. Certainly, the regular ‘publicity’ received as a result of ongoing, and large, charitable donations has not done the reputation of the English Craft any harm. Of course, charity is a great teaching of the First Degree in Freemasonry, but that does not, and was never intended, to make Freemasonry a charitable organisation, *per se*. It was designed to educate Freemasons to be charitable (as well as in many other moral and ethical ideals), not to be the overriding purpose of the Institution! The effect of turning English Masonry into a “Rotary” or “Lions” will not, in my view, be in its longer term interest – retrofitting an essentially educational institution as primarily a charity. It am not suggesting that lodges, and

Freemasons, should stop their charitable activities; I merely state the view that it should not be their primary function!

Yet, despite all these (arguably positive) factors I have just enumerated, the membership of English Freemasonry has nonetheless consistently declined, albeit not as fast as, proportionately, the rest of the English-speaking world. I will hasten to add that, very largely, English Masonry has no focus at all on Masonic education.

So, what then are the primary reasons for the unmitigated decline of membership in Victoria, and like English-speaking Jurisdictions? Quality dining, as suggested by the English experience (and in Lodge Epicurean and Lodge Amalthea) helps, most probably – but it is used in relatively few lodges here. Masonic Education? Maybe. It certainly will not do any harm (although compulsion and the lack of quality presentations by many MAP presenters are undoubtedly not positives). Neither of these two beasts, where implemented, have had any demonstrable effect on declining numbers and membership retention.

In my view, the real culprit is uniformity of ritual, enforced by what I would term as a *Command Economy*, not greatly dissimilar to the ex-Soviet Union, frankly. This is THE common denominator amongst all declining Jurisdictions in Australia and New Zealand, Canada and the USA.

A bit harsh? Maybe. In Victoria, up until just the last couple of years only, the Grand Inspector of Workings (invariably a Past Grand Director of Ceremonies), the Grand Lodge *Ritual and Ceremonial Committee* and the 200 page *Book of Lodge Workings* were infinitely more important than the *Volume of the Sacred Law*, as books go. Form was, and very largely still remains, everything. And while one may no longer ‘be shot at dawn without a trial’ (as was most definitely the case only a very few years ago) for having the temerity to put your foot incorrectly one inch to the left, it is still a hugely motivating factor amongst most Grand Lodge Officers, and Lodge Past Masters for that matter (the majority of whom are Past Grand Officers anyway).

Let us consider Grand Officers for a moment. The Grand Team comes primarily from very recent Past Masters who have not been in the Craft all that long. Into the Grand Team they go, as such is considered the *Epitome of Freemasonry* – whence one is rigorously trained, not in Freemasonry you understand, but in the rigid *Form* of the ceremonial. And thus they start on the ‘greasy pole’ which, if they prove worthy, may one day see them ascend to Grand Director of Ceremonies, or a Senior Grand Officer, or maybe even eventually they may become a Past Deputy Grand Master! Wow!!

And so they perform the Installation Ceremony, to its exact Form, *ad nauseum*. One wonders if they ever pause to question (as I know as our current Grand Master does) why the pews in the lodges during this ‘magnificent Installation Ceremony’ are largely empty...

Speaking of Grand Officers, Victoria is top heavy with them as well – it seems that they make up at least half or more of the Past Masters present when you visit any lodge. The first to leave Freemasonry are Master Masons – they have little of themselves, and their time, invested in the organisation. Past Masters are the next to leave – they go through the chair, and then what? Last to go are Grand Officers, who have risen up the *greasy pole* and live in the hope of future promotion.

It is interesting to note that in most European Grand Lodges, there are eleven active Grand Officers - and no past Grand Rank (except Past Grand Master). Once your active term has finished, you revert to being a Past Master. I greatly suspect that, if such a system was introduced into Victoria, the vast majority of (now former) Grand Officers would vote with their feet.

So, how to fix the problems? Variety and involvement, and plenty of it; an end to uniformity of ritual and rote learning. The key problem, in my view, is that there hasn't been any variety at all. You go from one 'normal' lodge to another, and everything is EXACTLY the same. Why does a new (often young) Master Mason leave the Craft? In a word, boredom – if they haven't 'got a job', and of course, they don't, until (maybe) much further down the track (assuming they want one). They are often long-since gone by then.

Quality dining and Masonic education in a lodge might act to delay a young Mason's departure, but at the end of the day it is the ennui of seeing the *Masonic Waltz* repeated over and over again, without remission, that will see him off. And in most lodges, woe betide he who suggests things be done differently, as it has been since *time immemorial*. Verily, the only thing more parochial than a Freemason is two of them! And that is our biggest problem.

Even a nominally successful lodge, such as *The Lodge of the Golden Fleece*, will not be immune. It has ticked many of the right boxes. It meets bi-monthly (tick) at the Kelvin Club in the city – a 'different' venue (tick), attractive to the very many professional young men who work in the CBD (tick). It has excellent dining after each meeting (tick) and varied concurrent entertainment – opera singers, jazz, etc (tick). The ladies attend their dinners (tick). It has many, and is very regularly creating more, young Master Masons. So, the queue for lodge office will get very long, but these young Master Masons will still be subjected to the ennui of uniformity of ritual. Like 'lodges of old' they will need a second warrant, possibly. But despite ticking many boxes, I am still afraid uniformity of ritual will still see them suffer from the *revolving door* over time. Wonderful dining, and Masonic Education as well, did not close the *revolving door* in Lodge Epicurean and Lodge Amalthea as time went on...

Let us consider examples from the many, although now numerically greatly diminished, 'normal' lodges still extant in Victoria where the problems are dire, starting with the length of meetings and ceremonial. In most lodges, one has to suffer the near interminable admission of visitors, often the secretary reading every word of correspondence (mercifully, *Minutes* are largely pre-circulated these days), and the (highly structured and repetitive) festive board after the meeting – often replete with food you 'wouldn't serve at home except at a child's birthday party' – finishing at 11.00pm or later – whence you wonder why the young guy, who needs to get up early the next day to go to work, is unimpressed...

Then there is the Installation ceremony, in Victoria easily the longest in the Masonic world, where every officer **MUST** be invested or reinvested – even those who have held the same office for years. Where every Master must be fully installed, even those doing a second year (although there has been some very recent experimentation in slightly reducing the ceremony). More than some of the ritual used is superfluous, and repeated from other ritual. Try going to an English Lodge, where the Installation takes under an hour, as opposed to nearly three hours in Victoria...

I made the comparison, above, to Victorian/Australian Freemasonry being like the Soviet Union era *Command Economy*, where every aspect of life was effectively rigidly ruled. I make no apology for this, and we all know what happened to the Soviet Union. The analogy to our Freemasonry is far from inaccurate. Our constituent lodges are ruled by a *Constitution* of over 400 clauses, and a 200 page *Book of Lodge Workings*.

I can recall, more than a few times in the past, the cry from lodges was, as the Craft continued to sink further into the abyss: “What is Grand Lodge going to do about it”? To which the reply always was – “But it is up to the lodges”! Both miss the point. Sure, lodges are the only places where candidates can be dealt with, but for the last 120 years lodges have been totally and utterly restrained by the two aforementioned tomes. There was no scope for the slightest innovation. Grand Lodge has moved in very recent years to allow some innovation, but overcoming previously-enshrined ‘norms’ will possibly take years, as it stands – particularly given the mixed messages coming out of Grand Lodge.

A few years ago, Lodge Epicurean had the extreme temerity to introduce a full charity collection in the middle of the 1st Degree *North East Charge* – a very effective addition in emphasising the point, in our view (such is common in Scottish and Irish Lodges, I will add). We were reported to Grand Lodge and I, as Lodge Secretary, was hauled into the Grand Secretary’s Office to be told by the then Grand Inspector of Workings in no uncertain terms that we must cease and desist forthwith, or hell would immediately descend upon us. This event occurred only a couple of years ago... Has all that much changed?

Let us consider, for example, the most recent *Grand Secretary’s Bulletin* (No. 151, February 2019). The vast majority of items therein consist of very, very detailed instructions to lodges:

#### **RESIGNATION OF BRETHREN – RULE 231**

I remind Lodge Secretaries and Brethren of the requirements outlined in Rule 231 of the Constitution. Where a member of a lodge desires to resign from Freemasonry he must do so in writing to the Master or Secretary. The resignation shall be copied to the Grand Secretary and shall be read at the next regular meeting of the Lodge. The resignation shall lay on the Secretaries table until the Lodge and the office of the Grand Secretary have made contact with the member to clarify his wishes. If, after these contacts have been made and the brother still wishes to resign, the resignation shall take effect at the next regular meeting.

#### **MASTER ELECT**

It has been brought to our attention that in recent times an incoming number of Master’s Elect are presenting themselves in the Installed Board wearing Master Masons aprons rather than that which denotes their rank in the Craft. We remind appropriate Brethren that on such occasions they should be dressed in the apron applicable to their rank at the time of election to the office of Master. For example, if they are a Past Master (regardless of whether they hold Grand Rank) they should wear a Past Master’s apron. If they are a Master Mason, they should wear a Master Masons apron. It is necessary that in either case they be invested with a Master’s apron. On subsequent meeting nights, they would continue to wear this apron or in the case of a brother who holds Past Grand Rank, he may choose to wear his Grand Rank apron.

#### **SHORTENED BALLOT PROCEDURE**

An approved shortened ballot procedure for candidates can be found on the Freemasons Victoria website at <https://fmv.org.au/lodge-resources/> This shortened version will reduce the amount of time taken to ballot for a candidate and is available for use within Lodges effective immediately.

#### **LODGE FINANCIALS, LMRs and MWRs**

*Harashim* March 2019

A number of Lodges have not yet submitted their Lodge Financials for year 2017-18 which were due by 30 October 2018. There are also a number of Lodges behind in their Lodge Meeting Returns and Master and Wardens Returns. Please ensure these are brought up to date as a matter of priority.

### **LODGE ENGAGEMENT OFFICER**

Lodge Engagement Officers are now a requirement of the Master and Wardens Report and are one of the requirements for Member Ready Status. More information on Lodge Engagement Officers can be found on the website at <https://fmv.org.au/engagement-training/>

### **MEMBER READY LODGES**

Lodges who are not Member Ready will not be eligible to receive candidates through Grand Lodge. To view your Member Ready Status please click [HERE](#)

All these items are *Thou Shalt or Shall Not*. It must be quite clear to anyone reading them that *woe will betide* any deviation. Innovation in lodges? Really? Incidentally, I would reply to all these directives – so what? Which one of them is going to stop a young Master Mason resigning? Rule 231? Sorry – the horse has bolted.

One thing Victoria has just started to do is to allow new lodges to be formed to work other than Victorian ritual. The current Grand Master and his ilk are to be warmly commended on this initiative. It may still be too little, too late.

The primary reason for forming a new lodge, one would expect, is to attract new members (and, perhaps, retain members we might otherwise lose). Historically, new lodges were formed, particularly after WWII, when an existing lodge's membership became so numerous as to prevent progression in office in any reasonable time frame. Hence, a new lodge was formed, until it faced the same problem, when yet another formed, and so on. Of course, in later years, the reverse impetus occurred, which is why the number of lodges has seriously contracted.

It is probably the greatest truism in Masonry that new members attract new members – provided they are 'happy'. This is a very important caveat. The psychology of new member proposition is not clearly understood, I suspect. The primary motivation as to why a member will propose a friend into his lodge is because he thinks the organisation has great virtue (that is a given) and that most importantly, in so doing his relationship with his friend will be unaffected, or even enhanced.

There are very many members who (while they themselves attend out of habit, perhaps) will not propose a candidate as they are unhappy with the quality of their own lodge – they are afraid, maybe even subconsciously, that their friendship will be adversely effected. In any case, older members – of which, I have already noted, we are very top heavy – proposed any new candidate from their group of friends, years ago. Very largely, directly-proposed candidates will come from happy younger members – not in itself a large cohort.

This is why most new candidates come via direct inquiry to Grand Lodge. They then get sent to a lodge of, mostly, older members – with uniformity of ritual; the lack of innovation and inherent boredom will get to them, after a while – so the whole cycle repeats itself and most become what I call *revolving door freemasons*. I have very frequently met very excited new young Entered Apprentices, and considerably

less excited young Master Masons. It is a sad fact that 80% of new Master Masons resign from Freemasonry within four years. I rest my case.

In May 2018, the first lodge was formed in Victoria in 120 years to work other than the uniform Victorian Ritual. The Earl of Dunmore Lodge, created to work a Scottish Ritual, commenced with extraordinary enthusiasm and 75 founders. And as yet, these 75 founders have not generated one candidate. Of course, the Earl of Dunmore Lodge has many other virtues, particularly it's very strong Scottish *community of interest*. That alone will sustain it, at least for the moment.

The inherent problem, and The Earl of Dunmore Lodge is but one example, is that most members are 'elderly' and, for the most part, are no longer capable of learning new ritual. How to fix this, I will address shortly. Sure, the charges they have done for 40 years are no problem, but give such a member a new charge ... Learning new ritual, for older Freemasons, is very hard work. This has been apparent in The Earl of Dunmore Lodge, which is barely getting by with members willing and able to work even the Scottish First Degree Ceremony.

Other new Lodges are proposed, working non-Victorian Ritual, including one working Irish Craft Ritual. Given our absolute obsession with rote learning, the 'issue' with such new lodges is finding sufficient interested and capable founders to actually learn and work the ceremonies. As The Earl of Dunmore Lodge has already demonstrated, these are not to be easily found amongst the 'elderly' who make up the vast majority of remaining Masonic members.

Thus, in my view, if you are going to stick with rote learning, what is a must for such a new lodge to succeed is, at least, 12-15 committed young masons prepared to take progressive office and learn the new Ritual. These young brethren will, without doubt, attract candidates – if they can be found and 'interested'. Maybe these young Masons do exist, but they need to be attracted before they find the *revolving door*. One could have more than a few 'older' Masons to make up the numbers/provide bums on seats... But the young Masons are essential, if you are to continue with rote learning.

So, has the horse really bolted? Is Victorian Freemasonry doomed to extinction in 10 years, as the current inexorable membership decline would seem to indicate? We are most definitely up against it. Even if Grand Lodge decreed tomorrow that any Victorian Lodge could work the ritual from any recognised Masonic jurisdiction, how many would change? A very, very small handful, perhaps...

So, the answer to the question of *will we survive* is a very qualified 'maybe'. Grand Lodge must, in every possible and feasible way, forthwith relinquish control over what lodges do and how they do it, and proactively encourage lodges in innovation – if not Masonic extinction is almost certain. Grand Lodge must become a benign advisor only; out with 'dictatorship'.

So, instead of having *Constituent Lodges*, we need (as they are in England) *Private Lodges* – which have always been allowed to work whatever ritual they like. There is a significant difference. Give alternatives, make variations of the Installation available, work to assuage the inherent boredom young members feel. Give them EVERY opportunity to be involved. Involvement is a key. Lift every possible restriction. Make rote learning optional.

Would the world stop turning if Grand Lodge stopped doing Installations (or only rarely) – as has always been the case in New South Wales (where, nonetheless, the ceremony is still stiflingly uniform and overly lengthy)? So what if the PMs doing the job are not quite to the standard of the Grand Team. What is the point if, within a few years, the Grand Team has no lodges left to work in? The *lemmings* mentality must go!

So, here is what I most strongly recommend:

### Lodge Workings

1. Make the key word **optional** in Victorian Freemasonry. Make the use of the *Book of Lodge Workings* **optional**. Make **involvement** available to EVERY member – if you do not, do not expect him to remain a member. Why should he?
2. Allow, indeed encourage, **an end to the rote learning of ritual**. Most charges can be read. Simply put a lectern in the south-east part of the lodge. In terms of Victorian Ritual, the only charge where rote is needed is probably the knock down/raising the 3rd Degree. The deacons work would still need learning. Other than that – no! The immediate advantages are obvious. New Masons can be given jobs immediately! Even an Entered Apprentice can read the *Final Charge* in the next First Degree working. Hand almost all ritual work to Master Masons and below – **Involvement for all members, especially new ones**. Gone will be the problem of who is going to do the *Tracing Board Lecture* if ‘dear old WBro Smith can’t make it’. New lodges (or, indeed, existing lodges) working other Craft rituals? No problem, if it is largely read. Rehearsals? One per meeting would be more than enough.
3. Thus, all your new members are **immediately and consistently involved** in the ceremonial. Even a young guy who is time-poor can handle reading a charge! And it will be word-perfect too! And it doesn’t matter if PM’s are deacons. Reverse the roles – make all the MMs, FCs and EAs the charge presenters!! It works in Europe.
4. Next, make the MAPs **optional**. Sure, encourage a new guy to attend, maybe – but if so make very sure the presentation is of a high standard.
5. Re-introduce the **Grand Lodge Speaker’s Panel ASAP**. Have a range of speakers trained and assessed, and ready to go. So that when a lodge hasn’t got a degree to work, it can **OPTIONALLY** ask for a speaker – who will do an excellent and interesting presentation (do NOT bring back the word ‘lecture’). Readily available, but optional, Masonic education.
6. Allow lodges, **if they choose**, to vary the ceremonies. What does it matter if the *Reasons* in the First Degree are the Victorian, Scottish or German version!? Diversity and variety! It might suddenly become interesting to visit another Lodge!

### Installations

As noted above, Victoria has the dubious distinction of possessing the longest Installation Ceremony in the Masonic world. For those many not involved in the presentation of the ceremony – which is most – it is nearly three hours of complete tedium.

### Installation Ceremony Options:

1. A Past Master (whether doing a consecutive year or not) is simply proclaimed, and then his officers invested.
2. The new WM receives the *Secrets* in another room, and the officers being invested concurrently in the Main Temple. This is common practice, for example, in Scotland.
3. Officers continuing in the same office (secretary, organist, etc) NOT being re-invested.
4. Officers being lined up, invested with their collar and thanked for accepting the office, with no ritual involved (as is the English method). It is noted this is exactly what happens with the investiture of Grand Officers at Victorian Grand Installations. Surely what is good for the goose...
5. Extraneous ritual is deleted, such the *Address on the Pillars* (straight from the First Tracing Board).

The aim of all these options is to **seriously** reduce the length of the ceremony. Let Lodges and the Master-elect choose the option/s that work for them!

### A Final Comment

A great deal of thinking 'outside the square' needs to be done, and done very quickly. In a one-sentence summary, Victorian Freemasonry is still dancing the *Pride of Erin* when it should be doing the *Disco*. The key words are **variety** and **involvement**, and lots of both.

### A Sad Appendix

Back in 1994, following the success of Lodge Epicurean in Geelong, we were looking to follow on with such a lodge in Melbourne. We initially considered 'taking over an existing lodge', rather than going through the considerable procedures in forming a brand new lodge. At that time there were (and continued to be ...) plenty of lodges handing in their warrants. So, we found a moribund lodge meeting at Sandringham, where we wanted to meet – The Lodge of Assembly No 808. It had less than 20 members, of which about 8 attended. We offered to 'save its warrant' – we would join *en masse*, change its By-Laws and off we would go. Existing members would be welcome to stay on, if they wished! The members readily agreed, and thus at its next meeting we had a dozen proposed Joining Members on its *Summons*. And the 'dead voted'. There were a couple of members who were implacably opposed. They induced two members who otherwise never attended (one in wheel chair!) to attend and vote. Thus, with such a very small number of members voting, we did not obtain the necessary three-quarters majority to admit. The WM, DC and Secretary all came out of the Lodge meeting to apologise, very embarrassed (the 12 of us were waiting outside). So, we all went home, and thereafter petitioned for Lodge Amalthea No 914 to be formed. And The Lodge of Assembly? Four months later it handed in its warrant.

What can one say? Even today, we still have some 'Lemming' lodges in Victoria, with more than 30 members on their books, who seem to prefer to die rather than change.

---

### **\*\*About the Author**

Kent Henderson, DipT, BEd, GradDipEd, MEd, is a member of several Craft Lodges in Australia and overseas. He has been the Secretary of Lodge Epicurean and Lodge Amalthea in Victoria for over 25 years. He is a full



member of The Lodge of Research, Dublin, and the only ever Australian Full Member of the Premier Lodge of Research, Quatuor Coronati Lodge No 2076 EC, London.

He is also a Past Master, and Fellow, of The Victorian Lodge of Research, and a former long-term Editor of its *Transactions*. He is also a member of, and in most cases a Past Master (or equivalent) of many additional Masonic Orders. He was a founder and former long-term Secretary, and later President, of the Australian and New Zealand Masonic Research Council (ANZMRC), and was *Kellerman Lecturer* for Victoria in 1994. He was also a *Founding Fellow* of the Masonic Society (USA).

He is the author of many books and papers on Freemasonry, including *Masonic World Guide* (Lewis Masonic, London, 1984), *The Masonic Grand Masters of Australia* (Drakeford, Melbourne, 1989), *Freemasonry Universal – A New Guide to the Masonic World*, Volumes 1 & 2 (Global Masonic Publications, Melbourne, 1998 & 2000 – with co-author Tony Pope); *Freemasonry for Wives and Others* (Global Masonic Publications, Melbourne, 2001); *Millennial Masonry* (collected papers) (Global Masonic Publications, Melbourne, 2002) and *300 Famous Australian Freemasons* (Global Masonic Publications, Melbourne, 2016).

He holds the Grand Lodge of South Australia's *Diploma of Masonic Education* and he was awarded the Grand Lodge of Denmark's *250th Anniversary Commemorative Medal* in 1993 for his 'Outstanding Contribution to International Masonic Research'. He is often a sort-after [sic] speaker and has been on Lecture Tours to several countries. He has spoken in lodges in England, Europe, New Zealand, Nigeria, Singapore, South Africa, Canada, the United States and across Australia.

# HARASHIM

חרשים

No. 82: June 2019

ISSN 1328-2735

The quarterly magazine of the  
Australian and New Zealand  
Masonic Research Council.



*Harashim*, Hebrew for *Craftsmen*, is a quarterly newsletter published by the Australian and New Zealand Masonic Research Council, in March, June, September and December each year. It is supplied to Affiliates and Associates electronically in PDF format. It is available worldwide as a PDF as an email attachment, upon application to the Editor at [morsemasonic@gmail.com](mailto:morsemasonic@gmail.com). *Harashim* may be read online at <https://issuu.com/harashimed>

### Copyright and reprinting

Copyright is vested in ANZMRC and the author of any article appearing in *Harashim*.

Affiliates and Associates are encouraged to reprint the entire newsletter (at their own expense) and circulate it to their own members, including their correspondence circles (if any) and to supply copies to public and Masonic libraries within their jurisdictions.

Individual items from any issue may be reprinted by Associates and Affiliates, provided:

- The item is reprinted in full;
- The name of the author and the source of the article are included; and
- A copy of the publication containing the reprint is sent to the editor.

Anyone else wishing to reprint material from *Harashim* must first obtain permission from the copyright holders via the editor.

***Unless otherwise specified, authors submitting original work for publication in Harashim are deemed to grant permission for their work to be published also on the Internet websites of ANZMRC <http://anzmrc.org> and <https://issuu.com/harashimed>***

### Contents

Affiliate and Associate members are encouraged to contribute material for the newsletter, including:

- Their lecture programs for the year;
- Any requests from their members for information on a research topic;
- Research papers of more than local interest that merit wider publication.

The newsletter also includes news, reports from ANZMRC, book reviews, extracts from other publications and a readers' letters column, from time to time.

If the source of an item is not identified, it is by the editor. Opinions expressed are those of the author of the article and should not be attributed to the Council.

Material submitted for publication must be in a digitized form by e-mail, or memory stick addressed to the editor, Neil Wynes Morse, PO Box 6080, Mawson ACT 2607 Australia. Or email to [morsemasonic@gmail.com](mailto:morsemasonic@gmail.com)

Clear illustrations, diagrams and photographic prints suitable for scanning are welcome, and most computer graphic formats are acceptable. Photos of contributors (preferably *not* in regalia) would be useful. ***Contributors who require posted material to be returned should include a stamped, self-addressed envelope.***

### General correspondence

All other correspondence, including about purchase of files and books, should be directed to: The Secretary, ANZMRC. Brendan Kyne, 7 Devon Ave Coburg Vic 3058 or [<lordbiff@hotmail.com>](mailto:lordbiff@hotmail.com)

# ANZMRC DIRECTORY

## ANZMRC People

President	Kerry Nicholls	Hunterville, NZ
Immediate Past President	Neil Morse	Farrer, ACT, Australia
Vice-President	Ian Green	Launceston, Tas, Australia
Vice-President	Phil Ivamy	Nelson, NZ
Vice-President	David Slater	Higgins, ACT, Australia
Secretary	Brendan Kyne	Melbourne, Vic, Australia
Asst. Secretary	Colin Heyward	Waipawa, NZ
Treasurer	Harvey Lovewell	Cairns, Qld, Australia
Digital Library Co-ordinator	Ed Robinson	Wellington, NZ
Information Officer	Pete Grounds	Melbourne, Vic, Australia
2020 Conference Convenor	Glenn Summerhayes	Dunedin, NZ
Webmaster	Don Ray	Chisholm, ACT, Australia

## ANZMRC Affiliate (Voting) Members

The Research Lodge of Ruapehu 444 NZ	Palmerston North, NZ
United Masters Lodge 167 NZ	Auckland, NZ
Midland District Lodge of Research 436 NZ	Timaru, NZ
Hawke's Bay Research Lodge 305 NZ	Hawke's Bay, NZ
Top of the South Research Lodge 470 NZ	Nelson, NZ
The Research Lodge of Otago 161 NZ	Dunedin, NZ
Research Lodge of Wellington 194 NZ	Wellington, NZ
Research Lodge of the Taranaki Province 323 NZ	New Plymouth, NZ
Research Lodge of Southland 415 NZ	Invercargill, NZ
The Waikato Lodge of Research 445 NZ	Waikato, NZ
Masters and Past Masters Lodge 130 NZ	Christchurch, NZ
Research Chapter No 93 NZ	Auckland, NZ
Hobart Lodge of Research 62 TC	Tasmania, Australia
Newcastle Masonic Study Circle	NSW, Australia
Discovery Lodge of Research 971 NSW&ACT	NSW, Australia
Victorian Lodge of Research 218 VC	Victoria, Australia
Barron Barnett 146 QC	Queensland, Australia
WHJ Mayers Memorial Lodge of Research	Queensland, Australia
Granville Preceptory No 53 SC	NSW, Australia
Linford Lodge of Research	ACT, Australia
WH Green Memorial Masonic Study Circle,	Queensland, Australia
Western Australian Lodge of Research 277 WA	WA, Australia
Grand Lodge Masonic Learning Group	South Australia, Australia
Middle Chamber Society	South Australia, Australia
The Chisel Lodge 434 VC	Victoria, Australia
Launceston 69 TC	Tasmania, Australia

### ANZMRC Associate (Non-Voting) Members

Groupe de Recherche Alpina	Switzerland
Centro Iberico de Estudios Masonicos,	Spain
South Carolina Masonic Research Society	USA
The Masonic Society,	USA
The Phylaxis Society,	USA
Kellerman Lodge 1027, NSW	NSW, Australia
Dr. R K R Cama Masonic Study Circle	Mumbai, India
Nairobi Lodge of Instruction	Nairobi, Kenya
Lyceum Lodge of R 8682 EC	Jo'burg, South Africa
Mount Faber 1825 SC	Singapore
Lodge of Research 200 [CC] IC	Ireland
Quatuor Coronati Research Lodge-Bayreuth	Germany
Irish Masters Lodge 907 IC (Jamaica)	Jamaica
Circolo di Correspondenza della QC	Italy
Southern California Research Lodge	USA

### IN THIS ISSUE:

Legals	1
ANZMRC Directory	2
President's Page	4
Reminder: ANZMRC Lecture tour places and dates	5
The Norman B Spencer Essay Prize: Reports	7
Kellerman Lecturers 2020: Selection Arrangements	9
Feature Article: <i>The History of HRA Chapters in Victoria</i> : Chapter 1	13

# PRESIDENT'S PAGE

## *Greetings All:*

A lot has been occurring behind the scenes over the last few months.

I propose to let you all know in this message, as a number of areas will be of interest to you all.

## ANZMRC Website – [www.ANZMRC.org](http://www.ANZMRC.org)

This has currently been upgraded to ensure a more user-friendly and informative area for all of the outside world and us. As I have always believed this is our window to the world – we have no other apart from each of us as individuals.

This is on going and you will be kept updated but I encourage you all to visit it if you have not already done so, not only once, but also on a regular basis.

Your input is still required to make our website even better so please feel free to let us know your thoughts on anything.

## 2019 ANZMRC Touring Lecturer:

Preparations for the tour a well advance and by the time you read this our riveting speaker, W. Bro Dr Mike Kearsley will be in the final stages of packing his bag(s) and jetting to the Southern Hemisphere where he will commence the first of 24 speaking engagements on the Asian continent, in late July, then to Australia and New Zealand where he will finish in late October. Of course there are also various meetings and other engagements that a touring lecturer undertakes at their discretion. This is where our Masonic Teachings pay dividends to us all.

Please be aware this is a strenuous time but I am confident Bro. Mike will keep you all enthralled so please make him and Annie feel welcome.

## 2019 ANZMRC Tour Book:

This is now finalized and currently it can be ordered on our website, we now accept PayPal; however at each of the presentations copies will be available so make sure you purchase a copy of the book. You will not be disappointed.

## 2019 ANZMRC Tour Flyers:

A generic flyer has been prepared and is available from either myself or our Secretary so to

ensure you have a copy to circulate please ask for one and we are only too happy to send it to you.

You only need to fill in the blank areas and you are up and running.

### **2020 ANZMRC Conference:**

The next ANZMRC Conference will be held from Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2020 in the Dunedin Masonic Centre, New Zealand.

The theme will be 'Freemasonry – Beyond the Craft'.

An exciting and very innovative topic. You can now diary this and plan your 2020 holidays.

<https://www.anzmrc.org/the-next-conference/>

### **2021 ANZMRC Touring Lecturer:**

A number of prospective people have been canvassed and we anticipate having a final decision for you towards the end of this year.

### **THE FUTURE:**

Now is the time for all of you to give serious consideration to two issues:

1. Kellerman Lecturers for the 2020 Conference – do not be afraid – put your hand up – you know the theme – think of an appropriate topic. It is fun and you will thoroughly enjoy the moment – ask around – seek guidance and we are here to assist. Do not be shy.
2. Your next committee to be decided upon and put in place at the 2020 Conference – who do you want?

Finally I thank all of you for making the ANZMRC what it is both past and present – for me personally this has been another of my Masonic Journeys and I must admit it is enjoyable but like everything in life it does have some hurdles but we cross them and carry on.

Thank you one and all.

Kind regards

Kerry.



## ‘Aussie Night’ at QC – Norman B Spenser Essay Prize Lecture

On 9 May Bro David Slater KL addressed Quatuor Coronati Lodge 2076 EC on his deciphering of Browne’s *Master Key*. The essay, and the resultant discussion, will be available in the next number of AQC. The main comments offered centred on the amount of work which David had put into the exercise of decipherment and the development of the paper. It was particularly heartening to see that David’s son, Bro Alex Slater, had journeyed to London to support his father and Brother.



Lunch at the *Shakespeare's Head* before the QC meeting: *l to r* Bros John Wade, Brent Morris, Mike Kearsley and David Slater.



Bro Ric Burman addresses the QC afterproceedings, with the DC, Bro John Wade, watching on.



## COMMENTS ON PRESENTING MY PAPER AT QUATUOR CORONATI LODGE

by David B. Slater

This is not the first meeting of the Quatuor Coronati Lodge that I have attended, having been present at a meeting in 2013, when Bro Tony Baker gave a talk on the Excellent Master Degree, but the meeting on Thursday 9 May 2019 was different; it was I who was giving the presentation. It had been suggested that I use notes because there seemed to be some hesitancy in the trial presentation that I gave back in Canberra and this was a good idea, but for another reason. I felt that any hesitancy had been overcome, but it was good to have those whom I wished to acknowledge listed so that none would be missed. I felt quite comfortable talking to the audience and being prompted by the PowerPoint presentation I had produced to enhance my talk. The use of Microsoft PowerPoint turns out to be very effective way to indicate the various ciphers that Bro John Browne used in his texts.

The written paper consists of an introduction, a description of the ciphers used by Browne, an analysis of the accuracy of Browne's works through quantifying the errors made in the First Degree, indicating errors that previous decipherers have made, a general conclusion and an appendix consisting of the deciphered text of the four quarto pages accompanying Browne's tracing boards. The oral presentation also consists of these components except the appendix but there had to be some reduction in the content due to the 30 minute limit placed on the talk, Three works of Browne are covered, viz. his 1798 and 1802 *Master-Keys* and the quarto pages that accompany his tracing boards. As far as errors by previous decipherers are concerned, I restricted myself to Browne's 1802 *Master-Key*. Only Ernest Cartwright has deciphered this 1798 and he did so after he had deciphered the 1802 edition. The same errors tend to occur in both his deciphered texts. Although the quarto pages have previously been deciphered, the results have never been published and I have no access to them, so no comparisons could be made.

The audience largely supportive and the questions asked at the end of my talk showed that that there was interest in the topic. The Junior Warden came closest to giving a critical analysis, but in a humorous manner. Among many comments he dug up a statement that I had made on a website which showed that the proposed completion date of my paper had shifted. He also made reference to William Finch which, although I originally intended to include a similar analysis of some of his works, it was impossible because of the word limit of 10,000 words to do so and also include my deciphered quarto pages accompanying Browne's tracing boards.

I have now to answer the questions asked on the evening of my presentation, or submitted subsequently, in time for this year's publication of the Quatuor Coronati's transactions. There is pressure to do this sooner rather than later so it has become a high priority task but, having had a look at the questions actually submitted to the editor in writing, although some are challenging, I will enjoy answering them.

My overall feeling of the experience in giving this paper at the Quatuor Coronati Lodge is one of satisfaction and, indeed, accomplishment. I have been researching and undertaking this topic for a number of years, including a spell at the Library and Museum of

Freemasonry in Great Queen Street in 2013. It is fortunate that I did not present this paper earlier as it was only in May 2016 that I had access to the pages accompanying Browne's tracing boards. The addition of these previously unpublished pages enhanced my paper immensely, in my opinion. It is indeed satisfying to have been able to present a paper overseas and particularly as the winner of a competition. My previous attempt in Edinburgh in 2013 resulted in an initial acceptance but a subsequent rejection. To actually present a paper which I feel was well received is a definite encouragement for future research.

---



Selection process for KELLERMAN LECTURERS 2020.

Please make this available to potential lecturers.

Submission guidelines:

1. A 5000-word (minimum) paper is required on any subject that has a connection with Freemasonry – historic, philosophic or esoteric.
2. The lecture must be an original work of the author and not have been previously published in any form,
3. All quoted material must have the author acknowledged in the written transcript.
4. The printed version of the lecture may be longer than the spoken version, provided that the spoken version is of sufficient length to occupy the time allocated (30-40 minutes speaking time with 20 - 30 minutes for questions, answers and feedback).
5. The printed version should include a bibliography and may include appendixes, diagrams, photographs and illustrations.
6. PowerPoint or other visual aids may be employed during the lecture.
7. The Kellerman Lecturer cedes first publication rights to the ANZMRC
8. The Kellerman Lecturer must be prepared to travel to Dunedin, New Zealand in November 2020 to present the lecture in person at their own expense.
9. The selection panel consists of five and will comprise the following:

M.W. Bro Dr Gary Bacon AM (PGM, Queensland)  
W.Bro. Dr Mike Kearsley – (2019 ANZMRC Touring Lecturer)  
W. Bro. Brendan Kyne – (Secretary ANZMRC)  
W.Bro. Glenn R. Summerhayes OL - (Conference Convenor)  
M.W. Bro Hugh Young – (PGM, Alberta, Canada)

After discussion these members will select a chairman.

Information on the panel members is attached.

Their decision is final.

### **Submission deadlines**

1. **Before 31 January 2020** – Lecturer applicants will submit a 250-word synopsis of paper title and brief summary.
2. **By 1 February 2020** - Following this submission they will be advised if they have been selected for paper submission.
3. **31 March 2020** - Deadline for papers to be submitted as a draft for presentation at the conference for consideration by the panel.
4. **30 May 2020** - A final draft, with photographs or drawings (if applicable), must be ready for publication in ANZMRC Conference Transactions. You have until this date to prepare a final draft of the lecture following the panels' considerations.

**Note:** The ANZMRC's professional editor offers help, in this final stage, with editing and layout preparation for publication.

---

## **THE HISTORY OF HOLY ROYAL ARCH CHAPTERS IN VICTORIA**

1981

by the late Bro. Peter Thornton

Editor's Note: This is the first part of a four-part paper which has, until now, remained unpublished. Years later Bro. Thornton wrote the 'official history' of the Holy Royal Arch degree in Victoria. This is NOT that document.

### **CHAPTER 1**

The degree, or Order, of Companion of the Holy Royal Arch is practised in most masonic jurisdictions throughout the world and is considered to be the completion of the Master mason degree. Under the English and Victorian Constitutions the degree is conferred upon Master masons of good standing in a body known as a Chapter. Under most other jurisdictions Chapters confer a number of other degrees as necessary preliminaries to the

ceremony of Exaltation and under a few of these there are degrees which may be taken after the ceremony of Exaltation.

The Chapter is ruled by three Principals and there is a ceremony - including an inner working - attached to the chair of each Principal.

### First Victorian Signs

Royal Arch Freemasonry was introduced to the state of Victoria - or, to be precise, the colony of Port Phillip - by a number of companions of the English Constitution. Of necessity this simple statement must be modified as, not unexpectedly, some of these companions played a lesser part than others. The initial impetus came from John Stephen, the curious man who had been very much to the fore in the introduction of the Craft to the colony and who had attained Past Master and Past First Principal rank in Sydney.

In the Craft we find Stephen, on 7 May 1844, refusing to release a letter which had been sent to his lodge because, he stated, although it contained answers and rulings from London it also referred to certain matters appertaining to the Royal Arch degree. Although it is apparent that this was not the true reason as to why he would not permit anyone else to view the letter it does show that the degree was already under consideration by at least one person. There is a report that Stephen also read the Royal Arch warrant at that meeting but this appears to be an error in the recording of the minutes and it is more likely that it was some other document, or a copy of a warrant, read by Stephen in the hope of arousing interest.

It is obvious, however, that in his communications with London Stephen had, among other matters, broached the possibility of opening a Royal Arch Chapter in the colony and it is equally obvious from the comments made at the above meeting that there were a few other Royal Arch masons present. The devious reasoning behind the non-release of the letter involved a purely Craft matter but it is possible that John Stephen could see his early control in the Craft being eroded and he now intended to maintain control over the Royal Arch degree for as long as he could. In any case he was able to find sufficient companions in Melbourne to allow a Chapter to be formed.

### Beginnings

Stephen waited - it is difficult to determine whether intentionally or unintentionally - until the main Craft uproar ceased soon after the middle of 1844 before he initiated any concrete moves along these lines. Peace was more or less on hand when the First meeting of those interested was held at the Royal Exchange Hotel on 5 November 1844. With a mere seven present, and Stephen as Chairman, the decision was made to send a petition to London for a warrant. The companions, however, did not display the necessary patience for while they waited they worked and a number of brethren were exalted. From the Craft point of view it is interesting to note that William Kerr was not admitted on his First application due to the argument between him and Stephen.

The Chapter, the Australasian, appears to have followed much the same pattern as that of many of the early Craft lodges. If the writings of Grand Secretary Hervey during the 1880s can be taken as applying to the 1840s, and there is no valid reason for assuming they cannot, then many of the early lodges and Chapters were, albeit unwittingly, working before they should have been. If the letter of the law had been followed the lodges would not have been consecrated until the warrant arrived from England and as a number did work and change officers before the warrant did arrive a number of brethren claiming Past Master and Past First Principal rank were not constitutionally entitled so to do. Still, no one in the colony was likely to take issue and in the Royal Arch at least all acts were deemed to be regular and legal by the authorities when the warrant was issued.

The warrant arrived in August 1847 and probably inspired the end of a call off which appears to have occurred between July 1846 and October 1847.

### Decay...then Growth

In regard to the Royal Arch as a separate degree we have very little information extant about these very early years. In October 1850 the parent lodge, the Lodge of Australia Felix, lent the Chapter £30 to meet its debts which does suggest that the Chapter was already in difficulties and it seems reasonable to conclude that the gold rush, which all but shattered the Craft lodges in 1851, made a tremendous impact on the Chapter. Dr. Kent, in a letter home which was published in London in April 1855, reported that the Royal Arch and the Chivalric Degrees had representatives in Victoria but, as yet, there had been no move to unite the companions in a Royal Arch Chapter or set up bodies in the other degrees mentioned. According to Kent Joseph John Moody was soon to open a Chapter.

If there had been a Chapter in work surely Kent would have become aware of it, and if not Kent then Moody, an experienced mason who had joined the Lodge of Australia Felix in June 1853, would certainly have known of its existence. This evidence suggests that the original Chapter was in abeyance, had been for some time and had not attained any particular strength.

Yet, if it had been in abeyance, as does seem likely, it was soon to be revived as there are reports of two men prominent in the Craft, Richard Levick and Henry Wallace Lowry, being associated with a Chapter of Instruction in connection with the Australasian Chapter in November 1855. Perhaps the ceasing of work had always been intended as a temporary measure - with the gold rush as the root cause - and perhaps it had been run on rather exclusive lines. In any case the Chapter of Instruction formation can be seen as a determined attempt to restore the Chapter to life.

The Chapter with which Moody became associated was the Collingwood - he lived in Collingwood and was Town Clerk for a number of years - which was consecrated on 2 June 1858 by Past First Principals Levick, Lowry and Grafton. Undoubtedly Moody would have

been one of the consecrating officers if he had not been the First Principal designate. The new Chapter certainly had strong leadership as Moody was a Past First Principal of three Chapters in England.

It was around the latter part of the 1850s - the period during which the Craft experienced a great upsurge in activity and began its spread throughout the state - that the country areas first evinced an interest in Royal Arch masonry. The Golden - later Royal Golden - Chapter at Bendigo was working in October 1857 by dispensation from the Provincial Grand Superintendent in Tasmania. The Chapter received a warrant dated 3 February 1858 but did not enjoy great success during its early life.

Geelong, which had two Craft lodges by 1853, also displayed an interest and, possibly due to the fact that a number of Scotsmen had settled in the nearby areas, an application was forwarded to Scotland for a warrant. This decision was to cause a number of complications in masonry some thirty to forty years later.

Scottish Royal Arch Masonry in Victoria.

The driving force behind the procuring of the warrant was Thomas Charles Harwood the original First Principal when the Chapter was opened. He was appointed as the First Grand Superintendent of the Provincial Grand Chapter - and, as far as we have records, the only one - and was Substitute District Grand Master in the Scottish Craft under Haines in 1858.

Harwood had been initiated in London in 1 February 1847 and exalted in the associated Chapter in May the following year. It appears that he had been installed as Master in the Craft before he left for Australia and the first record we have of him in Victoria is his affiliation with the Lodge of Unity and Prudence in Geelong in March 1853. He also affiliated with the Scottish United Tradesmen Lodge at the first regular meeting after its consecration and succeeded George Coppin as its right worshipful Master.

This may well have been the beginning of Harwood's enthusiasm for Scottish masonry. On the 20th November 1857 he was again exalted, this time in the Glasgow Chapter No.50, Scottish Constitution. This, at first glance, appears to have been a peculiar step for Harwood to have taken but there are two very good reasons as to why he should have taken it.

Firstly, Harwood could well have been given a commission, either vague or direct, by his Geelong brethren who were members of the Scottish Craft lodge and/or had been exalted in a Scottish Chapter before the emigration trip which brought them to Victoria to bring Scottish Royal Arch masonry to the colony. After the experiences of the Craft, and the delay associated with obtaining warrants, the idea of a personal approach to Scotland and the consequent delivery of the warrant by the same person would have been most appealing. Harwood could well have been proposed and seconded into the Scottish Chapter by two of the members who were now resident in Victoria. (Life membership of Scottish bodies could

be obtained for a small payment by brethren who were leaving the country.)

Secondly, re-Exaltation could have been the simplest, and possibly the only practical, way for Harwood to obtain the necessary preliminary degrees, particularly as the Mark degree was still basically unknown in Victoria.

Scotland gave Harwood authority to assist in the formation of Chapters in Australia and he used this authority to establish the Chapter in Geelong. It may appear strange for such an authority to be given to one individual but it was not the first such occasion in Victoria. The Reverend Moses Rintel was in possession of a similar document in the mark degree although his authority allowed only for the conferring of the degree and did not extend to the formation of lodges. Rintel, however, had arrived in Victoria before Scotland began issuing warrants for separate Mark lodges and authority for this type of action was later delegated to Harwood. Rintel, incidentally, made his returns direct to Grand Chapter.

As a result of Harwood's visit to Scotland the St. Andrews in the South Chapter was consecrated on 22 September 1858. It was the first Scottish Chapter in any of the Australasian colonies and Harwood was initially in charge of Victoria and New South Wales. Robert Levick travelled down from Melbourne to install the three Principals. Of the ten petitioners all but one are recorded as members of the Chapter which Harwood joined, Glasgow Chapter No. 50, while the tenth was a member of Cathedral Chapter No. 67 in the same city. Five of the ten were also members of the Australasia Chapter in Melbourne.

The Chapter commenced activity a fortnight before the consecration, or at least the companions did, presumably under a working order which Harwood had obtained and the mark, Past Master and Excellent Master degrees were worked as well as a meeting for the Exaltation ceremony.

The Chapter history states that the Chapter was originally attached to the United Tradesmen Lodge and was transferred to the Lodge of Unity and Prudence on the disbandment of the former body. This 'attachment' should be considered very loosely as the attachment of a Chapter to a lodge was purely an English necessity and not a Scottish. It does illustrate, again, the influence exerted on masonry in Victoria by the English brethren in their desire to enforce and maintain the English masonic systems. On the register of the Supreme Grand Chapter of Scotland the Chapter carried the number 81, quite separate from any lodge, and the Grand Lodge of Scotland did not, at that time, officially recognise Royal Arch masonry. The only period during which the Chapter was officially attached to any lodge was during its first period of work under the Supreme Grand Chapter of Victoria.

The Chapter worked steadily until 1872 when it went into abeyance and, although an installation is recorded as being held in 1876, remained there until 1887. During the first epoch of its life the Chapter always worked - or at least communicated - the three preliminary degrees and, on odd occasions, the Royal Ark Mariner degree and the

Babylonish Pass.

The degree of Past Master, which provided quite a few headaches for the Craft in Victoria, is said never to have been officially recognised by the Supreme Grand Chapter of Scotland. A debate on this particular question is beyond the scope of this work and we need only to extract the various points which are relevant to Victoria. The regulations of 1845 - 49 which were probably the set used by the Geelong companions, stated that the degree was essential before Exaltation and two separate forms of the Grand Chapter certificate were in existence, the one to be issued depending upon whether or not the companion received the degree in the Chapter. At this time the Scottish Craft did not recognise such a degree in the important sense of being a closed portion of the installation of Master and, in general, it was not worked in the Craft lodges.

The Grand Chapter of Scotland was never enthusiastic about the degree and was at pains to remove it. This was achieved by the early 1850s - Bernard Jones states that the Grand Chapter removed the degree in 1846 and forbade the private Chapters from working it - but it appears that the companions in Victoria were unaware of this piece of information from the inception of the Chapter up until its First period of abeyance. (Jones, without being specific, states that Chapters outside Scotland continued to work the degree until 1872.)

Harwood would not have noticed the absence of the degree at his re-Exaltation in Scotland as he was already a Past Master and would not have expected the degree to be worked. When the Geelong Chapter re-opened in 1887 the 1886 edition of the regulations was most likely used and, as this omitted all reference to the degree, the Chapter did not work it during the second period of its life. (There is still a certain amount of vagueness involved in regard to this degree, its acceptance and its use around the 1850 era and it is not possible to be completely definite about its standing. That Scotland never officially informed the colonies that the degree had been deleted is not uncharacteristic of the Scottish masonic authorities of the time.)

The formation of the Geelong Chapter and the granting of Harwood's commission heralded a brief burst of activity under the Scottish Constitution. By 1861 the St. Clair Chapter had been formed in Melbourne. By 1863 this Chapter was meeting only every six months for the dispatch of any necessary business and, in the same year, St. George's Chapter was consecrated at Ballarat. Neither had a very long life. Harwood was also responsible for the formation of a Chapter at Young, New South Wales.

The Provincial Grand Chapter appears to have been almost inactive as the only real evidence of any sort of effort on its behalf was the occasional meeting at Geelong. Early in the 1870s, with two of its constituent Chapters out of existence, the Provincial Grand Chapter gave up all pretence of being an active body and the need for a Grand Superintendent disappeared entirely with the demise of the Ballarat Chapter around 1880. As the St. Andrews in the South Chapter was not restored to life until 1887 and the Supreme



Grand Chapter of Victoria was formed in 1889 no successor to Harwood was appointed. In one sense William Davis as Provincial Grand Master in the mark degree succeeded him but it is curious to note that Harwood lived into the 1900s and Masonry recorded his death without any mention of his activities in the Royal Arch. (The editor, Jarrett, may well be described as an Excellent newspaper man in regard to contemporary events but his knowledge of events well in the Past was negligible and he was in no sense an historian. The omission is thus not surprising.)

One is almost forced to conclude that Harwood's interest in Royal Arch masonry did not extend over a great number of years.

### The English Royal Arch

Reverting to the numerically stronger English Constitution we find, as already mentioned, that there is very little information about the early years and all that we can really conclude with any measure of certainty is that when the Provincial Grand Chapter was formed in 1863 there were seven private Chapters in existence.

Of these seven two ceased work before the inauguration of the local Grand Chapter in 1889. The Meridian St. John Chapter, attached to the lodge of the same name, did not work for long after its consecration in March 1863. There was some talk of reviving the Chapter around 1886 as its warrant, lost for some fifteen years, had been recently discovered but it never did resume work. The Eureka Chapter was originally attached to the Southern Cross Lodge at Maldon - it is hardly surprising that one masonic body should be formed in the gold fields perpetuating the name of the famous Eureka Stockade incident - but it found its chances of success to be very limited in that town when the gold fields became exhausted. On 13 September 1870 it moved by dispensation to Castlemaine, became attached to the Mount Alexander Lodge, but failed to find success there either. Its banners lived on in the Kyneton Chapter.

The South Yarra Chapter was formed just before the formation of the Provincial Grand Chapter and, from the names of the original members, appears to have played an analogous role in the Royal Arch to that played by the Meridian St. John Lodge in the Craft. (A number of unattached companions were among the founders and then appointed to office in the Provincial Grand Chapter.) The petitioners included Frederick Charles Standish, Doctor Horatio St. John Clarke and Thomas Henry Lempriere, the Craft District Grand Master, the Deputy District Grand Master and the District Grand Secretary respectively. The Victorian Chapter had been set up in 1860 with Lowry as its sole guiding Past First Principal and with Francis Thomas Gell and John J James as the foundation First and Second Principals. J Gell, a solicitor, was to be appointed the First Grand Superintendent of the English Royal Arch in Victoria, a position he relinquished on the formation of the Provincial Grand Chapter to allow Standish to become Provincial First Grand Principal. The history of the Victoria-Washington Chapter gives April 1861 as the date of Gell's appointment but does not specify whether this was the date on the patent or the date on

which the local masons were informed of the appointment. Gell was Andrew Clarke's Deputy Provincial Grand Master in the first Provincial Grand Lodge but apparently showed little interest in either of these appointments. His masonic career is, unfortunately, not known but it is obvious that he was highly situated on the masonic social scale as he was also the first Provincial Prior of the Knights Templar, a position he retained when he retired from the others.



Rt. Em. Comp.  
T. H. LEMPRIERE, P.G.H.,  
Grand Scribe Ezra, 1889-1894.

The Provincial Grand Chapter was consecrated on 14 October 1863 in the presence of some thirteen companions and quite a debate centred about the projected appointment of Dr. Clarke as Provincial Second Grand Principal, This controversy arose because Clarke was

not an installed First Principal and, although he was completely ineligible, those in control had every intention of ignoring the regulation. Wiser heads prevailed upon Standish to delay such an appointment until Clarke was qualified. Standish already had more than enough trouble in the Craft - through his suspension of Lowry - without unnecessarily manufacturing more in the Royal Arch and much of the continuing noise appears to have been made by editor Taaffe in the masonic press.

The consecration occurred during the period of Lowry's suspension and, although it is only conjecture, it is interesting to speculate as to whether he would have occupied a high position in the new body. It is perhaps significant that during the years of Standish's rule of the English Constitution the only office obtained by the experienced and knowledgeable Lowry was the elected office of District Grand Treasurer.

### Early Disenchantments

Two incidents from these early times are worthy of note as, apart from importance in Royal Arch masonry, each is basically a chapter reflection of areas of concern in Craft masonry which led to the attempts to form a local Grand Lodge. In 1862 mention was made in the Victorian Chapter of the regulation which specified that a companion must be a Past Master of an English lodge to be eligible for election as a Principal in an English Chapter. This was a particularly annoying restriction as, apart from the fact that there was no really effective Irish Chapter and the only strong Scottish Chapter was in Geelong, the masons of Victoria had already begun to think more along the lines of joining a particular lodge or chapter and less along the lines of joining a particular constitution.

The members of the Victorian Chapter forwarded a special petition in April in regard to this matter and November saw the news reach the colony that a companion would be considered fully eligible for election provided he had served for the full, English, period in a jurisdiction recognised by England and provided he had met the full requirements of the sister constitution. (It is possible to see here a reason as to why a number of Masters of the local Irish lodges served for two successive six month terms - and also to explain why the St. Clair Chapter became doomed to failure.)

The quick reply and result achieved by the petition does appear to be a little surprising when we take into account the complaints which were often made about communication with the overseas Grand Lodges. However the Grand Chapter apparently intended for the ruling to apply only to Victoria or the ruling itself was forgotten as July 1871 saw John James call attention to a report of the Grand Chapter which included the refusal to permit the installation of a third Principal elect in Malta as, although he was a Past Master, he was not a Past Master of an English lodge.

The Victorian Chapter acted, promptly and called a meeting of all Principals and Past Principals of Chapters in Victoria which would be affected by this ruling. A mere four companions attended and the meeting was immediately closed. The Victorian Chapter,

undeterred, decided to carry the fight alone and pursued the matter with England. October 1872 saw the news arrive that the English Past Master qualification was not to apply to any Chapter in the colonies provided that the Companion concerned was otherwise qualified.

The Craft often complained about the delays experienced with any communication which had to be sent home to England. The above example shows that while some delays may not have been so great in the Royal Arch the rulings were not always recalled. The second incident, however, shows that when delays did occur in the Royal Arch they were far greater than the Craft could have imagined. In 1871 - eight years after the consecration - the foundation Second and Third Provincial Grand Principals were informed that their patents of office were now ready at the English office of the Grand Scribe Ezra.

Little can be said of the twenty or so years which followed the consecration of the Provincial Grand Chapter as Royal Arch masonry, as did the Craft, tended to roll along at comparatively low ebb with little of importance to disturb the nearly stagnant scene. The affairs of the Craft, and the isolated Grand Lodge movements, did not affect the Chapters in any way – other than foreshadowing a necessary formation of a local Grand Chapter should a movement happen to be successful - and as a result of the complete dependence of the English Chapters on the parent lodges the affairs of the Craft rarely permeated into the Chapter rooms. The only incident which did manage to break through this barrier occurred v/hen Lowry was elected First Principal of the Victorian Chapter while he was under suspension and could not accept the office. Strong words were spoken at the installation banquet and John James, who had replaced Lowry, referred to a forthcoming Grand Chapter with the heavy implication that such a situation would not have then arisen. It did not, of course, eventuate.

### The Irish Royal Arch

The Irish Constitution opened a semi-surviving Chapter, the Washington, under a warrant dated the 17th of April 1863 - this is the Chapter which Lowry was going to consecrate while under English suspension - apparently through the agencies of Moody and the American Edwin Levi Crowell. It would be logical to conclude that this Chapter was formed in order that the Irish companions could have an Irish Chapter as, at the time that the discussion on its formation began, an Irish Past Master was not eligible for election as a Principal under the English Constitution.

However this theory does not take into account the Duke of Leinster Chapter which was definitely still working when the Washington Chapter was formed. Like its associated mark lodge little is known about this Irish Chapter, the first to be formed, and its working life was short. The suburb of Prahran, possibly due to the annoying river crossing, was not a particularly healthy place for masonry in those early days. Perhaps it is wiser to conclude that the Irish companions desired a city Chapter particularly if, as seems likely, the Prahran Chapter was already ailing.

The dispensation for the Duke of Leinster Chapter, and the accompanying Mark lodge, was issued by John Thomas Smith on 10 March 1860 in his capacity as Provincial Grand Master in the Craft but the date of its consecration is not known and one wonders how Ireland viewed his action. We probably obtain a strong hint when we take into account the fact that the Washington Chapter was not consecrated until after the warrant arrived.

Smith became Grand Superintendent on 26 March 1863 having been installed through the three Principal's chairs by Moody. No further appointment appears to have been made on his death.

Nothing is known of how the Washington Chapter worked but it is extremely doubtful that the Irish ritual was followed. The titles given to the foundation Principals were English, not Irish, and the foundation First Principal, Crowell, was not an experienced Royal Arch mason as he was also installed through the three chairs by Moody. Later events were to show that at least some attempt was made to adopt an Irish ritual and, during the latter part of the life of the Chapter, the three Principals were given their Irish titles. (This could have been solely due to communications with the Grand Chapter of Ireland and does not necessarily suggest that the actual Irish working had been adopted.)

William Farquharson Lamonby, the ever-ready authority, commented in 1882 that the ceremony of Exaltation was nearly the same as the English with the addition of the passing of the veils. His comment is unfortunate, and somewhat unsatisfactory for us at the present time - but probably most satisfactory for the masons of England who were reading his articles - in that it gives us no details of how the ceremony of passing the veils was being worked, whether it was before or during the Exaltation ceremony or whether, it was considered as an entirely separate degree.

### A Quiet Period

After the formation of the South Yarra Chapter the city of Melbourne did not see a Royal Arch consecration until 1881. In the meantime a number of country Chapters were opened. The Keystone Chapter was formed at Bright sometime around 1877 and although it was one of the constituent Chapters in the formation of the Supreme Grand Chapter in 1889 it appears as though it could have been somewhat in the same category as the Loddon Lodge in the Craft as it had, in 1889, a mere seven members.

The Beechworth St. John Chapter was formed in 1872, or thereabouts, and struggled along until sometime before its erasure in 1907. The Yarrowee Chapter at Ballarat opened in September 1880 when the three Principals were installed by James at a meeting of the Victorian Chapter. The Chapter itself met for the First time four days later. The original Chapter in Ballarat had been Scottish although there is evidence to suggest that the thoughts of the petitioners back in 1863 had originally been for the Chapter to be English. It does seem strange for a Scottish Chapter to have been formed in a strong masonic area where only English and Irish lodges existed. Possibly the petitioners were swayed by Harwood

being able to allow them to start work immediately. The old Chapter had not long died. When the new Chapter was formed - possibly there had been a small amount of trouble with Scotland - a point which is very significant for later events.

The formation of the Beechworth Chapter illustrated the lack of power actually possessed by the District Grand Superintendent compared with the power which everyone thought he had. When Grand Chapter warranted this Chapter in November 1872 the comment was made that it would be for the best if the warrant was granted as the Chapter had apparently been working for some time. Grand Chapter was most upset that Standish had granted the petitioners permission to work pending the arrival of the warrant and Grand Scribe Ezra was given special authority to issue certificates for the companions who had been exalted. The regulations were altered in February the next year to include a specific statement that Grand Superintendents could not give petitioners permission to work the degree while waiting for the warrant to arrive from England.

In August 1873 a petition was forwarded to the District Grand Chapter for a Zenith Chapter at Bendigo. No dispensation is recorded as being issued and England has no record of such a Chapter but a letter was sent by the District Grand Scribe Ezra to the Chapter in November 1878 to state that no dues or returns had been received for over four years and the consequences could be serious. It is difficult to accept the inherent implication that Bendigo was strong enough to support two Chapters during the low ebb era of the 1870s. It is most likely that the idea of the second Chapter was occasioned by the arguments which were occurring between the Craft lodges in the town as these would have prevented members of the Zenith Lodge from being proposed into the Royal Golden Chapter. Whether or not the second Chapter was actually formed is debatable. It does appear that it was presumed to have at least started life - and we should not be surprised to see that Standish appears to have ignored the new regulation as he was by no means the greatest expert in constitutional law in Victoria - and that it died very quickly without informing Melbourne of the fact. The healing of the Craft breach would have most certainly sent it into abeyance as a second Chapter was simply not necessary. Strangely Vahland, in his Excellent book, makes no reference to a Zenith Chapter at all which does suggest that it proceeded no further than the receipt of the dispensation from Melbourne.

The 1880s brought Royal Arch activity back into the town of Melbourne and the Combermere Chapter was formed as a result of an August 1881 petition although only one of the nine applicants was a member of a Chapter in the state. The local Committee of General Purposes felt that it could not refuse to grant a dispensation to such qualified companions as had signed the petition. The Chapter was erased in 1898 as returns had not been forwarded to London for a number of years. It does appear that the Chapter had not met for quite a few years and the robes of the three Principals were being used by the Grand Principals of the Grand Chapter of Victoria. The Chapter was reconstituted on 18 October 1973 - a feeler had been put out by the Combermere Lodge in 1952 but it apparently met with a very lukewarm reception from the Grand Chapter of Victoria - and is now the only

Chapter in Victoria which does not owe allegiance to the local Grand Chapter.

The death of Standish in 1883 left the local English Royal Arch masons without a constitutional head and the logical choice, the new District Grand Master, had not been exalted. The obvious solution was found and Sir William Clarke received the degree in February 1884. He chose the Irish Washington Chapter but care was taken to ensure that he did not become confused. The writer of the relevant article in the 'Victorian Masonic Journal' commented that the English ritual was used. Or, perhaps, we should interpret his comments as surprise in seeing the Irish Chapter normally working the English ritual.

Sir William soon joined the South Yarra Chapter, a piece of intelligence which District Grand Scribe Ezra, Lempriere, quickly relayed to London together with the rather heavy hint that Clarke would now be eligible for appointment as District Grand Superintendent if the First Grand Principal saw fit to so appoint him. There was a little local doubt as to whether he could be appointed without first becoming an installed First Principal but this was easily removed by the consecration of the Melbourne Chapter in 1884 with Sir William as foundation First Principal. This Chapter had to struggle for survival during the early part of its life.

The First Grand Principal did see fit to appoint Clarke to the vacant office but it was 1887 before the appointment was made, the installation occurring on 31 March of that year. During the hiatus Dr. Clarke was Acting District Grand Superintendent and managed to involve himself in a rather complex situation in regard to appointments to District Grand Chapter Offices. It was the type of situation which the local English masons seemed to delight in.

Clarke was, of course, the District Second Grand Principal when he accepted the reins and in the new set of District Grand Officers he appointed a new District Second Grand Principal and promptly found himself being accused of having appointed himself out of office. Twenty years previously a furore may well have erupted but the passage of time had seen the English masons become more temperate in some aspects and the matter was quietly settled by forwarding a letter to London for a ruling.

To round off the story of the English Constitution in Royal Arch masonry we need only mention the consecration of the - inevitable - Clarke Chapter in 1888 and the Moira Chapter in 1889.

### The Effect of the Grand Lodge of Victoria

We must now return to the year 1883 when the affairs of the Craft and the formation of the Grand Lodge of Victoria had given a certain impetus to the mark degree by the controversy which was aired in the masonic press. The Royal Arch degree was not placed in the same fortunate - or unfortunate - position.



The new Grand Lodge attracted around five per cent of the local masonic population, was strongly opposed by the local leaders of the three British Constitutions, produced feelings of intense bitterness in a minority of the brethren and was largely ignored by the majority who had rapidly become disinterested when faced with the threat of expulsion from their mother lodges if they had any contact with the new body. It was pronounced 'irregular' by the three British Grand Lodges.

The English Constitution Royal Arch masons were automatically expelled from their Chapters when they were expelled, or resigned, from their Craft lodges because of the close tie between the Craft and the Royal Arch. Lempriere made sure of this in a letter he sent to London on 10 July 1883, eight days after the new Grand Lodge was inaugurated. The only other Chapter which was in any way involved, the Irish Washington, used the close connection between the mark and the Royal Arch to remove the unwanted companions with little surface or public trouble. On the credit side however it does appear that the members of the Irish Constitution who were seceding were not interested in creating any fuss. This could well have been due to their realisation that Baker, Ellis and Franklin - the Provincial Second Grand Principal, Grand Scribe and Grand Treasurer - would have formed a formidable trio to combat, particularly while Franklin was First Principal, combined with their intention to reach for the stars and found a Grand Chapter as well.

While the Mark men who were members of the Grand Lodge of Victoria remain unexcluded from the English Mark lodges and found a home, more or less, in the South Melbourne Mark Lodge the English Royal Arch companions did not have a Chapter to which they could turn.

The members of the new Grand Lodge were well aware of this fringe difficulty, the matter was aired in the Board of General Purposes and a committee was appointed to investigate the problem. There were definite thoughts of the Victorians forming their own Grand Chapter but these were not proceeded with once the committee became aware that the Grand Lodge of Victoria did not number sufficient Past Principals among its ranks to form such a body. (This does rather destroy the suggestion that the promoters of the Grand Lodge of Victoria had been purely after personal honors as, if this had been the case, they would have pushed ahead regardless of the lack of experienced leadership.)

This more or less forced decision left the Victorians in the eminently undesirable position of either not working the degree or discovering a Grand Chapter which would grant them warrants. They chose Canada. It was probably not a difficult choice to make and the Canadian companions, who had considered themselves to be somewhat libelled by the more extreme statements in the 'Red Pamphlet' of the loyal masons of Victoria, were undoubted happy to assist. (The 'Red Pamphlet' was one of the printed documents produced during the controversy caused by the proposed Grand Lodge, was written by the leaders in the local English Constitution and stated that - the Grand Lodge of Canada, and by implication the Grand Chapter, were insignificant bodies unknown outside their own boundaries.)

## Canadian Royal Arch Masonry in Victoria

The full story of the approaches made, and who made them, is unfortunately lost but, many years later, one of the leading lights of the Canadian Constitution in Victoria credited Joseph D'Amer Drew with being the founder of the constitution in this state. By the same token York Bramwell must have played a large part as he did, after all, receive the honor of being the First Grand Superintendent. Bramwell had drifted out of masonry by the time that the above comment was made and the context in which it was made, an attempt to obtain a certain Past Grand Office for Drew, precluded any credit from being given to any other companion.

Little is known of Drew but he had been in Victoria since at least 1874. A warrant was readily granted and the Metropolitan Chapter under the Canadian Constitution was in work in 1886. It was apparently formed in a very quiet and unpublicised manner and the news does not seem to have reached England. Around two years later two further warrants were granted and the City of Melbourne and the Australasian Kilwinning Chapters were born. London heard about these two and harsh words were spoken.

For a time it appeared that Canada's assistance was not to be needed for the latter two Chapters as the Victorians had, again, in the Board of General Purposes of the Grand Lodge, discussed Royal Arch masonry. On 25 July 1887 the decision was made to communicate with South Australia - where a Grand Chapter had been inaugurated with one constituent private Chapter - but the advice, if such was obtained, must have been against forming a Grand Chapter of Victoria at that time.

Each of three Chapters was formed under dispensation with full authority to work. The Grand Chapter of Canada met only annually and this meeting was generally held during the third week of July so it was only to be expected that the First Grand Principal would make full use of his dispensatory powers. The City of Melbourne Chapter, as an example, was opened in February 1888 although the warrant did not arrive until October.

The Grand Chapter of England did not greet the receipt of the news of the warranting of the latter two Chapters - as mentioned London does not appear to have heard about the Metropolitan Chapter - with any great display of enthusiasm or goodwill but promptly declared them to be irregular, England had always held, perhaps unjustly, to the view that the jurisdiction of colonial and dominion Grand Lodges and Grand Chapters could not be recognised as extending beyond their own territorial boundaries, (Or, to be more precise, as extending into an area which had already been occupied by England,) This was a claim which had never been conceded by Canada and the Grand Chapter felt that it was entitled to grant warrants to companions in Australia - no real attempt was made to sort out the states - if it so determined.

The English attitude was best summed up by the London Freemason when it commented

“...it is difficult to image a more wanton, uncalled for, and graceless attack than this on the supremacy of our Grand Lodge and Chapter, (One can only wonder whether England was upset by the ‘invasion’ as such or whether the main cause for complaint was that a number of masons who had brushed aside the supremacy of the Grand Lodge were able to circumvent the attempts made by England to prevent them from practising Royal Arch masonry”.

The editor of the Canadian Craftsman was not impressed by the action his Royal Arch compatriots either and he queried whether the Grand Chapter was justified in sowing seeds of discontent with England. He was firmly convinced, although accused by a number of disloyalty, that Canada had blundered and he labelled the granting of the warrants as ‘an invasion, pure and simple’. He based this assertion on his classifying Victoria as being under exactly the same government as a province within England.

It should also be pointed out here that in order to run a successful and paying masonic paper it appears to have been necessary for the editor to be outspoken and forthright and to disagree with the majority opinion of his readers.

On the local scene the English Constitution Royal Arch masons did not need to be informed that they were not permitted to visit these new Chapters as they had little intention of mingling with the ‘renegades’ while they could avoid so doing. The Canadians kept to themselves and peace, albeit uneasy, returned to the Royal Arch scene.

There does not appear to be any overt reason underlying the formation of the Canadian Chapters and the companions under this constitution were merely concerned with being able to work the degree. They were not out to cause dissension with England - this they had already managed in the Craft - although they would have been well aware that dissension would again occur.

The Canadian Royal Arch system was similar to the Scottish in that it contained almost the same degrees - with the substitution of the Most Excellent Master degree for the Excellent Master degree - and did not require a companion to be an installed Master in the Craft before he could be installed as a Principal in the Chapter. This was one of the main reasons why, a few years later, it was difficult to arrive at an amicable conclusion to the problems in this degree. The Past Master degree was definitely part of the work of the Canadian Chapters in Victoria in the early days of their existence - a motion was moved in the Past Masters Lodge under the Grand Lodge of Victoria to allow ‘virtual’ Past Masters to be members - but it is quite possible that it was not always worked in full.

Jarrett, on a number of occasions, referred in Masonry to the ‘imperfect communication’ of the degree in some Chapters when the extended working of the Installed Board in the Craft was being advocated. The Duke of Albany Chapter was only involved with the degree at two of its meetings. On the first occasion it was worked in twenty minutes while the second

required only twelve.

The Grand Chapter of Canada decided to remove the degree from its system and its Chapters at the July 1893 annual meeting but as this required an alteration to the constitutions which could not be accomplished until the next meeting of Grand Chapter the private Chapters were instructed that they need only communicate the degree until the alteration became constitutional in 1894. The Victorian Chapters which had been working the degree promptly discarded it.

#### A Grand Chapter is Considered

The formation of the Supreme Grand Chapter of Victoria was not a very complicated affair, nor did the decision to form such a body require any long drawn out discussion. It was one of the few major decisions made in the early days of masonry in Victoria which were not riddled with panic, bitterness or delaying tactics, or a combination of all three, but the calm was still shattered at the finish by the introduction of the above in a somewhat negative manner.

No move was made in the Chapters, apart from the obvious unofficial discussions which must surely have occurred, until the United Grand Lodge of Victoria was an all but accomplished fact. It was as if the guiding hand of Chairman John James had ensured that energy would not be spent until it became necessary. On 30 January 1889 twenty six companions of the Royal Arch met at Freemasons Hall.

The degree was not progressing very well at all at this time. It had been reported in June 1888 that the District Grand Chapter was about to meet and the intention was to make the meeting serve the purpose of inspiring a revival of the degree. Circulars were issued to every member of the order, rather than to the First Principal only of each Chapter, and it was hoped that the waning interest would be stimulated. This state of affairs could also, it must be admitted, have attributed towards the seemingly lethargic approach to the formation of a Grand Chapter.

John James chaired the meeting at Freemasons Hall and the companions present really had only two possibilities to consider; to form a Grand Chapter or disband the private Chapters. Not surprisingly they decided to form a Grand Chapter.

Lamonby and William Davis moved and seconded that the laws and regulations of the Grand Chapter of England were to be used, as far as applicable, until otherwise decided.

#### The Canadian Thorn

A letter was read from the secretary of a committee representing the Canadians asking for a conference. Ellis moved that a committee - James, Baker, Bayley and Ellis - be appointed to confer with them. Lamonby, with Davis again the seconder, promptly moved an amendment that no communication be held with the Canadians until the letter which had

been sent to the meeting was withdrawn. The amendment was defeated and the original motion carried.

The Australasian Keystone reported that the position of the Canadians had been raised earlier in the meeting and no one had been too sure of exactly what should be done about them or even whether any move should be made towards accepting them immediately. The letter which came up for discussion at the meeting was the result of the Canadians having become aware of the James' committee and the fact that it was about to meet. The Canadian Grand Superintendent had convened a meeting, a committee was appointed and a conference requested.

The section of the letter which aroused the ire of Lamonby and Davis was a statement to the effect that the Canadians desired to assist in the formation of the Grand Chapter and a warning that if they were not permitted to participate they would start their own. The Victorian Freemason had previously pointed out that the Canadians had not started their own Grand Chapter, although they now could, because the 'clouds were lifting'. (A report had been given in the City of Melbourne Chapter in October 1888 that the three Chapters were to meet and form themselves into a Grand Chapter. The members passed a motion of support.)

If Lamonby's amendment had been passed the Canadians would have been completely ignored, would justifiably have considered themselves to have been slighted and would have, without any doubt, proceeded with the formation of their own Grand Chapter. There is also no doubt that they could have accomplished this in less than a month and even more complications would have been added to those which were already in existence. Before very long there would have been two Grand Chapters in Victoria each claiming Jurisdiction, the old argument in the Craft which was in the process of being healed would have instead been intensified and the prospect of peace would have been pushed far into the future. And not only in the Royal Arch.

It is interesting to speculate upon the motives involved in meeting with the Canadians and why the brethren present voted to do so. On the credit side it is possible that under the superintendence of John James the hand of friendship was to be extended - James showed in the Craft that he wished for all private bodies to join although there was not, as yet anyway, a Grand body to worry about in this case - while on the debit side it could be looked upon as a piece of forestalling which was well planned, a contention which cannot be ruled out if we take into account some of the doubtful events which had occurred or were yet to occur.

In verification of the Canadians' claim George Martin, who had been appointed honorary secretary of the executive committee, stated that they had everything in readiness to begin and it does appear that the meeting referred to in the City of Melbourne Chapter - which occurred after the Craft difficulties had been basically settled - had been organised purely to make arrangements for actions which could be taken if they were not permitted to join with

the others. George Martin, incidentally, was more than likely the 'renegade' he was believed to be as he was certainly quite happy to meet with the seceders in the Order of the Red Cross of Constantine when there was no need for him to do so. Lamenby's amendment was only defeated by 8 votes to 6 and there were 26 companions present.

Ultimately those present decided to appoint an executive committee with the date for the inauguration of the Grand Chapter set for 21 March. The Basis of Union was analogous to that of that Craft, the only major difference being that certain officers, by virtue of their positions in the Grand Lodge, would be automatically appointed to similar positions in the Grand Chapter. This clause was essential if the English regulations were to be adopted.

The Victorian Freemason, the only press outlet available to the Canadian companions, was well aware that all was not as well as it could have been and commented that it appeared that the Grand Lodge would be formed on one evening while, on the next, one section would be unwilling to meet with the other.

### A Meeting Takes Place

The conference between the two Royal Arch factions occurred on the 4th of February and the 'Australasian Keystone' was quickly reporting that all had been settled. The Canadians had sent along LeFevre, Dumont, Meadowcroft and Ferguson, a strange choice as none of the more logical and knowledgeable were involved. By the same token the four who did attend had not been under much personal attack and they had not been involved in the bitterness to the same extent as had many of the more obvious choices.

Three possibilities were discussed.

1. The Canadian Chapters were to be received by the Supreme Grand Chapter after it had been formed.
2. The Canadian companions to be received by one or other of the existing Chapters, carry their Principal and Past Principal ranks, take part in the formation of the Grand Chapter and not be charged affiliation fees by which-ever Chapter they chose to join.
3. The Canadians form a separate Grand Chapter and the two amalgamate.

Each of these three schemes had faults, obvious in two cases and hidden in the third. The first and third possibilities were very similar in that the Grand Chapter was to be formed before the Canadians would be permitted to participate and, to the wary, there was the very real chance that they would never be allowed to join. The third, in itself, is an extremely interesting manifestation of the way in which the minds of some of the leading masons of the time worked. Charges were made from time to time that the masonic administrators in Victoria had allowed a drift away from established custom in various areas but this, the open advocacy of two Grand Chapters in the one territory at the one time, must surely be the most blatant attempt to allow expediency to rule the day. Admittedly rival Grand bodies have existed in various jurisdictions from time to time but not with the open consent and co-operation of both parties.

The second scheme was selected and all appeared to be settled. Yet while the executive committee was being convinced that the controversy in the Royal Arch was as good as over the Canadians were meeting with representatives of the Washington Chapter, being informed that affiliation fees of one guinea per member would most definitely be required and being told that no promises could be made in regard to future warrants.

It does appear that the Canadians were willing to make a few sacrifices to allow the Grand Chapter to be formed in peace. To hand back their warrants which were still considered to be illegal in loyal quarters, was a major concession by the Canadians although they obviously fully intended to hold tightly to their identity as the procedure was designed to permit them to be part of the inauguration after which they expected to re-establish their original Chapters.

The executive committee, or part thereof, had, for reasons known only to themselves, no intention of allowing the Canadians, as Canadians, to take part in the formation of the Grand Chapter.

England was not about to assist, as had happened in the Craft, by insisting upon the Canadians being included. The foundation of the Grand Chapter held no specific interest for England as the Chapters were about to be erased and would have been practically, if not officially, out of existence on 20 March. In that sense England would no longer be occupying Victoria as all Craft lodges had been unofficially directed to join the new Grand Lodge. The Combermere Lodge did stand out, probably to England's surprise, but the Combermere Chapter was almost certainly already in abeyance. (If the New South Wales experience can be taken as a guide the English Chapters would have retained their official existence until notified by the Grand Chapter of England of their erasure.)

Of course England could well have expected the loyal masons to take the broad hint and include all of the Chapters in a similar fashion to the approach being adopted in the Craft and was probably most surprised to find that the pupil had learnt its lesson well in regard to showing displeasure.

The decision taken by the Washington Chapter was strictly against the terms of the proposed union and the Canadians refused to participate. One is left to wonder just what Angell Ellis and George Baker had in mind. Were they still harboring a deep-seated grudge against the members of the Grand Lodge of Victoria, was the Chapter itself not interested in being swamped, albeit for a brief period, was it stupidity, or was it a carefully prepared plan which caught the Canadians unprepared?

To assist the Canadians a suggestion was made to refer the whole question to either Chief Justice Way in South Australia or Lord Carrington in New South Wales, the respective First Grand Principals, along the lines of whether the loyal masons could permit the

Canadians to associate with them. This appeared to be the main point of contention in the minds of many and we again recall that in the Craft the members of the Grand Lodge of Victoria were not exactly welcomed into the United Grand Lodge with expressions of great enthusiasm. Pressure from England had forced their inclusion but there were still a number who did not wish to extend the hand of friendship to the renegades.

Both the committee and, significantly, Grand Scribe Ezra designate, Lempriere, refused. It seems likely that the answer would have pointed out the salient point that as they were about to associate with an irregular body in the Craft there was no good reason for not adopting a similar course in the Royal Arch. The Canadians stated their case to Way anyway but he, very wisely, decided to remain outside the debate and refused to give any kind of adjudicatory decision until and unless the committee presented its side of the story. It had no intention of doing so.

### The Canadians Left Out

Three days before the inauguration the Canadians were still being left out in the cold and it became more and more apparent that stalemating tactics had been employed to keep them out. They issued a protest to the chairman of the committee and to the First Grand Principal designate on the grounds that it was against masonic law for any body to claim supremacy in any territory unless every body in that territory was notified and given the opportunity to join and that while England had protested against the so-called invasion it still recognised Canada and maintained a representative there. Officially the Canadians had not been informed, the conference had been prompted by them due to rumor and hearsay, they had still not been officially invited by the executive committee to participate and the unofficial invitation was along unacceptable lines.

The Canadians were getting absolutely nowhere. The meeting with Way had proved fruitless, the chairman would not permit the Chapters to take part and he would not give any guarantee or bind himself in any way in regard to future warrants. Way's attitude is understandable as he had simply shown himself to be too great a diplomat to be involved in a problem which had to be solved by the masons of Victoria but the attitude attributed to John James seems to be entirely out of character.

It is likely that the Canadians were laying the blame on the wrong man. James, as chairman, was restricted by the majority vote of the executive committee once a decision had been reached and the actual opposition appears to have come from Lempriere and a few others. Shadwell Clerke, the English Grand Scribe Ezra, was reported to have expressed surprise that so experienced a freemason as Lempriere should have made so palpable an error as to refuse admission to the Canadians.

Although the writing was very much on the wall and Archibald Aitken was not being appointed to the position which the Canadians felt was rightly his - Third Grand Principal - a number of the companions attended at the inauguration only to be refused admission. One



report claimed that they had attended expecting to be given a hearing. In regard to Aitken it must be pointed out that the Canadians had made a false assumption. According to the regulations which were being adopted the Grand Master and the Deputy Grand Master of the Grand Lodge, if Royal Arch masons, were automatically to be appointed as First and Second Grand Principal respectively of the Grand Chapter. The Canadians felt that Aitken, as Senior Grand Warden, should automatically occupy the office of Third Grand Principal. Although there were no constitutional grounds for such a belief some of the Canadians were tempted to destroy the good work which had been accomplished in the Craft until Aitken himself persuaded them not to.

A number of jurisdictions throughout the world were not entirely convince that Victoria had correctly handled this particular Royal Arch question and the suggestion was put forward that the Supreme Grand Chapter had not been formed by the usual and acceptable method of holding a convention of representatives from all interested Chapters. The inauguration meeting was described instead as simply a congress of Royal Arch masons which did not have the standing attributed to it particularly as some local companions had been prohibited from attending.

It is, perhaps, interesting to note that the first commission from overseas to appoint a representative of a sister Grand Chapter near to this Grand Chapter did not arrive until 1894.

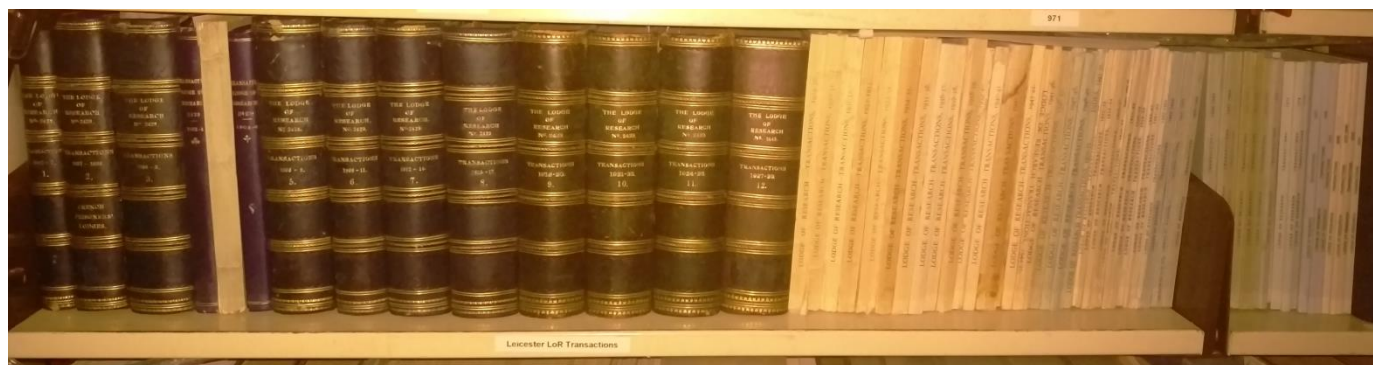
The executive committee remained unimpressed by any of the above arguments and the Supreme Grand Chapter of Victoria was inaugurated on 21 March 1889 with James, Cantor and Ellis as Acting Grand Principals. All known Chapters with the exception of the Eureka and the Combermere were represented and Way, the First Grand Principal of South Australia, was admitted and invested the Grand Officers.

The Canadian Chapters were not represented or permitted to join.

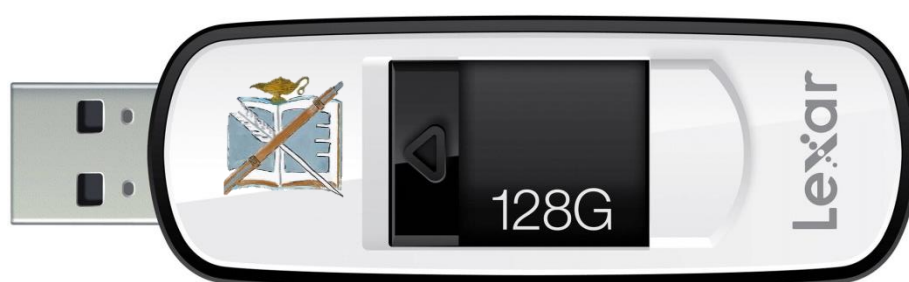
End of Chapter 1

---

Leicester goes digital . . . Reclaim your shelf space!



Need more space on the bookshelf? Gain over a linear metre by ditching those old paper-based Leicester *Transactions* and replacing them with a shiny new thumb drive!



But please give your local masonic library first right of refusal to take them away.


All of the Leicester Lodge of Research 2429 EC Transactions from 1892-93 to 2012-13 are now available as downloadable pdf files at <https://research2429.org.uk/transactions-index/> - **EXCEPT** for the papers for 1914-15, where the link is broken.

The following quotation is from an Australian bookseller's blurb:

“All of the material produced is drawn from works preserved in research libraries which, therefore, lies beyond the reach of the interested layman”.

The statement about research libraries is complete rubbish!

## New books on old books



**U**n *tailleur* est un document qui rassemble les connaissances indispensables au Maçon pour répondre aux questions posées puis être autorisé à entrer dans un temple maçonnique. Les premiers *tailleurs* édités datent du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle et présentent, pour chaque grade, les mots, signes et attributs demandés. Ils sont cependant en noir et blanc et peu illustrés.

Notre ouvrage dévoile et étudie le plus ancien *tailleur* maçonnique manuscrit et aquarellé connu : il date du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle. L'ensemble présente une collection d'images, exceptionnelle par son ampleur et sa beauté, de tableaux de loge et de bijoux maçonniques parmi les plus rares parvenus jusqu'à nous qui en font un formidable outil initiatique. Il offre aussi des documents indispensables à la compréhension de l'évolution de la franc-maçonnerie. Le commentaire historique et symbolique présenté ici est essentiel pour les apprécier, comprendre leurs significations et les relier à la franc-maçonnerie contemporaine.


À partir de ces images authentiques et originales, le lecteur, sérieusement accompagné par un guide sûr, peut alors visiter et travailler les principaux grades, en particulier les Hauts grades et acquérir les clefs de compréhension pour s'aventurer dans les territoires méconnus de l'Écossisme dont la connaissance se révèle indispensable à toute quête initiatique.

Nos analyses s'appuient sur le manuscrit de la Bibliothèque de la Maison des Maçons – Grande Loge Nationale Française *Bib. 2007*, auquel nous associons les planches aquarellées de la Bibliothèque André Doré du Grand Collège des Rites Écossais du Grand Orient de France, tous deux inédits mais d'une origine commune. Nous avons aussi retrouvé et publions les manuscrits-sources conservés à la Bibliothèque nationale de France et une version, elle aussi exceptionnelle, conservée à la bibliothèque de la Grande Loge Unie d'Angleterre (GLUA).

Dominique Jardin est agrégé et Docteur en histoire. Il a obtenu un Doctorat en Histoire et en Sciences religieuses en soutenant une thèse sur les rituels, les tableaux de loge et la construction de la tradition maçonnique. Auteur de nombreux articles, ses précédents ouvrages, *Voyages dans les tableaux de loge*, *Le temple ésotérique des Francs-maçons*, *La tradition des francs-maçons, histoire et transmission initiatique*, ont obtenu des Prix aux Salons du Livre maçonnique de Paris. Il a aussi transcrit, commenté et publié avec Claude Gagne, *Aux sources du REAA*, le cahier de loge du *Vénérable Tarade*, manuscrit témoin de la vie maçonnique de 1761 à 1776.

Lors de la *World Conference on history of Freemasonry* tenue à la BnF (juin 2019) Dominique Jardin a été distingué par le *Bartholdi Award* (prix universitaire) for *Distinguished Scholarship*, "for his years of research and his many reference books and papers on the masonic trestle boards".

ISBN : 979-10-242-0540-3  
Prix : 35 €



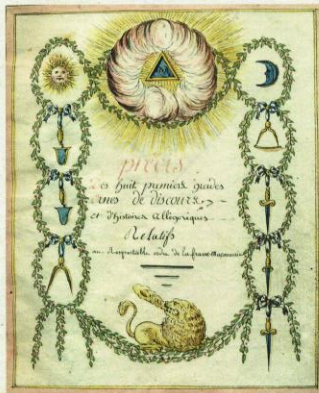
Avec le soutien  
du Musée de la GLNF

Dominique JARDIN

### Aux sources de l'Écossisme, le premier *Tailleur* illustré

(XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle)

80 Tableaux de loge et bijoux maçonniques



*Le manuscrit Bib. 2007 de la Bibliothèque de la GLNF,  
les planches de la Bibliothèque A. Doré,  
les compléments du manuscrit de la GLUA et les dessins de la BnF*

Éditions Dervy

This is a flyer for a soon-to-be-released book on a GLNF manuscript which is one of that Obedience's treasures. So far it is my personal 'Book of the Year'. Besides the wealth of information contained in it, the production values are extremely high. Having seen the manuscript in Paris at a recent conference, the reproductions in this book are almost better than the original! Who knew that there was a degree named 'Les Antipodians'? Surely that's one which should be worked at the Dunedin Conference next year!

# HARASHIM

חרשים

No. 83: September 2019

ISSN 1328-2735

The quarterly magazine of the  
Australian and New Zealand  
Masonic Research Council.





*Harashim*, Hebrew for *Craftsmen*, is a quarterly newsletter published by the Australian and New Zealand Masonic Research Council, in March, June, September and December each year. It is supplied to Affiliates and Associates electronically in PDF format. It is available worldwide as a PDF as an email attachment, upon application to the Editor at [morsemasonic@gmail.com](mailto:morsemasonic@gmail.com). *Harashim* may be read online at <https://issuu.com/harashimed>

### Copyright and reprinting

Copyright is vested in ANZMRC and the author of any article appearing in *Harashim*.

Affiliates and Associates are encouraged to reprint the entire newsletter (at their own expense) and circulate it to their own members, including their correspondence circles (if any) and to supply copies to public and Masonic libraries within their jurisdictions.

Individual items from any issue may be reprinted by Associates and Affiliates, provided:

- " The item is reprinted in full;
- " The name of the author and the source of the article are included; and
- " A copy of the publication containing the reprint is sent to the editor.

Anyone else wishing to reprint material from *Harashim* must first obtain permission from the copyright holders via the editor.

*Unless otherwise specified, authors submitting original work for publication in Harashim are deemed to grant permission for their work to be published also on the Internet websites of ANZMRC* <http://anzmrc.org> and <https://issuu.com/harashimed>

### Contents

Affiliate and Associate members are encouraged to contribute material for the newsletter, including:

- " Their lecture programs for the year;
- " Any requests from their members for information on a research topic;
- " Research papers of more than local interest that merit wider publication.

The newsletter also includes news, reports from ANZMRC, book reviews, extracts from other publications and a readers' letters column, from time to time.

If the source of an item is not identified, it is by the editor. Opinions expressed are those of the author of the article and should not be attributed to the Council.

Material submitted for publication must be in a digitized form by e-mail, or memory stick addressed to the editor, Neil Wynes Morse, PO Box 6080, Mawson ACT 2607 Australia. Or email to [morsemasonic@gmail.com](mailto:morsemasonic@gmail.com)

Clear illustrations, diagrams and photographic prints suitable for scanning are welcome, and most computer graphic formats are acceptable. Photos of contributors (preferably *not* in regalia) would be useful. ***Contributors who require posted material to be returned should include a stamped, self-addressed envelope.***

### General correspondence

All other correspondence, including about purchase of files and books, should be directed to: The Secretary, ANZMRC. Brendan Kyne, 7 Devon Ave Coburg Vic 3058 or <[lordbiff@hotmail.com](mailto:lordbiff@hotmail.com)>

# ANZMRC DIRECTORY

## ANZMRC People

President	Kerry Nicholls	Huntermville, NZ
Immediate Past President	Neil Morse	Farrer, ACT, Australia
Vice-President	Ian Green	Launceston, Tas, Australia
Vice-President	Phil Ivamy	Nelson, NZ
Vice-President	David Slater	Higgins, ACT, Australia
Secretary	Brendan Kyne	Melbourne, Vic, Australia
Asst. Secretary	Colin Heyward	Waipawa, NZ
Treasurer	Harvey Lovewell	Cairns, Qld, Australia
Digital Library Co-ordinator	Ed Robinson	Wellington, NZ
Information Officer	Pete Grounds	Melbourne, Vic, Australia
2020 Conference Convenor	Glenn Summerhayes	Dunedin, NZ
Webmaster	Don Ray	Chisholm, ACT, Australia

## ANZMRC Affiliate (Voting) Members

The Research Lodge of Ruapehu 444 NZ	Palmerston North, NZ
United Masters Lodge 167 NZ	Auckland, NZ
Midland District Lodge of Research 436 NZ	Timaru, NZ
Hawke's Bay Research Lodge 305 NZ	Hawke's Bay, NZ
Top of the South Research Lodge 470 NZ	Nelson, NZ
The Research Lodge of Otago 161 NZ	Dunedin, NZ
Research Lodge of Wellington 194 NZ	Wellington, NZ
Research Lodge of the Taranaki Province 323 NZ	New Plymouth, NZ
Research Lodge of Southland 415 NZ	Invercargill, NZ
The Waikato Lodge of Research 445 NZ	Waikato, NZ
Masters and Past Masters Lodge 130 NZ	Christchurch, NZ
Research Chapter No 93 NZ	Auckland, NZ
Hobart Lodge of Research 62 TC	Tasmania, Australia
Newcastle Masonic Study Circle	NSW, Australia
Discovery Lodge of Research 971 NSW&ACT	NSW, Australia
Victorian Lodge of Research 218 VC	Victoria, Australia
Barron Barnett 146 QC	Queensland, Australia
WHJ Mayers Memorial Lodge of Research	Queensland, Australia
Granville Preceptory No 53 SC	NSW, Australia
Linford Lodge of Research	ACT, Australia
WH Green Memorial Masonic Study Circle,	Queensland, Australia
Western Australian Lodge of Research 277 WA	WA, Australia

Grand Lodge Masonic Learning Group  
Middle Chamber Society  
The Chisel Lodge 434 VC  
Launceston 69 TC

South Australia, Australia  
South Australia, Australia  
Victoria, Australia  
Tasmania, Australia

**ANZMRC Associate (Non-Voting) Members**

Groupe de Recherche Alpina	Switzerland
Centro Iberico de Estudios Masonicos,	Spain
South Carolina Masonic Research Society	USA
The Masonic Society,	USA
The Phylaxis Society,	USA
Kellerman Lodge 1027, NSW	NSW, Australia
Dr. R K R Cama Masonic Study Circle	Mumbai, India
Nairobi Lodge of Instruction	Nairobi, Kenya
Lyceum Lodge of R 8682 EC	Jo'burg, South Africa
Mount Faber 1825 SC	Singapore
Lodge of Research 200 [CC] IC	Ireland
Quatuor Coronati Research Lodge-Bayreuth	Germany
Irish Masters Lodge 907 IC (Jamaica)	Jamaica
Circolo di Corrispondenza della QC	Italy
Southern California Research Lodge	USA

**CHANGE OF ADDRESS**

The Research Chapter of New Zealand No 93 has changed their Scribe E from Phil Adrian to Alan Bevins. Alan's contact address is 68A/49 Aberfeldy Avenue, Highland Park, Auckland 2010 New Zealand. His email is [abevinsnz@gmail.com](mailto:abevinsnz@gmail.com). Telephone: +9 537 9345

## IN THIS ISSUE:

Legals	1
ANZMRC Directory including a change of address	2
President's Page	5
Feature Article: <i>The History of HRA Chapters in Victoria</i> : Chapter 2	8
Feature Article: <i>An Explanation of the Tracing Boards of Phoenix Lodge No. 94</i>	33



## PRESIDENT'S PAGE

### *Greetings All:*

I would like to reminisce a little in relation to the Australian and New Zealand Masonic Research Council (ANZMRC).

The ANZMRC (est. 1991) brings together the Masonic Research Lodges and Study Groups throughout Australia and New Zealand.

The aim of the ANZMRC is to promote research and education within Freemasonry in Australia and New Zealand and to act as a liaison body to the various Masonic research groups in those jurisdictions.

The organization seeks to promote Masonic research and education through biennial conferences that are rotated around the States of Australia and the North and South Islands of New Zealand.

The first conference was held in 1992 and at these conferences the research lodges are able to put forward the name of one distinguished Masonic researcher, who is then designated as a Kellerman Lecturer (KL) and delivers this paper at the Conference.

All the Lectures are published in the biennial conference Proceedings, which are available to all conference delegates, and also added to the Masonic Digital Library.

Without the support of our Lodges and the input of your members throughout the world we would not be able to bring to you high quality presenters and an ever continuing and improving environment for research and education.

I also give a big shout out to the support we have received and currently receive from each and every one of you

### **2019 ANZMRC Touring Lecturer:**

Currently parts of the New Zealand tour are in the process of being re-scheduled and updates as and when available will be circulated to you but will also be available on the website.

With the Asian and Australian stopovers completed the feedback has been extremely positive with numerous requests for encores to be presented in the future.

### **2019 ANZMRC Tour Book:**

This has sold out in Australia and Asia with some top-up required from New Zealand.

I would like to encourage those who have not acquired a copy to purchase one prior to the presentations – particularly in New Zealand.

If the other stopovers are any yardstick to judge it by you may be disappointed, as limited numbers will be available at presentations.

Should you wish to purchase please contact the following – Kerry Nicholls – [cheker@xtra.co.nz](mailto:cheker@xtra.co.nz) or Colin Heyward - [coljan@waspnet.co.nz](mailto:coljan@waspnet.co.nz) and the cost is NZ\$40.00 (excluding shipping).

It can no longer be purchased via the website.

### **2020 ANZMRC Conference:**

The next ANZMRC Conference will be held from Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2020 in the Dunedin Masonic Centre, New Zealand and do not forget your submissions for consideration as a 2020 Kellerman Lecturer – time is creeping up on us. Please direct any enquiries to your Lodge Secretary or ANZMR Secretary [lordbiff@hotmail.com](mailto:lordbiff@hotmail.com)

### **Congratulations are in order:**

I take this opportunity to extend congratulations to our Secretary W. Bro Brendan Kyne– our Secretary – who has achieved a well deserved accolade that is a reflection of the efforts of a true Masonic researcher and educationalist.

Being the recipient of the You have Norman B Spencer Prize 2019 with his paper – ‘The First Lodge on the Ballarat Goldfields; French Memphis Rite Lodge, 1853’.

This follows hard on the footsteps of W. Bro David Slater in 2018 who achieved this pinnacle.

This is a true reflection that we are alive and well in the Antipodes and we look forward to performing a hat-trick in 2020?

Well done Brothers.

Finally a big thanks to all of you for making the 2019 ANZMRC Lecture a resounding success and your patience and understanding in this great Masonic Journey in research and education.

Keep well and safe until the next edition of Harashim.

Kind regards  
Kerry Nicholls

ANZMRC Website – [www.ANZMRC.org](http://www.ANZMRC.org)

---



Bro Brendan Kyne [mentioned above] as the Kellerman Lecturer for Victoria at the ANZMRC conference in Wellington in 2012.

I have seen a photograph of Brendan delivering his KL, but do not have a copy. Any photos from previous conferences would be gratefully received, particularly from the early [1992-2000] period.

# THE HISTORY OF HOLY ROYAL ARCH CHAPTERS IN VICTORIA

1981

by the late Bro Peter Thornton

Editor's Note: This is the second part of a four-part paper which has, until now, remained unpublished. Years later Bro. Thornton wrote the 'official history' of the Holy Royal Arch degree in Victoria. This is NOT that document.

## CHAPTER 2

There appears to be only two possible reasons why the Canadians were finally rejected and it depends upon whether this rejection was deliberate or not as to which would apply. Firstly, the principals not necessarily being Installed Masters could have proved to be an insurmountable problem, a contention which is highly unlikely if Canadian participation had been desired as one side or the other would have bent somewhat in its demands. Secondly, the 1883 wounds had not healed and enough companions were carrying sufficiently strong grudges for them to make a final gesture of defiance towards the unloved seceders.

While the second reason may appear a harsh and unmasonic comment it is probably the correct explanation for the actions which occurred. Drew was the new Canadian Grand Superintendent, Lamonby moved the amendment which asked the Victorians to have nothing to do with the Canadians and the two were not exactly the best of masonic friends. The final rejection, if it was a rejection and not the conclusion of a well-conceived plan, came from the Washington Chapter of which Ellis and Baker, two of the four appointed negotiators with the Canadians, were prominent members and surely could have carried the negotiated conditions if they had wanted to.

A small amount of jealousy may well have been present and active as the Canadians were generally making a success of the work within the chapter. Admittedly only two of the three chapters were in active work - the City of Melbourne Chapter met only once between October 1888 and July 1891 - but the companions of the Canadian chapters were, to a much larger extent, playing an active and capable role in the ceremonies. The English Royal Arch, from all reports, was lamentably weak and in one chapter it is recorded that one Companion had performed the work of first principal ever since the

consecration thus allowing past principal rank to be easily won by a number of unworthy recipients.

John James might have won the Craft but he lost the Royal Arch.

How close the full amalgamation was can perhaps best be seen from the fact that other masonic constitutions were quite convinced that no problem was about to arise. The Sydney *Freemason* of 6 April stated that the Canadians had decided to return their warrants while the *South African Freemason* was even more definite and stated that the warrants had been returned and that the Canadians had been absorbed into the Irish chapter.

Both of these were published after the inauguration and the Sydney paper in particular should have been expected to have its facts correct. The reports do, however, tend to suggest that amalgamation on acceptable lines had been close. The London *Freemason* had the story correct but tended to place the blame in the wrong place. The paper stated that, at the last moment, the Canadians repented of their resolution to act towards the others in reconciliation and decided to retain their warrants.

Lamonby was the Victorian correspondent of the London *Freemason*.

The paper hoped that the Grand Chapter would ignore this aggressive group of people as 'they cannot be a very numerous body, and as there are no longer lodges in the colony from which it will be possible to obtain recruits, their ultimate disappearance from the scene of their wanton aggression can only be a question of time'.

The London *Freemason* was wrong.

In 1883 it was possible to heavily criticise - as many have done - George Coppin and his friends for their action in forming the Grand Lodge with such limited, committed support but they at least observed the spirit of masonic law-by inviting all craft lodges to join the movement and while they possibly erred in forming the Grand Lodge they at no time barred any section of the masonic community. In the Grand Chapter formation the 'loyal' masons are seen in a very bad light in that they did not notify all masonic bodies involved, would not admit all companions to their ceremonies and appear to have actually attempted to keep them out by 'persuasion' before they were forced to take the ultimate step of forbidding their attendance. It must have galled these 'loyal' companions to hear their Grand Chapter described by the derogatory term 'so-called' by Canada a few years later.

### **The Initial Strength of Grand Chapter.**

Thirteen chapters tendered allegiance to the new Supreme Grand Chapter.

Eleven were English - Combermere and Eureka are missing from those which

were expected to join which suggests that the latter had only just died - while the Scottish and Irish Constitutions were represented by one chapter each. It is possible that the Combermere Chapter was still alive as it was under no compulsion to join, its parent lodge having decided to remain English, but all evidence suggests that it had ceased to work. Forced to stand out were the two still active Canadian chapters while the third had not really been inactive for long enough to be classed as in abeyance.

There is, however, an unanswered question in regard to a second Scottish chapter which appears to have been in existence at the time during which organising of the Grand Chapter was occurring, but it is never mentioned as being represented at any of the meetings. Odd references have been found to this Mackersay Chapter No.21? Scottish Constitution meeting at Colac. The Chapter is listed among the masonic bodies of Victoria in the Australasian Keystone around 1904 but this cannot be considered as evidence of continuing existence as the same journal listed the two conclaves of the Order of the Red Cross of Constantine which had ceased to meet in 1891.

It is almost certain that the chapter existed in work at some time and was known to some people in Victoria. Scotland itself lists the chapter in official publications and gives the year of its formation as 1889.

The *Cyclopaedia of Victoria*, published in 1904, contains a reasonably long article on masonry and includes a potted biography of a number of arbitrarily selected prominent masons. In its article on Frederick Louis Maillard - the man credited by Jarrett as being responsible for keeping Ark Mariner masonry alive in this state - the writer credits him with being the founder of the Mackersay Chapter.

But while we may be justified in stating that the chapter existed beyond doubt, we have no information as to how long it lived. Two thoughts in regard to this chapter spring readily to mind. Firstly, Colac was quite a long way from Melbourne and the new chapter was unable to survive because of a lack of candidates and, secondly, the companions of the Geelong chapter were a little wary as to how the Scottish Royal Arch system would be treated by a Grand Chapter which had drawn the vast bulk of its membership from the English Constitution. The second is an interesting possibility as Colac was reasonably close to Geelong and there is quite a strong chance that a few of the Geelong companions determined upon taking out some insurance by setting up second, and unpublicised, Scottish chapter to which they could retire if the Grand Chapter prevented them from continuing with their Scottish working.

Unfortunately - for the Geelong companions - Grand Chapter did not do just that until late in 1893 by which time, assuming the above premise to be correct,

the Colac chapter would have been allowed to die just as quietly as it had been formed.

It is mentioned on only one occasion by the Grand Chapter of Victoria minutes of the Committee of General Purposes for 1 July 1895 mention receipt of a letter on which no action was to be taken.

The membership of the Supreme Grand Chapter, some of which would have been dual, was 320 and of these all but 46 were ex-English Constitution. With such a great supremacy in numbers the English adherents had little difficulty in ensuring that Victoria adopted the English Royal Arch system. The sole Irish chapter was most likely in no way upset by such an arrangement, but the Scottish St Andrews in the South Chapter at Geelong was not overly enthusiastic. The chapter continued, or attempted to continue, to work all in the degrees to which it was accustomed - it had been given verbal advice that it could - and it went into abeyance when it was officially informed that it was permitted to work only the exaltation ceremony. It consequently forfeited its rightful place on the table of precedence. The Irish chapter is no longer in sole existence having amalgamated with the Victorian Chapter in 1906.

### **Early Decisions of Grand Chapter.**

Naturally enough the Grand Chapter adopted the English practice of attaching each private chapter to a parent lodge so that separate numbering of the chapters was not necessary. The system was altered on 21 January 1903 and the chapters were re-numbered, as now, in order of precedence of their warrants with no reference to any lodge. The Committee of Purposes recommended the re-numbering at its meeting on 17 October 1900 - through a motion by Sinclair and Maillard - as there was no longer any real need to attach chapters to lodges - Victoria had commenced to drift away from English thinking in the Royal Arch - and the proposed Goulbourn Valley Chapter could not be attached to any lodge. The stated reason does appear to be more than a little transparent and the move more accurately reflected the gradual separation of the Royal Arch from the Craft.

In many ways it was most unfortunate that the local companions had to form themselves into a Grand Chapter as the Order in Victoria was not quite ready for such a major step. However, although the inauguration was basically forced upon them, it may well have been preferable to have waited for a brief period after the formation of the Grand Lodge before the Grand was also inaugurated. The Victorians appear to have believed that essential to form the Grand Chapter as soon as practicable as the private chapters automatically ceased to exist on the formation of the Grand Lodge - in theory this could well have been

correct - but logic does suggest that there has to be a time gap of some measurable length. (Taken to extremes the above line of reasoning means that the one day delay would have been sufficient to cause the disbandment of the chapters.)

New South Wales had some trouble in forming its Grand Chapter and out of the correspondence which occurred between the state and England it is possible to determine how the body in charge of the warrants reasoned. As far as England was concerned the parent lodges had to return their warrants to Grand Lodge and be erased. After this had been effected the Grand Chapter would, on being notified, immediately withdraw the chapter warrants and inform the private chapters that this had been done. It was the receipt of this notification by the private chapters which put them out of existence.

Hence the Victorians could well have afforded to wait for some six months before forming the Grand Chapter - it is curious to note that Lempriere waited until the United Grand Lodge received English recognition before he communicated with London on Royal Arch matters appending, incidentally, his English Royal Arch rank - and even if they had waited longer they would merely have deprived themselves of the right to carry out exaltations without in any way precluding themselves from forming a Grand Chapter at some future date. Was it a lack of thought or were they really that worried by the Canadians who might, conceivably, have gained exclusive right and jurisdiction in the territory?

If a delay had occurred between the two inaugurations the Grand Chapter may well have got away to a better start. An examination of the members of the executive committee - James, Lamonby, Ellis; GF Martin, Baker, Dowding, Bayley, Reeves, Pridham, Purvis, Braim, Thompson, Davis, Maillard and Lempriere - shows that either there would be a major division of energy between the two Grand bodies or that the Grand Chapter would be forced into a very minor second place.

It was the latter course which eventuated and, in comparison with the Craft, the Royal Arch moved very slowly. The original set of Grand Officers served for two years, a committee to compile a set of rules and regulations was not appointed until January 1891 - which was only the second meeting after the inauguration anyway - nothing whatsoever was done about ritual, Grand Chapter took the backward step of meeting only twice a year and the Committee of General Purposes did not hold its first meeting until 24 October 1890. Finance was a desperate problem and Grand Chapter began life with £50 borrowed from Grand Lodge.

The lack of activity did however have some beneficial side effects as peace



seems to have come very quickly to the Royal Arch scene. Soon after the inauguration, although the Canadian chapters had been omitted, a certain amount of unrestricted visiting appears to have occurred.

The only drawback to full amalgamation was now the position of the principals, present and past, who had not been installed as master of a Craft lodge and the Canadians were no longer willing to join - assuming that they ever had been - while any of their companions were likely to be disadvantaged. The Metropolitan Chapter was able to meet all of the requirements without any problems and the unused Mark warrant in the same name being still available, an approach was made to the Grand Chapter. The Mark degree, incidentally, appears to have played no part in the 1889 discussion (although it was probably the main reason why the Irish chapter had been chosen by the Canadians. A communication was considered at the January 1891 convocation of Grand Chapter and it was recommended that the three Canadian chapters be issued with foundation warrants provided they attached themselves to a Victorian lodge. It was, however, only the Metropolitan Chapter which was interested and, with twenty members, it transferred allegiance under a warrant dated 11 May 1891.

The two other chapters remained under the Canadian Constitution although it is curious to note that the City of Melbourne Chapter, having last met in August 1889, reopened in July 1891 under an arrangement whereby its candidates would first receive the Mark degree in the Metropolitan Mark Lodge.

Peace in the Royal Arch was now at hand and the scene stayed peaceful for some time. Grand Chapter settled its rules and regulations in July 1891 while in September the same year it opened its first born, the Argyle Chapter. Earlier in the year a committee - James, Finlayson and Lempriere - had drawn up a Victorian warrant and Victorian certificates. The next year First Grand Principal Clarke, at the request of the Committee of General Purposes, conferred Past Grand Zerubbabel rank on the foundation First and Second Grand Principals, George Baker and John James.

In 1892 there were complete fraternal relationships between the two constitutions, no doubt prompted to a large extent by the transfer of the Metropolitan Warrant, and a number of companions were members of both constitutions. Late in the year the City of Melbourne Chapter invited George Martin to be the installing first principal. In reply Martin stated that he had consulted with the Grand Principals and George Baker, in particular, saw no reason why he should not accept. Martin was of the opinion that Baker himself would attend if invited and the date suited. Baker apparently found the date to

be unsuitable but Martin attended and carried out the installations. Earlier that year an attempt was made to prevent any further difficulties with Canada and, through the Grand Scribe Ezra, the Victorian body inquired whether Canada was likely to issue any further warrants for chapters in Victoria.

A letter, dated 9 April 1892, duly arrived from the Canadian Scribe Ezra. He explained that he was writing under instruction from his First Grand Principal. The letter said that Mason had 'distinctly stated that it is not his intention to issue any (dispensations) should such application be made' This was promising although there was an escape clause involved which no one realised, and everyone was happy and content.

Unfortunately everyone forgot that it was the Grand Chapter of Canada which issued the warrants and not the First Grand Principal.

### **Peace is Disturbed ... the Excellent Master Question.**

It was not all that long, however, before the peace and calm in the Royal Arch began to be disturbed - it is difficult to visualise it lasting for long in those turbulent days - and the end of 1893 saw the Grand Chapter of Victoria faced with two problems which had to be solved. Neither of them was handled very effectively.

On 2 November 1893 the unhappy - and deceived - companions of St Andrews in the South Chapter discussed a motion with the intention forwarding it for consideration by Grand Chapter if it was passed. It called upon Grand Chapter to recognise the degrees of Mark Master Mason, Excellent Master and Companion of the Holy Royal Arch and to permit all private chapters to practise the three degrees.

The discussion had resulted from the chapter being informed that it did possess the authority to confer the preliminary degrees which the chapter continued to work ever since the inauguration of the Grand Chapter. It was mentioned that two of the past principals had been in attendance at the meeting of representatives to form the Grand Chapter and had been assured that no alterations would be made to the working of the private chapters.

For those familiar with the craft history it is not an unusual tale.

The published history of the chapter records that there appeared to be a marked reluctance on the part of the members to join the new Grand Chapter. Being Scottish there was certainly no necessity for it to do so. One of the leading lights in the chapter was Henry Bannister and he more than anyone else influenced the members into transferring the warrant. Bannister was appointed as the first President of the Committee of General Purposes – an apparently

late appointment as another Geelong companion had originally been elected – and held the office for three years. He evidently worked hard to preserve the right of the chapter to confer the two preliminary degrees as, while he was President, the right was not directly challenged.

Bannister was Scribe of his Chapter in 1893-4 and, as a result of the November discussion, he moved, and his First Principal seconded, at the half-yearly convocation of Grand Chapter on 22 January 1894 that the Supreme Grand Chapter of Victoria recognised the three degrees and permitted all private chapters to practise them. The members of Grand Chapter showed that they had watched closely the practices adopted by Grand Lodge and had learnt their lessons well – T Walker, Fowler and Angell Ellis were the instruments of proof – as Bannister's motion was dealt with by the procedural motion that Grand Chapter move onto the next business.

The Committee of General Purposes, however, did look at the question and at its April meeting passed a Fowler and Louis Peral motion that Grand Chapter prohibit all but the Royal Arch. Grand Chapter discussed this clause at the July convocation and on an Ellis and Thompson motion sent it back to the Committee.

The Committee discussed the matter at its October meeting and Ellis stated that he understood that Grand Chapter had intimated that the working of any degree should not be prohibited. One companion now suggested that only the Mark should be allowed while two others followed by claiming to be strongly opposed to any. The Committee confirmed its original clause, took it back to Grand Chapter in July 1895 and this time it was accepted and approved.

St Andrews in the South Chapter promptly went into recess. On 6 July the following year Bannister wrote to the Grand Scribe Ezra in regard a query and the letter contained the following comment.

‘I have seen some of the former members and am desired to state that when the Supreme Grand Chapter of Victoria repudiated the agreement made with the members of the Scottish Chapter, meetings ceased to be held.’

As far as Bannister was concerned the only way in which meetings of the Chapter could again be held was for the chapter to be allowed to return to work under Scottish control. It remained in abeyance until successful efforts saw its revival in August 1903. This was, unfortunately, some six months after Grand Chapter had completed the re-numbering and the old Chapter had lost its rightful place.

There is probably a little more to the story than what took place in a purely Royal Arch setting. Early in October 1893, about one month before meeting of

the chapter which decided to present the motion to Grand Chapter, David Meadowcroft, the Provincial Grand Secretary or the Scottish Provincial Grand Mark Lodge, was instructed to visit Geelong and confer with the local companions in regard to the possible formation of a Mark Lodge. In December it was reported to the local Mark authorities that no further steps would be taken.

Thus the Excellent Master degree must have been the core of the problem. When the Chapter came out of abeyance Grand Chapter had decided to allow that degree to be practised - although this involves a long mixed up story which we will eventually come to - and early the next year Grand Master Edward Coulson gave permission for the Chapter to be informed of the manner in which a Mark Lodge could be established in Geelong.

### Canadian Expansion.

The second problem which had to be faced, although not necessarily immediately, was the rumoured report that the Grand Chapter of Canada was about to open new private chapters in Victoria, a rumour heard by the Grand Chapter of Victoria with a marked lack of enthusiasm. Strangely the Victorian masons who had shown an amazing reluctance to accept word of mouth agreements in regard to the working of the chapter in Geelong and, later, the wearing of magenta coloured aprons in the St Clair Lodge greeted this rumour as if it was a sworn statement.

Lempriere informed the Committee at its October meeting that he had heard of new chapters to be formed, mentioned the April 1892 letter from Canada and stated that he had written to Canada on 27 September calling attention to the rumours. His action was approved, and the Committee passed a motion to enter a strong protest and, on positive proof being obtained, to cease fraternal intercourse with Canada. This motion was to be forwarded to Canada.

One can only assume that this information had been gleaned from the August 1893 edition of the Canadian Craftsman which reported on the July meeting of Grand Chapter. (It is also possible that a report had been made public of the 19 January meeting of the City of Melbourne Chapter at which the companions had decided to recommend the two petitions but the time delay makes it unlikely that this was the information which Lempriere was working from.)

The Canadian First Grand Principal reported that three applications for dispensations for new chapters had been received from Australia, they appeared to be regular, 'but owing to complications that had arisen during the term of office of his predecessor he refused the dispensations asked for and referred the whole matter to Grand Chapter to deal with which should be done

without delay’.

He further stated that recognition had been withheld from the Grand Chapter of Victoria until the Canadian chapters at work there were recognised.

There was no mention in the report of the decision which was made by the Grand Chapter - which explains why Victoria could not make a definite decision - but later events were to show that the warrants were granted at this convocation even though the First Grand Principal sponsored a defeated amendment to send the question to the Committee of General Purposes.

Jarrett, who had recently launched his paper *Masonry* onto the Victorian scene, did a little digging and came up with part of the story. He referred to the exchange of letters between Lempriere and his Canadian counterpart which led to the previously mentioned April 1892 letter. Possibly, at that time, Victoria had also been seeking recognition. On 24 February 1893 a further letter arrived, and this contained the opinion of the Canadian Scribe Ezra that Canada would not issue further warrants in the territory of Victoria.

The peace between the two jurisdictions was very uneasy as Canada had taken justifiable offence back in 1891 when, in January of that year, a report was received by the Grand Chapter of Canada that a Grand Chapter of Victoria had been inaugurated but that body would not recognise or receive the Royal Arch masons under the Canadian Constitution. It was also mentioned at the annual convocation of that year that there was no clause in the constitutions which permitted the formation of a District Grand Chapter and the Committee recommended that the necessary steps be taken to remedy that deficiency.

The *Australasian Keystone*, following Jarrett’s lead, also decided to offer a few comments and stated that it was understood that some ‘thoughtless Companions’ had applied to the Grand Chapter of Canada for permission to open two new private chapters - which suggests that this was taken from the City of Melbourne Chapter meeting - and that Canada had ‘thoughtlessly granted’ these. In some slight understatement the journal expected some unpleasantness to occur and commented that, while there was peace at the moment this would surely be destroyed. It allowed itself the luxury of some criticism and felt that the members of the Grand Chapter of Victoria were partly answerable as ‘it would have been good taste and good policy to follow the example of the Craft lodges, and invite the chapters under the Grand Chapter of Canada to join them on perfectly equal terms. This, however, they did not do.’ When, afterwards, the possibility was mooted irksome conditions and restrictions were attached. The journal felt that the Canadians should be admitted on terms of perfect equality immediately.

Jarrett, for his part, felt that the restrictions referred to could be very easily

settled as the other colonies did not have the Installed Master requirement for the principals.

Joseph Milton D'Amer Drew had succeeded his father as Grand Superintendent, the only position of real note which he received in a brief masonic career. He decided that the Canadian point of view was required and wrote a letter which was published on 23 November 1893. He stated that, whatever England may have thought, the territory of Victoria was masonically unoccupied at the time the original warrants were issued. The companions working under these warrants were not permitted to join in the ceremonies at the inauguration of the Grand Chapter and several were actually refused admission. This last point was in answer to the claim that was being made that the Canadians had been permitted friendly intercourse although they had elected not to join.

As far as the correspondence between the Grand Scribes was concerned, Drew pointed out the salient factor which many seemed to have missed, or had chosen to ignore, that what had been expressed was purely a personal intention of the then First Grand Principal and could not possibly be binding on the Grand Chapter. The new applications had been referred to the Grand Chapter and had been granted by an overwhelming majority.

Many of the Victorians were aware that the three original chapters under the Canadian Constitution had commenced work under dispensation and that such dispensations, as far as they were treated in Victoria, gave the companions the same rights as did a warrant. However, they did not seem to be aware that they were still only dispensations and that the actual warrant had to be granted by Grand Chapter.

These dispensations were extremely important in a constitution where the Grand body met only yearly and Mason's comment was simply that he would not issue any further dispensations. His successor followed his intentions to the letter. He did not issue any dispensations and he went one step further by attempting to have Grand Chapter defer the granting of the warrants for what would have been one year at least.

The *Australasian Keystone* was to alter its stance slightly soon after Drew's letter - perhaps some official displeasure had been shown - and stated that the Canadians had no right to expect to be invited to join as they were already offenders. This change of approach was included in a comments on a resolution which was passed at the Grand Chapter convocation on 22 January 1894 - editor Kelly rarely criticised the authorities - which claimed that masonic usage had been violated as a Grand Chapter existed and that fraternal intercourse with Canada should cease. The Canadians were to be refused admission to the

Victorian chapters. At the Committee meeting -just before Lempriere - still Grand Scribe Ezra until a successor was appointed - stated that chapters were being opened and he read a Circular in connection with the Duke of Albany Chapter.

The convocation of Grand Chapter was an interesting one. Meadowcroft stated that he had examined all of the material and could not uncover any report of the actual granting of the warrants. (Which again suggests that the Canadian Craftsman had been the original source of information as the journal had neglected to state whether or not the warrants had been issued.) Ferguson pointed out that the Canadians had been snubbed at the inauguration after the question of a conference had been mooted and defeated by one vote while Rodda provided one of his by now increasingly valueless contributions by requesting a stay of six months to see if the Canadians would join the Grand Chapter of Victoria.

It was then debated whether or not the Craft Grand Lodge should have its attention drawn to the fact that a number of masons holding under it were co-operating with Canada. (Kelly's journal wanted Grand Lodge to expel them.) The motion was postponed.

It was not suggested that the Grand Lodge of England be similarly informed. It was resolved after a few amendments - the final version of the motion was attributable to Meadowcroft and Braim - that fraternal recognition would be refused the Canadians in Victoria until advice was received from Canada in regard to the warrants which were said to have been issued. This decision was to be forwarded to Grand Superintendent Drew. A number of companions were now neatly caught as they were members of both constitutions.

### **Some Non-Productive Discussion.**

By including the clause that advice was to be received from Canada the was taken out of the conflict as there now had to be a delay caused by an external source. Everyone was well aware that the Duke of Albany Chapter had been consecrated on 22 December 1893 and the Committee of General Purposes had mentioned this consecration in its report. Still, it was as good a way as any to allow everyone to cool down.

The Canadians began to realise that positive steps had to be taken by one or other of the conflicting parties and, on 30 January 1894, the present and past principals met. It was reported that nothing had been seen or heard of the letter which Drew was reportedly to receive and it was suggested that it had been suppressed in transport. (It was not explained who or why but there was the contributing factor that Lempriere had very recently been requested to resign

his office as Grand Secretary and it is possible that the secretarial area was not operating at full efficiency.) The meeting carried a motion to appoint a committee of five, to invite the Grand Chapter of Victoria to select a similar number and to hold a meeting to endeavour to solve all difficulties.

The Victorian Committee met on 19 February and on an Ellis motion agreed to the proposal. It was pointed out the Canadian letter seemed to suggest that the Canadians had elected six representatives, so the Victorians chose Thompson, Ellis, Davies, BD Smith, Fowler and Maillard.

The conference was held on 21 February and the Canadians had sent along five - Williams, Tuffield, Hookglimmer, Gaffney, Kennedy. Robert Oliver Thompson was elected as chairman and Lempriere acted as secretary. After Williams had stated that the Canadians wanted amalgamation Davies and Hookglimmer moved that it was desirable to find a suitable scheme. Fowler and Williams then moved that the first clause would state that in the future the Installed Master requirement would be insisted upon but those companions who were already principals would have that rank accorded to them irrespective of whether or not they were Installed Masters. The meeting then adjourned.

The Committee of General Purposes met in April and the report was received. The *Australasian Keystone* published a report of this meeting but Kelly, who could justly be charged with being a little biased, managed to introduce a few inaccuracies. He stated that the point had been clearly made that while the Canadians would be admitted on terms of perfect equality, and willingly admitted, the Victorians would not alter or vary the regulations and that the Canadians had accepted this point quite happily.

Jarrett retained his independent, if highly critical, approach and remained unconvinced that the problem had been solved. He commented in his paper on 26 May that the Canadians were quite happy to join if the present officers could progress to the chair of first principal under their present constitutional requirements. This was the point which Kelly neglected to mention, and it was the crux of the problem.

The feelings of the Canadians, outside the conference room, can be judged from the decisions made at the City of Melbourne Chapter. In March a report was given by the District Grand Scribe Ezra John Kennedy - this is not the companion who later became Grand Scribe Ezra of Grand Chapter - on the amalgamation meeting and an emergency meeting of the chapter was called for May. The chapter was definitely not in favour of amalgamation and wanted to delay matters until a further meeting. Highlighting the fact that matter appeared to be poised to move very rapidly the chapter appointed two



representatives in case a meeting was held in the meantime.

Obviously Jarrett's comments were unofficial but they foreshadowed things to come. Grand Chapter met on 27 July and adopted the report of the amalgamation committee. The Committee of General Purposes had met on the 9th, discussed the matter and written to Williams to inquire if the Canadian half had made any progress. A Special meeting was held on the 18<sup>th</sup> to consider a letter from Williams and it is apparent that he requested the waiving of the Installed Master requirement for those who were approaching the chair of third principal.

It is a little difficult to determine how much uniformity of thought there was among the Canadians themselves as the City of Melbourne Chapter decided at a meeting on 19 July - after Williams's letter – that they were not willing to make any deals, they wanted straight Canadian qualifications and the future prospects of the chapter would be very severely marred if any deals were made. (There was ample precedent for this belief as 1889 had seen the St Andrews in the South Chapter placed at a disadvantage when it was forced to follow the new Victorian system and a number of junior officers appeared to lose a lot of interest in the chapter.) At the Special meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> the Committee recorded the receipt of a letter from Charles Chapman stating that the Citizens Chapter was strongly in favour of the amalgamation.

The Committee refused to entertain Williams' suggestion at all. Ellis said that the Canadians were not being asked to join and if they wished to be admitted they had to expect this admission to be entirely on Victorian terms. This was hardly calculated to facilitate matters but Ellis was arguing from fairly safe grounds as the conference had been held at the request of the Canadians.

One of the dual members complained that the procedure was unfair to the Canadians as would be any procedure which did not allow them to amalgamate with all of their privileges. He was promised when he joined certain rights were not given to the Victorians and, now, it was intended to rob him of these.

Thompson picked up this comment and was quick to state that when he joined the Victorian Constitution he knew nothing of any rights or privileges or anything else he was to receive. (This is a debatable point. It seems fair enough for the two major points of divergence to be mentioned. Indeed it was probably essential to inform a candidate for a Canadian Chapter that he would also receive the Mark degree.)

Jarrett comes to our rescue in the period between convocations of Grand Chapter and, on 15 September, he commented that he had been informed that the Committee of General Purposes had decided not to recognise the Canadians, the Victorians were to be enjoined not to visit and the Canadians

were not to be admitted to the Victorian chapters. Those who were members of both constitutions were to retire from one, the option being left in the hands of the companion concerned. Ellis and Maillard had been responsible for this motion within the Committee and it should be pointed out that this decision had not been ratified by Grand Chapter.

The last decision has to be read as peculiar. It had now reached the stage where the only thing that was irregular was the individual chapter under the Canadian Constitution, the Victorian companions who were members of both being able to become regular simply by renouncing all Canadian connections with, apparently, no further obligation. If nothing else such a decision was probably as good a lever as any as far as getting something accomplished was concerned for the divergence was beginning to show signs of widening, particularly as the United Wimmera Chapter had just been consecrated.

An Angell Ellis inspired motion was on the notice paper for a special Convocation of Grand Chapter on 21 November 1894. It was upon the motion of the previous January when Grand Chapter had decided to cease all communication with Canada unless a satisfactory reply was received in regard to the rumoured new warrants. None had been, the chapters which were considered to be illegal were still working and Ellis wanted Grand Chapter to resolve- to draw the attention of Grand Lodge to the invasion and request the enforcement of rule 182 of the constitutions of that body.

Ellis had brought up the continuing question of the Canadians at the October Committee meeting and felt that they should be getting to a conclusion but Maillard and Davies produced the suggestion of asking Grand Lodge to expel the Canadians.

(Matters were a little tricky, particularly when the term 'invasion' was being used. All masonic jurisdictions agree that once a Grand body has been formed in a territory no other constitution may open a private body. Canada, however, had never recognised the Grand Chapter of Victoria and, consequently would not agree that an invasion had occurred. England, on the other hand, had recognised Victoria, considered the Canadian action to be an invasion and stopped talking to Canada.)

Jarrett, meanwhile, appears to have been firmly of the opinion that Ellis had lost his mind as rule 182 referred to the making of masons clandestinely or for unworthy considerations. He pointed out that it was the Canadians who admitted on very small fees while the Canadians could by no means be considered as unworthy as they included the cream of the Craft in their ranks. He could also have pointed out that the Canadians were not 'making masons'. One also wonders just how much truth there was in his last statement as, if it

was true or even basically true, an element of jealousy could have crept in. One can only speculate upon just what Ellis had in mind and why he seemed to be so strongly opposed to solving the problems. It had been his chapter which had destroyed the arrangements back in 1889 and he was not exactly assisting matters with motions of this kind. Could he have laid the blame for the challenge to his position as Grand Treasurer on those Craft brethren who were members of the Canadian chapters?

And why did he not suggest that the same objection be sent to the Grand Lodge of England Oldfield, the first principal of the new Duke of Albany Chapter, was the master or the Combermere Lodge while Williams was the director of ceremonies of the same lodge?

Whether Ellis lost interest in following through with the motion, whether he had never liked it had simply acted as spokesman for the Committee or whether he was persuaded that it would not be conducive to harmony to continue is not known but he did not attend the special convocation.

Thompson moved the motion proforma, Davis seconded it and Fowler and Smith promptly moved for its consideration to be postponed. Grand Chapter displayed wisdom and passed the latter motion. The Second and Third Grand Principals, George Baker and Frank Davies were thanked for the steps which had been taken by them. This referred to a conference between these two and the Canadians which Williams, as chairman, had reported to his companions on 19 November, three days before the special convocation of Grand Chapter. Williams had reported that the Victorians were willing to allow every Canadian with Canadian qualifications for the principal's chairs to be elected and installed for the next twelve or fifteen months.

It does appear that the matter had been taken out of the hands of the Committee of General Purposes and that Baker - presumably with Clarke's backing - had decided that the question had to be settled.

### **Amalgamation on the Horizon.**

At this meeting Gaffney, the Grand Superintendent, had offered his personal opinion that the time was right for amalgamation but, in his official capacity believed that the Victorians should rescind their latest edict.

All had agreed with him and they passed the following motions.

1. It was desirable to amalgamate along the lines foreshadowed by the chairman and then agreed to by Baker, Davies, Williams and Gaffney.
2. A copy was to be signed and sent to the Grand Scribe.
3. The agreement was to be laid before the private chapters.

Williams was also able to inform his Canadian companions that the District

Grand Mark Lodge, English Constitution, believed the Canadians to be perfectly legal but, on joining, should be re-obligated.' This removed one problem which had been caused by the refusal to debate the motion from St Andrews in the South. As it eventuated, however, it was to the Scottish Constitution that the Mark men were to turn.

Obviously some companions were working hard behind the scenes to tie the two sections together as now only time was needed. At the January 1895 Committee meeting Ellis and WB Fox moved the necessary motion to allow the Committee to apply to the Grand Lodge to allow the Installed Master degree to be conferred on some six to eight brethren. (The removal of the degree from the Canadian system could not have occurred at a more inopportune time as surely the Victorians would have accepted it given the atmosphere of the day.) This attempt to hand the problem over to another authority led to Baker, as Deputy Grand Master, moving an incredible motion which was, in effect, a request that the established usages and customs be overridden. It was rightly ruled out of order and Grand Chapter was left to solve its own problems.

The next half yearly convocation in January 1895 saw Ellis withdraw his postponed motion as a result of a letter which had been received from the Canadians and had been favourably accepted. The amalgamation committee reported that, after a long and careful consideration and being desirous of union, they now recommended that the First Grand Principal be given authority by Grand Chapter to issue dispensations to confer on the hereinafter named companions the necessary qualifications to be principals in any chapter, such dispensations to be issued immediately the amalgamation was accomplished.

With these strong overtures of peace in the air Jarrett, who at times allowed his editorial position to run away with his good judgement chose to publish a report of the Grand Chapter of Louisiana. This Grand Chapter was of the opinion that the Grand Chapter of Victoria was irregular and unlawful and claimed that both Way and Hunt - the latter was Deputy Grand Master of New South Wales - considered it to be illegal.

This may well have been true but it was hardly the time to publish it. However not even Jarrett could ruin things and the last difficulty was being solved in April as the Canadians were in touch with the local Scottish authorities to obtain Mark warrants.

On 1 April 1895 the Victorians received a letter from Williams containing the intelligence that the Canadians had elected a committee with full power to settle the matter. The Victorians promptly elected Baker, Davies, Thompson,

Braim and Rodda and later the same day they met with Gaffney, Leishman, Walker, Florance, Kennedy and Williams. Baker assumed the chair and Davies and Leishman moved that amalgamation was desirable. Williams and Davies then moved the main motion. The Canadians would receive free warrants and free registration, that in the future the Installed Master requirement would be strictly insisted upon but those who were already past principals would continue to be recognised as such and, the major point, organisations would be issued for all elected as principals at the next installation after the amalgamation, such dispensations not to exceed eight. Williams and Gaffney moved that given the above the rules and regulations of the Victorian Constitution would be acknowledged.

All then signed the agreement.

On 30 May the Victorians separately confirmed the agreement and the Canadians were allowed twelve months in which to transfer allegiance before the agreement became null and void.

Amalgamation Achieved.

On 22 July 1895 it was - almost - all over as four of the five warrants were handed in for cancellation. The fifth, United Wimmera, was to be delivered in two days' time. To cement the two sections firmly together Williams was appointed Third Grand Principal and Oldfield Grand Standard Bearer. Past Grand rank was ratified and the Past Grand Superintendents became Third Grand Principals while the four Past Grand Principal Sojourners - Kennedy, Dumont, Williams and Tuffield - received the same rank in the Victorian Constitution.

Jarrett now felt free to comment openly and he claimed that the degree had suffered badly during the past two years due to the unfriendliness of the Victorians and that these had been the chief sufferers.

The Grand Chapter of Canada sent a cablegram of good wishes and conferred past Grand rank on a number of leading members of that constitution. The convocation of the Canadian Grand Chapter which registered these ranks was held on 16 July or, as Jarrett commented, at the eleventh hour. Probably keeping in mind the mild furore which followed Munro's Craft list some six years earlier, although the circumstances were vastly different, the Canadians decided at an informal meeting not to press for the recognition of these as such an action could be detrimental to the general and popular desire for amalgamation.

Jarrett did mention that this informal meeting, held just before the convocation of Grand Chapter of Victoria, had been by no means unanimous and that some companions had been willing to sacrifice all the good work for the sake of little

personal glory.

Drew senior was to become a Past First Grand Principal while Drew junior, Williams, Dumont, Collis, Kennedy and Gaffney were to be appointed Past Second Grand Principals. John James sent a letter of congratulations to the convocation which celebrated the amalgamation as, apparently, he had continued to work hard in the background to complete the task he had begun in 1889 and Jarrett offered him congratulations in return.

One may wonder why the name was not altered to the United Grand Chapter. Most likely it was never considered - England did not have a United Grand Chapter - but if it had been the reasoning was probably along the lines adopted by England in 1817. As the amalgamation was not between two Grand 'Chapters the term 'united' could not logically be used. (Under this reasoning it was debatable whether the Craft body in Victoria is entitled to use the term, although it was undoubtedly advisable to differentiate between the two Grand Lodges which were formed, while the mark body has no right to use it all. Following is a list of all chapters formed in Victoria prior to the amalgamation of 1895.

#### English Constitution Chapters

Number	Name	Warrant	Comments	Victorian numbers	
474	Australasian	5.11.44		1	1
530	Golden	3.2.58	Now Royal Golden	7	3
641	Victorian	1.8.60	Victorian-Washington 1906.	3	4
692	Eureka		No. 793 until 13.9.1870.		
713	Yarrowee	5.5.80		10	7
727	Collingwood	4.8.58		13	2
728	Beechworth St John	6.11.72	Erased 10.1907	14	
729	Meridian St John	3.63			
747	Melbourne	16.12.84		17	8
752	Combermere				
793	Eureka		Changed to No. 692		
930	South Yarra	5.8.63		38	6
1133	Zenith				
1202	Keystone		Erased c. 1900		
1371	Moir	5.1.89		64	12
2080	Clarke	8.3.88		98	11

### Irish Constitution Chapters

368	Washington	17.4.63	Amalgamated 30.9.06	9	5
424	Duke of Leinster	1860			

### Scottish Constitution Chapters

81	St Andrew in the South	1858		5	19
88	St Clair	1861			
93	St George	1863			
217	Mackersley	1889			

### Canadian Constitution Chapters

93	Metropolitan	1886	V.C. 1891	85	13
96	Australasian Kilwinning	1888	Erased 10.07	93	10
97	City of Melbourne	1888		92	9
107	Citizens	1893	Shakespeare 10.1903	166	15
108	Duke of Albany	1893	Erased 10.1907	91	17
109	United Wimmera	1893		84	16

### Victorian Constitution Chapter

105	Argyle	1891		105	14
-----	--------	------	--	-----	----

It should be noted that the English Constitution chapters were allotted the same number as the lodge to which each was attached. The chapters formed prior to the closing up of the numbers in 1863 would have had on formation a different number. These can be found in a list of Craft lodges.

Under the Victorian Constitution each of the chapters has had two numbers, the first being allotted in 1889 or at the time the chapter joined the constitution and it was the number of the parent Craft lodge. Thus the Canadian chapters were forced to attach themselves to a lodge in 1895. The second is the number given to each chapter in January 1903.

A few other comments are in order. When the re-numbering, supposedly in the order of the precedence of the original warrants, was completed in 1903.

It is obvious that the passing of the years had allowed a few errors to creep in. The Metropolitan Chapter, which was most definitely the first of the Canadian chapters to be formed, is obviously misplaced as it is below two chapters which were formed two years later. It does appear that the Victorian warrant of 1891 was the one considered.

It is also apparent that the Beechworth St John Chapter had been in abeyance

for some time before its official erasure as it was not included the new list of numbers. The erasing of the three chapters in 1907 was most likely the formal conclusion to deaths which had occurred some years previously. (One report dated the last meeting of the Beechworth chapter as 13 December 1891 and that of the Australasian Kilwinning as 28 February 1901.) The St Andrews in the South Chapter was unfortunately in abeyance at the time or it would have been near to the top of the list. The Argyle Chapter has been included in the above list as it was the only chapter consecrated by the Grand Chapter of Victoria to have worked under two numbers. The chapter which was officially responsible for the new set of number, the Goulbourn Valley Chapter, had a brief life as It was erased in 1910.

### **Joseph D'Amer Drew and his Canadian Rank.**

The amalgamation should have seen the end of all of the problems in Royal Arch masonry but there were still two legacies from Canada, with a little help from Scotland, which had to be settled. The Excellent Master degree was in-to be raised, particularly as it was being worked in a neighbouring state, and become hopelessly confused with the Most Excellent Master degree which the Canadians had been nominally working while Canada, in its eleventh hour appointments, had made Joseph D'Amer Drew a Past Grand Zerubbabel.

At the first convocation after the amalgamation, in January 1896, before any business at all had been conducted Gaffney requested the holding of the minutes until an addition was made. George Baker ruled that the minutes had to be read as they stood. This was duly done but before they were put for confirmation Williams asked for the minutes to be altered, or corrected, to register Drew's rank among the others listed. Gaffney followed this by stating that he, personally, would forgo any honours but asked the Grand Chapter to recognise the pioneer of Canadian Royal Arch masonry in Victoria.

In explanation he stated that on the night of amalgamation a cable had arrived conferring certain titles but the patents had not been received.

There had been thoughts of not attending on the night and now, on the advice of the Grand Scribe Ezra, he was entering a protest. He believed that two of the clauses in the Basis of Union were ambiguous.

Baker regretted that discord was occurring on the first night, but Williams quickly expressed his conviction that no discord was desired or expected. A letter from Gaffney - presumably the formal protest - was then read. Drew thanked Williams for the attempt and said that he would decline the honour in the same fashion. He had been appointed a Past Grand Zerubbabel by Canada and neither this, nor any other Grand Chapter, could take that away from him.



(This case was quite different from the situation which had occurred in the Craft amalgamation due to David Munro's list and two important differences are immediately obvious. In the Craft Munro's list was not only very lengthy in that it contained quite a large number of names, but it also attempted to create four Past Grand Masters, none of whom had really accomplished anything to merit such an honour. In the present case only one companion was involved and Drew had at least been in charge of a District. More importantly, however, the Grand Chapter which conferred the rank was still in existence and entirely within its rights in conferring rank, either then or on some future occasion, whomsoever it pleased. Victoria could not refuse to recognise the Canadian rank, unless it chose not to recognise the constitution, but it could refuse to confer the identical rank on Drew under this constitution. Presumably this was the point Drew was attempting to make.) Ellis was by now becoming a little irascible and demanded that past rank must be in accordance with the list submitted by Gaffney at the amalgamation. Baker and Gaffney followed with a slight altercation in which each insisted he must protect his own.

The Reverend Rodda entered the debate at this point and could have easily destroyed the essentially peaceful mood in which the matter was being discussed. (It would not be surprising, however, if very few people listened to Rodda anymore and his vagueness, along with Ellis's antagonism, was probably tolerated because of the age and position of each.) Rodda considered the Canadians to be claiming far more than they should and far more than the Victorians could claim, that of Past Grand Zerubbabel. He assumed that cable originated here.

This was an extraordinary accusation for him to make and Gaffney quickly denied it pointing out that Rodda had no right to make such a statement. Rodda would not retract, did not think he was wrong and believed that he had a perfect right to make any statement he wished. (Rodda may have meant something slightly different to the meaning his words conveyed and he could have had in mind a previous action of the Canadians. In January 1894 the City of Melbourne Chapter had recommended Collis and Leishman for Grand Chapter honours and had actually suggested that each be appointed a Past Grand Superintendent. Victoria's ally in Canada, Daniel Spry, moved as such in Grand Chapter and the two companions received the requested rank. Rodda may well have meant that the suggestion for the conferred ranks had originated in Victoria.)

Matters looked like becoming rather nasty at this point and Ellis's motion to not recognise the rank was quickly put and carried.

One wonders just what the masons of Canada thought of those Victorian masons who seemed to be so eager to denigrate Canadian masonry whenever possible. It had started in 1883 with the 'Red Pamphlet' and concluded with the Victorians refusing to acknowledge this latest rank. One also wonders how short Rodda's memory had become as, in 1892, Clarke had conferred Grand Zerubbabel rank on James and Baker and the latter was chairing the present convocation.

Drew had second thoughts and decided not to let the matter die. The Committee of General Purposes received a letter from Drew in October 1897 and Sinclair and Tompsitt successfully moved that it be passed on to Grand Chapter. Drew consequently placed a motion for debate on the notice paper for the January 1898 convocation. He explained that the Grand Chapter, not the First Grand Principal, had conferred the rank and it had been voted in open conclave. It was a high honour and indicated the respect in which he was held by his companions. He did not ask this Grand Chapter for any rank at all, he just wished it to register his title from a sister Grand Chapter. According to the Articles of Union all Past Grand rank was to be recognised and his diploma was dated prior to the actual amalgamation. (There was the unmentioned consideration that when the union did come it came quickly, the Grand Chapter of Canada met only yearly and if it was desired to confer honours then Canada had done so at the earliest opportunity.)

Drew stated that he had held office as District Third Grand Principal under the English Constitution in Victoria which, he claimed, was equivalent to District Grand Master in the Craft, a stand which have experienced considerable difficulty in maintaining, and he was entitled to be a Past First Grand Principal on those grounds but he was basing his claims entirely on his Canadian patent. Which was, of course, very wise of him. He did not, he claimed, seek or ask for favours.

One speaker ignored the basic facts by claiming that the document was not heard of at the time of the amalgamation and had only popped up afterwards. Thompson stated that, at the union, the Canadians had submitted a list of names, Drew was not on the list with the rank he was now claiming, and the document could not be produced on that night or since. He suggested, that the question stand over.

Gaffney's explanation had been ignored.

In April 1898 the Committee determined to ask the Grand Registrar to report on Drew's application while in July a sub-committee of Cohen, Davies, Thompson, Sinclair and Grand Registrar Brown was appointed to meet with Drew.



The Hon. JD Brown

[later when M.L.C., Attorney-General and Solicitor-General for Victoria]

In September 1898 Grand Registrar James Drysdale Brown informed Grand Chapter that he had conferred with Drew and the two were in agreement in regard to the facts of the case. The only difference of opinion was the interpretation to be placed on the Articles of Union. Drew suggested that a committee of Past Grand Registrars discuss and decide the question and he, Drew, would then feel bound by the decision.

The rank was acknowledged by Grand Chapter in September 1899. The convocation was sparsely attended as Grand Lodge was holding its particular quarterly communication at Ballarat and Grand Chapter was meeting on the night before or after Grand Lodge. Grand Registrar Derham explained that he had conferred with two Past Grand Registrars and the three had not even been able to arrive at a majority opinion. Derham stated that, on the facts, the rank had to be awarded to Drew and he moved the necessary motion. Grand Chapter apparently decided to soften the blow to its pride by conferring the same rank on Robert Oliver Thompson and Frank Davies at the same time.

### Personalities.

The chief negotiator from the Canadian point of view appears to have been one Ezra Hulbert Williams and a number of meetings of the Canadians in both the Royal Arch and the Mark were held at his home. He was born in Canada in

1864 and came to Melbourne for his health around the middle of the 1880s, intending to remain for about one year. The Canadians made a presentation to him in January 1896 and he died a few years later.

There is no suggestion that Canadian Royal Arch masonry was brought to Victoria by Williams and he appears to have been initiated in Victoria. We are left with Drew, or possibly York Bramwell, to fill that role.

The fourth of the active Grand Superintendents, Francis Bernard Lawson Gaffney, is deserving of a mention but he does not appear to have played a large part in the determination of policy. It is possible, that he became Superintendent somewhat by default. York Bramwell served for a number of years but his successor, Drew senior, resigned after one year in, what appears to have been a move designed purely to give the office to his son. The younger Drew also served for one year only and promptly drifted away from active masonry. He was married around this time.

This judgement may be a little harsh, it may well have been agreed policy to limit the tenure of office to but one year - just before the amalgamation the ritual printer Chapman was being nominated as the next Grand Superintendent - but Gaffney's masonic record does not really suggest that he had earned the honour. He became somewhat difficult to handle in masonry during the 1900s, nearly wrecked his Mark lodge and appeared to be unconcerned when his chapter was erased as it was not until some six years later that he that petitioned for the removal of his own automatic suspension.

[ *To be continued* ]

AN EXPLANATION OF THE TRACING BOARDS OF PHOENIX LODGE NO. 94  
by William Waples

The following is the text of the first section of a booklet produced by the late WBro William Waples [1884-1969] currently held in a private collection in Australia.

I acknowledge the generous assistance of WBro John James, Secretary of Phoenix Lodge No. 94, UGLE.

The accompanying image of the First Degree Cloth is reproduced with the kind permission of WBro RJR Hardman of that Lodge.

Dring, in his landmark paper on Tracing Boards [*AQC*xxix], refers to the report *Summer Outing, July, 1908, Durham* by Bro Dr S Walshe Owen in *AQC*xxi, viz:

On the walls also were the T.B.'s of the Lodge; most deeply interesting. All were very different to those we know in the South, and though the differences, for obvious reasons, cannot be explained in detail, it is to be hoped that our Q.C. Lodge may be able to obtain photographs of them. The third was what might be called (by a Zoologist) the most "aberrant" from the normal. A recumbent figure was upon it, but the artist had apparently copied it from a Crucifix, and simply altered the extended arras and put them to the side, parallel with the body. Beneath was an "Arc rule," or Sector, with the numbers 3, 5, 7, 9, 11 and 15.

This sequence of numbers was also the subject of a query by 'W.W.', [presumably Bro Waples] which was responded to by Bro Alex Horne. This can be found as Q.48 – '3, 5, 7, 9, 11, and 15' on pages 234-5 in *AQC*lxxvi.





## THE FIRST DEGREE CLOTH.

In Operative Masonry the Master Mason uses a Tracing Board for the purpose of making a draft or plan of the several parts of the intended building. On this Board he delineates, in full scale size, the details of the important shapes and designs, and from the drawings, he makes patterns in lead or zinc, which the Craftsmen use as Templates or Moulds.

The Speculative Mason also uses a Tracing Board generally in the form of a framed Cloth.

In the early days of this and other Lodges the Tracing Board was called “The Lodge” and was always veiled from the eyes of the profane. At the Constitution of every Lodge the Three Great Lights and the Three Lesser Lights, as well as the Jewels of the Lodge, were placed upon the Cloth, and were Dedicated in due form – thus was formed the macrocosm which could be used in the common room of an Inn, or the thoroughfare where Masons gathered to lay the foundation stone of a public structure.

To the Speculative Mason the Tracing Board (or Cloth) represents the ground plan of the Holy Temple, and more especially the ground floor of the Inner Temple – the Holy of Holies. As such it becomes the Holy Ground upon and around which the Candidate is Made, Passed, and Raised. Since the Union of the two Grand Lodges in 1813, three Cloths have been used to depict the emblems and symbols of the different degrees of Freemasonry. The Board of the Entered Apprentice degree is still used at the Constitution of every Lodge as the symbol of the Lodge, and it is in that ceremony that the term “The Lodge” is retained on and around “The Lodge”, the emblems of Freemasonry dedicated to the use of the Lodge; round its border, the Founders of the new Lodge are Constituted and Consecrated to a Masonic way of life and service, and in similar manner, every newly made Mason is dedicated to a new birth, and a purpose in life.

On the Cloth, which should be upon the centre of the Lodge room floor, are varied emblems, the symbolic interpretation of which is intended to form a pattern of Creation and the Mansions of Bliss, overlooked by The All Seeing Eye of T G A O T U.

The Candidate represents the macrocosm in the great drama of Initiation. To keep within the precincts of the Holy Ground and within Cable Tow, during the Initiation journey, should be an earnest endeavour, for it teaches the great lesson of reliance upon God alone, and dependency upon Him as Conductor to “That Spiritual Temple not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens.”

The First degree of Freemasonry is intended, in its symbolic signification, to furnish a representation of youth, just entering on the struggles, the trials, and the duties of an earthly and responsible existence.

On admission into the Lodge the Candidate is reminded of the weak and helpless State of man on his entrance into the world – unprepared for the exigencies of the present; ignorant of the vicissitudes of the future, and dependent for the safety on God, on whom alone, in all trials and difficulties, is there sure and abiding trust.

And as the youth is prepared by a useful and virtuous education for his journey through life, so the Apprentice obtains in this degree those first instructions whereon to erect his future moral and Masonic edifice. He now receives the elementary details of that universal language in which hereafter he is to converse with his brethren of all nations, so as to understand, and be understood by Masons of every tongue. He is directed to take as a staff and scrip for his journey, a knowledge of all the virtues that expand the heart, and dignify the soul. Secrecy, obedience, humility, trust in God, purity of conscience, economy of time, are all inculcated by symbolic ceremonies, too impressive in their Character ever to be forgotten.

And lastly as Charity forms the Chief Corner stone of all the Masonic virtues, the beauty and holiness of this attribute we depicted in emblematic modes which no spoken language can equal. The degree of the Apprentice is, in short, one of preparation for a more advance position, and more exalted privileges and duties.

The teachings of the apprentice degree is here symbolised by various emblems.

Viz:- “The irradiated Sun. The letters T, F, P & J.  
“The working Tools, the Clock, The inverted  
“Star, the square and polished Ashlar, the  
“Lewis, The Sun, Moon and Seven Stars. The  
“Clouded Canopy. The All-Seeing Eye. The  
“Jewels of the Master and his Wardens. The  
“Border of Diamonds. The Orientation of the  
“Cloth, and lastly, but most important of all,  
“The Volume of the Sacred Law and the Square  
“and Compasses.

But before a Candidate may be offered an explanation of these emblems he must “be prepared” to receive them, and it is interesting to note that there is much analogy between the preparation of the Candidate in Masonry, and the



preparation for entering the Temple, as practised among the ancient Israelites. The Talmudical treatise entitled “Beracoth” prescribes the regulations in these words:

“No man shall enter into the Lord’s house with his staff, (an offensive weapon) nor with his outer garment, nor with his shoes on his feet, nor with money in his purse.” And having been prepared according to ancient custom there follows “the Shock of entrance” – a peculiar moment when the Compasses are put to special use. To comprehend the purport of this symbolism, it is essential to appreciate that in the symbolic science of Masonry that the Lodge is often represented as a symbol of life. In this case Lodge labour becomes the symbol of the labour of life, its duties, its trials and tribulations; and the Mason is the type of the labourer and actor in that life.

The Lodge is then, at the time of the reception of an Entered Apprentice, a symbol of the world, and the initiation is a type of the new life upon which the candidate is about to enter – He stands without the portals on the threshold of a new Masonic way of life, in darkness, helplessness and ignorance, craving a new birth, and a withdrawal of the veil, which conceals Divine Light from his uninitiated sight. Within the Portals, the Candidate is brought to the Holy Ground of the Temple, here depicted by the mosaic flooring and the letters H.G. In some ancient Lodges the portals were represented by the Pillars B. and J. sometimes on the Cloth itself and in some cases by actual full sized Pillars at the West end of the Lodge. And having been conducted to the portals, there is unknown to him, the place of Dedication to a new life, the place of Light, symbolised here by an irradiated Sun within which are the letters T. F. P. and J, which stand respectively for the four cardinal virtues, i.e.: - Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence and Justice. This ensemble represents the altar of Dedication, the V. of the S. L. that great Light in Freemasonry – The V. of the S. L. is dedicated to God because it is the inestimable gift of God to man; it is the rule and guide of our faith, on it lies the square, the emblem of the Master, who is destined to be our spiritual guide, and also the compasses, by which the candidate is taught to circumscribe his desires, and keep his passions within due bounds.

Having dedicated his life to Masonry, there follows the shock of enlightenment, “and, God says let there be light, and there was light”. The material light which sprang forth at the fiat of the Great Architect of the Universe; when chaos and darkness were dispensed has ever been, in Masonry, a symbol of that intellectual illumination which it is the object of the Order to create in the minds of its disciples, whence we have justly assumed the title “The Sons of Light”. This mental illumination, this spiritual light, which, after

his new birth, is the first demand of the candidate, is but another name for Divine Truth – the truth of God and the soul – the nature and essence of both – which constitute the chief design of all Masonic teaching – the shock of enlightenment then is to all Masons the symbol of the birth of intellectual light and the dispersion of intellectual darkness.

Immediately above the symbol of light is an inverted Star, the emblem of an inactive life, pointing out to every Mason that before he received the spiritual light of Masonry and the new birth, he was, as one that is dead. This emblem is to be seen on ancient Masonic tombstones – as the sign of activity.

The Clock at the right side is a reminder that the hours of the day and night should be divided equally into hours of labour, refreshment and sleep.

The working tools viz:- the Mallet, Chisel and Trowel – are emblems well known to every Mason – the Trowel especially is reminiscent of the spread of brotherly love – one of the great principles upon which the Order is founded. The Square is the symbol of the Master and inculcates morality. The Level is the jewel of the Senior Warden and inculcates equality. The Plumline belongs to the Junior Warden and teaches the valuable lesson of rectitude of conduct. The Lewis, an instrument by which the operative mason is enabled to lift great weights, teaches the important lesson that the son of a mason should support his parents after they have borne the heat and burden of the years.

The perfect ashlar is the symbol of that perfect life to which all good masons should strive. It also has a symbolic reference to the Corner-stone, which to a Mason on his initiation, marks the commencement of the moral and intellectual task of erecting a spiritual temple in his heart – the squareness of its surface, emblematic of morality, its cubic form, emblematic of firmness and stability of character – and the peculiar fineness and finish of the material – emblematic of virtue and holiness – show that the ceremony of the North east corner of the Lodge was undoubtably intended to portray in the consecrated language of symbolism, the necessity of integrity and stability of conduct of truthfulness and uprightness of character, and of purity and holiness of life, which just at that time, and in that place the candidate is most impressively charged to maintain.

Above the Volume of the Sacred Law is the Pillared Hall of the Mansions of Bliss, the goal of the Masonic aspirant. All the labour, trials and vicissitudes of life – are directed to that great objective. The Trinity of Pillars here represented, also represent the Pillars of creation, known to masons as Wisdom, Strength and Beauty; Wisdom to contrive, strength to support, and beauty to adorn all great and important undertakings of these, the column of Wisdom is situated in the east part of the Lodge and is represented by the W.

Master, because it is presumed that he has wisdom to devise labour for the Craft, and to superintend them during the hours thereof; the column of Strength is situated in the West part of the Lodge, and is represented by the Senior Warden; because it is his duty to strengthen and support the authority of the Master; the column of Beauty is situated in the South part of the Lodge, and is represented by the Junior Warden, because from his position in the South he is the first to observe the meridian Sun, which is the beauty and glory of the day to call the workmen from labour to refreshment, to superintend them during the hours thereof, to see that none convert the purposes of refreshment into those of intemperance and excess, and to call them on again in due season. And over all the varied symbols is the clouded canopy through which pierces the all-seeing eye of TGAOTU, the searcher of hearts and minds, always present, day and night, the symbols of which remind each of us that His ever-present omniscience never sleeps or tires. The canopy also represents the blue vault of heaven; the star decked heaven where all good Masons hope at last to arrive.

The orientation of the macrocosm of the universe betokens order and regularity – the East is the place of Light, the West the place of darkness, the North is the temporary abode of the Entered Apprentice and the South his place of refreshment and labour. Surrounding all is the Border of Diamonds, the emblem of fertility, emblematic of newness – new life and instruction, and the bounds which circumscribe Masonic activities – To keep within these bounds is the first duty of every newly instructed Freemason.

It will be noted that the Cloth is oriented N. E. S. and W. The aspirant makes his perambulation on the edge of the diamond border, and advances with irregular steps from West to East, on the Holy Ground of the Temple towards that “Light” which is known to Masons as “The Light that Shineth in the Darkness and the darkness comprehendeth it not.”

To appreciate the meaning and intention of all the symbols and to apply the teachings towards the advancement of our spiritual life, is to prepare oneself for still further rewards on life’s highway, to that kingdom, where reign peace, contentment and bliss, known only to the perfect Mason.

[The Explanation of the FC Cloth will appear in the next *Harashim*.]

# HARASHIM

חרשים

No. 84: December 2019

ISSN 1328-2735

The quarterly magazine of the  
Australian and New Zealand  
Masonic Research Council.



*Harashim*, Hebrew for *Craftsmen*, is a quarterly newsletter published by the Australian and New Zealand Masonic Research Council, in March, June, September and December each year. It is supplied to Affiliates and Associates electronically in PDF format. It is available worldwide as a PDF as an email attachment, upon application to the Editor at [morsemasonic@gmail.com](mailto:morsemasonic@gmail.com). *Harashim* may be read online at <https://issuu.com/harashimed>

### Copyright and reprinting

Copyright is vested in ANZMRC and the author of any article appearing in *Harashim*.

Affiliates and Associates are encouraged to reprint the entire newsletter (at their own expense) and circulate it to their own members, including their correspondence circles (if any) and to supply copies to public and Masonic libraries within their jurisdictions.

Individual items from any issue may be reprinted by Associates and Affiliates, provided:

- The item is reprinted in full;
- The name of the author and the source of the article are included; and
- A copy of the publication containing the reprint is sent to the editor.

Anyone else wishing to reprint material from *Harashim* must first obtain permission from the copyright holders via the editor.

*Unless otherwise specified, authors submitting original work for publication in Harashim are deemed to grant permission for their work to be published also on the Internet websites of ANZMRC* <http://anzmrc.org> and <https://issuu.com/harashimed>

### Contents

Affiliate and Associate members are encouraged to contribute material for the newsletter, including:

- Their lecture programs for the year;
- Any requests from their members for information on a research topic;
- Research papers of more than local interest that merit wider publication.

The newsletter also includes news, reports from ANZMRC, book reviews, extracts from other publications and a readers' letters column, from time to time.

If the source of an item is not identified, it is by the editor. Opinions expressed are those of the author of the article and should not be attributed to the Council.

Material submitted for publication must be in a digitized form by e-mail, or memory stick addressed to the editor, Neil Wynes Morse, PO Box 6080, Mawson ACT 2607 Australia. Or email to [morsemasonic@gmail.com](mailto:morsemasonic@gmail.com)

Clear illustrations, diagrams and photographic prints suitable for scanning are welcome, and most computer graphic formats are acceptable. Photos of contributors (preferably *not* in regalia) would be useful. *Contributors who require posted material to be returned should include a stamped, self-addressed envelope.*

### General correspondence

All other correspondence, including about purchase of files and books, should be directed to: The Secretary, ANZMRC. Brendan Kyne, 7 Devon Ave Coburg Vic 3058 or <[lordbiff@hotmail.com](mailto:lordbiff@hotmail.com)>

# ANZMRC DIRECTORY

## ANZMRC People

President	Kerry Nicholls	Huntermville, NZ
Immediate Past President	Neil Morse	Farrer, ACT, Australia
Vice-President	Ian Green	Launceston, Tas, Australia
Vice-President	Phil Ivamy	Nelson, NZ
Vice-President	David Slater	Higgins, ACT, Australia
Secretary	Brendan Kyne	Melbourne, Vic, Australia
Asst. Secretary	Colin Heyward	Waipawa, NZ
Treasurer	Harvey Lovewell	Cairns, Qld, Australia
Digital Library Co-ordinator	Ed Robinson	Wellington, NZ
Information Officer	Pete Grounds	Melbourne, Vic, Australia
2020 Conference Convenor	Glenn Summerhayes	Dunedin, NZ
Webmaster	Don Ray	Chisholm, ACT, Australia

## ANZMRC Affiliate (Voting) Members

The Research Lodge of Ruapehu 444 NZ	Palmerston North, NZ
United Masters Lodge 167 NZ	Auckland, NZ
Midland District Lodge of Research 436 NZ	Timaru, NZ
Hawke's Bay Research Lodge 305 NZ	Hawke's Bay, NZ
Top of the South Research Lodge 470 NZ	Nelson, NZ
The Research Lodge of Otago 161 NZ	Dunedin, NZ
Research Lodge of Wellington 194 NZ	Wellington, NZ
Research Lodge of the Taranaki Province 323 NZ	New Plymouth, NZ
Research Lodge of Southland 415 NZ	Invercargill, NZ
The Waikato Lodge of Research 445 NZ	Waikato, NZ
Masters and Past Masters Lodge 130 NZ	Christchurch, NZ
Research Chapter No 93 NZ	Auckland, NZ
Hobart Lodge of Research 62 TC	Tasmania, Australia
Newcastle Masonic Study Circle	NSW, Australia
Discovery Lodge of Research 971 NSW&ACT	NSW, Australia
Victorian Lodge of Research 218 VC	Victoria, Australia
Barron Barnett 146 QC	Queensland, Australia
WHJ Mayers Memorial Lodge of Research	Queensland, Australia
Granville Preceptory No 53 SC	NSW, Australia
Linford Lodge of Research	ACT, Australia
WH Green Memorial Masonic Study Circle,	Queensland, Australia
Western Australian Lodge of Research 277 WA	WA, Australia

Grand Lodge Masonic Learning Group  
Middle Chamber Society  
The Chisel Lodge 434 VC  
Launceston 69 TC

South Australia, Australia  
South Australia, Australia  
Victoria, Australia  
Tasmania, Australia

**ANZMRC Associate (Non-Voting) Members**

Groupe de Recherche Alpina	Switzerland
Centro Iberico de Estudios Masonicos,	Spain
South Carolina Masonic Research Society	USA
The Masonic Society,	USA
The Phylaxis Society,	USA
Kellerman Lodge 1027, NSW	NSW, Australia
Dr R K R Cama Masonic Study Circle	Mumbai, India
Nairobi Lodge of Instruction	Nairobi, Kenya
Lyceum Lodge of R 8682 EC	Jo'burg, South Africa
Mount Faber 1825 SC	Singapore
Lodge of Research 200 [CC] IC	Ireland
Quatuor Coronati Research Lodge-Bayreuth	Germany
Irish Masters Lodge 907 IC	Jamaica
Circolo di Corrispondenza della QC	Italy
Southern California Research Lodge	USA

**CHANGE OF ADDRESS**

The Discovery Lodge of Research No 971 has elected WBro Don Ray as Secretary-elect [installation in Sydney on 5 March 2020]. Don's contact address is 10 Cousin Place, Chisholm ACT 2905 Australia. His email is [don@crtcs.com](mailto:don@crtcs.com). Telephone: +61 4 13 187 878

## IN THIS ISSUE:

Legals	1
ANZMRC Directory including a change of address	2
President's Pages	6
Vale Bro John Acaster – a selection of remembrances	8
Feature Article: <i>The History of HRA Chapters in Victoria</i> : Chapter 3	14
Feature Article: <i>An Explanation of the Tracing Boards of Phoenix Lodge No 94</i> [2 <sup>nd</sup> degree]	61



## PRESIDENT'S PAGE

### *Greetings All:*

I would like to reminisce a little in relation to the Australian and New Zealand Masonic Research Council (ANZMRC).

The ANZMRC (est. 1991) brings together the Masonic Research Lodges and Study Groups throughout Australia and New Zealand.

The aim of the ANZMRC is to promote research and education within Freemasonry in Australia and New Zealand and to act as a liaison body to the various Masonic research groups in those jurisdictions.

The organization seeks to promote Masonic research and education through biennial conferences that are rotated around the States of Australia and the North and South Islands of New Zealand.

The first conference was held in 1992 and at these conferences the research lodges are able to put forward the name of one distinguished Masonic researcher, who is then designated as a Kellerman Lecturer (KL) and delivers this paper at the Conference.

All the Lectures are published in the biennial conference Proceedings, which are available to all conference delegates, and also added to the Masonic Digital Library.

Without the support of our Lodges and the input of your members throughout the world we would not be able to bring to you high quality presenters and an ever continuing and improving environment for research and education.

I also give a big shout out to the support we have received and currently receive from each and every one of you

### **2019 ANZMRC Touring Lecturer:**

Currently parts of the New Zealand tour are in the process of being re-scheduled and updates as and when available will be circulated to you but will also be available on the website.

With the Asian and Australian stopovers completed the feedback has been extremely positive with numerous requests for encores to be presented in the future.

### **2019 ANZMRC Tour Book:**

This has sold out in Australia and Asia with some top-up required from New Zealand.

I would like to encourage those who have not acquired a copy to purchase one prior to the presentations – particularly in New Zealand.

If the other stopovers are any yardstick to judge it by you may be disappointed, as limited numbers will be available at presentations.

Should you wish to purchase please contact the following – Kerry Nicholls – [cheker@xtra.co.nz](mailto:cheker@xtra.co.nz) or Colin Heyward - [coljan@waspnet.co.nz](mailto:coljan@waspnet.co.nz) and the cost is NZ\$40.00 (excluding shipping).

It can no longer be purchased via the website.

### **2020 ANZMRC Conference:**

The next ANZMRC Conference will be held from Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2020 in the Dunedin Masonic Centre, New Zealand and do not forget your submissions for consideration as a 2020 Kellerman Lecturer – time is creeping up on us. Please direct any enquiries to your Lodge Secretary or ANZMR Secretary [lordbiff@hotmail.com](mailto:lordbiff@hotmail.com)

### **Congratulations are in order:**

I take this opportunity to extend congratulations to our Secretary W. Bro Brendan Kyne– our Secretary – who has achieved a well deserved accolade that is a reflection of the efforts of a true Masonic researcher and educationalist.

Being the recipient of the You have Norman B Spencer Prize 2019 with his paper – ‘The First Lodge on the Ballarat Goldfields; French Memphis Rite Lodge,1853’.

This follows hard on the footsteps of W. Bro David Slater in 2018 who achieved this pinnacle.

This is a true reflection that we are alive and well in the Antipodes and we look forward to performing a hat-trick in 2020?

Well done Brothers.

Finally a big thanks to all of you for making the 2019 ANZMRC Lecture a resounding success and your patience and understanding in this great Masonic Journey in research and education.

Keep well and safe until the next edition of *Harashim*.

Kind regards  
Kerry Nicholls

ANZMRC Website – [www.ANZMRC.org](http://www.ANZMRC.org)

---

## VALEBROTHER JOHN ACASTER

[The following is a tribute written by Brother John Wade, editor of *AQC*, and delivered to the November meeting of the Sheffield Masonic Study Circle. We thank John for his permission to include it in *Harashim*.]



Ernest John Tutin Acaster was a Past Master of Quatuor Coronati Lodge, No. 2076, and very active as the Programme Secretary of the Manchester Association for Masonic Research (MAMR). He joined Freemasonry in London in 1970 and was a founder member of various lodges and chapters in Manchester and London. John was intrigued by the history and complexities of Freemasonries as the Craft has evolved across centuries and continents. He has addressed conferences in Edinburgh, London, Washington DC, Cork, The Hague, Hannover, Bayreuth, Perugia, and Paris. He is also on the Council of Manchester Cathedral and is a past President of the Manchester Statistical Society.

After a career in commercial banking based in London and Manchester judging a broad spectrum of risks, John took early retirement to become trained in school inspection on behalf of the government agency Ofsted. The experience of seeing and judging teachers within refined criteria across the broadest range of English schools for a dozen years was invaluable in his later path of carefully disseminating Masonic knowledge. While employed, he was repeatedly elected chairman of the Association of Lay Inspectors, annually providing evidence to the Education Select Committee of the House of Commons. Consonant with his broad interests and desire to promote the good, John served on the committees of many civic and charitable bodies, and was instrumental in establishing the first Buxton International Music Festival in 1979. He had relinquished most of these involvements but retained a close association with Manchester Anglican Cathedral, and acted as proof-reader and copy-editor of *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum* (AQC), and other publications emanating from Quatuor Coronati Lodge.

We thank Brother Robert Bashford, Secretary of the Lodge of Research CC IC wrote the following:

Brethren,

It is with great sadness that we record the passing of Very Wor Bro John Acaster, Past Senior Grand Warden of The Provincial Grand Lodge of East Lancashire. Although, not widely known throughout the Lodges within the Grand Lodge of Ireland, John was well known in Irish Masonic Research circles, and over the years was an occasional visitor to our meetings throughout the island of Ireland. Some of us first met up with John back in the early noughties when we took part in the very first British Masonic symposia, successfully organised by the Scottish

Research Lodge - Lodge Hope of Kurrachee No 337 S.C., the premier Lodge of Research is the Scottish Province of Fife and Kinross. In those early days, the cream of British and Irish Masonic researchers came together to meet with great enthusiasm and enjoyment, where we discussed many aspects of Freemasonry, as worked within the three home Constitutions.

Amongst those present was Professor Andrew Prestcott, Professor David Stevenson, Doctor Andreas Onnerfors, Bob Cooper, Curator Grand Lodge of Scotland, The Rev Neville Barker Cryer, Bill Howie Provincial Grand Lodge of Durham, Wor Bro Alan Turton Internet Lodge No 9659 U.G.L.E. Wor Bros Dr John Stephen Wade, John Acaster and John Belton and Iain McIntosh now all elected members of Quatuor Coronati Lodge No 2076. Then of course, we had the Irish contingent including myself, Wor Bro Chris McClintock, Wor Bro James Penny, Wor Bro Eric Henry and others. The balance of attendees were either Scottish or up from Lodges in the north of England. One particular component, always present in those early days, was the great sense of enjoyment and fellowship that was always present on those early occasions.

From those early beginnings, we all continued to meet across the Constitutions in venues such as The Manchester Association for Masonic Research, The Sir Robert Moray Lodge of Research No 1641 S.C., The Irish Lodge of Research No 200 I.C., The Cornerstone Society in London, and Quatuor Coronati Lodge No 2076 U.G.L.E. Indeed, some of us moved on to the European stage, speaking in International symposia in Athens, Toulon, Bordeaux and Copenhagen.

In his working life, John had been a Bank Manager and School Inspector in the Greater Manchester area. He had a lifelong interest in statistics and filled the office of President in the Manchester Statistical Society. His other great interest in life was The Manchester Cathedral, where he served as a member on the management committee of the Cathedral.

Masonically, John was a very busy man who began his Masonic career back in 1970, when he was initiated into Clapham Lodge no 1365 U.G.L.E. in 1970. He was exalted into Clapham Chapter in 1972.

Shortly after his move to Manchester, he became one of the founder members of Maccabee Lodge No 8947 U..G.L.E. in 1980, and went on to serve as Master of this new Lodge in the year 1986-7. In 1991, he once again was one of the Foundation Companions in the Robert Burns Chapter No 999, and went on to serve as First Principal in this new

Chapter in 1997. With his financial acumen, John served in a number of Masonic Charities, sometimes in the role of governor and in others as one of the Trustees. John was a frequent contributor to *The Square* masonic magazine, in an effort to encourage readers to take a greater interest in their masonic history.

On the research front John had joined the Manchester Association of Masonic Research No 5502 U.G.L.E., shortly after his arrival in Manchester and went on to serve as Worshipful Master in 2002. Four years later his Masonic Province of East Lancashire acknowledged his contribution to Freemasonry by appointed him to the active office of Senior Grand Warden within the Province for 2006. Early in 2007, he was elected into Quatuor Coronati Lodge No 2076, where he served in many rolls including Lodge Treasurer and then in 2013/14 as Master. He was a frequent contributor to the various conferences, hosted by The Cornerstone Society, which was intimately involved in researching the esoteric side of Freemasonry. Sadly this society eventually closed down, but John's interest was sufficient to gain him an invitation to join the Canonbury Tower Lodge No 9772 U.G.L.E. which only meets four times a year on the Spring and Autumn equinoxes and on the Summer and Winter Solstices. Interestingly, this Lodge meets in Islington, North London, in the actual Canonbury Tower. Even the name Islington coming from the old English form Y-Sel-Don translates as Hill of the Sun. Canonbury Tower is a fascinating historical building dating from the 16<sup>th</sup> century with links to Sir John Spencer and Sir Francis Bacon, and is today owned by Lord Northampton. The Canonbury Tower Lodge still carries out ongoing research into the ritual and symbols of our Craft, an area that remained of great interest to John in his lifetime.

Brethren, as you now understand, our good friend Very Wor Bro John Acaster led a life less ordinary. He was a seasoned traveller who did his best to promote links between Constitutions, Grand Lodges and Grand Orients directly with the ruling body of Quatuor Coronati Lodge. Some would say that this was the big idea from his year as Master of Q.C., but in my opinion, John's mission throughout his entire Masonic career was to promote communication and fellowship between all Brethren, Lodges and Grand Bodies wherever he found them in his travels.

One thing struck me as I was looking for the photographs to go with this short obituary. John was one of the happiest men that I have ever known, and he is usually smiling in the majority of these photos.



This short poem, in many ways, reflects some of the many values that I have found when talking with John in venues all over the country. And, as you read it, I hope that you too, will realise the loss of such an energetic Brother, at this difficult juncture in our history.

Rt Wor Bro Robert T. Bashford,  
Secretary of The Irish Lodge of Research.

Do not stand at my grave and weep  
I am not there. I do not sleep.  
I am a thousand winds that blow.  
I am the diamond glints on snow.  
I am the sunlight on ripened grain.  
I am the gentle autumn rain.  
When you awaken in the morning's hush  
I am the swift uplifting rush  
Of quiet birds in circled flight.  
I am the soft stars that shine at night.  
Do not stand at my grave and cry;  
I am not there. I did not die.





The editor of *Harashim* contributed the following:

We always seemed to meet up in France; be it in Paris, Toulon, Paris, Bordeaux or Paris. Although we also met up in London, Edinburgh and 'oop Nort'. Where ever there always seemed to be food involved.

Irrespective of where we met up, there were always potential opportunities for further masonic research.

We'd had a lovely time in Bordeaux in June and were looking forward to working together on the Butterworth working tools paper.

In the above image I'm not sure whether we're discussing the crushing of crab claws or the George Grey MS [both happened].

But it doesn't really matter; we were enjoying each other's company – 'being happy and communicating happiness'.

Alas, that project may not go ahead as it needs local Manchester knowledge.

He was also going to contribute to the Old Charges wiki being worked up for Brent Morris *et al*.

John wanted to be the ANZMRC touring lecturer – but it wasn't to be. Anyway, I'll miss him, as a freemason, as a researcher and as a man.

As Tony Pope has too often quoted in these certain circumstances:

*Turn up an empty glass*  
*Tamam shud*



# THE HISTORY OF HOLY ROYAL ARCH CHAPTERS IN VICTORIA

1981

by the late Bro Peter Thornton

Editor's Note: This is the third part of a four-part paper which has, until now, remained unpublished. Years later Bro. Thornton wrote the 'official history' of the Holy Royal Arch degree in Victoria. This is NOT that document.

## CHAPTER 3

As happened with the formation of the other two major Grand bodies in Victoria, the inauguration of the Supreme Grand Chapter saw the beginnings of a few major themes which were to run through the affairs of Royal Arch masonry for quite a number of years. Obviously problems involving ritual and the regulations were very much to the forefront.

The craft Grand Lodge experienced considerable difficulty, firstly in deciding upon a uniform ritual and secondly in convincing all of the private lodges of the advisability and necessity of adopting the authorised form while the mark Grand Lodge managed to avoid most of the pitfalls in these aspects of ritual.

The Grand Chapter managed to drift along somewhat lazily while following a middle course which combined both of these experiences.

As the last statement may appear paradoxical it could be wise to stress that, as far as Grand Chapter and Royal Arch masonry in Victoria is concerned, ritual can be rather neatly divided into two sections. Firstly there is the exaltation ceremony and secondly there are those degrees and ceremonies which have been associated with Royal Arch masonry in various parts of the masonic world without necessarily being part of the exaltation.

Uniformity in the first part was relatively easy to maintain - and was all but obtained in the first instance with a minimum of fuss - and very few problems, particularly in comparison with the craft, were produced, but in the second part quite an amount of controversy was aroused, at times no one was really certain just which degree was under consideration and, although uniformity has been obtained, it is but reasonable to state that argument or debate has never been completely stilled. The future will undoubtedly see the subject under discussion again.

We shall follow the story of the easier portion first.

### The Basic Ritual.

The Articles of Union for the inauguration of the Supreme Grand Chapter in 1889 specified that each of the private chapters was to continue to work in its accustomed manner until it was otherwise decided. It is obvious that either this particular clause produced no immediate problems or that Grand Chapter itself was not overly concerned as to how the private chapters were working.

There is also, of course, the already mentioned distinct possibility that the members of Grand Chapter were far more concerned with ensuring that the craft Grand Lodge was placed on a firm rooting - a task which turned out to be by no means easy - than they were with the affairs of a small group of chapters which claimed around 5% of the craft population within their ranks. Many companions undoubtedly saw the formation of the Grand Chapter as a basically unwanted but forced consequence of the formation of the Grand Lodge and felt that the affairs of the Royal Arch, in the sense of strong local rule and autonomy, could well be ignored for a few years.

The city chapters at least were all working in basically the same fashion, there was no major disharmony - or harmony for that matter - and the Grand Chapter could very easily be left to fill a minor role without upsetting many Companions. And that, apparently, is just what happened.

According to Bernard Jones the revision of the ritual by the Grand Chapter of England in 1835 had seen the majority of the English chapters accept the new working so that the divergences which were so apparent in the craft were not a noteworthy characteristic of the Royal Arch. Obviously there were, and still are, differences in the various printed rituals but these were very minor and ranged to nowhere near the same extent as they did in the craft.

The main versions have all been directly derived from the 'Sussex' ritual, so called because it was devised at the direction of the Duke of Sussex who was then First Grand Principal.

The eleven English chapters in Victoria would thus have been working the one basic ritual although there is evidence that a few modifications had been made as the main metropolitan working went under the name of the 'James' ritual.

There was probably a slight divergence, although not in essentials, between the city work and the country work for this reason. The Scottish Royal Arch ritual is similar to the English and it is most likely that the sole surviving Scottish chapter was working in a basically identical manner to the English chapters, particularly when we recall that it had only just emerged from around fifteen years in abeyance, but this statement applies only to the ceremony of exaltation itself.

The correct Irish ritual does differ considerably from the English, as it is based

on the restoration of the temple rather than the rebuilding, but we have Lamonby's 1882 comment that the Washington Chapter was working a ceremony which was the replica of the English with the addition of the passing of the veils and the admittedly less conclusive - at least as far as the ceremony was concerned - report that Sir William Clarke was exalted in the Irish chapter but the ceremony was English.

Actually the Grand Chapter of Ireland had experienced a little difficulty in deciding just which version of the legend was to be used in its chapters and, for a number of years, either form was acceptable. It was 1863 before a report was presented by a special committee which had been formed to inquire into the matter and it is only from that date that the authorities demanded the use of the repair motif as the basis of the ceremony.

As the only two Irish chapters were formed before or around this date it is quite likely that they adopted the rebuilding motif - the Duke of Leinster Chapter in particular - as all other chapters in the area worked in this manner and assistance would be readily available. (We should perhaps recall at this point that the generating motive behind the formation of the Irish chapters was more the restrictive English regulations than any great love for or knowledge of Irish Royal Arch masonry.)

We can ignore the Duke of Leinster Chapter as far as ritual is concerned as its life was very short and concentrate on the working of the Washington Chapter. Having almost certainly commenced its life with the re-building motif it would have experienced no difficulty in continuing with an 'unofficial' ritual. The Grand Chapter of Ireland, if it dealt with its chapters in much the same way as the Grand Lodge dealt with the lodges, would not have bothered to inquire as to how the colonial chapters were working. Admittedly the locals altered the titles of the principal officers into the Irish form but the usual annual returns to Ireland would have made it rather obvious that incorrect titles were in use, a point which would no doubt have been brought to the attention of the locals together with a request for an alteration. This does not, however, suggest that the ritual or working were altered in any way but merely that cosmetic changes were made.

It is admittedly largely conjecture but it does appear that the sole surviving Irish chapter was working the English ritual, with the possible addition of the ceremony of passing the veils, at the time of the union.

It is not known just what ritual the Metropolitan Chapter brought with it in 1891. It may have simply adopted the same form as the other Victorian Constitution chapters were working but later evidence suggests that it continued to follow a Canadian ritual as it was presumably entitled to do under

the 1889 Articles of Union. In either case there is no evidence to suggest that Grand Chapter was in any way concerned. By the same token Grand Chapter was very much aware of what was taking place in Grand Lodge in regard to ritual and could well have concluded that life would remain a lot simpler if there was no interference with any of the private chapters.

However, the amalgamation of the other five chapters in 1895 must have made it rather obvious that different types of ritual were in use and a few companions began to believe that the time had arrived for something to be done towards achieving uniformity. In July 1897 the concern being felt by some companions was evidenced by two separate events. The Committee of General Purposes recommended the inclusion of the excellent master degree in the exaltation ceremony and we shall return to that point later. More importantly, as far as uniformity was concerned, Hugh Sinclair and future First Grand Principal Philip Cohen inspired a motion which led to the formation of a uniformity committee. In December 1897 the Committee supported this action via a motion of Sinclair and Templeman and January 1898 saw the committee set up. It was, as far as the private bodies were concerned, a far more representative committee than its craft equivalent had been as it consisted of two representatives from each chapter.

As this committee was to lay the foundation for the work as it is performed today it may be advisable to list the members: Pie, JD Brown, Nichol, Rennie, Vahland, EC Brown, Fox, Perfect, Davies, Sinclair, English, Maillard, Davidson, Coundon, Collis, Chapman, Ford, Barclay, Templeman and Crawcour. (It is obvious that not all chapters availed themselves of the opportunity to appoint two representatives.)

### The Work of the Ritual Committee.

September 1898 saw the committee produce its first report through its chairman Alexander Bald Templeman and reference was made to the fact that there was no uniformity as four constitutions were involved. The committee stated that no standard ritual was being issued but they had compiled a ritual and revised it against the best works extant in England and America.

Unfortunately, there was no explanation given as to the definition of the term 'best' and equally unfortunately the above explanation does not quite carry the ring of truth as far as the procedure said to be used.

Nor was everyone happy and content.

In October *Masonry* printed a letter from a member of the committee who explained that he had not been to any meeting of the committee and that he not even been informed of any meetings taking place. (It is an interesting point as

the number of members listed for the committee did not add up to two per chapter and presumably some lodges had neglected to forward the names of their representatives.) Jarrett replied that the committee had six English rituals, one Canadian and three so-called James each of which was vouched for as authentic yet they differed in a number of aspects. The complaining member was invited to bring along any ritual he might have.

This, of course, did not help him if he was not being informed of when the meetings were occurring. Nor would it now have been of much use if he did find out as the committee had explained at the September convocation that an exposition of the work had already been given and it appears that everything was close to being finalised.

Templeman remained chairman throughout the work and the ritual, when printed, carried the names of Hugh Sinclair and Thomas Ford as editors. (These editorial meetings could have been quite interesting as each of these companions were, at times, quite enthusiastic about the idea of the chapters absorbing the mark degree as is done in other constitutions and Sinclair actually produced this suggestion at Grand Chapter in September 1898 on the night when the committee delivered its first report. Ford waited for a few years before he delivered the same line and by that time Sinclair had become very prominent in the mark degree. Not that these were the only Victorians to think along these lines as Lamonby had suggested the same course back in 1888.)

In June 1899 Templeman read an exhaustive report as prepared by the Committee and suggested that the ritual be printed. They could not ask Grand Chapter to sanction the ritual as this would be unconstitutional. (This was before the belief that rituals could not be sanctioned was killed by Coulson, Peacock and Balls-Headley.) One companion commented that the matter should be left in abeyance for six months as the suggested work was exactly the same as had been seen in Melbourne for the past thirty years. This invited, and received, the reply that there was thus no need to postpone it.

By September it was in print.

The comment that the ritual was exactly the same as had been seen in Melbourne for the past thirty years is interesting and leads, by implication to conjecture as to what the country chapters had been doing. In December 1893 the masonic press reported the visit of a number of mark men to Ballarat to open a new English Constitution mark lodge. While they were there they took advantage of the opportunity to visit the Yarrowee Chapter which exhibited the country working at the request of the Melbourne companions in their turn, performed the city ceremony. The paper also commented that the closing ceremony was worked in full and served as an impressive lesson for the

visitors.

The particularly interesting part of this report is not so much the fact that the country chapters were working in some different manner but that the chapter in Ballarat was. This chapter had been basically formed out of an old Scottish chapter which had become defunct a mere few years before the English chapter was formed. It makes us wonder just how much of the Scottish working had found a home in the Yarrowee Chapter and just how much of an alteration to the English form in the city chapters can be attributed to John James.

### Later Ritual Alterations.

After this brief burst of activity all appears to have gone along quietly if not necessarily happily and uniformly until October 1918 when the whole question was again brought to a head. It is probably from this time that we can trace the rituals we have today in the sense that firm steps were taken to ensure that all of the private chapters worked identical ceremonies. In 1914 the Committee of General Purposes reported the correction of a few grammatical errors and stated that the ritual was now to be placed in the hands of the Grand Scribe Ezra to print and sell.

At the October 1918 convocation of Grand Chapter a long discussion ensued in regard to Grand Chapter itself setting up a chapter of instruction. Although many of those present felt that such a body had nothing to do with Grand Chapter but was entirely the prerogative of the First Grand Principal Player Bice was quite content to let the discussion proceed. Bice, it will be recalled, as one of the three organisers of Grand Master George Emery's model lodges of 1908 which established uniformity in the craft and was undoubtedly personally in favour of a similar action in the Royal Arch. By the same token Bice could well have decided that the relatively brief period during which dictatorial approaches had been essential was passing and that major matters could now be determined by debate and resolution. Hence he much preferred to ascertain the general climate of opinion before he proceeded.

In October the following year the ceremony was exemplified.

It was also around this time that Grand Chapter attacked other ritual and ceremonial problems, showed that it had decided to become very serious and allowed the private chapters to learn that they were expected to conform. There was still a little determined opposition but Grand Chapter refused to back down, or be backed down, and the year 1921 saw the finale about to be written. An article in the masonic press claimed that three chapters - unnamed - were still using old rituals - presumably non-English - and had threatened to break away from Grand Chapter. The main source of this difficulty lay in the attempt

by some companions - including the fiery and knowledgeable lawyer Walter Kemp who was the then first principal of the Metropolitan Chapter – to interpret the Articles of Union as meaning that the private chapters were to continue to work in the old way until they, the private chapters in an individual sense, otherwise decided. When Grand Chapter ruled that the interpretation must be that Grand Chapter made the decision all of the fight was reasonably quickly dissipated.

In January 1921 a number of amendments to the 1911 rules and regulations were proposed by John Kennedy who was gradually advancing in prominence in Royal Arch masonry and was within a few years of being appointed Grand Scribe Ezra. One of the amendments involved the addition of a clause which required all chapters to conform to the ritual as prescribed by Grand Chapter and Kemp promptly became most upset. Kennedy, after Kemp's argument had been deemed fallacious, pointed out that even if he had been correct the efforts of the 1899 uniformity committee were sufficient to prevent the use of a Canadian ritual.

In April Bice commented quite simply that the few chapters which were holding out would soon come in but Kemp had no intention of giving up that easily. On the motion for the confirmation of the amendments Kemp tried again but was told he must cease covering the same old ground. The motion was then carried by 64 votes to 18.

This did not, however, finish the matter and the above mentioned talk of secession indicates that the ex-Canadian chapters did not immediately change over although it is probably fair to suggest that they were given a reasonable time interval in which to learn the new work.

In July 1922 Bice felt the need to make a further reference to the few chapters which were still not conforming. In October he finally had had enough of the whole business and issued a pronouncement. From and after the 18th of April 1923 the ceremonies were to be conducted as set out in the official rituals.

And that was that.

One factor which may have been significant was the 1914 decision to place the sale and-printing of rituals solely in the hands of Grand Chapter thus preventing any deviations appearing in a semi-official form.

### **The Ritual Itself.**

In the ritual itself very little alteration has been made to the original edition which was published in 1899 although ceremonial instructions have been gradually added until the present ritual which can be considered as complete in every way. The following need to be only briefly mentioned.

In July 1892 Davies and Fowler raised the question of the mode of preparation of the candidate in the Committee of General Purposes and suggested that it was not necessary to continue to prepare him as in the master mason degree. The decision was taken to wait until England had been communicated with but it is apparent that the change had been made before 1899.

The 1899 ritual saw the opening extended from the original working in the state while January 1911 saw a re-arrangement of the various portions of the opening ceremony to permit all companions to be present. Previously only principals and past principals could participate. The matter had actually been raised some twelve months previously and, on the motion of Thompson, had been postponed until the practice in other jurisdictions could be ascertained. When the advice from England showed that the mother Grand Chapter permitted the attendance of all companions at the opening the Grand Chapter of Victoria quickly followed suit. (Back in October 1896 the Committee of General Purposes had sought the opinion of the Grand Registrar as to why companions could not be present at the opening. There is no record of his reply and no change was made.)

In 1923 permission was given to curtail both the opening and closing ceremonies, ceremonial instruction began to appear in 1926 while 1937 saw the issuing of a complete information on working booklet which was later to be incorporated into the ritual itself. It was the first to give detailed instructions on now the secrets were to be communicated while 1933 had seen the inclusion of the explanation given by the sojourner outside the door of the chapter. Further alterations and re-arrangements have been made from time to time but none of these have been major, nothing particularly new or different was added and nothing can be gained from entering into a detailed discussion of them.

### **Excellent Master or Most Excellent Master.**

The second part of the ritual story, the attached degrees or ceremonies and how they came to be attached, is nowhere near as simple to relate. Nor are the threads simple to untangle. In attempting to discover the correct story reference will be made to two important lectures delivered at the Golden Jubilee Chapter of Research by Richard Ernest Trebilcock, later to be First Grand Principal from 1951 to 1953. Trebilcock was Grand Registrar from 1939 to 1942 - appointed after the First Grand Principal had asked the opinion of the Committee of General Purposes as to whether the office should be adequately filled by a country companion - and had made extensive research into the matter, research which he used as the basis for his lecture. The first, 'Degrees Associated with the Royal Arch' was delivered in February 1946



while the second, on the ceremony known as 'Passing the Veils', was presented some four years later.

These lectures are most important in that they represent the first attempt in Victoria to detail the introduction of the additional degree to our chapters, in that they have become the standard from which other companions have worked, in that they - or the research involved - formed the basis for some of Trebilcock's later actions and in that we are about to disagree with a number of the statements.

However, before we attempt to describe the mess and confusion which the Victorian companions manufactured for themselves, it may be advisable to examine the various masonic systems throughout the world with particular reference to the excellent master and most excellent master degrees.

Apart from England and those masonic bodies which have been directly derived from the English system all other Royal Arch chapters work the mark degree. Most of these systems have, at times, included the past master degree in the chapter series although as far as the two other British constitution are concerned Scotland only 'accepted' it for a brief time while Ireland never appears to have been particularly interested in it and has left it to the craft lodges to create 'virtual' past masters to satisfy the regulations. Various chapters have, at other times, included a number of additional degrees which are today worked under separate Grand bodies.

The degree which caused all of the problems in Victoria - and the only one of the additional degrees with which we will be concerned - was the degree that was, and still is, worked immediately before the exaltation ceremony and after the mark - and past master when worked - in most Royal Arch series of degrees. The complication arose because of two degrees which are quite separate and distinct but have similar names, excellent master and most excellent master.

The most excellent master degree appears to have been an American invention, or at least an American compilation, and is the degree which is worked in American and Canadian chapters while the excellent master degree belongs primarily to Scotland and does not appear to have been known at all in America in its correct form. Thus to the Americans and the vast majority of Victorians there was no realisation that it was an entirely different degree altogether.

Albert Mackey, the prolific American writer, failed to distinguish between the two degrees - not that Mackey is the most-reliable of masonic authors - and the more respected Coil gives the Scottish degree little more than a throw-away reference. He does show, however, that the very early use of the name for a degree in America was in reference to the past master degree. (In other words it

appears that those states of America which have some early connection with Scottish masonry were aware that there was a further degree and knew its name but concluded that it was the past master degree was being referred to.)

The two degrees are quite dissimilar in content and in the historical eras with which they are concerned. The most excellent master degree is associated with events which occurred during the building of the first temple while the excellent master degree is associated with the second temple. It is traditionally the degree which was conferred upon those mason who wished to leave Babylon and join with Zerubbabel in erecting the second temple and it revolves around the communication of passwords which would allow the returning masons to pass the various 'veils' of the tabernacle set up by Zerubbabel and enter the Grand Sanhedrin.

For this reason it has often been referred to as the ceremony of passing the veils but, and this must be stressed, in constitutions where the excellent master degree is worked there is still a portion of the exaltation ceremony where the candidate has to pass the various veils. And in constitutions where the degree is not worked there must be a necessarily extended passing of the veils in the exaltation ceremony as the candidate has not previously received the passwords.

Many companions who are aware that there are two degrees have tended to consider the excellent master degree to be simply the passing of the veils section of the exaltation ceremony worked as a separate degree but this is complete over-simplification in one sense and completely wrong in a second sense in that it suggests that if the excellent master degree is worked then the passing of the veils during the exaltation ceremony is not necessary.

Confusion appears to have reigned supreme and even the respected Bernard Jones managed to make contradictory statements in his 'Freemasons' Book of the Royal Arch'. Referring to the 1969 edition we find on page 199 in reference to the Scottish system:

'In general the Veils and the Royal Arch are conferred at the same meeting, and if the Candidate is not a Mark mason, the Mark Degree also is given but in short form.'

Later on page 224 he states:

'It is not allowable to confer the Excellent Master and the R.A. Degree at the same meeting ...'

Both of these statements are easily understood and correct but throughout the section on the Scottish Royal Arch wherever Jones mentions the excellent master degree he includes either 'the veils' or 'passing the veils' in parentheses. If the reader is now in the process of becoming somewhat confused he can

perhaps understand why, some seventy or so years ago, our pioneer Royal Arch companions managed to become so confused that no one was too sure just which degree anyone else was talking about.

And what of the English from whom we derived our Royal Arch ceremonies? Before the 1835 revision of the ritual the passing of the veils was a common but not invariable part of the exaltation ceremony. The revision eliminated it from the standardised and recommended, but not compulsory, ritual and it drifted into almost complete disuse. It was not entirely forgotten however as a description of the ceremony - but not a ritual - appears in an 1881 text book while Lewis's 'Perfect Ceremonies' of 1907 contains a note to point out the place in the exaltation ceremony where the veils would be worked. This could have been attributed to the revival of the ceremony by the Bristol chapters around the turn of the century but those chapters work the passing of the veils before the exaltation ceremony not during it.

The most excellent master degree is not part of the English Royal Arch system but it is worked in England in councils of Royal and Select Masters. The reason for this will be developed fully in its correct place. For now we need only mention, that the most excellent master degree in other parts of the world is not part of the cryptic system for the simple reason that it is worked in Royal Arch chapters. When England set up its Grand Council of the cryptic degrees it did so through the authority of the Grand Council of New York and of necessity had to include the most excellent master degree to satisfy the New York companions. The authority for this came from the Grand Chapter of New York because the most excellent master degree is not a cryptic degree. The English, however, work a much shorter version than is normal in America. From the above it can be seen that each of these degrees has a perfect right to be included in a Royal Arch chapter but, to be strictly correct, each should be worked before the exaltation ceremony not after as is done in Victoria, and in England for that matter although not in the chapters. Whichever degree is worked there is still a portion of the exaltation ceremony where the candidate is required to pass a series of veils. The ceremony is briefer if the excellent master degree has been worked as the candidate has the passwords but it is still there. If the reader has now managed to sort out the two degrees, well and good. If not he is at least in the perfect state of mind to return to the story of the degrees as far as Victoria is concerned.

### **Confusion Begins.**

Before we do get too involved in the story, however, it may be wise to stress that when we refer to references to an additional degree we cannot be

completely sure of just which degree was being referred to and even when a name is given we cannot be certain that the name has been attached to the correct degree. However, we can be almost certain that the companions in Victoria wished only to work one other degree beside the exaltation ceremony and never two.

The first public reference occurred in 1894 when, at the instigation of Henry Bannister, representing the St Andrews in the South Chapter, Grand Chapter found itself discussing whether or not the private chapters would be permitted to work the mark and excellent master degrees. And, as previously mentioned, Grand Chapter solved this problem by passing a motion to proceed to the next business, a decision which did not impress the Geelong companions at all. Some slight excuse may be offered in that Grand Chapter understandably felt the news of Canada issuing new warrants to Victoria to be of greater urgency and surely no one would have expected such a drastic reaction. Nor, presumably, did anyone believe it until Bannister's letter of July 1896.

To summarise what was probably known about either of the degrees we may state that the companions who hailed from the English Constitution did not, in general, know anything about either degree, the ex-Scots wanted to continue working the excellent master degree and the Irish may have been working a passing of the veils ceremony. The Canadians should have been working the most excellent master degree according to the constitutions but herein may have been the source of one of the difficulties as the available evidence suggests that the degree was by no means being worked in full.

When the Canadians were attempting to open a mark lodge under the Scottish Constitution Gaffney informed Provincial Grand Master Davis that the Canadian system had not been carried out strictly in previous years although he could have been referring only to the mark degree. However, in Gaffney's own chapter, the Duke of Albany, there is evidence that the most excellent master degree was treated with little respect. At its July 1894 meeting the chapter allotted fifteen minutes to the degree while in November the mark lodge was closed at 9.18 and the chapter opened at 9.30. In the meantime the most excellent master degree was conferred. Perhaps it would be fair to state that the Canadian chapters did no more than obligate the candidates and confer the secrets.

And if all of this was not bad enough there was one more detail to add to the confusion. The degree of excellent master was being worked in some of the chapters in New South Wales. The formation of the Grand Chapter in the neighbouring state had been even more difficult to accomplish than had been the union of all of the chapters in Victoria and, in the 1890s, the trouble was by

no means settled as a number of Scottish chapters were maintaining separate existence. The regulations of the Grand Chapter of New South Wales stated that the Grand Chapter recognised the supreme degree and no other, including however as a preliminary the ceremony of passing the veils and that of excellent master. These included parts were, presumably, not being worked in all of the chapters or at all times - their inclusion had been inspired by an attempt to induce all of the Scottish chapters to join - but they were being worked often enough to allow some New South Welshmen to be well aware of them. A number of New South Welshmen, including newspaperman Frederick Jarrett in particular, were visiting Victoria from time to time while others, including a future First Grand Principal Thomas Lambert, were settling in the state. One could reasonably assume that the two companions specifically mentioned would have some concrete idea of what they were talking about but later events cast considerable doubt upon this conclusion.

It is also worth mentioning here that in the middle of the 1880s, when the members of the Grand Lodge of Victoria embraced every possible degree. they could a council of Royal and Select Masters was opened under the English Constitution with Drew and Bramwell very much to the fore. The story of this, the Metropolitan Council, appears to have been completely unknown to others who have attempted to unravel the mystery of how the Supreme Grand Chapter of Victoria managed to finish up with the most excellent master degree attached to its private chapters almost as an after thought.

We do not have evidence that the most excellent master degree was actually worked but presumably the somewhat mysterious Thomas Sanderson·Bulmer was involved and he would have started the council on the right footing if comparison with other orders is any guide. Hence Drew should have been well aware of what the most excellent master degree was about as he was associated with it in two separate orders.

It does appear that as far as most companions in Victoria were concerned there was but one degree in existence under two similar names. The very poor working of the most excellent master degree could easily have led to the conclusion that it was simply a different form of the work which was practised in Scotland with the veils left out because some English rituals specified the place where the veils would be worked in the exaltation ceremony.

### **Confusion Increases.**

Allowing for this apparent confusion we can now see that the influx of the ex-Canadians was probably the reason why the degree was again brought under consideration by Grand Chapter. By the same token the rather influential

Jarrett may also have had ideas along these lines as in August 1896 he referred to the passing of the veils as worked in New South Wales.

In Chapter 2 we saw that Bannister's rejected motion had led to Grand Chapter, at the instigation of the Committee of General Purposes, declaring that only the exaltation ceremony could be worked. In April 1897 the Committee re-opened the question - Gaffney and Williams were now members - and carried a motion by Jacob Harks and Bernard Smith that private chapters could include the excellent master degree. Quite a debate centred about this recommendation in Grand Chapter in July 1897 and the clause was eventually postponed until the next convocation in January the following year.

Around this time it became rather obvious that there were some companions including a number who could be considered as somewhat influential, who had no idea at all as to what either degree was about and a number of revealing remarks were made. Rodda, who could have been reading the wrong American encyclopaedias, was quite convinced that it was the past master degree until he was straightened out in one sense by Sinclair who explained that all constitutions, except England, worked the degree and the companion who visited chapters outside Victoria faced the likelihood of not being able to gain admission as although there were facilities for obtaining the mark degree in Victoria there was no way in which the mandatory middle degree could be obtained.

Now this tends to suggest that Sinclair was talking about the most excellent master degree, or to be more precise, about American chapters as a number of reports had reached Victoria that these refused to admit anyone to even an exaltation ceremony unless all degrees were possessed. Acting First Grand Principal George Baker now ruled that he could not allow the discussion to proceed as the degree was outside the constitutions and he, personally, knew nothing of this side degree. It is a little difficult to determine what to make of this statement. The Irish chapter is recorded as having at times worked the passing of the veils, and Baker had been around since 1863, so it would be easy to assume that it was the most excellent master degree which was in the minds of most companions. Against this conclusion is the fact that Baker was not the most reliable of authorities on masonic matters while the veils section could have long since disappeared from the local Irish ceremony as the chapter had suffered badly as a result of the formation of the Grand Lodge of Victoria in 1883. On the other hand it is certain that very few people were aware of the excellent master degree, that it had actually been in existence in Geelong and that it was a completely different degree to the one which was worked, or

conferred, in the Canadian chapters.

Drew interrupted Baker with the comment that it was not a side degree but a cryptic degree and had been worked in England before the Royal Arch was attached to the craft. Presumably no one could have argued with his last point but it does appear that he was arguing from the working of the short-lived Metropolitan Council for his cryptic degree claim as only in England was the degree part of the cryptic series.

(One has to admit that rarely was sufficient detail given to allow us to be completely certain just which degree was being referred to. Neither could rightly be described as a cryptic degree.)

The press of the day was no real help and simply assisted us to realise that the whole question was hopelessly confused in the minds of most of the companions. Of those who knew anything at all about a separate degree almost all were completely unaware that there were two degrees. The two names appear to have been treated as simply interchangeable and we are left in no doubt as to which was meant by most speakers and writers.

*Masonry* printed an article under the heading of 'Excellent Master' in August 1898 but referred to the degree as most excellent master in the body of the article. If it was written by Jarrett, and surely he edited it if he did not write it, one would expect it to be accurate. However, the article used Mackey as a reference which means that the author had to be referring to the most excellent master degree. The author was corrected by a past first principal a fortnight later and informed that he should not have called it the excellent master degree as this gave the wrong impression. (One is almost forced to conclude that Jarrett's experience in masonry in New South Wales had been almost exclusively confined to the craft and that his knowledge of Royal Arch masonry was limited.)

A few further pertinent comments were made at the January 1898 convocation where the question was again raised. Meadowcroft was against the introduction of the degree as the original decision had been to follow the English system while Thomas Ford, who was involved in ritual preparation, was honest enough to admit that he had no idea what the degree was about or even what it was but, nevertheless, it was against the constitutions.

No one else received a chance to speak as Baker ordered the withdrawal of the clause and the matter was left in abeyance until after his death although whether or not this was a deliberate action is difficult to determine.

The question remains, however, as to which degree that were all actually talking about. The only real conclusion we can reach is that it was either or both and that no one knew the difference. While most references appeared to

be to the most excellent master degree and while there is more than a suggestion that the discussion was re-opened due to the influx of the Canadians there is also the possibility that a few companions became aware of how upset the Geelong companions actually were and re-opened the question from that point of view. If the last contention is correct then it was the excellent master degree.

### Confusion Legalised.

In April 1900 the Committee of General Purposes reported that it had resolved to formulate regulations for the working of the most excellent master degree. Trebilcock has concluded that this time gap of two years or so had allowed companions to lose track of the degree which they had originally been interested in - based entirely on the change of name in the report - but this appears to be most unlikely. In any case it is dangerous to base any conclusion whatsoever on the particular name used. However what is quite likely is that the longer the delay continued the greater the possibility that the Geelong brethren would completely lose interest in the Royal Arch and it is possible that by 1900 there were very few members of the chapter still around and interested. (One wonders whether the conclave of the Order of the Secret Monitor was formed because the Geelong companions had given up all hope of again working their chapter.)

An interesting, and still more confusing, point is that the President of the Committee from 1900 to 1902 was the fairly recently arrived New South Welshman Thomas Lambert. This would tend to suggest that the excellent master degree would be very much to the fore in Committee discussions but Lambert hailed from Combermere Chapter in Albury which was an English Constitution body.

At this stage it is still anyone's guess as to which degree each individual was talking about

The promised regulations were read at the July convocation and, after discussion referred back to the Committee. In October - Grand Chapter was now meeting quarterly - the Committee reported that the degree was purely optional but believed that it should be worked because of sister constitutions and pointed out that the regulations required it to be conferred on mark master masons.

Trebilcock commented in his lecture:

'From this it would appear that what the committee now had in mind was actually the degree of Most Excellent Master, which from the nature of its secrets required the candidate to have taken the Mark degree,



which the Excellent Master did not.'

One hesitates before disagreeing with so eminent an authority but Trebilcock based his conclusion on one faulty premise although one cannot rule out the possibility that the conclusion itself was correct. In most workings the excellent master degree does require a candidate to be a mark master mason and forbids, in the customary manner, the conferring of the degree on a candidate who is not in possession of the mark degree although the secrets themselves would require no such qualification.

However the content of the report does tend to suggest that the Committee was now basing its findings on the working in New South Wales but not taking into account the specific reasons why that Grand Chapter had removed the mark qualification although one cannot entirely eliminate the nagging thought that some companions believed the most excellent master degree to be simply a part, or a shortened version, of the excellent master degree as this belief is well and truly alive today.

Drew and Davidson moved for the adoption of the report at the October convocation and, although Templeman and Joel wanted a further postponement, the report was carried. Sinclair and Drew then obtained a specific statement that the degree could now be worked.

Templeman gives us a clue as to the way in which some members of the organising committee were thinking. He was in the chair for the October convocation as Acting First Grand Principal and he stated that the St Andrew in the South Chapter was really disbanded although strictly only in abeyance because the companions were prevented from carrying out their correct ritual. And this, of course, included the excellent master degree.

A few interesting comments were made. Templeman, who was now the actual Second Grand Principal, wanted to hold matters over until the next convocation. It would be easy to conclude that Templeman was merely following the lead given by his predecessors in Victoria who had always believed that all of their troubles would disappear if they ignored them but Templeman had far more constructive ideas in mind. Edward Coulson aired, for the first time, a fear which was to haunt him for a number of years by stating that he was worried that the mark degree was about to be trespassed upon. Grand Registrar Derham assured him that this was not the case, it was simply that the regulations would specify that the candidate had to have taken the mark degree.

Drew now explained that the degree was closely attached to the chapter, that it had nothing to do with the mark or past master degrees and it referred to the vaulted chamber. Templeman, who at times appeared to waver in the breeze of

opinion, stated that only England did not work it but later reports show that, at the time, Templeman did not really know what he was talking about. Coulson, unconvinced and still worried about the fate of his new mark Grand Lodge, warned all not to tamper with the rights of mark men as they formed a powerful body.

On the 1<sup>st</sup> of November Jarrett reported the drawing up of a petition to present to Coulson to allow the excellent master degree<sup>7</sup> to be worked in the mark lodges. One is almost forced to the conclusion that those who signed the petition were concerned with the most excellent master degree as there is one logical line of thought which could have allowed this action. In the Grand Lodge library there is a ritual published by Lewis in 1885 for the four degrees of the English cryptic councils - curiously Lewis tacked on the 'harmless' degree of St Lawrence the Martyr - which contains the full degree of most excellent master. Pencil markings have scored out the portions which were, apparently, not required in the English or Victorian working. The ritual does indicate a very strong connection with mark masonry and the opening ceremony contains the following words:

I now declare this Lodge, No. -, of Most Excellent Masters, working under the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons, open . . . .

(It is not important whether or not this was a ritual actually in work but it is significant that it existed.)

In no logical way. could the excellent master degree be attached to a mark lodge. The petition was not proceeded with.

Although permission to work the degree was given at the October convocation it was withdrawn in January the following year as the Committee of General Purposes had found that the regulations did not meet all of the requirements and had recommended the rescission of the clause.

The Committee had held a special meeting in November and had appointed a committee consisting of President Lambert, Registrar Derham, Thompson and Templeman to draw up a report as to the exact meaning of the most excellent master regulations. In January, before the Grand. Chapter convocation, Templeman moved the rescission and a new committee - with Sinclair added to the previous four - was appointed.

Matters, however, were becoming slightly clearer.

### **New Regulations**

In January Ellis stated that the degree was not worked in Royal Arch chapters but in mark lodges. Templeman called Ellis up on a point of order. He stated that the degree was worked in Royal Arch chapters but the Committee had not

yet grasped the degree in its correct form. (Which was about the only statement of the time which we can be sure was correct.) This comment was extremely interesting as Templeman had previously referred to his visit to America and his inability to gain admission to chapters there as he did not possess the most excellent master degree. He is also mentioned as interfering with plans in hand in New South Wales to unite that Grand Chapter with the Scottish chapters which had stood out in 1888. Reportedly he referred to his American experiences as a warning to the Scottish chapters not to join. (This did not, of course, endear him to the New South Wales companions.)

Back in July 1900, when Grand Chapter was sending the regulations back to the Committee, Henry Jebb had invited all to Ballarat to see the veils worked. It is not recorded how many took advantage of this offer but Jarrett definitely did and he gave the meeting a full report. He referred to the special interest taken in the working of the veils, a portion of the ceremony which was never seen in the other Victorian chapters but which was so essentially necessary while visiting other places.

Maybe this comment inspired Templeman, maybe he was in Ballarat and maybe New South Wales decided to straighten him out. Whatever the reason he was again exalted in the Temperance Royal Arch Chapter No.219 Scottish Constitution on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of January 1901, just two days before the convocation of Grand Chapter which rescinded the regulations.

So Templeman at least, and at last, had grasped the excellent master degree in its correct form. A few years later he was to be appointed the Grand Superintendent of Scottish Royal Arch masonry in New South Wales.

In April 1901 a new report and a new set of regulations were produced. It called for the opening by Grand Chapter of a register of all who were most excellent masters, the jurisdiction under which they obtained the degree was to be indicated and documentary evidence was to be the sole basis of proof. The degree was to be conferred on mark men.

Lambert and Coulson wanted it to be adopted immediately but Cohen and Sinclair succeeded in having it referred back to the Committee so that it could be printed and circulated. Tomsitt also wanted it to be sent back as it had been framed by Sinclair who did not possess the degree - but was very prominent in the mark - and very few of the Committee possessed the degree. Lambert was the source of this information and he also disclosed the three to two vote of the committee which produced the report. After all the debate the report was neither received nor rejected and Templeman indicated that he had a rather long list of amendments which he would propose when the matter was again raised.

In July the Committee took no action and in Grand Chapter Sinclair and Thompson succeeded in getting the report postponed yet again so it was October before it was opened for discussion for what would be, hopefully, the last time. Templeman proposed his long list of amendments and these, together with a special preamble, were carried. Basically the new regulation called upon all members of Grand Chapter who possessed the degree of most excellent master to register upon which being effected they would be asked to open a lodge and confer the degree upon all present who wished to receive it. All reference to the mark degree was eliminated.

The original regulations would have allowed 'pro forma' conferring of the degree - the amendments also allowed for this but only for the first twelve months, and by dispensation - and no mention had been made of group conferring.

Templeman also mentioned that there was no wish to interfere with any other body. In Victoria there were some who were mark men and some who were not, a mark Grand Lodge existed and Grand Chapter had no wish to interfere until they all became one body. (There was no longer any real possibility of this happening even if there ever had been in the past.) Drew, the seconder of the amendments, stated that the degree must be worked in a lodge attached to a chapter but not in the chapter itself.

Templeman also mentioned that he had conferred with authorities and it is obvious that he, at least, was referring to the excellent master degree but there is no conclusive evidence that anyone else was and even Drew's comment does not definitively determine the degree he was referring to. There were quite a few copies of Carlyle's exposures known to be in existence in the state and if these were used for reference matters would have become even more confused. There is extant, in the Grand Lodge library, a manuscript ritual of a degree headed the Scottish most excellent master degree while it is actually the working of the excellent master degree.

Again we can only conclude that the vast majority, if not all, of the companions were still firmly convinced that there was only one degree but in two different forms, one of which was designated as 'Scottish'. It is dangerous to make assertions about this period but it does appear that Drew also was of this belief. With these amended regulations carried the *Australasian Keystone* felt free to offer a few comments and the writer of the article mentioned that, except in New South Wales, all excellent masters had taken a solemn obligation not to confer the degree on anyone who was not a mark men. Hugh Sinclair was deeply involved with this journal by this time - he served for a period as editor - and Sinclair was the compiler of the original set of regulations.

So it was partly settled. Ford's suggestion at Grand Chapter in April 1902, that Grand Mark be disbanded and the mark and most excellent master degrees be worked in all private chapters, received scant support, which is a pity in many ways, and plans were made for the first working of the degree.

A special convocation was held on the 21<sup>st</sup> of July, five days after the regular convocation, and the excellent masters were requested to retire and form themselves into a lodge. Fifteen companions complied with this request and forty nine were admitted to the degree. A number refused to attend on conscientious grounds and included in this group were Lambert, Coulson and Charles Martin. (It is probably very relevant that around this time arrangements were in hand for the opening of a council of Royal and Select Masters under the English Constitution.) Drew was to be master of the lodge but was absent.

Around this time Templeman, who comes through very strongly as the main agitator for the additional degree after the question was again raised in 1900, moved permanently to New South Wales. He did, however, find the time to make sporadic visits to Victoria to keep in touch. On one such occasion he released advance information that he would confer the excellent master degree at the Australasian Chapter on the 30<sup>th</sup> of October 1903. This could have been to allow as many as wished to receive the degree to be present but it can also be seen as necessary forewarning to those who still objected on conscientious grounds to the lack of the mark requirement. Two companions did retire on the night and Templeman duly proceeded to open a lodge of excellent masters. Twenty-eight brethren were received and, as the report stated, they also passed the veils. (The actual report in the *Australasian Keystone* stated that the most excellent master degree was worked, that it was wrong in a few particulars and one veil was missing.)

Templeman explained that in America, Ireland, Scotland and parts of the continent the degree of the Holy Royal Arch could not be given to anyone who was not an excellent master. The working of the veils was merely an introduction to the Royal Arch degree. (Surely Templeman knew that the mark degree was also a pre-requisite.)

Drew, incidentally, was present on this occasion and was thanked for his advice.

What can be made of this incident?

The fact that Templeman came down from New South Wales suggests that the degree was being worked but rarely - and all other evidence supports this contention - and the comments made by him, combined with the press reports, tend to suggest that the veils and the excellent master degree were not being

thought of as part and parcel of the same thing in Victoria. Templeman, presumably was working the degree in its correct form as he had found it in New South Wales but it still appears that the belief prevailed in this state that the excellent master degree was the Canadian and American most excellent master degree with the veils added.

Drew did not attend, and act as master, at the original mass conferring in Grand Chapter but he did attend, and offer advice, at the Australasian Chapter. One conclusion which can be drawn from this is that the mass conferring had been that of excellent master as Templeman found it in New South Wales. Drew was not familiar with this working and had expected the normal working of the most excellent master degree to be followed when he agreed to preside as master. Hence he could not, or would not, go ahead. Following this line of thought the latter meeting could have seen the working of the most excellent master degree. Templeman may have been reasonably easily convinced that it was a different form of the degree- the American form - and this would explain why the press reports suggested that the degree and the passing of the veils were two separate ceremonies with the second part being worked by Templeman to show how it was done in the neighbouring state. (It does not quite obey the laws of logic but the above quite possible as an explanation.)

No real conclusion can be reached as to which degree was actually worked on the rare occasion when an additional degree was conferred by a private chapter. There appears to be little doubt that Templeman wished to work the excellent master degree while, on the other hand, Drew would have had the most excellent master degree in mind. Nothing appears to have been heard from the new and rather exclusive Victorian Council of Royal and Select Masters which was working the English equivalent of the most excellent master degree. Perhaps the only valid conclusion we can reach is that either of the degrees were worked, the ritual chosen depending upon the particular chapter and the prominent member thereof. The knowledgeable Henry Tompsitt had received the most excellent master degree in London in 1901 and returned to Victoria after the discussion had been resolved. Surely he would have found out, while in England, that it was an American chapter degree. We can possibly suggest that the city chapters tended to work the most excellent master degree while the country chapters tended to work the excellent master degree but the whole matter is still very cloudy. It does appear, however, that from around 1902 the belief was very strong that the most excellent master was basically the excellent master degree with the veils removed.

Apart from the decision in the middle of 1906, through a Hugh Sinclair

motion, to make the mark degree a necessary pre-requisite Grand Chapter showed very little interest in the degree and very little is really known about the way in which the degree was worked until 1911 when Trebilcock received the degree of excellent master in the Royal Golden Chapter at Bendigo. In this particular case the degree was definitely that of excellent master and the jewel received by Trebilcock was the five pointed star of that degree.

### A Finale.

Trebilcock was firmly convinced that up until that time no ritual of the degree was ever published and, when he became foundation first principal of the Kerang Chapter the following year, he inquired of Grand Scribe Ezra as to whether there was a printed ritual. He was informed that there was none. He received, instead, a manuscript copy of the ritual in the handwriting of First Grand Principal Edward Coulson. The accompanying letter concluded with the following paragraph:

'What I have given in this book is the only correct working of the M.E.M.'s degree in Victoria. It is the first of the Cryptic degrees through which I have had the honor of passing through all the chairs. But they have kindly handed the degree to the R A. Chapter.'

As this was a rather crucial incident in the story of the most excellent master degree and, more or less, set the seal on which degree would be worked in the future it may be wise to again have a look at what occurred in the past, particularly as the definite decision of the First Grand Principal seems to have found ready acceptance.

The members who produced documentary evidence on that first night most likely did so of either degree but the ceremony worked was that of excellent master. Grand Chapter failed completely to distinguish between the two degrees but this was not at all surprising, although it was decidedly significant in some ways, as none of the individual companions seems to be able to do so either. The problem which arose over the mark degree is irrelevant in regard to which degree was being worked and it came about due to those who had received the excellent master degree in New South Wales not necessarily being mark men while those who were most excellent masters would have insisted upon the mark qualification. It is purely a side issue to the basic story and the reversal in 1906 gives us no real clue as to which degree was being worked. One can wonder how the companions who had received the most excellent master degree in the Canadian chapters could so readily assume that it was effectively equivalent to part of the excellent master degree but, by this time, some seven years had passed since the Canadian warrants had been returned

and masonic life during our early years tended to be very short. Many brethren did not attempt to learn rituals so that few of the companions would really have been aware of the differences and in many cases the possession of the degree was purely nominal.

(There is no criticism implied in this last statement nor is there any suggestion that Canada was permitting something which England would not have allowed. The inaugural body in Victoria in one order under the English Constitution was given permission to simply communicate the secrets in one degree as the procurement of the full equipment would have involved too great an expanse. Possibly this is the treatment - although not because of the expense- that the most excellent master degree received in the Canadian chapters.)

Over the years Drew's influence - and knowledge - led to the original excellent master degree being gradually replaced in the city chapters by the most excellent master degree but, and this is also an important point, the degree, in either form, was rarely worked. In the country where Drew had less influence the excellent master degree tended to hold sway.

In the meantime the council of Royal and Select Masters was formed in Melbourne and an 'English' version of the most excellent master degree was being worked in Victoria. The Victorians, it must be remembered, were very keen to adopt English working. Yet it is apparent that all companions remained blissfully unaware that there were actually two degrees and not two interchangeable names. Even Trebilcock, in 1946, assumed that the excellent master degree was worked in Canada although he was well aware that there were two degrees.

On the 27<sup>th</sup> of February 1950 Trebilcock delivered a lecture on the ceremony known as 'passing the veils' in which he was highly critical of the position of that work in the ceremony of exaltation. He also made the following comment:

'The Degree of Most Excellent Master was adopted in the early days of our Grand Chapter through the failure to recognise the difference. There is no doubt that what our early Grand Chapter intended to work was the degree of Excellent Master, in other words the passing of the veils but, through ignorance they called it Most Excellent Master, with the result that our early companions pirated the degree of M.E.M. from the Council of Royal and Select Masters, of which Order it forms the first degree. And this error has been perpetuated ever since.'

We shall return to this statement in some detail later as Trebilcock has placed on record a number of wrong assumptions and incorrect masonic statements which have also been perpetuated for many years. But first we shall examine



the way in which the most excellent master degree became the official degree of our Grand Chapter.

By 1912, apart from the fact that the additional degree was being worked but rarely, some fifteen years had passed since the original moves had been made and almost all of the original agitators had disappeared from the scene. Many of them had lost interest in much less than fifteen years, probably because of the general shortness of masonic life, and few Royal Arch masons who had a 'legitimate' reason to work either degree were still around. Royal Arch masonry itself had been caught in a masonic slump which appears to have occurred as a result of the bursting of the land boom and appears to have lasted for around fifteen years.

As the first decade of the twentieth century neared its end interest in the masonic degrees beyond the craft underwent a minor revival. Knight Templary began to thrive rather than exist, dormant bodies of the Red Cross of Constantine and the Rosicrucian Society were revived and the new Council of Royal and Select Masters was exhibiting signs of becoming successful. In such a climate it is not surprising that the interested masons would turn to the degree which their constitution permitted them to work. It is also not surprising that those who were living in the outer country areas were experiencing difficulties in finding 'experts' to confer the degree as the sparse working would have prevented any new 'experts' from arriving on the scene. Trebilcock's action in requesting a ritual from Grand Chapter was quite logical but it is debatable whether Coulson's action was equally logical. Coulson was, admittedly, the first of the First Grand Principals to be faced with such a request but the correctness of his subsequent actions is a matter for conjecture. Theoretically Coulson had two choices at his disposal; to send a ritual for the degree specified in the regulations or to change those regulations to specify the degree which Trebilcock wanted and which was apparently being worked in Bendigo. However we cannot be absolutely certain that anyone, least of all Coulson, had managed to work out that there were actually two degrees and his statement that the ritual was 'the only correct working of the M.E.M's degree in Victoria' can be interpreted as meaning that he considered the other workings to be incorrect versions of the same degree.

(Victoria had very little awareness of the various systems in Scotland as it was around this time that Coulson's mark Grand Lodge refused to recognise Scottish mark masons who received the degree in their craft lodges.)

One cannot escape the thought that Coulson may also have been taking out a little insurance for his mark Grand Lodge. The debate of some ten years previously had shown that some Victorians were aware that the New South

Wales approach to the excellent master degree was not in accord with other constitutions in which the degree was worked in that the mark qualification was not required.

Admittedly Grand Chapter had inserted this requirement but there was no guarantee that it would not again be removed at some future time. By circulating a ritual which directly specified the need for the mark degree Coulson could have been hoping that this would become so widespread that it could never be eliminated. By adopting the English degree as worked in the cryptic councils he also lessened the possibility that someone in authority would eventually successfully move that the degree be placed in its correct position, before the exaltation ceremony. A move of this type could well be extended into including the mark degree in the chapters as well.

We will probably never know Coulson's line of thought but his great love for the mark Grand Lodge must have influenced his thinking and, if he had become aware that there were two degrees, the one he chose, or more accurately the ritual he prescribed, lessened the chance that the mark degree would lose its independent existence.

Whatever his reasons Coulson made his choice and the Supreme Grand Chapter of Victoria now works the most excellent master degree as an optional extra for any companion who is also in possession of the mark degree.

Before attempting to tie together all the threads to give a complete picture of the trials and tribulations of the degree until 1912, and its continuation therefrom, it is necessary to examine one further comment made by Trebilcock in one of his lectures where he made the following reference to the chosen degree:

‘The error should be corrected and the degree dropped by Grand Chapter, not forming part of the Royal Arch system, and the degree of Excellent Master, which does, adopted in its stead.’

It may seem unfair to continually quote from Trebilcock's work in order to criticise his conclusions but it is necessary as his work is most likely well known to researchers and could well be the basis from which any new researcher works. Some of his comments are valuable in that they sum up the erroneous lines along which many present day companions think, and sum them up very neatly. It is also essential that his arguments be successfully countered.

### A Summary

The original request, in 1894, was most definitely for the excellent master degree but by 1889 and 1900 the old Geelong chapter had been out of work for some time and the new request to Grand Chapter can only be thought of as

permission to work an additional degree. It seems reasonable to conclude that a number of companions were interested in the ritual which was in existence in New South Wales and had been an integral part of the work of the Geelong chapter - and for a time a part of Ballarat Royal Arch masonry - while others were concerned - with the ritual which had been part of the recently deceased Canadian chapters and the original, but well and truly dead, council of Royal and Select Masters. There was no real awareness that there were two separate degrees and it is impossible to support Trebilcock's contention that they intended to work the excellent master degree but called it most excellent master through ignorance.

Quite simply all thought that there were two versions of the one degree.

The first working of the degree occurred after documentary evidence only had been produced by those who claimed to be in possession of it. At first glance this appears to have been a peculiar procedure but it was most likely caused by the fact that those who had produced evidence of membership in one degree could not have proved themselves to those who had produced evidence of membership of the other. (Or, in the minds of the participants, those who had taken the degree in one form could not prove themselves to those who had taken it in the other.)

This could also have been the reason why arrangements for the first working were altered at the last moment and Drew did not act as master. It suggests that Templeman's influence had caused the excellent master degree to be adopted while Drew had been preparing along the most excellent master lines.

Almost certainly the version brought by Templeman from New South Wales was thus used almost exclusively through his influence.

No great interest was displayed and no one was particularly anxious about the additional degrees until Trebilcock in Kerang, one of the first of the new breed of masons who were interested in the higher degrees called for a ritual in his position as first principal of his chapter. Coulson sent him the English version of the most excellent master degree which he had personally written out. He did not, however, 'pirate' the degree except perhaps in the sense that he stole the shorter version as it was worked in the English constitution cryptic councils. As far as that order handing over the degree is concerned this statement must be seen as a complete fallacy as it did not belong to the cryptic order at all, it is not a cryptic degree and was only introduced into England, by a Grand Chapter not a Grand Council, because the Grand Chapter of England did not work the degree.

The adoption of this version, however, was a logical step as the Victorian Council of Royal and Select Masters had been around for some ten years or so

by this time and common sense does suggest that it would be a wise move to keep both workings the same.

As far as Trebilcock's final point - the dropping of the most excellent master degree in favour of the excellent master degree - is concerned it must be stated that he has based this suggestion on one wrong fact - that the most excellent master is not a chapter degree - but this should not prevent his suggestion from receiving some consideration, particularly if it meant that, whichever degree was finally decided upon, it was worked in its correct place. Before the exaltation ceremony.

In one sense the excellent master degree would be the better choice as our early companions set out to work according to English masonic systems and this degree does at least belong to a sister British Grand Chapter whereas the most excellent master degree belongs primarily to America and constitutions which follow American masonic systems.

Or perhaps it would be better to work neither degree as the most excellent master degree is being worked in the cryptic councils in Victoria and the inclusion of the excellent master degree would be a rather radical change to make in our regulations at this relatively late date.

### **More Recent Developments.**

Very little is known about what occurred between 1912 and 1918 mainly because the rather innocuous masonic press which made sporadic appearances on the scene had very little to say about anything outside the craft. In July 1918 the comment was made at Grand Chapter that very few private chapters were working the degree. One companion commented that his chapter had conferred the degree some time back but, in the absence of a ritual, had used the Canadian after knocking out the portions which did not suit. Which if nothing else, does suggest that there was a Canadian ritual in the state. It also suggests that Coulson's ritual which had been sent to Kerang had not been automatically adopted throughout the state.

George Cameron Kingscott commented, correctly, that the degree was properly a preliminary in some constitutions but this does not necessarily mean that he was - at that time - aware of the two degrees. However, by this time it does appear that the excellent master degree had been well and truly forgotten. Certainly we have no way of knowing how universal Coulson's manuscript ritual became but no uproar appears to have followed his action.

William Player Bice, who was now First Grand Principal, wanted and trusted that the Committee of General Purposes would do something about a ritual. Some clear guidelines were obviously needed as the relatively new *Victorian*

*Craftsman* showed that all was still rather confused in many minds by stating that the City of Melbourne Chapter would work the royal and select master degree in July. From later reports it is obvious that the degree worked by this old Canadian chapter was most excellent master.

At its October 1918 meeting, the Committee of General Purposes considered a letter from Bice and agreed to his request to appoint a sub-committee to confer with him in regard to the most excellent master ritual and the ceremony of passing the veils. The Committee agreed and appointed Bagnall, Callaway and Kennedy who reported in November that the rituals were settled. In April 1919 Bice was able to inform Grand Chapter that the ritual was in print. Bice also asked the Committee to consider the number of candidates per meeting and October saw the issuing of a decree which limited the number to seven. This may have been a follow up to the comment the previous year that one chapter had recently conferred the degree on forty six candidates. At the same convocation it was stated that each candidate was to produce his mark certificate.

Thomas Lambert stated that the penal sign was contrary to England and he wanted the First Grand Principal to make inquiries, thus suggesting that the excellent master sign had possibly been retained. (One is intrigued as to which body such inquiries were made. Perhaps Bice simply asked Coulson.)

The issuing of the ritual did not immediately produce uniformity as this was the time when there was still debate over the exaltation ceremony. An editorial comment claimed that a number of chapters were continuing to work from an unauthorised ritual which was, in some instances, a hybrid of Scottish, Irish and American work compiled by a Melbourne printer.

The October 1922 decree settled the question completely.

Only two important changes have been made to the 1919 edition of the ritual and both appeared in the second edition in 1925. One was an addition the other an omission. The former was the explanation of the pass grip and pass word while the latter involved a small portion which had somehow been extracted from the historical address of the super excellent master degree, the final degree in the cryptic councils. Presumably the compiler had included it as it attempted to tie the Royal Arch to the craft - suggesting that the gap was filled by the most excellent master degree - and referred to what had taken place during the intervening 470 years.

Nowadays the two separate workings, in chapter or council, in Victoria, are all but identical.

The only remaining significant change involved regalia. In 1919 any companion present at the conferring of the degree wore his jewels and the

Royal Arch sash only. By 1925 this had been altered to the present day practice of wearing full Royal Arch regalia.

There is a little more to the story but before it is detailed we need to turn to that other quaint piece of appending effected by our early companions; the addition of the ceremony known as 'passing the veils'.

### The Veils.

Very little direct information can be discovered as to whether or not this ceremony was worked immediately after 1889 by the Grand Chapter of Victoria. We do know that the Irish chapter, Washington, worked the ceremony in 1882 at the time when Lamonby began issuing reports, we can be reasonably certain that it was worked by the Scottish chapters - separately to the excellent master degree - and it is likely that it was included in the exaltation ceremony in the Canadian chapters as these did, at least, appoint four masters of the veils at certain times. In December 1893 the masonic press reported the visit of a number of mark master masons to Ballarat to open a new mark lodge. While there they visited the Yarrowee Chapter which exhibited what the press called the 'country' working. In August 1896 Jarrett mentioned the ceremony as it was practised in New South Wales chapters.

It does appear, that the Yarrowee Chapter was working some sort of ceremony along these lines as, in October 1898, it issued an invitation to the ritual committee to visit the Ballarat chapter to see the working and commented that the ceremony had just received the approval of a number of representatives of Grand Chapter who had seen it. (These would not have been official representatives. Grand Lodge had just held its quarterly communication in Ballarat and presumably arrangements had been made to entertain the Royal Arch masons at a meeting in that degree.)

In July 1900 Henry Jebb again invited Grand Chapter to Ballarat and the following month, the *Australasian Keystone* made a interesting reference to this chapter by commenting that it worked. the veils which had dropped out elsewhere and added that this ceremony was always worked.

This comment is significant as the Yarrowee Chapter was born a mere few years after a Scottish chapter gave up life in Ballarat and, as less than four years did pass, it is quite likely that some former member of the old chapter were involved with the new. It appears that a nucleus of members from the old chapter brought this particular ceremony with them and, as has already been noted, one English ritual specified the place in the exaltation ceremony where the passing of the veils should be worked. Thus the chapter could not be considered to be working an 'illegal' ceremony even though it was under the

English Constitution.

It seems reasonable to assume that it was the Yarrowee Chapter which kept the ceremony alive in Victoria.

As further evidence that this was indeed the case we have the press report that the Australasian Chapter worked the veils in some form late in October 1905.

The Yarrowee Chapter was thanked for the loan of its veils and Drew was thanked for his advice and assistance. The ceremony was stated - by Templeman - to be merely an introduction to the Royal Arch degree which would not have helped the prestige of the ceremony.

### **Grand Chapter and the Veils.**

But it was still only the Yarrowee Chapter which in any consistent way worked the ceremony and after Templeman moved permanently to New South Wales no other chapter appears to have displayed any great interest for quite a number of years. Indeed as far as the city chapters were concerned interest was not again sparked until the Yarrowee companions journeyed down to the Clarke Chapter in February 1911 to demonstrate the ceremony. After this visit the Clarke Chapter occasionally worked the ceremony.

First Grand Principal Edward Coulson decided that something needed to be done about the ceremony and, at a subsequent meeting, visit the Clarke Chapter to see it worked as he felt that there were several ways of doing so and he believed uniformity to be essential. This does suggest that by 1911-12 the ceremony was receiving an occasional airing.

It must also be remembered that Coulson was effectively ensuring that the additional degree would be the most excellent master which meant that if the veils ceremony was being considered as part of the exaltation ceremony a new form had to be devised to take into account the fact that the passwords were not being previously communicated in a different degree. At least this would be the case for any chapter which had derived its work from the Scottish system.

July 1912 saw the Committee of General Purposes in receipt of a letter from Coulson referring to the two or three versions of the work and his desire for uniformity. Coulson had been interested in the ceremony for quite some time as back in June 1903 the Committee had reported the receipt of a communication from him detailing the cost of procuring the basic framework for working the veils but as this did not include the transparency and other particulars it was referred back to him. In October the Committee decided not to procure the necessary equipment as this was the province of the individual chapters.

( In 1912 the Committee deputed Bice, Baxter and Tilley to confer with Coulson and October saw the recommendation that the version known as the 'English' be adopted. It had been exemplified in the Yarrowee and Clarke Chapters and was preferable to the other forms in use or which had been issued. Bice felt that the ceremony could well be worked in conjunction with the most excellent master degree. (Early evidence of putting the two parts back together?) In December 1912 the Committee rejected the idea of an exemplification in Grand Chapter as irregular. Grand Chapter itself did not make the ceremony compulsory and it has been considered as an optional extra ever since. Nor, apparently, did Grand Chapter issue the ritual which it had adopted until 1918 when the most excellent master ritual was also published for the first time. This was brought about by a letter from Bice asking for a sub-committee to confer with him and, as mentioned, he was joined by Bagnall, Callaway and Kennedy. How the individual chapters were working until this time is open to doubt.

### The Ceremony in the Victorian Chapters.

The reference by Coulson to the Yarrowee and Clarke work as being 'English' is interesting in that it does strongly suggest that the Ballarat companions had been responsible for the ceremony continuing to exist in Victoria but it is a little disappointing in the sense that it does not inform us of who actually devised this form of the ceremony. It does appear, quite strongly, that the Scottish passing of the veils portion of the exaltation ceremony had been adopted as the base and the essential and necessary additions made thereto. It is extremely unlikely that any English ritual for the ceremony had ever arrived in Victoria and the resurrection of the ceremony in the Bristol chapters was of too recent an origin for its effects to have any bearing.

If the above supposition is correct we can wonder, to some extent, how the Ballarat companions managed to work an unauthorised ritual for so long, but we should recall that when Grand Chapter finally became serious about uniformity in 1918 comments were made that a number of chapters were insisting upon retaining their own form of the ritual. During the debate on the possibility of a Grand Chapter of Instruction being formed one companion raised the appointment of a Grand Inspector of Workings and was promptly warned by another against such a suggestion as one chapter had been in abeyance for twelve years because of interference.

This does suggest that the experience which Grand Chapter had had with the St Andrews in the South Chapter had made many companions wary of interfering with any other chapter. Thus, even if interference had been considered warranted the Yarrowee Chapter was left well alone.



By 1918 the veils had started to become more common and October 1919 saw the *Victorian Craftsman* mentioning the conferring of the veils in the relatively young Lord Kitchener Chapter as having been performed in the usual efficient manner for which this chapter has become prominent.

In January 1921 Grand Chapter altered the regulations to allow the passing of the veils to be worked without dispensation and private chapters were permitted to appoint three guardians of the veils. In July 1921 the Committee received a letter from Bice in regard to an investiture for this new appointment. Adcock and Kennedy were to compile a charge and submit it to Bice for his approval. Thus the 1923 edition of the exaltation ritual saw the first mention of the ceremony while the 1932 installation ritual included the investiture of the guardians although that charge had been in use for around a decade. 1921 thus saw the end of the story in the sense that Grand Chapter had prescribed rituals for the three basic ceremonies permitted to each private chapter. Minor changes have been made in each of these - and in the installation ritual - from time to time but this was still not the end of the story in another aspect.

### An Unfinished Debate.

In his previously mentioned 1950 lecture Trebilcock made one further comment which requires examination.

‘I have never been able to understand why the ceremony of Passing the Veils has, in the ritual used in Victoria, been placed where it is.’

From one point of view the answer to this query, and the removal of Trebilcock’s bemusement is simple. Because that is where it should be according to the ritual, or constitution, from which Victoria derived it and where it should be according to England if we wish to follow the line of thought which inspired our early companions.

It was often stated by the masons of Victoria when local Grand bodies were mooted that it was desired to adopt English masonic practices.

So, in this sense, Trebilcock’s implied question is readily answered but he continued his objection to the position of the ceremony along different and masonically purer lines. He argued that the placing of the ceremony after the obligation meant that there was a necessary re-arranging of the furniture unless there was a convenient room nearby which could be used. He considered the reasoning which placed the ceremony where it was to have been along the line of a need to place the candidate under an obligation of secrecy before the passwords could be communicated. (There is, of course, the line of thought which claims that the first obligation taken in masonry covers all others and

makes them unnecessary as far as pledges of secrecy are concerned.) He also believed that the ceremony should be sited in its correct position and made into a full degree as was done in other constitutions.

Trebilcock, in both of these claims, has missed the essential point that, leaving aside the Bristol working, the ceremony is in its correct place but compared with other constitutions it is extended. Its placement has nothing to do with the obligation of secrecy.

In practice it is possible to produce quite justifiable arguments for locating the ceremony in either place - whichever form of the ceremony is being used - but the combination of two successive First Grand Principals who thought along similar lines provided an opportunity for a minor alteration to be attempted.

Trebilcock's views basically coincided with those of the knowledgeable George Cameron Kingscott, the companion who preceded him as First Grand Principal. As far back as 1918 Kingscott had been critical of the treatment being given to the most excellent master degree - if that is what it was - and in 1947 - when it most certainly was that degree - he initiated a move within the Committee to have the degree withdrawn. For reasons which we will come to later he did not proceed with this intention.

In January 1950 the Ritual and Ceremonial Committee recommended the working of the Veils before the exaltation ceremony. In February Kingscott informed the Committee of General Purposes that this had been tried and the total time required was one and three quarter hours. The committee carried a Danglow motion that where practicable, on the desire of the First Grand Principal, the ceremony was to be worked at least once in each year and before the exaltation ceremony.

Kingscott was thus able to inform Grand Chapter in April that the Ritual and Ceremonial Committee had agreed to his express wish, listed the above mentioned recommendations and stated that the veils would no longer be considered as a separate ceremony.

Two years later Trebilcock felt the need to clear up what he referred to as a 'misunderstanding' and stated that the ceremony must precede the exaltation. (Victorian masons have often held the erroneous belief that a pronouncement retired with the person who made it.) In October 1953 his successor Richard Willmore Chenoweth declared that he had discussed the matter with Past First Grand Principals, Past Grand Directors of Ceremonies and his co Grand Principals and had decided that as the original practice had worked so harmoniously they would now revert to it but any chapter which had gone to any trouble or expense could retain the new if desired.

### Will it Ever. be Finished?

In January 1957 the Ritual and Ceremonial Committee recommended that the working, or not, of the veils should be left to the discretion of the individual chapters but not at the expense of any other part. (Apparently some chapters were omitting part or all of the lectures on nights when the veils were worked.) The final chapter, so far, was written in June 1958 when the Committee of General Purposes - via Kingscott and Baker - recommended that the passing of the veils be not worked on nights of exaltation because of the undue length of the ceremony.

There are no clear lines for deciding the right or wrong of the situation but surely the following statement by Trebilcock deserves some honest and impartial consideration:

‘What I advocate is that the Degree of Excellent Master which is the ceremony of Passing the Veils worked as a degree, be regularly adopted by Grand Chapter. If the ceremony is worth carrying out at all (and I think it is) it should be done properly.’

We may not entirely agree with the masonic exactitude of the statement but the sentiment deserves some serious thought, particularly as our early companions wanted ‘British’ masonry not ‘American’.

By January 1955 Grand Chapter could no longer plead ignorance in regard to the two degrees. Among others Grand Scribe Ezra Harry Thomas had visited Western Australia for the 50 year jubilee of that Grand Chapter and seven of the visiting eminent companions received the degree of excellent master. As Thomas reported the ceremony in no way resembled the most excellent master degree but around 85% of it termed the Victorian passing of the veils.

### George Kingscott.

Kingscott refused to give up his attempt to remove the most excellent master degree from our regulations. We have mentioned his criticism of 1918 and we briefly referred to his 1947 efforts. Now we can complete that section of our history.

In December 1946 the Committee of General Purposes, on a Kingscott and Tackaberry motion determined to investigate the degree of most excellent master. In March 1947 the Ritual and Ceremonial Committee unanimously agreed to Kingscott’s motion to omit all reference to the degree from the regulations. Kingscott and Dick then moved in the Committee of General Purposes that it be a recommendation to Grand Chapter that the above be complied with.

In June 1947 the new first Grand Principal, Walter Kemp, was present and

stated that he was opposed to the suggestion. It had been well considered by those who had introduced it and it was dangerous to interfere with the regulations in such a connection. Immediate Past First Grand Principal, Rabbi Danglow, believed that on this opposition, and this opposition alone, they should not proceed. He put a motion to this effect and it was carried.

In January 1957 the Ritual and Ceremonial Committee recommended the deletion of the degree but when Kingscott gave its history and moved to that effect in the Committee of General Purposes he could not get a seconder and the motion lapsed.

In March 1965 Kingscott again raised the question in the Committee of General Purposes and with the aid of Norman Llewellyn Brunt obtained the formation of a special committee, consisting of First Grand Principal Christopher Thomas Frow Goy, all Past First Grand Principals and Grand Registrar Walton with power to add, to consider the question.

In May 1965 the special committee met. Kingscott and Goy moved the deletion of Rules 64 to 67 but this was withdrawn. The same two then successfully moved that a further meeting be held and a submission be drawn up asking the Committee of General Purposes to remove the relevant rules.

The submission was drawn up on the 31<sup>st</sup> of May with Money, Kingscott, Dean, Walton and Thomas present. It was prepared by Kingscott and opened with a brief history to show how the original intention had been the excellent master degree. It continued with the claim that it did not rightly fit in, it denied membership rights to certain companions, that apart from a very small income neither Grand Chapter nor the private chapters gained any real benefit and stated that opinion was and always had been widely divided.

Four paragraphs headed 'Disadvantages' were amended out.

The special committee, on a Kingscott and Walton motion, decided that, taking all into account, the Grand Registrar take the necessary steps to delete the degree from the regulations.

Kingscott and Walton moved to this effect in the Committee of General Purposes in June 1965 but Swan and Frank introduced a successful amendment that the report be received and no action be taken for six months.

In December 1965 Kingscott raised the subject again and after much discussion moved the appointment of a sub-committee consisting of himself, Goy and Thomas to prepare a letter containing the reasons for discontinuing the degree. This was to be presented to Swan, Grand Registrar Walton and the President of the Committee of General Purposes, Robert Money, for approval after which it would be forwarded to the private chapters. The scribes were to be instructed to read the letter in open chapter and return an expression of

opinion to Grand Scribe Ezra. In January Kingscott would give the necessary Notice of Motion and the vote would be taken in July. In June 1966 it was again discussed. Walton and Reinecke moved that the President inform Grand Chapter of the results of the opinions received, that the question was not of such vital importance as to warrant a recommendation from the Committee and therefore it had been left completely open for discussion. Grand Treasurer Hallows and Baker then moved an amendment that in view of the opinion expressed by the plebiscite the Committee of General Purposes now recommended to the mover that he withdraw his notice of Motion. This was carried and on becoming the motion was also carried.

Kingscott disregarded this recommendation and moved for the deletion at the July convocation. After an amendment to refer the matter back to the Committee of General Purposes was defeated the original motion was put and overwhelmingly defeated.

At the October convocation a comment was passed to the effect that an attempt was to be made to remove the mark qualification, a statement which was to be repeated in January the following year together with the information that the degree was to be revised to give it added dignity. At the same convocation the Committee had reported that the Grand Registrar had been instructed to formulate a Notice of Motion to remove the mark qualification.

Six months later, after a further examination, the Committee of General Purposes decided not to proceed with these plans and the status quo was maintained. The Committee had agreed in December, on a Goy and Swan motion, that the degree should be conferred on any companion but in June 1967 a letter was received from Trebilcock in regard to the proposed amendments. His argument must have been telling as the Committee decided without dissent not to proceed with the Notice of Motion.

### **Other Rituals.**

Three further ritual aspects are deserving of a brief mention. Late in 1900 the suggestion was made that a consecration ritual was rather desirable, as was a ceremony which allowed for Grand Chapter to be opened in a different form from that in use in the private chapters.

The latter point received prompt attention. A January 1901 saw Grand Chapter opened for the first time with a preliminary ceremony. Jarret had also mentioned that Grand Chapter was using the robes of the old Combermere Chapter and the January convocation also saw new robes and surplices in use (Jarrett appears to have been correct as the Combermere robes were offered for sale late the previous year and a special Committee had decided to buy them if

they were in good order. Apparently they were not.)

The lack of a consecrating ritual is a significant comment on the lack of enthusiasm of our early companions as two new chapters had already been consecrated. Little comment had been made about the formation of the Argyle Chapter, probably because it had been born during the days when the craft Grand Lodge was the centre of masonic attention but the formation of the Goulbourn Valley Chapter on the 14<sup>th</sup> of September 1900 brought the lack of an authorised form painfully before the eyes of all concerned, particularly as the consecrating officer, Alex Phillips, was simply told to do the best he could. A committee - Thomas Ford and Frederick Maillard - was promptly formed and took within its frame of reference the installation ceremony as well. By October 1902 there was talk in Grand Chapter of the rituals being ready and it was stated that the English, with slight variations, had been adopted.

Something, however, went wrong, as November saw the two rituals placed in the hands of Lambert, Sinclair and Phillips by the Committee of General of Purposes. At the next convocation of Grand Chapter the Committee requested more time.

In July 1903 the consecration ritual was adopted - and slightly amended by the Committee at its next meeting - and January the following year saw the installation ceremony accepted.

All remained quiet until October 1911 when Thomas Ford commented at Grand Chapter that there were only a few copies of the installation ritual in existence and these were typewritten. He felt that the work could well be printed. Apparently the ritual itself was undergoing some consideration as First Grand Principal George Emery stated that he had conferred with two or three Past First Grand Principals as to the advisability or otherwise of slightly re-arranging the form of the ceremony in use so as to permit companions to be present for some parts from which they were excluded.

In January the following year Emery stated that the matter had been carefully considered, the revision had been typed and handed to some eight Past Grand Officers. Emery felt that Grand Chapter could now elect a small committee and, in reply to a question, added that all that had been done was to re-arrange the ceremony so that no companion was outside for more than twenty minutes. Nothing had been added but a few corrections had been made. He felt that anything to do with the ritual was entirely the prerogative of the First Grand Principal but, personally, he preferred to consult Grand Chapter.

The committee was formed and by the next convocation the ritual was in the hands of the printer.

The installation ritual was, in a slight degree, rewritten in 1932 by a new

committee. The work was described by First Grand Principal Charles Thomas Martin as being somewhat short, but no major alteration had been made. In August 1963 the Ritual and Ceremonial Committee recommended that in proving the third principal elect to be an installed master it was not necessary for him to give the sign. First Grand Principal Goy presented a draft of a re-arrangement which would have again reduced the time spent outside by the companions and the order of installation of the principals elect was reversed. In January this major alteration became law and the principals elect were now to be obligated in open chapter. It was explained that this was now the practice in England and many other jurisdictions.

### **Rules and Regulations.**

In the craft history the alterations which were from time to time made to the constitutions warrants a separate chapter to allow the full story to be discussed as there was often controversy involved. In Grand Chapter the story in relation to alterations to the rules and regulations is by no means as complex as, apart from the long running and indecisive battle over the most excellent master degree and the ceremony of passing the veils, little debate has ensued and many alterations have been direct corollaries of changes which have occurred in Grand Lodge.

The original committee - Finlayson, Ellis, Lempriere, Bayley, Solomon, Fox and GF Martin - was not appointed until January 1891 and their work was adopted at the next convocation in July. Basically the committee did little more than reproduce the English set and no arguments appear to have developed. Thus Victoria originally had a First and Second Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies and these, together with the Grand Director, were placed below the four Grand Standard Bearers on the table of precedence.

The treasurer was not a regular officer of the chapter, active craft membership was not required and serving companions were permitted.

### **One Major Area of Dissatisfaction.**

There was, however, one heritage from England which was soon to be viewed with disfavour. It involved the automatic appointment of some companions to certain Grand Chapter offices solely on the grounds of their holding similar Offices in Grand Lodge.

In January 1895 Ferguson placed a Notice of Motion on the agenda paper. It called for the three Grand Principals to be elected at the July convocation and to be forthwith installed and for the Grand Treasurer to be elected by Grand Chapter. The motion was withdrawn without debate.

Twelve months later Davies and Rodda began to realise that as the regulations stood a very inexperienced companion could be appointed as Grand Scribe Ezra and they brought forward a motion to prevent the Grand Secretary from becoming Grand Scribe Ezra unless he was a past first principal. The motion was defeated.

In July 1896 the first signs were seen that Grand Chapter, as a whole, did not consider the tied appointments to be beneficial to Royal Arch masonry. Drew, with Collis as seconder, sponsored a motion that it was not essential for the Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master, Grand Registrar and Grand Treasurer of Grand Lodge to be appointed to similar positions in Grand Chapter.

An extensive discussion revolved around the first of these positions and when this section of the motion was defeated the rest was not proceeded with.

However, the closeness of the vote - 6 for, 21 against - showed that a gradual change of opinion was occurring within Grand Chapter, no doubt influenced to a large extent by the amalgamation of the Canadian chapters - and incidentally the members of the old Grand Lodge of Victoria - and the influx of a number of companions who were always firmly committed to the elective principal.

At the Committee of General Purposes meeting just before this convocation the Committee had undoubtedly acted in contempt of the regulations by deciding not to appoint the new Grand Master, Lord Brassey, as First Grand Principal until the next year. Pro Grand Master Sir William Clarke simply continued in office.

The question was raised again the following year and the specific Notice of Motion was referred to the Committee. At the July 1897 convocation Lord Brassey was installed as First Grand Principal after Grand Chapter had first resolved itself into a Conclave of Installed Principals and installed him through each of the principals' chairs. Maybe it was basically coincidental that the matter was coming to a head around this time but it is probably beyond doubt that the forced appointment of the very inexperienced Lord Brassey played a large part in the decisions which followed.

Grand Chapter, with a build up of motions which had been referred to the Committee and as yet undealt with, decided to follow the lead given by Grand Lodge and make a complete revision of the rules and regulations. Accordingly January 1898 saw a revision committee appointed and this body - Cohen, Thompson, Tomsitt, Smith, Drew, Ford, Sinclair, Brown, Marks and Jennings - presented its report in September. It was adopted.

The most important of the alterations was the removal of the necessity for certain Grand Lodge Officers to be appointed to similar positions in Grand Chapter although equally divergent from English practice was the adoption of



new prefixes attached to the various offices. (Over a quarter of a century later Bice called attention to the fact that Grand Officers who were not past principals were also given 'eminent' rank but the Committee decided to take no action.)

While this change undoubtedly allowed Royal Arch mas ns to now consider themselves as a separate order with only companions voting for all Grand Chapter Offices a second alteration allowed, or perhaps forced, Grand Chapter to act as a governing body should. Back in 1891 the first set of rules and regulations specified that Grand Chapter should meet but twice a year and the infrequency of these convocations must have caused all companions to look upon meetings of Grand Chapter as being little more than formal gatherings. It was, it must be admitted, rather ludicrous to have to call a special convocation whenever important business - such as the issuing of a warrant for a new chapter or the amalgamation of the Canadian chapters - was outstanding. Rodda wanted Grand Chapter to meet three times a year but withdrew his motion on hearing that the Committee of General Purposes desired four meetings. Sinclair and Cohen were thus able to move the successful motion for four meetings per year but they added a clause which required these convocations to be held on the night before or after Grand Lodge thus leaving Grand Chapter in a somewhat inferior position. By the same token this could have been done to persuade the country brethren to spend an extra day in town and attend Grand Chapter as well as Grand Lodge which they had made a special trip to attend.

This last provision was altered within two years and Grand Chapter began to meet, as now, in the four months each one month later than the Grand Lodge quarterly communication.

In regard to the removal of the necessity of appointing the Grand Master as First Grand Principal no advantage was taken of the opportunity to select a different companion until 1904 although Philip Cohen had been appointed Second Grand Principal in 1901 as Deputy Grand Master Templeman had stated that he did not wish to assume the office. This does tend to suggest that Grand Chapter was satisfied with the performance of Lord Brassey, or at least with his Pro First Grand Principal Alexander Peacock, and with Peacock himself after he took over. Indeed it was not until Peacock all but demanded his release and instructed the prominent companion Frank Davies to nominate Thomas Lambert that any change was contemplated or made. Peacock had for some time felt that his parliamentary duties combined with the office of Grand Master were preventing him from devoting the necessary time to Royal Arch masonry.

Perhaps it is fair to state that Peacock was the first of the leaders of Grand Chapter to realise that it was necessary to devote considerable time to the affairs of Royal Arch masonry although it should be pointed out that George Baker as Second Grand Principal until his death had been an effective ruler of Grand Chapter.

In July 1904 Thomas Lambert, who had come down from the Albury area around the middle of the 1890s and quickly became prominent on the Victorian scene, was installed as First Grand Principal and since that time no reigning Grand Master, with the exception of Lord Somers for one year, has been elected to the equivalent office in Grand Chapter. (Emery was Pro Grand Master when elected as First Grand Principal.) The one minor blot which occurred at this, the first real election of a First Grand Principal, was a second nomination but the companion concerned wisely refused to allow his nomination to be accepted as he felt that there should not be a contest for such an important position.

No one objected to the Grand Secretary being Grand Scribe Ezra, particularly as the person concerned was John Braim, and no alteration was made until 1909 when Braim himself asked to be relieved of the Royal Arch office as his work in the craft had increased to such an extent that he believed he could not do justice to both offices.

### **Officers - Private and Grand.**

The next extensive revision of the rules and regulations occurred as the result of a new revision committee being appointed in January 1909 but two changes had occurred before this. October 1905 had seen the Committee decide that it would be appropriate to permit the appointment of two Grand Heralds and the consequent addition was made in April the next year. In April 1965 the word 'two' was deleted, quite a few years too late. Grand Chapter never did get upset about the appointment of Grand Chapter Officers, possibly perhaps there were few to choose from, but April 1905 had seen the introduction of a method whereby each private chapter was invited to nominate one eligible companion for appointment to office. This promptly saw a number of offices left unfilled - the year before had seen six vacancies as no companions could be found to accept them - and Knight moved a motion in October 1907 to remove the privilege. The motion was carried in April the following year and is probably significant from two points of view. Firstly it was similar to a scheme which had been tried, and had failed, in the mark Grand Lodge and, secondly, this was the first appearance on the Royal Arch scene of Herbert Manning Knight in a major sense as far as administrative changes were concerned.

Knight was extremely prominent in the craft, particularly in regard to constitutional changes and improvements from late in the 1890s and was the first Grand Secretary in the mark Grand Lodge in 1899 where he was later to be Grand Registrar. His first appearance came later on the Royal Arch scene as he was not exalted until 1896. He was a parliamentary draughtsman. The abovementioned committee of 1909 consisted of Cohen, Knight, Robertson and Hughes - the last named being a replacement for Maillard who died soon after appointment - with Grand Scribe Ezra, Marquand, acting as secretary. It obviously gave the rules and regulations a long hard look as it was October the next year before the amendments were under consideration. The work was adopted in January 1911.

Perhaps we can see the guiding hand of legal draughtsman Knight involved in this work as quite a number of alterations were made. In a minor sense April became the night of the Grand Installation while in a more important sense Grand Chapter recognised the four American and Canadian chapter degrees but stated that private chapters were chartered to work the Royal Arch ceremony and may be permitted to work the most excellent master degree under the regulations.

A few alterations were made to the table of precedence of Grand Officers. The Grand Director of Ceremonies was raised above the Grand Sword Bearer but below the Grand Sojourners while the Grand Treasurer and Grand Registrar were placed above the President of the Committee of General Purposes. A minor re-arrangement was made in the precedence of the past and present Grand Scribes.

In private chapters the regular officers - the three principals, the two scribes and the three sojourners - were to be elected while a director of ceremonies, an organist and stewards could be appointed. No regular chapter could consist of more than 72 members.

January 1921 saw a series of amendments moved by John Kennedy, about to become Second Grand Principal and later Grand Scribe Ezra, which were generally of minor importance and carried without discussion. The one amendment which did cause problems, the addition of a clause to require all chapters to adopt the prescribed ritual, has already been examined in detail. Private chapters were now permitted to appoint their officers - apart from those still elected today - a janitor was specified and three guardians of the veils and a choirmaster were allowed. Chapters could consist of more than 72 members but any member higher than 72 in order was not permitted to perform the duties of an officer. Private chapters were also allowed to work the ceremony of passing the veils.

The late 1930s saw a few important changes as far as Grand Officers were concerned. New Grand Officers - four Grand Stewards and an Assistant Grand Scribe Ezra - were added in July 1937 while the Grand Director of Ceremonies was moved up in the table of precedence and became very eminent in January 1939 but the major change involved the tenure of office of the First Grand Principal.

From the time of Lambert's election the usual length of service - omitting Bice - was two or three years until Charles Thomas Martin was continually elected from 1931 to 1938. The motion which resulted was in no way a reflection on Martin who must have had a trying and an exasperating time in ruling across the depression years when membership of the order was falling, but it was an attempt to ensure that Grand Chapter was never again placed in the position which it was now in.

During the 1930s almost all of the masons who had led, or who were leading the various masonic orders died and when Robert Peter Dick was elected First Grand Principal there was only one other companion alive who had occupied the office. This was Phillip Cohen who had been exalted in 1886 and had recently been one of the first two recipients of a 50 year jewel.

In an immediate attempt to overcome the lack of assistance for Dick the Committee of General Purposes recommended the appointment of three Past Grand Zerubbabels. This was done in April 1938 - two of the three were to be elected to the active office in the future while the third died soon after his appointment - and George Kingscott gave Notice of Motion to limit the tenure of office to two years.

He withdrew his motion in October in favour of a new motion which would permit the Committee of General Purposes to recommend a further term of one year if exceptional circumstances should warrant it. The new motion was passed after an amendment to delete the one year restriction was defeated.

Two other significant moves were made during the years that Robert Peter Dick led Grand Chapter. First was the formation of a past principals' chapter under the name of the Golden Jubilee Chapter of Research while the second was the formation of a Grand Chapter choir under the leadership of John Alexander Browne.

1940 saw a Grand Choirmaster added to the list of Grand Chapter Officers. In 1946 provision was made for a Deputy Third Grand Principal to allow the appointment of a companion from distant parts to the office of Third Grand Principal. In March 1964 the office of Grand Lecturer was discussed by the Committee but as there was no motion the debate lapsed. Goy raised the matter again in December, the Committee agreed and April 1965 saw a Grand

Lecturer appointed for the first time. In October 1971 the number of Grand Stewards was increased to six.

An office which has never been part of the regulations appears to have been seriously considered on only one occasion. In June 1952 the Committee forwarded the question of the appointment of a Grand Inspector of Workings to the committee which was revising the regulations. They were apparently unimpressed as no such office was provided for.

### Elections.

The whole question of election to the two Boards in the craft caused problems on a number of occasions before the actual election was removed from a Grand Lodge quarterly communication to a meeting in each lodge. A motion for similar action in the mark degree was presented to the mark Grand Lodge but debate proved unnecessary as the suggestion was handed to Walter Kemp who was in the process of revising the constitutions. The elections in that degree were also moved away from the quarterly communication of Grand Lodge.

In September 1962 the Committee of General Purposes received a letter from Harry Balaam - who had been the mover of the motion in the mark degree a quarter of a century earlier - detailing a notice of motion he was to give at the October convocation in regard to changing the regulations to move the voting out of Grand Chapter. As the Committee found important defects in draughtsmanship the Grand Registrar was deputed to confer with Balaam.

In December the Committee decided against Balaam's motion although they did favour some changes, basically to provide for absentee voting and to remove the actual vote from the April convocation of Grand Chapter. The motion was put at the January convocation the next year but was lost after the information was released that the Committee was against it. The Committee did state, however, that it favoured moving the date of the election.

Nothing was done about the matter however until two nominations for the office of First Grand Principal were received at the January 1969 convocation thus forcing an election and requiring a special convocation for the installation meeting.

Regulations were soon introduced to provide for such an occurrence in the future and the night of nomination was altered to October leaving the January convocation free for an election if such is required. At the same time the election for the Committee of General Purposes was moved from April to January.

In October 1971 absentee voting was provided for after an amendment by Drought and Balaam to follow the craft and mark systems had been defeated.

### Qualification for Election as Principal.

In January 1976 the last, and one of the more important, changes was made to the regulations which specified the qualifications to be possessed by aspirants for the chair of third principal. The existing qualification - installed master in the craft and one year in office as either a scribe or a sojourner - was retained but an alternate qualification was added. This permits the election of a companion who is not an installed master provided that he has actively served in the office of principal sojourner and has been provided with a dispensation. The Committee of General Purposes had reported that there was no sound reason for retaining the installed master qualification it was recommending its removal.

### Candidates.

In January 1924 the number of candidates to be exalted at any one meeting was limited to six by proclamation while October the same year saw the rules and regulations amended to restrict this number to five.

Nothing more, really, has happened. In January 1948 the Committee, on Danglow's suggestion, recommended that the First Grand Principal issue a pronouncement limiting the number to four as this was in the best interests of the degree. In October 1949 Kingscott stated that he would prefer only two exaltees per meeting but it was not a pronouncement.

[ *To be continued* ]

AN EXPLANATION OF THE TRACING BOARDS OF PHOENIX LODGE NO. 94  
by William Waples

The following is the text of the second section of a booklet produced by the late WBro William Waples [1884-1969] currently held in a private collection in Australia.

I acknowledge the generous assistance of WBro John James, Secretary of Phoenix Lodge No. 94, UGLE.

The accompanying image of the Second Degree Cloth is reproduced with the kind permission of WBro RJR Hardman of that Lodge.

The concluding portion will be published in March 2020 [DV].

---

## AN EXPLANATION OF THE SECOND DEGREE CLOTH.

---

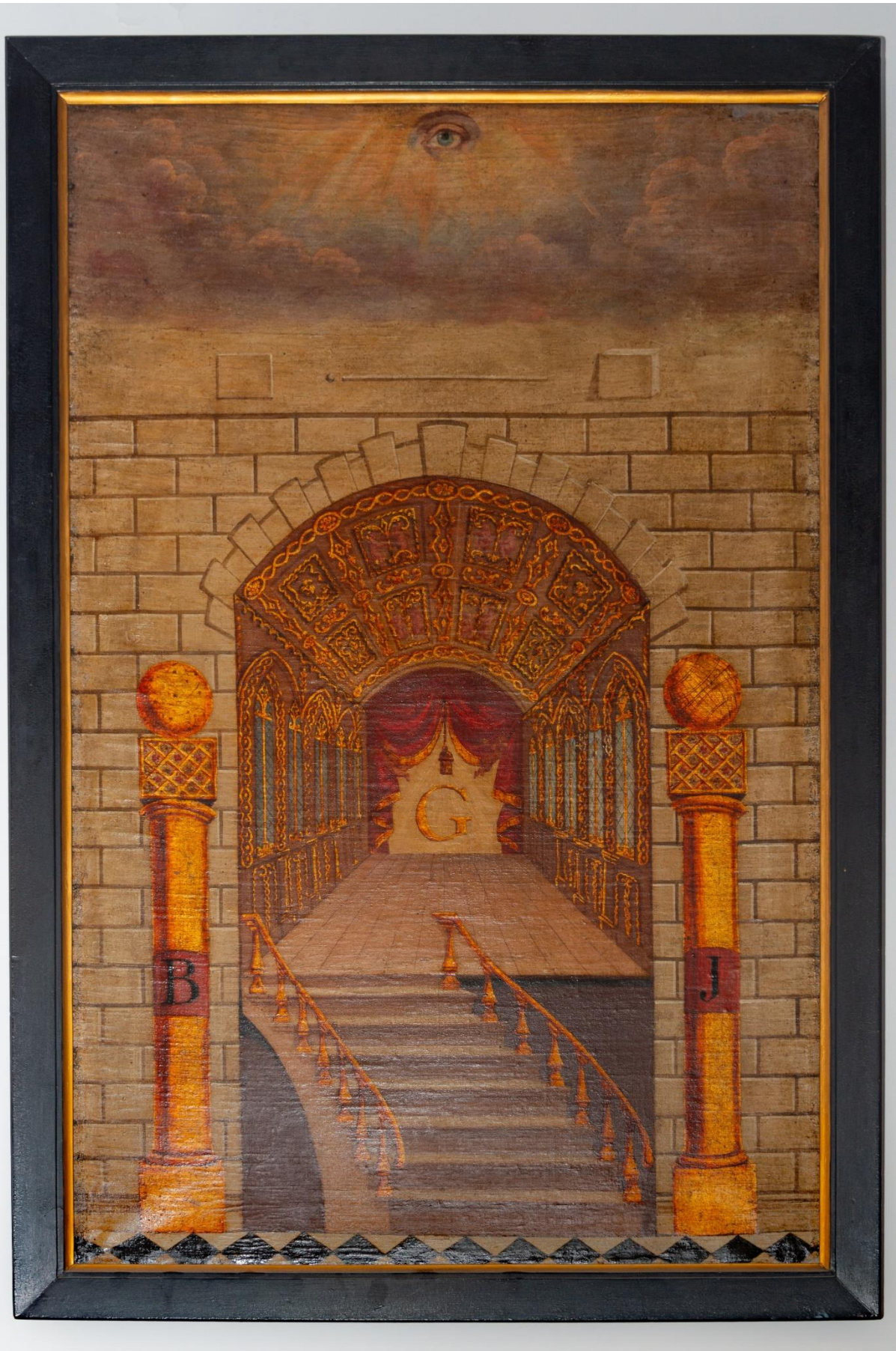
Brethren, before us is a representation of the Tracing Board of the Second Degree comprising of five principal symbols viz:-

- (1) The Pillars, Boaz and Jachin.
- (2) The Winding Staircase.
- (3) The Middle Chamber.
- (4) The Letter 'G'.
- (5) The Canopy of Heaven.

The five symbols, when relatively considered, are indicative of the teaching of the Second Degree in Freemasonry, and to those who have passed up the Winding Staircase into the Middle Chamber it is but proper that an acquaintance should be made with the symbolic meaning of the ceremonies.

But before the symbolism of the degree can be imparted, it is necessary to point out that the degree is based on the legend of the Winding Stairway, and that to understand the true design of this legend, and to learn the symbolism which it is intended to teach, it is essential to understand that the true meaning of every Masonic symbol and allegory is governed by the single principle, that the whole design of Freemasonry as a Speculative Science is the investigation of Divine Truth – To this objective everything else is subsidiary;





throughout the Masonic system the quest is for Truth, the ceremonials and traditions of the Order all point to this ultimate design. In the quest for Truth, there must be progress, symbolised by peculiar ceremonies which show an advancement from a lower to a higher state, from darkness to light – from death to life, from error to truth. The road may be rough and rugged, and it will certainly be uphill, pausing at times on the stairway of life to absorb some new mental illumination.

An inquiry into the legend of the Winding Stairway leads to the Scriptures; a single verse in the sixth Chapter of the 1<sup>st</sup> Book of Kings, and in these words

“The door for the middle chamber was in  
“the right side of the house, and they  
“went up with winding stairs into the  
“middle chamber and out of the middle into  
“the third.

Out of this slender material has been constructed an allegory, which, if properly considered in its symbolic relations, will be found to be of surpassing beauty. But it is only as a symbol that we can regard the whole tradition, for the history and Architectural details alike forbid us to suppose that this legend, is anything more than a philosophical myth.

In an investigation of the symbolism of the Winding Stairs, attention will be directed to the true explanation by a reference to their origin, their number, the objects which they recall, and their termination, but above all, by a comparison of the great design which a figurative ascent is intended to accomplish.

The Steps of the Stairway commence in the Porch of the Temple. The Pillars Boaz and Jachin are situated at the very entrance and two things of great importance happen – for at the entrance the aspirant stands in the world of darkness, the world of the profane, and at one step he is within the place of initiation and receives the symbol of a new birth and continues the masonic way of life – a preparation and purification for something higher.

As a Fellow-Craft he advances again this time towards an intellectual education. And here at the spot, which separates the Porch from the Sanctuary – adolescence ends, and manhood begins. In front are the winding Stairs, which suggests ascent. They are the symbol of discipline and instruction and offer the lesson that here, and here alone, must commence Masonic Labour. Thence forward follow the glorious and difficult researches, the end of which is the possession of the Divine Truth.

The ascent of the Winding Stairway begins after the Pillars of Strength

and Establishment have been passed, a symbol which teaches that after the years of irrational childhood, there commences an entrance upon manly life,. The laborious task of self-improvement is a first and continuing duty – there can be no standing still, for Masonic life is progressive – the destiny of an immortal being requires an upward progress, step by step to that summit, where the treasures of knowledge await the deserving. The Winding Stairs beckon onwards and upwards; they herald the journey of life – a life of self-improvement for which there is a rich reward.

How beautiful is the symbolization of these Stairs – At the foot, ready to climb the toilsome steep is the aspirant, incited by virtue and the desire of knowledge. Then the first step and a pause to consider with gratitude the blessings of civilisation and the unity of men; the invention of architecture as a means of providing convenient dwellings and shelter; Geometry, the Science which enables man to measure and plan, to form limits and divisions: Law and good government; peace and goodwill.

Advancing for the second time, and again pausing, one contemplates the advantages of intellectual cultivation; to appreciate the human Senses, as the appropriate channels through which men receive the ideas of perception, and which, therefore, constitute the most important sources of knowledge. At the third step, the point is reached where the whole circle of human science is to be explained.

In ancient days the circle of instruction was limited to what was then known as the Liberal Arts and Sciences, which consisted of two branches, the trivium and the quadrivium. The trivium included grammar, rhetoric, and logic; the quadrivium comprehended arithmetic, geometry, music and astronomy. The seven heads were supposed to include universal knowledge. He who was master of these was thought to have no need for a preceptor to explain any books; or to solve any questions which lay within the compass of human reason; the knowledge of the trivium having furnished him with the key to all knowledge and that of the quadrivium having opened to him the secret laws of nature. At a period when few were instructed in the trivium, and very few studied the quadrivium, to be made Master of both was sufficient to complete the character of a philosopher. The propriety, therefore, of adopting the seven Liberal Arts and Sciences as a symbol of the completion of human learning is apparent.

Having acquired a knowledge of the trivium, the candidate now takes the fourth step, the first of quadrivium, viz: Arithmetic; the science that teaches the powers and properties of numbers and by whose aid man is led to a more comprehensive knowledge of our great Creator and the works of the creation.

The next step teaches the value of Geometry the science which treats of the powers and properties of magnitudes in general where length, breadth, and thickness are considered from a point to a line, from a line to a superficies and from a superficies to a solid. By this science the Architect is enabled to construct his plans and execute his designs; the general to arrange his soldiers, the geographer to give us the dimensions of the world, and all things therein contained. By it, also, the astronomer is enabled to make his observations, and to fix the durations of time and seasons, years and cycles.

The sixth step brings us to a knowledge of music and the seventh and final step, fittingly bring one to a knowledge of the science of astronomy, that Divine art by which we are taught to read the wisdom, strength and beauty of the Almighty Creator in those sacred pages, the celestial hemisphere. While employed in the study of this science, we must perceive unparalleled instances of wisdom and goodness and through the whole creation, trace the glorious Author by His Works. Thus one learns that the seven steps on this Cloth represent the seven liberal arts and sciences – and having completed them the candidate pauses on the threshold of the Middle Chamber; over him is the clouded canopy of the heavenly Kingdom, through which the all-seeing eye of God searches the innermost recesses of the heart. The task of life is apparently finished, and he stands ready to receive the full fruition of human learning. This is the true symbolism of the Winding Stairs; viz:- the progress of an inquiring mind with the toil and labours of intellectual cultivation And study, and the preparatory acquisition of the human science, as a preliminary step to the attainment of Divine Truth, which it be remembered is always symbolised in Masonry by the Word, here depicted by the letter “G”. The quest of the Fellow-Craft is ended and the wages due to industry and merit are not money, nor corn, wine and oil, for these are but symbols. Truth viz:- the Word is the reward of labour and it is in the Middle Chamber only that one can obtain it.

The lesson of the Winding Stairs is not accepted as an historical fact, nevertheless it is believed as an allegory to point out that the ascent of the mind from ignorance, through all the toils of study, and the difficulties of obtaining knowledge, receiving here and there a little, adding to the stock of ideas at each step, until, in the Middle Chamber of life, in the full fruition of manhood, the reward is obtained, and the purified and elevated intellect is invested with the reward in the direction of how to seek TGOOTU and His Truth; to believe this, is to believe and to know, the true design of Speculative Freemasonry. And yet the quest is not completed for “Perfection”, the essential quality for the reception of the “Word” is not reached, a fact indicated by the incomplete indented border.

Thus the Fellow-Craft represents a man labouring in the pursuit of  
Truth, and the Winding Stairs are to him the devious pathways of that pursuit.

-----



## PRESIDENT'S PAGE

Greetings All:

The ANZMRC Lecture Tour by W Bro Mike Kearsley has been a resounding success but it is not over.

There is just a slight intermission with South Island of New Zealand presentations commencing in late January 2020 and completion late February 2020.

The itinerary is as follows:

Friday 24 January 2020.

Blenheim – Hosted by the Top of the South Research Lodge No 47  
– The Roberto Calvi Affair: a Masonic scandal?

Tuesday 28 January 2020.

Christchurch – Hosted by Unity Lodge No 271  
- Presentation TBA

Wednesday 29 January 2020.

Timaru – hosted by the Midland District Lodge of Research No 436  
– The Formation of the Grand Lodge of New Zealand

Thursday 13 February 2020.

Invercargill – Hosted by the Research Lodge of Southland No 415  
– The Roberto Calvi Affair: a Masonic scandal?

Tuesday 18 February 2020.

Dunedin – Hosted by The Research Lodge of Otago No 161  
– Four Years on the Square: the Musings of a Masonic Editor

Wednesday 19 February 2020.

Dunedin - Reflections on the meaning of the Royal Arch ritual

There will be limited signed copies of Mike's tour book available. The tour book has been much sought after so please ensure you obtain a copy by discussing with the respective host lodge representatives.

I would like to sincerely thank our Secretary, Brendan Kyne and Colin Heyward for their superb and tireless efforts that have made this tour the success it has been.

Of course it has not been without its challenges but these have been dealt with and tweaking as required has been made. I would also like to thank all participating lodges.

#### 2020 KELLERMAN LECTURERS:

Time is marching on so get your submissions in before the deadline dates.

Key dates to note for your final paper:-

1. Before 31 January 2020 – Lecturer applicants will submit a 250-word synopsis of paper title and brief summary.
2. By 1 February 2020 - Following this submission they will be advised if they have been selected for paper submission.
3. 31 March 2020 - Deadline for papers to be submitted as a draft for presentation at the conference for consideration by the panel.
4. 30 May 2020 - A final draft, with photographs or drawings (if applicable), must be ready for publication in ANZMRC Conference Transactions. You have until this date to prepare a final draft of the lecture following the panel's considerations.

#### 2020 ANZMRC CONFERENCE:

It is now less than twelve months until the next ANZMRC Conference in Dunedin – New Zealand - 12 – 15 November 2020.

Early in the New Year further detail will be available but you can be rest assured that all is developing well for a robust and invigorating Conference.

#### 2021 ANZMRC TOURING LECTURERS:

The Touring Lecturers for 2021 will be two local speakers.

RWBro John Molnar – Melbourne will tour New Zealand in August/September 2021 and WBro Jack Dowds – Palmerston North will tour Australia at the same time.

2021 is the 30th anniversary of the ANZMRC and it was thought appropriate to use and showcase local speakers.

Finally I take this opportunity to express to one and all Best Wishes for the Holidays, to thank you for your support during the past year and to wish you and everyone close to you a very Happy and Healthy New Year.

Fraternally

Kerry.

# HARASHIM

חרשים

No. 85: December 2019

ISSN 1328-2735

The quarterly magazine of the  
Australian and New Zealand  
Masonic Research Council.

## SPECIAL ISSUE

**The Origins of Freemasonry and the Invention of  
Tradition**





*Harashim*, Hebrew for *Craftsmen*, is a quarterly newsletter published by the Australian and New Zealand Masonic Research Council, in March, June, September and December each year. It is supplied to Affiliates and Associates electronically in PDF format. It is available worldwide as a PDF as an email attachment, upon application to the Editor at [morsemasonic@gmail.com](mailto:morsemasonic@gmail.com). *Harashim* may be read online at <https://issuu.com/harashimed>

### Copyright and reprinting

Copyright is vested in ANZMRC and the author/s of any article appearing in *Harashim*.

Affiliates and Associates are encouraged to reprint the entire newsletter (at their own expense) and circulate it to their own members, including their correspondence circles (if any) and to supply copies to public and Masonic libraries within their jurisdictions.

Individual items from any issue may be reprinted by Associates and Affiliates, provided:

- “ The item is reprinted in full;
- “ The name of the author and the source of the article are included; and
- “ A copy of the publication containing the reprint is sent to the editor.

Anyone else wishing to reprint material from *Harashim* must first obtain permission from the copyright holders via the editor.

*Unless otherwise specified, authors submitting original work for publication in Harashim are deemed to grant permission for their work to be published also on the Internet websites of ANZMRC* <http://anzmrc.org> and <https://issuu.com/harashimed>

### Contents

Affiliate and Associate members are encouraged to contribute material for the newsletter, including:

- “ Their lecture programs for the year;
- “ Any requests from their members for information on a research topic;
- “ Research papers of more than local interest that merit wider publication.

The newsletter also includes news, reports from ANZMRC, book reviews, extracts from other publications and a readers' letters column, from time to time.

If the source of an item is not identified, it is by the editor. Opinions expressed are those of the author of the article and should not be attributed to the Council.

Material submitted for publication must be in a digitized form by e-mail, or memory stick addressed to the editor, Neil Wynes Morse, PO Box 6080, Mawson ACT 2607 Australia. Or email to [morsemasonic@gmail.com](mailto:morsemasonic@gmail.com)

Clear illustrations, diagrams and photographic prints suitable for scanning are welcome, and most computer graphic formats are acceptable. Photos of contributors (preferably *not* in regalia) would be useful. ***Contributors who require posted material to be returned should include a stamped, self-addressed envelope.***

### General correspondence

All other correspondence, including about purchase of files and books, should be directed to: The Secretary, ANZMRC. Brendan Kyne, 7 Devon Ave Coburg Vic 3058 or <[lordbiff@hotmail.com](mailto:lordbiff@hotmail.com)>

## ANZMRC DIRECTORY

### ANZMRC People

President	Kerry Nicholls	Huntermville, NZ
Immediate Past President	Neil Morse	Farrer, ACT, Australia
Vice-President	Ian Green	Launceston, Tas, Australia
Vice-President	Phil Ivamy	Nelson, NZ
Vice-President	David Slater	Higgins, ACT, Australia
Secretary	Brendan Kyne	Melbourne, Vic, Australia
Asst. Secretary	Colin Heyward	Waipawa, NZ
Treasurer	Harvey Lovewell	Cairns, Qld, Australia
Digital Library Co-ordinator	Ed Robinson	Wellington, NZ
Information Officer	Pete Grounds	Melbourne, Vic, Australia
2020 Conference Convenor	Glenn Summerhayes	Dunedin, NZ
Webmaster	Don Ray	Chisholm, ACT, Australia

### ANZMRC Affiliate (Voting) Members

The Research Lodge of Ruapehu 444 NZ	Palmerston North, NZ
--------------------------------------	----------------------

United Masters Lodge 167 NZ	Auckland, NZ
Midland District Lodge of Research 436 NZ	Timaru, NZ
Hawke's Bay Research Lodge 305 NZ	Hawke's Bay, NZ
Top of the South Research Lodge 470 NZ	Nelson, NZ
The Research Lodge of Otago 161 NZ	Dunedin, NZ
Research Lodge of Wellington 194 NZ	Wellington, NZ
Research Lodge of the Taranaki Province 323 NZ	New Plymouth, NZ
Research Lodge of Southland 415 NZ	Invercargill, NZ
The Waikato Lodge of Research 445 NZ	Waikato, NZ
Masters and Past Masters Lodge 130 NZ	Christchurch, NZ
Research Chapter No 93 NZ	Auckland, NZ
Hobart Lodge of Research 62 TC	Tasmania, Australia
Newcastle Masonic Study Circle	NSW, Australia
Discovery Lodge of Research 971 NSW&ACT	NSW, Australia
Victorian Lodge of Research 218 VC	Victoria, Australia
Barron Barnett 146 QC	Queensland, Australia
WHJ Mayers Memorial Lodge of Research	Queensland, Australia
Granville Preceptory No 53 SC	NSW, Australia
Linford Lodge of Research	ACT, Australia
WH Green Memorial Masonic Study Circle,	Queensland, Australia
Western Australian Lodge of Research 277 WA	WA, Australia
Grand Lodge Masonic Learning Group	South Australia, Australia
Middle Chamber Society	South Australia, Australia
The Chisel Lodge 434 VC	Victoria, Australia
Launceston 69 TC	Tasmania, Australia

#### ANZMRC Associate (Non-Voting) Members

Groupe de Recherche Alpina	Switzerland
Centro Iberico de Estudios Masonicos,	Spain
South Carolina Masonic Research Society	USA
The Masonic Society,	USA
The Phylaxis Society,	USA
Kellerman Lodge 1027, NSW	NSW, Australia
Dr R K R Cama Masonic Study Circle	Mumbai, India
Nairobi Lodge of Instruction	Nairobi, Kenya
Lyceum Lodge of R 8682 EC	Jo'burg, South Africa
Mount Faber 1825 SC	Singapore
Lodge of Research 200 [CC] IC	Ireland

Quatuor Coronati Research Lodge-Bayreuth  
Irish Masters Lodge 907 IC  
Circolo di Corrispondenza della QC  
Southern California Research Lodge

Germany  
Jamaica  
Italy  
USA

#### NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

ANZMRC is delighted to be able to bring *Harashim* readers an important paper by Professors Prescott and Sommers. This was presented at the third World Conference on Fraternalism, Social Capital and Civil Society held at the Bibliotheque nationale de France in Paris in June 2019.

This is the first publication of this significant paper. I thank the authors for their generosity in permitting ANZMRC to publish it.

# THE ORIGINS OF FREEMASONRY AND THE INVENTION OF TRADITION

Andrew Prescott and Susan Mitchell Sommers

'History is therefore never history, but history-for'.

Claude Lévi-Strauss<sup>1</sup>

Among the most famous and remarkable French historians was Marc Bloch, one of the founders of the *Annales* school which pioneered the use of sociological, anthropological and comparative techniques in the study of history. After the fall of Vichy France in 1942, Bloch joined the French resistance. He was captured in Lyon in 1944 and handed over to Klaus Barbie, the head of the Lyon Gestapo. During his imprisonment, Bloch was beaten and tortured. Following the D-day invasion, the Nazis were anxious to dispose of French prisoners and on 6 June 1944, 75 years ago, Bloch was executed by firing squad.<sup>2</sup>

Among the works by Bloch which were published after his death was *The Historian's Craft* (*Apologie pour l'histoire, ou Metier d'historien*), a series of reflections on the historian's method.<sup>3</sup> Ever since its appearance in 1949, *The Historian's Craft* has profoundly influenced the way historians think about what they do and how they approach both the past and the present. Among the most celebrated chapters in this short book is 'The Idol of Origins', in which Bloch suggests that the besetting sin of historians is an obsession with origins.<sup>4</sup> Bloch cites the historian of religion Ernest Renan as an exemplar of the preoccupation of historians with origins, summarising from memory Renan's views: 'In all human affairs, it is the origins which deserve study before everything else'.<sup>5</sup> Bloch reminds us how frequently books appear with titles like the Origins of Contemporary France, the Origins of the Reformation or the Origins of the French Revolution.

---

<sup>1</sup> Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1966), p. 257. This paper was originally given as a keynote lecture at the 3rd World Conference on Fraternalism, Social Capital and Civil Society at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, 14 June 2019. Thanks are due to Paul Rich and the Policy Studies Organisation for their support.

<sup>2</sup> For an English introduction to the work of Marc Bloch, see Carole Fink, *Marc Bloch: A Life in History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

<sup>3</sup> The standard English translation is: Marc Bloch, *The Historian's Craft*, trans. Peter Putnam with an introduction by Peter Burke (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992).

<sup>4</sup> Bloch, *Historian's Craft*, pp. 24-9.

<sup>5</sup> Bloch, *Historian's Craft*, pp. 24-5.

There is often an ambiguity about the way historians use the term 'origins'. Sometimes they use it as a shorthand for the beginnings of a particular phenomenon. On other occasions, they use origins to mean causes. In Bloch's opinion, the danger occurs when the two become conflated – when we assume that we can understand historical events by tracing their beginnings. Simply identifying how something began does not explain how it developed. If we think about the history of Christianity, whether or not Christ was crucified and resurrected is not a very interesting question – what happened to Christ is almost an irrelevance to the history of Christianity. For the historian, the pressing question is rather what social, political and cultural conditions caused millions of people to believe that Christ came back from the dead, why these beliefs led to wholesale slaughter and invasion, and why they still persist.

For Bloch, the obsession with finding the point of origin bleeds the life from history and distracts us from exploring how society shifts and changes. Religious belief is an example of a historical phenomenon whose study is distorted by an obsession with origins. Religion is like a knot that ties together many different aspects of society. If we only look for the point of origin of religious institutions, we ignore the way they bind together many social and human interconnections. This applies not only to religion, but to all human institutions – including freemasonry.

Freemasonry is a vivid illustration of the debilitating effects of the idol of origins. Freemasons have been obsessed for centuries with establishing where freemasonry came from. The medieval charges have been continually classified and categorised to the point where it is sometimes not entirely clear what the different manuscripts say.<sup>6</sup> These stonemasons' documents are precious evidence of artisan organisation in the British Isles, but because of the mania for trying to reconstruct the earliest form of text, many of these charges have never been properly edited and such fundamental palaeographical and codicological characteristics as the date of handwriting and watermarks have not been adequately analysed. We are not even sure where some of the most important manuscripts actually are.<sup>7</sup> Instead of using these documents to

---

<sup>6</sup> Andrew Prescott, 'Some Literary Contexts of the Cooke and Regius Manuscripts' in *Freemasonry in Music and Literature*, ed. Trevor Stewart, Canonbury Papers 2 (London: Canonbury Masonic Research Centre, 2005), pp. 1-36.

<sup>7</sup> For example, Dowland MS. (early 17th cent.), York No. 3 MS. (1630), Poole MS. (1665), Ramsey MS. (second half 17th cent.), Phillipps MS. 3 (18th cent), Crane MS. 2 (1780), Wren MS (1852 copy of an alleged Old Charge MS of 1600). For further details, see the relevant entries in W. P. Hugan, *The Old Charges of the British*

understand how stonemasons were organised and what beliefs bound them together, researchers have spent a century engaged in a fruitless and innervating search for the origin of the text in the hope this will help find the origin of freemasonry.

In our search for the smoking gun which might reveal the origin of freemasonry, we constantly ignore the wider picture. The National Archives in London contains over 200 wills of men from different parts of England who died in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and described themselves as freemasons. These are available for download via family history sites such as Ancestry. These wills offer all sorts of sidelights into the social and economic status, craft organisation and cultural milieu of freemasons from 1450 to 1700. Among the testators are such distinguished craftsmen as John Orgar, the chief mason of the Bridge House trust in London whose will was proved in 1546,<sup>8</sup> and John Bentley, the Yorkshire freemason recruited by Sir Henry Savile to work on the Bodleian Library in Oxford whose will was proved in 1616.<sup>9</sup> Many other wills of freemasons can be found in other archives.

The freemasons who appear in these wills were not humble operative craftsmen but successful and well-to-do businessmen, like Thomas Jordan, a freemason of London whose will was proved in 1635,<sup>10</sup> who had lent Abraham Baker, a citizen and weaver of London, four hundred pounds, taking land in Kent as security. Jordan stipulated that three pounds should be given to 'such of the livery of the Company of Freemasons London as shalbe present in their liveryes at my funerall ... to be disposed of at the discretion of the Master Wardens and assistants of the said company'. Jordan also left three pounds to be divided among the 'most indigent members of the said company'. In 1488, Stephen Burton, a freemason of London, left 4d 'unto every pore woman of my Crafte within London'.<sup>11</sup> George Dallow, a freemason from Comley in Shropshire whose will was proved in 1611, listed over thirteen pounds of payments due to him at the time of his death for work at such nearby places as

---

*Freemasons* 2nd edition (London: George Kenning, 1895) and Douglas Knoop and G. P. Jones, *A Handlist of Masonic Documents* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1942).

<sup>8</sup> London, The National Archives, PROB 11/31/367; J. H. Harvey, *English Medieval Architects: a Biographical Dictionary down to 1550* (London: Batsford, 1954), p. 201.

<sup>9</sup> London, The National Archives, PROB 11/127/133; 'The Bodleian library', in *A History of the County of Oxford: Volume 3, the University of Oxford*, ed. H. E. Salter and Mary D. Lobel (London: Victoria History of the Counties of England, 1954), pp. 44-47; *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/oxon/vol3/pp44-47> (Accessed 8 December 2019).

<sup>10</sup> London, The National Archives, PROB 11/169/152.

<sup>11</sup> London, The National Archives, PROB 11/8/271.

Condoover church, Montford bridge and Frodesley Hall.<sup>12</sup> Among the payments owing to Thomas Fells, a freemason of East Greenwich whose will was proved in 1609, was £6 15s from Sir William Cornwallis the elder, the essayist and friend of Ben Jonson, for transport of 300 feet of square stone, eighteen inches square, from Bishopsgate in London to Cornwallis's property at Brome in Northamptonshire.<sup>13</sup> Preoccupied with seeking the point of origin, there has been insufficient study of these wills which cast light on the economic and social conditions of stone masons in the period preceding the establishment of Grand Lodge and thereby help us understand the significance of its creation. The idol of origins saps our understanding of freemasonry.

Freemasonry is particularly prone to the worship of the idol of origins because it claims to preserve ancient landmarks of ritual and wisdom and sees itself as the incarnation of pure ancient masonry. Confronted with these claims, it is natural to ask where this pure ancient masonry comes from and what it represents. The rituals impart ancient secrets which purport to have been handed down through generations of stonemasons. We inevitably wonder where these ancient secrets come from and what their beginnings were. This search is made more febrile by the conviction that freemasonry hands down a hidden secret. Freemasons from James Anderson to Chevalier Ramsay, William Preston and George Oliver have fruitlessly used many different methods to try and discover this secret, and perhaps every masonic researcher is driven by the inner belief that, somehow, they will show what is all about. The idol of origins means masonic researchers too often prefer to speculate on the findings of previous researchers rather than go in search of new evidence. Pontification of the sort beloved of many freemasons feeds the appetite of the idol of origins and makes it more powerful, whereas the study of primary sources often denies the idol its sustenance.

The idol of origins is not only about a misplaced belief that finding the beginning will explain everything. It is also about power. Power of course permeates history, but expressions of power go beyond politics, diplomacy and war. Cultural power can be the most oppressive and destructive of all. Myths of origin are an important weapon of cultural power. They help keep nations together and monarchs on their thrones. Marc Bloch pointed out how history concerned with origins is frequently invoked to support value judgements. As he put it, whether the subject is the Germanic invasions of the Roman Empire

---

<sup>12</sup> London, The National Archives, PROB 11/117/198.

<sup>13</sup> London, The National Archives, PROB 11/113/312.



or the Norman Conquest of England, the past is used as an explanation of the present in order that the present might be better justified or condemned.<sup>14</sup> The search for origins is a means of developing histories which reinforce existing power structures in society.

Many things that we think of as age-old traditions are recent inventions, frequently intended to bolster nationalism. A famous collection of essays edited by Eric Hobsbawm and Trevor Aston is called *The Invention of Tradition*.<sup>15</sup> The contributors to this book argue that many of the traditions thought to characterise the British nation are of very recent origin and were often deliberately manufactured. The British enthusiasm for royal ceremonial was an imperial creation of the early twentieth century,<sup>16</sup> while many aspects of the Scottish 'highland tradition' date back no further than the beginning of the nineteenth century.<sup>17</sup> The Welsh Druid ceremonies of the *Gorsedd* were invented by the opium addict Iolo Morgannwg in the early nineteenth century as a means of protecting the Welsh language in an increasingly industrialised society.<sup>18</sup>

In his introduction, Hobsbawm points out that this process of inventing tradition gained considerable momentum during the period between 1850 and the First World War, and suggests that it is linked to the growth of modern ideas of the nation. As Hobsbawm puts it, invented traditions 'are highly relevant to that comparatively recent historical innovation, the nation, with its associated phenomena: nationalism, the nation-state, national symbols, histories and the rest. All these depend on exercises in social engineering which are often deliberate and always innovative'.<sup>19</sup> The invention of tradition is a vital political weapon, and myths of national origin continue to be invented today by populist politicians across the world from Erdogan in Turkey and Victor Orban in Hungary to Narendra Modi in India. In a 1992 article for the

---

<sup>14</sup> Bloch, *Historian's Craft*, p. 26.

<sup>15</sup> *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

<sup>16</sup> David Cannadine, 'The Context, Performance and Meaning of Ritual: The British Monarchy and the "Invention of Tradition"' in *Invention of Tradition*, ed. Hobsbawm and Ranger, pp. 101-64.

<sup>17</sup> Hugh Trevor-Roper, 'The Invention of Tradition: The Highland Tradition of Scotland' in *Invention of Tradition*, ed. Hobsbawm and Ranger, pp. 15-42; Hugh Trevor-Roper, *The Invention of Scotland: Myth and History*, ed. Jeremy J. Cater (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).

<sup>18</sup> Prys Morgan, 'From a Death to a View: the Hunt for the Welsh Past in the Romantic Period' in Hobsbawm and Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, pp. 62-6; *A Rattleskull Genius: The Many Faces of Iolo Morganwg*, ed. Geraint H. Jenkins (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2009); Ronald Hutton, *Blood and Mistletoe: the History of the Druids in Britain* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), pp. 146-347; Barry Cunliffe, *Druids: a Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 116-8.

<sup>19</sup> Eric Hobsbawm, 'Introduction: Inventing Traditions' in *Invention of Tradition*, ed. Hobsbawm and Ranger, p. 13.

*New York Review of Books*, Hobsbawm trenchantly described the political importance of the creation and manipulation of traditions:

History is the raw material for nationalist or ethnic or fundamentalist ideologies, as poppies are the raw material for heroin addiction. The past is an essential element, perhaps the essential element in these ideologies. If there is no suitable past, it can always be invented. Indeed, in the nature of things there is usually no entirely suitable past, because the phenomenon these ideologies claim to justify is not ancient or eternal but historically novel.<sup>20</sup>

In his introduction to *The Invention of Tradition*, Hobsbawm cites freemasonry as an example of an invented tradition 'of great symbolic force' and notes that it has been one of those 'well-supplied warehouses of official ritual, symbolism and moral exhortation' providing the raw materials for the construction of new traditions.<sup>21</sup> As elsewhere, the creation and manipulation of traditions in freemasonry reflects wider social, cultural and political movements. Despite its cosmopolitan veneer, freemasonry is particularly prone to the crack cocaine of nationalism, whether it is promoting the myth of George Washington in the United States, seeking to preserve the spirit of the French Revolution in Paris, or toasting the Queen in London, and freemasonry has both generated and been shaped by national cultures.

In reading our title today, you may have thought that we were going to prostrate ourselves before the idol of origins and reveal sensational new evidence about where freemasonry came from. We will not be doing that. Instead, we want to discuss how myths of the origin of freemasonry have been manipulated as a means of power play in freemasonry. We will illustrate how master narratives have been invented by different masonic bodies and individuals in an attempt to bolster their own power and influence. We will try to convince you, as researchers into freemasonry, that you should think less about where freemasonry came from and more about the way it has been constantly reinvented and reimagined to suit different social, cultural and political agendas.

---

<sup>20</sup> Eric Hobsbawm, 'The New Threat to History', *New York Review of Books*, 16 December 1993, pp. 62-5, afterwards reprinted as Chapter 1 of Eric Hobsbawm, *On History* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1997).

<sup>21</sup> Hobsbawm, 'Introduction: Inventing Traditions', p. 6.

Modern freemasonry is the result of a complex process of historical change which began at least in the middle of the fourteenth century. In each century, freemasonry changed profoundly and was used for different social and cultural ends. As freemasonry developed, different stories were invented to justify its appropriation by a variety of elite groups in different countries. Our job is not to use these to try and trace a false pure point of origin for freemasonry but rather to look at the way these master narratives were invented and how they were used. We cannot as historians ever know what actually happened, and that generally is not an interesting question. We can however find out what people said about what they thought happened and that is a far more interesting subject.

The most striking illustration of the invention of masonic tradition are the stories around the creation of a Grand Lodge in London in the early eighteenth century. The Grand Lodge in London has consistently over three hundred years manipulated and reinvented historical tradition to bolster its own prestige and power. Its authority depends on historical inventions. But of course the United Grand Lodge of England is not unusual in the way it manipulates history for political ends. A foundation myth is one of the distinguishing features of a fraternal organisation. The website of the Oddfellows traces the origin of the order to 587 BC and states that 'the earliest legend of an Oddfellows fraternity is linked to the exile of the Israelites in Babylon, when many banded together into a brotherhood for mutual support'.<sup>22</sup> Similarly, the Druid friendly societies claim to be directly descended from the Druids of pre-Roman Britain.<sup>23</sup> We should not simply ignore such stories as rubbish. One of the most important roles of the historian is to examine how these stories were invented and the ways in which they are used for political purposes.

The United Grand Lodge of England (UGLE) has recently celebrated 300 years of freemasonry.<sup>24</sup> The way in which these celebrations were marketed is an example of the type of slippery terminology that, as Marc Bloch noticed, often muddies discussions of origins. The implication of the UGLE strapline is that freemasonry began in 1717. But even UGLE couldn't claim that. The

---

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.oddfellows.co.uk/about/history/> (Accessed 7 December 2019).

<sup>23</sup> Hutton, *Blood and Mistletoe*, pp. 132-45; Cunliffe, *Druids*, pp. 125-7. *The Ancient Order of Druids Introductory Book* (London: Bro. Coningham, 1889) states that the Ancient Order of Druids was founded in time immemorial, but revived in 1781.

<sup>24</sup> 'Celebrating 300 Years. It's three hundred years since four London lodges met to establish the world's first Grand Lodge for Freemasons. Today there are over 6.5 million freemasons world-wide': <https://www.ugle.org.uk/celebrating-300-years> (Accessed 7 December 2019).

strange dramatization that was included in the Royal Albert Hall celebrations refers to the initiation of Elias Ashmole in 1646 and Sir Robert Moray at Newcastle in 1641, without mentioning that Moray's initiation was by members of the Lodge of Edinburgh.<sup>25</sup> The implication is that the Grand Lodge is equivalent to freemasonry, and that 300 years of Grand Lodge is 300 years of freemasonry.

But is a grand lodge all that freemasonry consists of? The creation of a grand lodge was after all simply an administrative device whereby the London lodges gave up their rights in trust to a representative assembly comprising Masters and Wardens and governed by Grand Officers.<sup>26</sup> Although the creation of the London Grand Lodge certainly marked a profound change and upsurge in freemasonry, is it right to suggest that a grand lodge is the essential feature of freemasonry? The claim to 300 years of freemasonry may also be seen as a veiled allusion to the emergence of a three degree system, but most authorities place the appearance of a third degree as a later development, perhaps during the 1720s.<sup>27</sup> Most of the other distinctive features of freemasonry – lodges on a territorial basis, the admission of members who were not working stonemasons, use of ritual, the mason word – can be found much earlier than 1717, particularly in Scotland.<sup>28</sup>

It is not clear why the Enlightenment form of freemasonry which developed in the eighteenth century is considered a purer form of masonry than that practiced in Scotland, Ireland and England in the seventeenth century. Why were we not celebrating 400 or even 700 years of freemasonry in 2017? The answer is simple: the United Grand Lodge of England was invoking and manipulating the past to bolster its claims to masonic primacy and to be an arbiter of regularity across the world.

Freemasonry has invoked the past since its inception. The two oldest surviving manuscripts describing the legendary masonic history, the Cooke

---

<sup>25</sup> Masonic Charitable Foundation, Tercentenary Celebrations at Royal Albert Hall, available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ciNkEPBGc-o> (Accessed 7 December 2019). On Moray, see David Stevenson, *The Origins of Freemasonry: Scotland's Century 1590-1710* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 166-89.

<sup>26</sup> 'The Grand-Lodge consists of, and is form'd by the Masters and Wardens of all the regular particular Lodges upon Record, with the Grand-Master at their head and the Grand-Wardens in their proper place': *The Constitutions of the Free-Masons* (London: John Senex and John Hooke, 1723), p. 61; Andrew Prescott and Susan Mitchell Sommers, 'Did Anything Happen in 1717?', *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum* 131 (2018), pp. 43-5.

<sup>27</sup> Jan A. M. Snoek and Henrik Bogdan, 'The History of Freemasonry: An Overview' in *Handbook of Freemasonry*, ed. Jan A. M. Snoek and Henrik Bogdan (Leiden: Brill, 2014), pp. 17-18.

<sup>28</sup> Stevenson, *Origins of Freemasonry*, p. 7.

manuscript and the Regius manuscript, both in the British Library in London, date from the early fifteenth century. Comparison of the texts show how they are independent compositions and are not derived from earlier lost histories.<sup>29</sup> The claim that the tenth-century King Æthelstan granted a charter to the stonemasons to hold an assembly is chronologically impossible and a characteristic medieval fabrication.<sup>30</sup> The legends in the Cooke and Regius manuscripts were created by junior stonemasons in order to justify meetings to protest against the controls over wages and prices imposed by legislation following labour shortages after the Black Death.<sup>31</sup> It was not enough for these journeymen masons to claim that a pre-conquest king had given them privileges. They invented a fabulous history claiming to show how kings and emperors had recognised the craft of masonry as special since the time of Noah. As the English government attempted to further control the wages of stonemasons and their rights to meet, the stonemasons in return elaborated their legendary history, fabricating stories of further charters and privileges.

The kind of process we see at work in the Cooke and Regius manuscripts also occurs in many other medieval institutions, ranging from guilds to monasteries.<sup>32</sup> The myths and fabrications of the stonemasons' documents are particularly valuable for the insights they provide into the outlook and mentality of the medieval artisan, as Lisa Cooper has shown in her book on *Artisans and Narrative Craft in Later Medieval England*.<sup>33</sup> Yet they have rarely been studied from that point of view. The other remarkable feature of these medieval legends of the stonemasons is their persistence. Although we do not have any other extant manuscripts until the end of the sixteenth century, manuscripts of these medieval legends proliferated during the seventeenth century. This may partly be related to continued disputes about the wage levels of masons – the levels of wages mentioned in sixteenth and seventeenth century

---

<sup>29</sup> On Cooke, Regius and the Old Charges, see Prescott, 'Literary Contexts'; 'The Old Charges' in *Handbook of Freemasonry*, pp. 33-49; 'Inventing Symbols: the Case of the Stonemasons' in *Signs and Symbols: Proceedings of the 2006 Harlaxton Conference in Memory of Janet Backhouse* ed. A. Payne and J. Cherry (Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2009), pp. 100-118.

<sup>30</sup> The York legend claims that Æthelstan sanctioned a meeting of masons under the auspices of his youngest son Edwin at York in 926. In 926, York was still under the rule of the Danish king Sihtric. It was not conquered by Æthelstan until 927: Sarah Foot, *Æthelstan: The First King of England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), pp. 18-19. There is no evidence that Æthelstan had a son called Edwin. In an attempt to rescue the legend, James Anderson suggested in the eighteenth century that the Edwin in question could have been Æthelstan's brother who drowned in 933: Foot, *Æthelstan*, pp. 235-7; Andrew Prescott, '"King Athelston That Was a Worthy King of England": Anglo-Saxon Myths of the Freemasons' in *The Power of Words: Anglo-Saxon Studies presented to Donald G. Scragg on his Seventieth Birthday* (Morgantown: University of West Virginia Press, 2006), pp. 397-434.

<sup>31</sup> Prescott, 'Old Charges', pp. 40-1.

<sup>32</sup> See, for example, Gervase Rosser, 'Myth, Image and Social Process in the English Medieval Town', *Urban History* 23:1 (1996), pp. 5-25.

<sup>33</sup> Lisa H. Cooper, *Artisans and Narrative Craft in Late Medieval England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 56-82.

Old Charge manuscripts are manipulated in line with contemporary wage claims.

The spread of Old Charge manuscripts is also probably related to the major developments in the organisation of freemasonry in Scotland. The first surviving manuscript of the Old Charges after Cooke and Regius, Grand Lodge Manuscript 1, is dated 25 December 1583, just four days after the appointment of William Schaw as Master of the King's Works in Scotland.<sup>34</sup> This requires further investigation, but it is unlikely to be a coincidence. It seems possible that Schaw began his work by seeking evidence of masonic legends and that Grand Lodge Manuscript 1 may be a result of this. We cannot be completely certain of what happened, but Old Charge manuscripts were extensively in use in Scotland in the late seventeenth century,<sup>35</sup> and this illustrates how we should regard the process of the development of freemasonry from medieval times as a complex and varied continuum.

Much of the organisational structure of Freemasonry bears the impress of medieval guilds, such as quarterly meetings, the names of officers such as master and wardens, and the use of oaths. Another major element in the development of freemasonry were the organisational reforms instituted by William Schaw in Scotland, succinctly summarised by David Stevenson as including the earliest use of the word lodge in the modern masonic sense; the earliest lodge minute books; earliest examples of non-operatives joining lodges; earliest evidence of the use of symbols to communicate ethical ideas; and earliest references to the mason word.<sup>36</sup> The way in which the discussion of the origins of freemasonry has been distorted by masonic anxieties about national precedence is evident from the fact that this sixteenth and seventeenth century freemasonry in Scotland is consistently downplayed and disregarded, apparently out of concern that England's precedence may be undermined. Yet the people involved in the creation of the Grand Lodge in London knew that they needed to learn about Scotland. One of the first actions of Desaguliers after the creation of Grand Lodge in 1721 was to visit the Lodge of Edinburgh, where as David Stevenson observes there is the earliest evidence for the emergence of a third degree.<sup>37</sup>

---

<sup>34</sup> Stevenson, *Origins of Freemasonry*, p. 26.

<sup>35</sup> Stevenson, *Origins of Freemasonry*, p. 211.

<sup>36</sup> Stevenson, *Origins of Freemasonry*, p. 7.

<sup>37</sup> Stevenson, *Origins of Freemasonry*, p. 152; Audrey T. Carpenter, *John Theophilus Desaguliers: A Natural Philosopher, Engineer and Freemason in Newtonian England* (London: Continuum, 2011), pp. 100-102

Masonic scholars have generated an extraordinary number of theories about the origin of freemasonry, which have been given imposing names like transitional, original birth, religious base, Rosicrucian, Enlightenment, Royal Society, and so on. The striking thing about all these theories is their difficulty in dealing with mixed and complex developments. They all assume linear lines of development, with key people or institutions portrayed as the originators of freemasonry. But history does not work like this. It is complex and full of the kind of knots of interconnections that Marc Bloch described. We can see this in the way that William Schaw took medieval traditions and fused them with Renaissance ideas. The fascination of Freemasonry is in trying to trace these interconnections and not in seeking to promote one theory above another – freemasonry is about transitions, Rosicrucians, monasticism, Enlightenment and the Royal Society, all together.

The foundation of a Grand Lodge in London has been taken as a key watershed in masonic history. As we have exhaustively documented elsewhere, all the existing evidence suggests that the story of the foundation of the Grand Lodge by four lodges in London in 1717 first published by James Anderson in the 1738 *Book of Constitutions* is unreliable.<sup>38</sup> It contains many internal contradictions and, where we can trace sources of information that Anderson probably used, they are suspect. Other contemporary testimony, such as that of the antiquary William Stukeley, contradicts Anderson. Furthermore, a contemporary minute in the possession of the Lodge of Antiquity in London states that the London lodges gave up their powers in trust to a Grand Lodge comprising masters and wardens of the lodges and under the direction of a Grand Master at a feast in Stationers Hall in London on 24 June 1721. Such a transfer of powers can only by definition happen once and, given the lack of contemporary evidence for the existence of Grand Lodge before 1721, we contend that the Grand Lodge in London was founded in 1721, not 1717.

It might seem that by insisting on the date of 1721 for the foundation of Grand Lodge we are closing out evidence for the earlier development of Freemasonry, but this is by no means the case. Rather, disposing of the shibboleth of 1717 makes it easier to accommodate evidence of earlier freemasonry. This evidence is not only confined to Scotland. In York, non-working masons seem to have been admitted to stonemasons' lodges in the

---

<sup>38</sup> Andrew Prescott and Susan Mitchell Sommers, 'Searching for the Apple Tree: Revisiting the Earliest Years of English Organised Freemasonry' and 'New Light on the Life of James Anderson' in *Reflections on 300 Years of Freemasonry*, ed. John S. Wade (London: Lewis Masonic, 2017), pp. 641-54, 681-704; 'Did Anything Happen in 1717?', *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum* 131 (2018), pp. 43-60.

seventeenth century.<sup>39</sup> There are hints of other organisations in Staffordshire and Cheshire.<sup>40</sup> There are also suggestions of early masonic activity in Ireland<sup>41</sup> and it is likely that Jacobite regiments and exiles had taken some freemasonry with them from Scotland to the continent after 1688.<sup>42</sup> Moreover, it is evident that the London masons lodges were organised and conscious of their traditions. The lodge at the Goose and Gridiron jealously guarded manuscripts of the Old Charges, some associated with the London masons' company. Some of these manuscripts include additional charges said to have been made at a general assembly of masons in 1663 and, since these are mentioned in multiple manuscripts, it may be that there is more evidence for such an assembly in 1663 than in 1717.<sup>43</sup> In short, there are many landmarks in the history of freemasonry, but no starting points. 1721, 1813, 1583 in Scotland, these are all important dates, but none of them represents the birth of freemasonry.

The creation of the Grand Lodge in 1721 was driven by Whig nobles who saw in freemasonry the potential for a powerful instrument to support the Hanoverian monarchy. Nevertheless, the appeal to the past and the invention of tradition had a prominent role. The prestige of the Goose and Gridiron Lodge was due to its custody of the oldest London copies of the legendary history of Freemasonry. The possession of such old manuscripts was vital to masonic authority and power. However, George Payne, the civil servant who marshalled the creation of Grand Lodge on behalf of the Duke of Montagu, managed to get custody of the Cooke manuscript, which he claimed was nearly 800 years old and embodied the ancient secrets of freemasonry. It was the possession of the legendary history of the Cooke manuscript which gave Payne and his colleagues the authority to drive through the creation of Grand Lodge.

This process in turn gave rise to another wholesale reinvention of history. Montagu, Payne and others were convinced that the medieval monks who had transcribed the Cooke manuscript had mangled the text. They felt that these monkish errors hid the true secrets of architecture and the ancient

---

<sup>39</sup> Neville Barker Cryer, *York Mysteries Revealed* (Hersham: Lewis Masonic, 2006), pp. 186-214; David Harrison, *The York Grand Lodge* (Bury St Edmunds: Arima, 2014), pp. 15-34.

<sup>40</sup> For example, Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson C.918 is an elaborate book to be used by the Provincial Grand Lodge of West Chester but it is undated and it is uncertain whether it might predate the appointment of the first Provincial Grand Master for North Wales in 1727.

<sup>41</sup> Sean Murphy, 'Irish Jacobitism and Freemasonry', *Eighteenth-Century Ireland / Iris an dá chultúr* 9 (1994), pp. 75-82.

<sup>42</sup> Allan McInnes, 'Jacobitism in Scotland: Episodic Cause or National Movement?', *Scottish Historical Review* 86 (2007), pp. 248-9.

<sup>43</sup> These 'Additional Charges' are listed in Grand Lodge MS 2, London, British Library Harleian MS 1942 and in the Constitutions published by James Roberts in 1722: Hughan, *Old Charges*, pp. 121-5.



knowledge of the masons. James Anderson was commissioned to rescue these secrets by revising the medieval texts. Anderson produced a history of masonry and architecture freed from gothic errors and kitted out in a new Palladian dress. But, like the medieval charges, Anderson traced masonry back to the beginnings of time, declaring that there was no doubt that Adam taught his sons geometry. Anderson's work in reworking the legendary history into something appropriate for the age of Newton was contentious. The London publisher James Roberts complained that Anderson had made the Constitutions unnecessarily lengthy at the expense and damage of the society, and had had them printed without authorisation.<sup>44</sup> Doubt was expressed as to whether Anderson's work had been properly authorised and the first motion recorded in the new minute book of the Grand Lodge pointedly declared that it is 'not in the Power of any person, or Body of men, to make any Alteration, or Innovation in the Body of Masonry without the Consent first obtained of the Annual Grand Lodge'.<sup>45</sup>

The early Grand Lodge was keen to encourage this process of invention of the past. Grand Lodge was anxious to demonstrate it was older than its rivals. The Grand Lodge established in York in 1725 claimed to date back to Edwin.<sup>46</sup> The Jacobite Andrew Michael Ramsey made a celebrated speech in 1730 which sketched out an alternative narrative of the origins of Freemasonry, looking to the Templars and the Crusades.<sup>47</sup> This provided an alternative Jacobite and Tory history to counterweigh the Whig narrative of Anderson. In 1736, a Grand Lodge was also formed in Edinburgh, which looked back to Kilwinning and beyond. The Grand Lodge in London urgently needed to recapture the initiative in the claims to ancient status. It ordered James Anderson in preparing the revision of the Book of Constitutions published in 1738 to document the succession of Grand Masters back to the beginning of time. Anderson accordingly declared that the first Grand Master of Freemasons in England was St Augustine, thereby trumping York, and that the very first Grand Master of Masons was Noah.<sup>48</sup>

In 1738, it was these earlier antecedents which were more important to Anderson and the Grand Lodge in London than the story of 1717. Anderson

---

<sup>44</sup> Prescott and Sommers, 'Did Anything Happen in 1717?', p. 50.

<sup>45</sup> *Quatuor Coronatorum Antigrapha* X (1913), p. 50; Prescott and Sommers, 'Did Anything Happen in 1717?', p. 50.

<sup>46</sup> Prescott and Sommers, 'Did Anything Happen in 1717?', p. 55.

<sup>47</sup> Lisa Kahler, 'Andrew Michael Ramsay and his Masonic Oration', *Heredom* 1 (1992), pp. 19-47.

<sup>48</sup> 1738 *Constitutions*, pp. 4, 140.

never claimed that Grand Lodge was begun in 1717; he presents it as a revival. It was a story pieced together from various claims and tales current in the 1730s to fill a gap in the links back to Noah. When the new *Book of Constitutions* was published in 1738, little notice was taken of the story of 1717. Contemporaries were more interested in the older fables. Laurence Dermott, the Grand Secretary of the Ancients, mocked this custom of prefacing masonic publications with 'a long and pleasing history of Masonry from the Creation'.<sup>49</sup> Dermott was determined to go one better by writing the history of masonry before the creation, including an account of the first Grand Lodge when Lucifer was expelled from heaven. Are such histories of any use in understanding the secret mysteries of the craft, Dermott wondered.<sup>50</sup>

The potency of historical narratives, invented and otherwise, in freemasonry was apparent in William Preston's defence of the privileges of the Lodge of Antiquity, the successor of the Goose and Gridiron Lodge.<sup>51</sup> Others continued to wonder what secrets lay behind freemasonry. Indeed, it seems that the search for an ur-religion, something that preoccupied such early eighteenth-century figures as Anderson and Stukeley, is a fundamental theme in the history of freemasonry.<sup>52</sup> At the end of the eighteenth century, writers like Thomas Paine used historical narratives of freemasonry to attack Christianity.<sup>53</sup> Paine suggested that Christianity was a blasphemous perversion of the sun religion, and that freemasonry preserved the secrets of the primeval religion. The Yorkshire radical and social activist Godfrey Higgins became a freemason in order to investigate these claims more deeply. With the backing of the Duke of Sussex, who was also deeply interested in the origins of religion, Higgins explored the records of the Grand Lodge in York and took away early copies of the Old Charges. In *Anacalypsis*, published posthumously in 1834, Higgins used these documents as evidence that freemasonry embodied rituals of the ancient sun religion of which the masons were the high priests. These claims were popularised by the radical writer and campaigner Richard Carlile,

---

<sup>49</sup> Laurence Dermott, *Ahiman Rezon, or Help to a Brother...* (London: Printed for the Editor and sold by Bro James Bedford at the Crown in St Paul's Churchyard, 1756), p. v.

<sup>50</sup> *Ahiman Rezon*, pp. vi-vii.

<sup>51</sup> William Preston, *State of Facts: Being a Narrative of Some Late Proceedings in the Society of Free Masons, Respecting William Preston* (London: n.p., 1778), reprinted in *British Freemasonry 1717-1813*, vol. 1, Institutions, ed. Cecile Revauger (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016), pp. 241-300.

<sup>52</sup> David Boyd Haycock, *William Stukeley: Science, Religion and Archaeology in Eighteenth-Century England* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2002).

<sup>53</sup> For all the following, see Andrew Prescott, "'The Cause of Humanity': Charles Bradlaugh and Freemasonry", *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum*, 116 (2003), pp. 26-28, and Andrew Prescott, 'Godfrey Higgins and his *Anacalypsis*', *Library and Museum News for the Friends of the Library and Museum of Freemasonry*, 12 (Spring 2005), pp. 2-6.

who published a substantial collection of masonic rituals in his periodical *The Republican* in 1825.

These esoteric views of the traditions of freemasonry profoundly influenced the development of freemasonry in the first half of the nineteenth century. One thread in the complex politics surrounding the Duke of Sussex's promotion of the union of the two Grand Lodges in England was his interest in reviving the ancient religion described by his associate Higgins.<sup>54</sup> Perhaps even more influential was the reaction to Higgins's work by George Oliver, an associate and supporter of Robert Crucefix. Crucefix and his party were thorns in the side of the Duke of Sussex as they campaigned to modernise freemasonry with the publication of masonic periodicals containing reports on the proceedings of Grand Lodge and the promotion of charitable campaigns such as home for elderly masons.<sup>55</sup> Oliver developed a Christian riposte to the deist theories of radicals such as Higgins and Carlile.<sup>56</sup> Oliver accepted their assumptions about the antiquity of religion, but sought to show that early religions were part of God's purpose and paved the way for Christianity, the highest expression of religious belief. For Oliver, freemasonry was the indispensable handmaid to the Christian religion and could only be fully appreciated by Christians. Oliver described his vast researches (reminiscent perhaps of the intellectual endeavours of Edward Casaubon) as a 'systematic attempt to identify Freemasonry with the religious institutions of ancient nations, *as typical of the universal religion of Christ*'.<sup>57</sup> Oliver's ultimate aim was to show that 'not only the legends, symbols and lectures of Freemasonry bear an undoubted reference to the Messiah promised at the fall of man; but also that the Order itself, in the earliest ages, was a legitimate branch of true religion'.<sup>58</sup> Oliver did not claim that freemasonry should be exclusively Christian, but argued that because Christianity was the highest form of ethics, the genius of freemasonry could only be fully appreciated by freemasons.

Oliver's teachings, constantly reiterated by masonic chaplains and popularised by masonic periodicals such as *The Freemasons' Quarterly Review* and *The Freemason*, had an enormous impact on Victorian freemasonry. Oliver invented historical materials on a vast scale to support his Christian

---

<sup>54</sup> Prescott, 'Godfrey Higgins'.

<sup>55</sup> R. S. E. Sandbach, *Priest and Freemason: the Life of George Oliver* (Addlestone: Lewis Masonic, 1988); Susan Mitchell Sommers, 'Robert Thomas Crucefix, Redux', *Journal for Research into Freemasonry and Fraternalism* 3:1 (2012), pp. 73-97.

<sup>56</sup> For the following, see Sandbach, *Priest and Freemason*, pp. 32-42, 122-48.

<sup>57</sup> *Freemasons' Quarterly Review*, 30 June 1844, p. 136.

<sup>58</sup> *Freemasons' Quarterly Review*, 30 June 1844, p. 137.

view of freemasonry. One of his most popular publications, *The Revelations of a Square*, which appeared in 1855, told the story of English freemasonry from 1717 to 1813 through the voice of a square which had supposedly participated in key events.<sup>59</sup> Although the narrative was told through a fictional mouthpiece, Oliver claimed the facts were correct, and based on a diary by his father, who he alleged had known Desaguliers, Anderson, Preston and others.<sup>60</sup> Oliver inserts many footnotes into the narrative, but, while many refer to genuine books, others cite publications which do not exist.<sup>61</sup> According to Oliver, Desaguliers was entirely responsible for the events of 1717.<sup>62</sup> He had been initiated at the Goose and Gridiron and was encouraged by Christopher Wren to revive masonry and arranged the meetings which led to the formation of Grand Lodge. Oliver claimed that Desaguliers and Anderson insisted that the ritual at that time should be explicitly Christian. Oliver alleges that at that time 'the Book of Common Prayer, according to the rites and ceremonies of the Church of England, was an established lodge book, as it was considered to contain all the moral principles of the order'.<sup>63</sup> What the Scottish presbyterian James Anderson would have made of such a claim, it is difficult to imagine – it is of course all complete invention by Oliver.

The myth of 1717 was a creation of the Victorian period and Oliver was one of the major contributors to its development. You will remember how Hobsbawm described the rise of nationalism and imperialism as the generator of invented traditions, and Oliver epitomises this. He was keen to stress the Christian dimension to freemasonry so that freemasonry could provide a social underpinning to the British Empire. On the occasion of a presentation of an engraved silver cup and service of plate as a masonic offering to Oliver at

---

<sup>59</sup> George Oliver, *The Revelations of a Square; Exhibiting a Graphic Display of the Sayings and Doings of Eminent Free and Accepted Masons from the Revival in 1717 by Dr Desaguliers, to the Re-Union in 1813 by their R.H. the Dukes of Kent and Sussex* (London: Richard Spencer, 1855).

<sup>60</sup> *Revelations of a Square*, pp. vii-viii: 'the following pages must not be accounted fabulous and without authority ... for the author is in possession of authentic vouchers for every transaction'.

<sup>61</sup> Examples of fabricated references by Oliver are: p. 4 [Simeon Townsend, *Observations and Enquiries relating to the Brotherhood of Freemasons* (1712)]; p. 22 [J. T. Desaguliers, *An Eloquent Oration about Masons and Masonry, delivered 24 January 1721*]; p. 23 [James Anderson, *On the Rise and Progress of Freemasonry*]; p. 90 [*Manifesto and Mason's Creed* (London, 1755)]. On pp. 98-99, Oliver lists four sermons concerning freemasonry by John Entick. The first, *The Free and Accepted Mason Described* preached at St Stephen Walbrook 25 June 1750, is known only from the list of books published by Jonathan Scott at the end of the 1756 Book of Constitutions; the second and third, *The Free and Accepted Mason Truly Stated* and *A True Representation of Freemasonry*, a lecture delivered at the King's Lodge in the Poultry London, 20 March 1751, are not recorded elsewhere; the fourth sermon by Entick listed by Oliver, *A Caution to Free and Accepted Masons, in a sermon preached at St Mildred in the Poultry, London, on the 26th of October 1752* does however survive in a single copy in the British Library (ESTC T28946). Some of Oliver's other references may be wishful thinking. On p. 90 he cites *The Mason's Creed to which will be Subjoin'd a Curious Letter from Brother Locke...* The publication of a volume under this title was announced in the *Public Advertiser* of 26 June and 8 July 1754, but no copy has so far been traced.

<sup>62</sup> *Revelations of a Square*, pp. 1-20.

<sup>63</sup> *Revelations of a Square*, p. 16.

Lincoln in June 1844, Robert Goodacre junior, a journalist, prominent freemason and Oddfellow and member of the Lincoln Board of Guardians,<sup>64</sup> made the imperial and evangelical implications of Oliver's work explicit, noting that the contributors to the fund came from all over the British Empire and expressing enthusiasm that a lodge had recently been established for Indians in India. Goodacre saw 'the introduction of Freemasonry amongst our native fellow subjects of India as but the precursor to that better intercourse which shall terminate in their civilization, and, I trust I am not out of order when I add, their Christianization'.<sup>65</sup> For Oliver, 1717 was an act of Christian freemasonry, led by clergymen, and an expression of English moral primacy. While Oliver saw the roots of freemasonry reaching back millennia, it was England that had brought the light of masonry to the modern world.

The influence of clergymen like Oliver on English freemasonry horrified those exiled French freemasons who arrived in Britain after 1848 and the coup of Louis Napoleon in 1851.<sup>66</sup> They loudly criticised English freemasonry through émigré publications like *La Chaîne d'Union*. Such criticisms encouraged a reaction against Oliver and earlier writers such as Preston, and the researchers associated with the creation of the Quatuor Coronati Lodge in London, such as Robert Freke Gould, pioneered work on the history of freemasonry using the latest antiquarian techniques of documentary criticism.

In clearing away such historical detritus as Oliver's *Revelations of a Square*, Gould was confronted by many problems. If later works by people like Oliver and Preston were put to one side, the only narrative of 1717 was in Anderson's 1738 Constitutions, compiled twenty years after the event by a man who wasn't involved in any of the events described. While some bits of Anderson are contemporary, and may be regarded as a primary source, others are fanciful. Where do we draw the dividing line which marks the division between Anderson the unreliable secondary source and Anderson the primary source? The best answer is probably the point at which Anderson was an eye witness for the events described, which would be free about 1722 onwards. However, Gould decided to draw the line earlier, at 1717, with fateful consequences. In his key discussion of the Four Old Lodges, published in 1879, Gould argues that Anderson is reliable as a source from about 1715 but

---

<sup>64</sup> John T. Godfrey, *Manuscripts relating to the County of Nottingham in the Possession of Mr James Ward of Nottingham* (London: Henry Southeran, 1900), p. 91.

<sup>65</sup> *Freemasons' Quarterly Review*, 30 June 1844, p. 129.

<sup>66</sup> Prescott, 'Cause of Humanity', pp. 28-39.

completely discounts all the earlier sections of Anderson's work.<sup>67</sup> The result is that 1717 emerges as the fundamental moment of masonic history and the creation of Grand Lodge the decisive act in the creation of modern freemasonry. Gould describes the London Grand Lodge as the 'premier grand lodge of the world' which has become a wonder and pattern to the craft.<sup>68</sup> Gould leaves his readers in no doubt of the primacy of the English Grand Lodge and its central role in the creation of modern freemasonry.

Gould was writing shortly after the French Grand Orient had revised the first article of its constitution to remove references to the Great Architect of the Universe. The Irish and Scottish Grand Lodges (and even Mother Kilwinning) quickly protested against this move, but the United Grand Lodge of England was anxious to demonstrate its claim to be the arbiter of regularity. It duly barred visitors from constitutions which did not require a belief in the Great Architect of the Universe. This bought accusations that the English Grand Lodge was excommunicating other freemasons.

Gould himself had been involved in the dispute which led to the English Grand Lodge withdrawing recognition from the Grand Orient of France. He had served on the committee of the English Grand Lodge which examined the actions of the Grand Orient of France and recommended that relations between the two Grand Lodges cease.<sup>69</sup> Gould's study of the events of 1717 was clearly designed to provide an exhaustive analysis of the available evidence supporting the claims of the English Grand Lodge to be the Premier Grand Lodge of the world. Gould's portrayal of 1717 as a pivotal moment in the history of Freemasonry was essential to maintain the prestige of the English Grand Lodge and to provide it with the authority to excommunicate other Grand Lodges in France and elsewhere.

Since the time of Gould, the conventional Anglophone view of masonic history has been what can be described as a 'big bang' theory, with freemasonry rapidly spreading across the world as a result of the creation of the Grand Lodge. Such a view of course again bolsters the self-image of the English Grand Lodge as the Premier Grand Lodge of the world. Does such a big bang model fit our understanding of the growth of freemasonry in the eighteenth century? From the point of view of Britain and its colonies, such a model

---

<sup>67</sup> R. F. Gould, *The Four Old Lodges, Founders of Modern Freemasonry, and their Descendants* (London: Spencer, 1879)

<sup>68</sup> Gould, *Four Old Lodges*, p. 47.

<sup>69</sup> *Freemasons' Chronicle*, 8 December 1877.

underplays the vital role of Scottish and Irish freemasonry, particularly through regimental lodges. In thinking about British freemasonry, we need to think much more about the interplay between these jurisdictions, and less about which is the premier organisation. While English influence can be seen in the earliest lodge in the Netherlands, with two of the founding members having been initiated in England, it seems like that the early development of freemasonry was also strongly shaped by the sociable and fraternal forms which had already arisen in the Dutch Republic in the seventeenth century, including bodies such as the Chevaliers de la Jubilation described by Margaret Jacob.<sup>70</sup> Likewise, in France, freemasonry did not simply spread from England in a linear fashion. The growth of freemasonry meshed together various groups and practices, including both Jacobite and Hanoverian lodges as well as other forms of sociability. We need to look less at spread and single points of origin, and more at interconnections and cross-fertilisation.

Marc Bloch was a pioneer of trans-national history. A major regret in preparing this lecture is that, because of my training and previous experience as primarily a historian of Britain, I haven't been able to open up sufficient trans-national perspectives. This is a pity, because it becomes increasingly clear that in studying the history of freemasonry we need to break out of national silos. Freemasonry is a cosmopolitan and international phenomenon, and needs to be studied in that way. Traditions are invented to bolster nationalism, and this is just as true in the history of freemasonry as elsewhere. We will not break free of these national blinkers by drilling further and further down towards imagined hidden origins. We will only develop a rounded trans-national view of freemasonry by looking at the way that different stories are told and imagined about it and seeing how these interconnect. Marc Bloch urged us to look at the interconnectedness of human institutions and cultures. Seeking this interconnectedness is the ultimate key to freemasonry.

---

<sup>70</sup> Margaret C. Jacob, *The Radical Enlightenment: Pantheists, Freemasons and Republicans* 2nd ed. (New Orleans: Cornerstone Books, 2006).