

[Revised version of a paper delivered to the Canberra Lodge of Research & Instruction in 1993]

HARRY RENFREE, A CANBERRA MASONIC PIONEER

by Neil Wynes Morse

In a paper delivered to CLoRaI in 1993, I stated, as an introduction:

I did not meet Bro H E (Harry) Renfree. He died in 1983, several years before I entered the Craft. Since that time he has cropped up in conversations from time to time, but I took this as a mark of the respect he was held in, not as a measure of his importance to the Craft and other Orders in Canberra. It was not until I stumbled across a chapter of his autobiography which he had sent to the then Preceptor of this Lodge, RW Bro Bob Linford, that I came to understand the reason for the esteem in which he is held.

Through the generosity of his son, Neil Renfree, I was able to read a copy of the full volume, numbering several hundred pages, to gain a deeper insight into this man.

From it I learnt that this year marks the 70th anniversary of the first Masonic gathering in the Australian Capital Territory. Whilst this talk will focus upon the achievements, Masonic and otherwise, of Harry Renfree, it will also provide some details of the early times of the Craft in Canberra.

Harold Edward Renfree was born in Melbourne on 5 May 1905, the son of Albert and Olivia (nee Reddoch) Renfree. At the time, his father owned a newsagency and sheet music business in Fitzroy, although by trade he was a boot finisher.

Harry attended Lee Street Primary School, Mordialloc Primary School and, after being awarded a scholarship, Wesley College. At the age of 15, having passed the Intermediate Certificate and topped that year's Public Service examination, then held in conjunction with it, with an average of 80%, he started work as a Fifth Class Clerk with the Marine Board of Victoria. As a result of further study, he was eligible for examination for matriculation in 1924. At the same time he applied for, and was granted, a transfer into the Commonwealth Public Service, entering the Attorney-General's Department. Later on in his career he was to hold the highest legal position in that Department, that of Crown Solicitor, for a record 15 years.

The Chapter of his autobiography detailing Bro Renfree's Masonic journey follows, as Appendix A, by kind permission of the Renfree family.

CHAPTER 16 – FREEMASONRY

Freemasonry is an Order which I joined when I became 21 years of age and of which, except for my period of eight years in Brisbane, I have remained an enthusiastic member ever since.

The Order was formally founded a little over 250 years ago by the establishment of the Grand Lodge of England in 1717. It had apparently existed in an organized form for some time before that, but because of the lack of written records it is difficult to ascertain how speculative Masonry came into existence, it developed during the 17th century in both England and Scotland but in different ways.

In Scotland, the operative or working stonemasons were organized in numerous lodges, and these gradually admitted honorary or speculative masons. Why and how this came about is not clear. The members of these Scots lodges had a mason's word, which may or may not have given rise to present practices, but it was some secret form of recognition between members. The organization of the officers of Scottish operative lodges and the grades of membership are very similar to those of speculative masonry today.

There was no history of operative lodges in England as there was in Scotland. There speculative masonry grew up within the craft guild – the Company of Masons. It has been suggested that speculative masonry derived in the long term from the effects of the suppression of the monasteries by Henry 8. It may also have derived its development to some extent from the Rosicrucian philosophy of the time.

The first speculative Mason known beyond question was Elias Ashmole, who was 'made' a Mason in 1646 in a lodge at Warrington in Lancashire, England. In his diary, Ashmole also refers to his attendance in 1682 at a meeting of Freemasons at 'Masons Hall, London', this being the headquarters of the Masons Company, a trade guild. This indicates a very close association existing at that time between the newly emerging system of speculative masonry and the operative masons of the day.

Whatever may be the merits of claims that masonry was founded in Scotland or England, it seems that the English, with their penchant for administration, were the first to put the organization on a formal basis by the establishment of a Grand Lodge in 1717 by four London lodges. This gave a central control and cohesion to the movement, and quickly new lodges joined the Grand Lodge. An important event was the promulgation of the 'Constitutions' by Dr Anderson in 1723, which laid down the basis of the organization and the aims of Freemasonry. This was followed by a second, improved, edition in 1738.

The first Grand Lodge was later called the Regular or 'Moderns'. The Grand Lodge of Ireland was established in 1723 or 1724, and that of Scotland in 1736. A rival body to the Moderns, the Atholl or 'Ancients', was formed in England in 1751, but the two rival bodies united in 1813, and became the United Grand Lodge of England.

Freemasonry is described by Masons as 'a system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbol.' Masons constitute a brotherhood and the rules of behaviour in Lodge assist this by prohibiting discussions on politics or sectarianism. Seeking favour, such as business advantages, from a fellow Mason is frowned upon. The whole system inculcates a high code of moral behaviour in its members. A Mason does not have to be a Christian, but he must have a belief in 'a Supreme Being'.

Freemasonry is a world-wide organization, embracing men of many religions, but the Bible, the Torah, or the Koran, under the Masonic title of 'the Volume of the Sacred Law', takes a central place in its ceremonies. Masonry is not a religion, but there is a religious significance in all its ceremonies.

Freemasonry in Europe has had a chequered career. Because of the anti-clerical activities of the Order in France, and I think for other reasons, Pope Clement proscribed the Order for members of his church 230 years ago. For this reason, although the Order would admit Roman Catholics, not many members of that persuasion have joined it. In Spain, Cuba and a handful of other countries, Masonry is still outlawed as an 'insidious secret society.'

There are more than 6 million Masons in the world in many countries, and many prominent men have been Freemasons, such as Kipling, George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Sir Walter Scott, Mozart, Voltaire and Tolstoy. The Duke of Edinburgh is a Mason, and the Duke of Kent was the Grand Master of England. References to the Order have appeared in literature, and even in opera, for Mozart introduces Freemasonry into his opera 'The Magic Flute'. Tolstoy makes one of his principal characters in *War and Peace*, Pierre Behuzov, join a Masonic Lodge, although Russian Masonry seems from the book to differ in many respects from our own.

William Joyce has many references to Freemasons and things Masonic in his 'Ulysses.' Freemasonry is a society with secrets, but it is not a secret society.

The founders of Freemasonry had a touch of genius, as it has so much to attract men. The formal dress and ornate regalia give it glamour; the chance to occupy offices over many years, getting higher and higher, appeals to ambition; the ritual caters for those who have any kind of flair for acting and, let it be said, exhibitionism; the moral precepts it inculcates provide the highest code for any idealist; the regular meetings, followed by banquets or suppers, cater for the gregarious instincts which most men have; the exclusiveness of the Order and the close control of its secrets adds prestige to membership; and that 'monarchs have not thought it derogatory of their dignity to exchange the sceptre for the gavel' has given lustre to the Order and enhanced the privileges of membership. It must be admitted that it is not an institution for poor men (if there are now any such persons), though I believe it is less exclusive in Australia, and certainly in Scotland, than it is in England.

One of the virtues inculcated is charity, and the Order conducts a number of charitable institutions in all States.

Candidates are not sought, and a prospective member must come forward of his own desire to become a member.

Several people prominent in Australia's early history were Freemasons. Sir Joseph Banks was one, and was the first member of the Order to set foot in Australia. Others were Captain John Piper, Governor Lachlan Macquarie, Lieutenant Governor George Molle, explorer Matthew Flinders, business man Thomas Sutcliffe Mort, Judge Advocate Wilde, Survey-General (and explorer) John Oxley, Judge Jeffrey Hart Bent and politician William Charles Wentworth.

The first Masonic ceremony in Australia which is recorded was one held on a ship of the French Exploration Fleet in Sydney Harbour in 1802. It is also known that Freemasonry was practised on board H.M.S. *Glatton* and H.M.S *Buffalo* moored in Port Jackson in that same year.

An attempt had been made to start a Lodge in 1803. Sir Henry Brown Hayes, a one-time sheriff of Cork, who had been sent to Australia for ten years for eloping with an heiress, held the first Masonic Lodge on Australian soil (unless a regimental one had met previously) on 14 May, 1803. But Governor King, who wrongly suspected that the organization had treasonable intent, ordered all those at the inauguration ceremony to be arrested. Nothing further came of the move.

When Australia was first settled, there were three Grand Lodges operating in the British Isles, and they each granted charters for the establishment of Lodges in Australia under their several jurisdictions in the first three-quarters of the 19th century.

The earliest charters for Masonic Lodges in Australia were those granted by the Grand Lodge of Ireland to the 46th Regiment and later the 48th Regiment, authorizing the members to work the degrees of Masonry. These charters, however, were attached to the Regiments, and when they left New South Wales they took their charters with them.

A warrant for a movable military Masonic Lodge No., 227 named 'Social and Military Virtues' was brought to Australia with it by the 46th Regiment, which replaced the 73rd Regiment in 1714. Among the members of this Lodge were Captain Sanderson, who was the Worshipful Master for a time; Lt Col Molle; several other officers; Mr Jeffrey Bent, former Judge of the Supreme Court; Surgeon John Harris; Captain Piper, the Customs Officer; Mr Oxley, the Surveyor-General; and others. (See the biography of Governor Lachlan Macquarie by Mr M.H. Ellis, 1970 Reprint, at pp 376–385)

In 1816, the cornerstone of Captain Piper's house at what is now Point Piper was set with Masonic honours and symbols, and thirty-two brethren took part in a procession, including some Knights Templar in regalia.

Some of these Masons supported those involved in a conflict with Governor Macquarie in the early days of Australia's history. Macquarie was a splendid governor, to whom perhaps insufficient praise has been given. He was himself a Mason, though he was not a member of the military lodge. However, Macquarie adopted a policy with which many persons did not agree. This was the policy of treating former convicts who had served their sentences or be pardoned – 'emancipists', they were called, the same as any other men, even to the extent of inviting the more successful of them to dine at Government House. Among those who opposed this policy were Mr Jeffrey Bent and some of the officers of the 46th Regiment who were Masons.

In the biography referred to, Mr Ellis makes some derogatory reference to these people and appears to see a sinister connexion between their membership of the Lodge and the general anti-Governor activities of the Regiment. He refers to them as a crew of disreputable.

It is true enough that the officers of the 46th Regiment; may not all have been model men, but it must not be forgotten that the Masonic institution is one that is primarily law-abiding and moral, and it seems to me that one could hardly expect its members to be favourably inclined to those who had offended the law so seriously, at least in those times, as to be transported, can find a good reason in their membership of the Order for their not wanting to associate with the emancipists other than one of pure antagonism to the Governor, though the motives of some of his other opponents may not have been so clear. Macquarie and the 46th Regiment both left Australia in 1817.

The first properly constituted Lodge in Australia was chartered by the Grand Lodge of Ireland in 1820 as 'Australian Social Lodge No. 260.' A committee had been set up locally by the Grand Lodge of Ireland to sponsor new Lodges, and as a result Lodges were established under the Irish Constitution in Sydney, Melbourne, Hobart and New Zealand.

The first Lodge established in New South Wales under the English Constitution was Lodge of Australia No. 820, on 21 June, 1828. The first Scottish Constitution Lodge was Australia Kilwinning Lodge No. 337, consecrated at Melbourne in 1844. The first Scottish Lodge in New South Wales was the Lodge of St Andrew No. 158 established in 1851, followed in 1857 by Lodge Newtown Kilwinning.

The first Craft Lodge was formed in Victoria in 1840 under the English Constitution, and the Order greatly progressed there, particularly after the flood of immigrants as a result of the gold rush. It is surprising to see how quickly Freemasonry spread during the middle of the 19th century. Thus within two years of the discovery of gold at Inglewood in Victoria, a Masonic Lodge called Aurora Lodge was inaugurated (on 3 July 1861) and public advertisements of the monthly meetings began to appear in the local newspaper. (See for example the *Inglewood Advertiser* of 17 September 1861.)

Some references to Freemasons in Australia during the 1800s appear, in books of the period.

In the Weidenhofer edition of Garryowen's *Melbourne 1835-1852* v.1, pp. 54 et seq., the first municipal elections in Melbourne, are described. The Melbourne Corporation was constituted in 1842, and it was decided to hold a formal procession on the occasion of the swearing-in of the Mayor. This took place in December, 1842. An invitation to the Masonic body was accepted, and 'as the Mayor had no official gown to put on, he borrowed a Masonic robe of crimson silk' (obviously a Royal Arch Chapter gown) 'arrayed in which he appeared as if clad in the morning dress of some obese dowager'.

The procession was formed, and behind the Town band followed 'Thirty Freemason Burgesses (two deep); three Masonic Banners of the Lodge Australia Felix 19; and Masonic members in regalia of the Craft.' Masonic brethren were noticeable in the procession in consequence of their display of official jewellery, some of them wearing a large number of jewels. (Garryowen 1 .Op. cit., at p 190.)

In 'Bell's Life in *Sydney and Sporting Reviewer*, a weekly journal published in Sydney, the following item appeared on 24 June, 1848 - 'This day being the anniversary of St John the Baptist, the various Masonic Lodges in Sydney will meet at High Twelve, and after the ceremony of installing officers, &c., adjourn till Monday next at six o'clock to celebrate this festival by a banquet. We are happy to see this truly loyal, charitable and useful society progressing, there being now four Lodges in Sydney, and we remember some years ago the only one being in existence was that of No. 260, under the Constitution of Ireland.' In addition 'to the two Royal Arch Chapters now existing, it is in contemplation to open a Knight Templar's Encampment, so that ere long we may calculate upon having the whole of the superior degrees of the order working in New South Wales.'

Garryowen (Weidenhofer edition, p 89) also described the celebrations in Melbourne of the separation from New South Wales in 1850. On Friday 15 November, 1850, there was another procession. "At ten o'clock the several societies began to collect, some in regalia, and others bearing a banner or some emblem to contribute to the coming display. There was no denominational dissension or political difficulty, no Masonic prayer, or invocation, to annoy the religious consciences, no emblem steeped in the passion of party fanaticism to offend any nationality; and the occasion was a general ovation, which more or less touched a sympathetic chord in every heart". The procession and the crowd that jammed the streets numbered about 15,000 persons, an immense aggregation for the period.

In 1856, the somewhat infamous entertainer, Lola Montez, came to Australia and performed in various cities. In Adelaide, it is said that the Governor turned up to watch her, as did the Free and Accepted Masons in full regalia. (*Australia's Heritage*, vol. 3, p 970), but the authority for the statement is not given.)

Another instance of Masons appearing more in the public eye than they do today is the report in the *Inglewood Advertiser*, on 3 April, 1883, that the foundation stone of the new town hall was expected to be laid with Masonic honours, as the Mayor, Mr Thompson, was a Past Master of the Order.

With the growth in the number of Lodges, Provincial Grand Lodges were later established in New South Wales by the Grand Lodges of England, Scotland and Ireland. In 1877 thirteen Lodges of the Irish and Scottish Constitutions formed the Grand Lodge of New South Wales, but it was not recognized by the Grand Lodge, of England, Scotland, or Ireland. In 1885, Lord Carrington, a Past Grand Warden of the Grand Lodge of England, became Governor of New South Wales, and was empowered by his Grand Lodge to effect a Masonic reconciliation. The English Lodges voted for union and a ballot of all members in New South Wales overwhelmingly favoured union and a Basis of Union was worked out, The United Grand Lodge of New South Wales was constituted by agreement between all existing Lodges and with the recognition of the three mother Grand Lodges in Britain.

The history of the development of United Grand Lodge for Victoria followed very much the same pattern as in New South Wales.

The movement towards union was not at first fully supported. Thus a news item in the *Inglewood Advertiser* of 24 May 1883 states that:

At a meeting of Orion Lodge, English Constitution, at Ballarat, it was resolved that the Lodge viewed with disapprobation and distrust, the attempt to form a Victorian Grand Lodge, independent of the Grand Lodge of England, and protests against the attempt as unmasonic and disloyal to the Craft, and calculated to materially injure Freemasonry as practised in the colony.

In the result, the members of Orion Lodge must have been persuaded to the other view, for only one English Constitution Lodge, namely Lodge Combamere, failed, and has continued to fail, to come under the Grand Lodge of Victoria.

This news item also shows that moves for the new Victorian Grand Lodge were going on for some years before it was successfully accomplished. In 1887 the Earl of Carnarvon, Grand Master of England, came to Australia and largely as a result of his efforts the United Grand Lodge of Victoria was formed in 1889 with Sir William Clarke as the first Grand Master.

A similar position now exists in all other States. The Australian Capital Territory comes under the jurisdiction of New South Wales; the Northern Territory under South Australia; and the Territory of Papua and New Guinea under Queensland. I do not know what was the authority for this arrangement. Although the various State Grand Lodges work in harmony, there has not yet been any strong effort to 'federate', although some senior brethren in Canberra have advocated something of the kind.

Up to the early 1920s, I knew little about Freemasonry. My uncle Ern Renfree was a member of the Order, but not I believe a very enthusiastic one, and I had not come into much contact with his activities as a Mason, nor had I come into contact with other Freemasons as such. My father had always been an enthusiastic member of the Protestant Alliance Friendly Society, and I had joined that Society when I reached the proper age, but I never became an enthusiastic member.

The father of Cleve Cole, the Scoutmaster of the 1st North Fitzroy Troop, of which I was a member, was a keen Mason and a Past Master of the Star of the South Lodge No. 198, meeting in Collins Street, Melbourne. He took a quiet interest in the Troop. Prior to 1926, Cleve Cole had become a member of his father's Masonic Lodge, and later Harry Dent and Arnold Hudson, two more of our Rover Scouts, joined. When I turned 21 years old, I put my name forward, and, with Les Mustard, the then Scoutmaster, was initiated into the Star of the South Lodge in October 1926. Later quite a few more of our Scout friends from North Fitzroy joined this Lodge.

I found Freemasonry attractive and took a great interest in the Lodge, attending all rehearsals. In due course I was made a steward and in the early 1930s started through the chairs as Inner Guard.

In December, 1939, at the age of 34 years, I was installed as Worshipful Master of my Lodge. World War II had commenced in the preceding September, and this was the period of the 'phony war'. 'The war flared up dramatically in May, 1940, and France quickly fell to the Germans. My year in office was not affected by the war but it cast a gloom over our lives. In the meantime I had taken other steps forward in Masonry.

I do not recall much about the Victorian Grand Lodge in my time. The Grand Secretary was Rt. Wor. Bro. William Stewart, who always struck me as a rather pompous and dictatorial man, though he was no doubt efficient.

The Grand Masters of Victoria during my Masonic years in that State were:

1926–1927	W. P. Bice
1927–1932	Lord Somers, the Governor of Victoria, with W. P. Bice as Pro Grand Master
1932–1935	W. Warren Kerr, Chairman of the Commissioners of the State Savings Bank of Victoria

1935–1939 Lord Huntingfield, Governor of Victoria, with W. Warren Kerr as Pro Grand Master
1939–1942 W. J. Byrne

Subsequent Grand Masters included many lawyers, such as: Judge Book of the County Court, a sincere and popular man in the community; Mr Justice Oliver Gillard, of the Supreme Court; Judge C. W. Harris, Chairman of the Workers' Compensation Board of Victoria, whom I recently met at a Conference of workers' compensation authorities held in Sydney, Judge (later Mr Justice) Frank Nelson was Pro Grand Master in 1959–1961 during Governor Sir Dallas Brooks's term as Grand Master. Oliver Gillard and Frank Nelson were both law students in my year at the Melbourne University.

It was the custom in Victoria for every fifth installation of a Lodge to be carried out by the Grand Lodge, and the officers of Grand Lodge did all the work., This made a splendid occasion, with trumpets blaring, gold braid flashing, precision processing, and elocution-type delivery of charges. I missed the fifth year and was installed by Wor. Bro. Harry Dent, my friend and sponsor into Freemasonry, assisted by Past Masters of the Lodge. In my turn I installed my successor, Harold Davis.

The Star of the South Lodge had a strong element of the Fitzroy-Collingwood district in it. Among its esteemed Past Masters were Councillor William Becket, M.L.C, who had a furniture business in Fitzroy; Charles Marshall of the engineering firm of Charles S. Marshall Pty. Ltd., which gave its name to a leading High Court case on a constitutional point; William Cole, who had a paint-selling business in Gertrude Street, Fitzroy; George Honeycombe, the Secretary of the Lodge, who was the Town Clerk of the City of Fitzroy; F. H. Appleyard, a dentist of Brunswick Street, Fitzroy; and Mark Thompson, the Director of Ceremonies, who was an engineer. Scout friends in the Lodge included Herb. Heweston; Bernie Clarke; Jim Lake; Dave Clarke and Vic Saunderson.

The subscription was 4/- per month and a charge of 3/- was made for each visitor to the Installation over one towards the cost of catering!

I found the visiting of the Lodges when I was Worshipful Master to be a burden, as my wife had two infants to look after and I did not like leaving her alone. I kept my visiting down to a minimum. During my year, Hubert Tope, who later came to live in Canberra and became my friend, was in the chair of the Travellers' Washington Lodge, Melbourne, but I do not recall meeting him 'on the road'.

Soon after I became a Mason, I obtained some text-books on Masonry, one of which, 'The Higher Degrees Handbook', intrigued me very much. It set out a brief summary of other Masonic Orders and degrees that existed, and I quickly formed the ambition to take as many of these degrees as I could. This ambition was almost fulfilled in 1972.

The history of these other degrees is to some extent wrapped up in mystery. The first of these to be mentioned is that of Mark Master Mason. This degree is based on a story of the rejection of some work made by a stonemason. In a somewhat dramatic but simple story, it teaches a lesson that one should ignore the criticism of one's actions if those actions are conscientiously believed to be right, and that they will bring their own reward. The degree is sometimes said to be a continuation of the Fellow Craft degree, but I do not think that it is.

The Mark degree sprang up in England in the 18th century, probably derived from Scotland, but it was not recognized by the Grand Lodge of England. Eventually a Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of England came into being in the 19th century. At first regarded as irregular, it was eventually recognized, and now the Grand Master of the Craft in England is always elected as Grand Mark Master.

My first advance into the 'Higher degrees' was when I joined the Mark degree. The Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of England chartered the first Mark Lodge in Victoria in 1858, and others followed. A Provincial Grand Lodge was established in 1888. The Grand Lodge of Scotland and the Supreme Grand Chapter of Scotland also established eight Mark Lodges in Victoria, and there were four Canadian Chapters working the degree in Victoria. In May, 1889, when the United Grand Lodge of Victoria was being formed, it was agreed to form a Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of Victoria and the first Grand Master was installed in 1890.

This body was recognized by all the Grand bodies concerned, including the Supreme Grand Chapter of Scotland, and seven of the eight Scottish Mark Lodges came in under the Grand Mark Lodge of Victoria, which then virtually ruled all Mark Lodges in Victoria. The ritual followed very closely the English ritual.

The degree of Royal Ark Mariner was attached to the Grand Mark Lodge, as in England, but it is worked in a separate Royal Ark Mariner's Lodge.

I joined the Kilwinning Mark Lodge No. 2, meeting in Collins Street, Melbourne, in October 1927, a year after I had been initiated into the Craft. As I recall it, M. Wor. Bro. Edward Coulson was the Grand Master

and had remained so for over 30 years – a thing I do not approve of – and the Grand Secretary was Albert Corinaldi.

The Kilwinning Mark Lodge No. 2, founded in 1907, was to an extent an off-shoot of the Star of the South Lodge, and many brethren were members of both Lodges. One member I remember with some admiration and affection was Wor. Bro. Bill Hendry, the Director of Ceremonies, an outgoing, hearty and happy type by whom we were pleased to be bossed about. The Moorabbin Ark Mariner's Lodge was attached to this Mark Lodge, but I did not join it.

I was proposed by my friend Harry Dent, and Cleve Cole and his father were also members of the Lodge. It was not long before I was given the lowest office in the Lodge and began to work my way through to the chair at the same time as I was working through the chairs of the Star of the South Lodge. At that time in Victoria, it was necessary to have been installed in the chair of the Craft before being able to take the chair in the Mark Lodge. For this reason I had to mark time for a year or two in Mark chairs, and a week before I vacated the chair of Master of the Star of the South Lodge, I was installed as Master of the Kilwinning Mark Lodge.

The ceremony of my installation was performed by my friend Harry Dent, then President of the Board of General Purposes, assisted by Grand Lodge officers. He had preceded me through the chairs (and had been the best man at my wedding). He later became Deputy Grand Master of the Grand Mark Lodge of Victoria, and I many years later had the rank of Past Deputy Grand Master of the Grand Mark Lodge of New South Wales conferred on me, so we friends both reached the same very high office in Mark Masonry in different States.

Before the first meeting after I left the Mark chair, I had left Melbourne to take up my new position in Brisbane, and was not able to attend any more meetings of my Melbourne Lodge, and took my clearance from both my Lodges.

In 1969–1970 I visited each of them on the 30th anniversary of my installation but in each only three members of my time were still members.

While still living in Melbourne, I had taken one further degree on 24 February 1937, when I joined the Caulfield District Chapter of Royal Arch Masons, meeting at the Morton Ray Temple, Caulfield.

Freemasonry had originally been a Christian movement, but it is said that Anderson's 'Constitutions' de-Christianised it. Belief in a Supreme Being remained, but it became open to men of any religion to join. As will be seen later, the de-Christianisation of Masonry was to result in an expansion of the number of degrees.

It is thought that the Royal Arch degree was established as a 'completion' of the 3rd degree about 1730–1740, and it shows a distinctly Christian influence.

Its ritual and symbolism are based on the story of the laying of the foundations for the re-building of King Solomon's Temple at Jerusalem after the era of the Jewish captivity in Babylon, and has its own peculiar lessons to teach, in its main purpose being complementary to the Master Mason's degree.

The degree of Knight Templar (and some others to be mentioned) also came into existence in the 18th century, and questions arose as to the working and recognition of the various degrees by the Lodges working under the several Grand Lodges of the British Isles.

When the 'Ancients' Grand Lodge, the newer body, notwithstanding its name, was formed in England in 1751, it made a special feature of the Royal Arch degree, but because of its Christian elements the 'Moderns' disliked it. The premier Grand Chapter of England was established in England in 1767 to control the degree, and when the two Craft Grand Lodges united in 1813, the Supreme Grand Chapter of England was formed to control the Royal Arch degree. The Grand Lodge of England at the same time recognized as part of Craft Masonry the three Craft degrees and the Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch, but so as not to prevent any Lodge or Chapter from holding a meeting in any of the degrees of the Orders of chivalry according to the constitutions of the said Orders. (This proviso has since been deleted from the definition of Masonry in the Book of Constitutions of England.) In England, a Craft Lodge can constitute itself into a Chapter and work the Royal Arch degree, and the Worshipful Master of the Lodge is the First Principal of the Chapter, while the Grand Master of the Craft is the First Grand Principal of the Grand Chapter.

The Grand Lodge of Ireland ordered in 1840 that only the three Craft degrees would be controlled by that Grand Lodge, but it recognizes the Royal Arch and the Mark degrees as part of Masonry.

In Scotland, the position was different again. After considerable disputation, the Grand Lodge of Scotland agreed that 'St John's Masonry' consisted of the three Craft degrees, including the Mark degree. Thus the Grand Lodges differed in their recognition and control of the degrees other than the Craft degrees of 'St John's Masonry'

I do not know the history of the establishment of the Royal Arch degree in Scotland, but it seems to have derived from England. A number of Chapters were established but, differing from England, there was no connexion between the Craft Grand Lodge and the Chapters. The Supreme Grand Chapter of Scotland was formed in 1816 and once controlled a very large number of degrees, including some Templar degrees, but now it works and controls the Royal Arch, Mark Master, Excellent Master, Royal Ark Mariner, Red Cross of Babylon and the Cryptic degrees, of which more anon The Mark degree is a part of Craft Masonry in Scotland, and most brethren will have taken their Mark degree in their Craft Lodge., The Mark degree is therefore worked in Scotland both in Craft Lodges and in Royal Arch Chapters.

In the differing history of the three Grand Lodges is to be seen the seeds of the confusion that was to arise when the three Grand Lodges commenced to warrant Lodges in Australia.

In Victoria, the first Royal Arch Chapter, attached to Lodge Australia Felix No. 474 (English Constitution), was established in 1844. A number of other English Chapters were later established, but only one Scottish Chapter and one Irish Chapter up to the time of the formation of the United Grand Lodge of Victoria in 1889. A Provincial Grand Chapter first met formally in 1863 and conducted the affairs of Royal Arch Masonry in Victoria until, in 1889, the Supreme Grand Chapter of Victoria was formed in that same year from all the Chapters. Four Canadian-warranted Chapters joined in soon afterwards, so there is a united Royal Arch body in Victoria. That body works and controls only the degrees of Royal Arch, Most Excellent Master and the Passing of the Veils, the latter two very light degrees as worked in Victoria. We shall see that the position was not nearly such a happy one in New South Wales.

Just before I left Melbourne, I was appointed as a steward of the Caulfield District Royal Arch Chapter, but when I went to Brisbane I took my clearance from this Chapter as well.

In February, 1942 I arrived in Brisbane to take up my promotion in the newly constituted office of the Crown Solicitor. The impact of the war was far greater in Brisbane than it had been in Melbourne. Not only were we so much nearer to the advancing Japanese army (shades of 'the Brisbane Line') but we had a million American troops in and passing through Queensland commencing in March 1942.

The war climate was not conducive to active interest in Masonry and I was too busy with my work, which went on night and day, to spare the time for it. So I had taken my clearance from my Melbourne Lodges and Chapter, and look no interest at all in Freemasonry in Queensland, even after the war, except to visit, a Mark Lodge with my next-door neighbour, Mr Frank Atthow, who was the Grand Master of the small group of seven Mark Lodges in Queensland, and to attend the Consecration of the Samuel Walker Griffith Lodge, the lawyers' Lodge, among whose members I had several legal friends. Among them were several who were, or were to become, judges – Alan Mansfield; Ben Matthews, Graham Had; Rex Carter and Lindsay Byth, to name a few. I became associated with some of these many years later in the Ancient and Accepted Rite.

We left Brisbane in March 1950, when I was appointed to a position in the central office of the Attorney-General's Department in Canberra. We purchased a house in Queanbeyan and lived there for five years. I decided to renew my membership of Freemasonry and affiliated very soon after my arrival in Queanbeyan with the Queanbeyan St Andrew Lodge, No. 56, N.S.W. Constitution, on 19 September, 1950. One of the first local Masons I met was V. Wor. Bro. Fred Beazley, a local business man and staunch Methodist, who was the District Inspector of Workings for the Canberra, Queanbeyan and Yass district. I was to remain his Masonic friend and colleague in many degrees for many years afterwards.

For Masonic purposes, the Australian Capital Territory is regarded as part of New South Wales. Included in District No. 102, which embraces the Canberra Lodges, is the Lodge of Truth, No. 26, at Braidwood, consecrated in 1860. This was formed when there was a gold rush at nearby Araluen, and Braidwood was a very busy centre. Today, Braidwood is a very quiet town.

Another similar old Lodge is the Yass Lodge of Concord, No. 27, founded in 1861, and its old charter under a British Constitution may be seen in the Yass Temple. Yass is the centre of the world's best fine wool growing area and is still a reasonably busy town.

Another of the early Lodges in this part of New South Wales was Lodge St Andrew, No. 56, founded at Queanbeyan in 1878. In 1927, the year in which the Parliament and the first departments of the Public Service transferred to Canberra, a second Lodge was consecrated at Queanbeyan, with the name 'Lodge Queanbeyan'. Brother (later Right Worshipful Brother) J F.(Fred) Beazley was its first Candidate.

However, it was later found that the town of Queanbeyan could not support two Lodges, and in 1941, a year or so after the start of the war, the two Queanbeyan Lodges amalgamated under the name of Lodge Queanbeyan St Andrew, with the old number 56. When I affiliated with it, the Lodge was flourishing as a

result of the post-war boom in Masonry. It was common for four candidates to be initiated at one time, and there were always candidates available for work in all the degrees. At that time the Captains Flat Mine was working at full production, and many employees of the Mine joined the Lodge. Mr Stuart Bannerman, who had been a Chelsea friend of my Whitford relatives many years before, was the Mining Surveyor of the Mine. He was an enthusiastic Mason and member of the Queanbeyan St Andrew Lodge, and that is where I met him first. There were many other fine men in this Lodge. Secretary for many years was Ancel Johnston, the Secretary of the Queanbeyan District Hospital, and Fred Beazley was Treasurer for a very long period.

Jack Gardner was the Worshipful Master when I joined and made me feel very welcome.

I should now say something about the development of the early Canberra Lodges. Work on the construction of Canberra commenced in 1913 and a large group of men were in the area from this time on laying down roads and water and sewerage services, and constructing the power house and the first buildings of the potential capital. To these men, Queanbeyan was their social centre, and I have no doubt that some of them affiliated (if they were already Masons) or were initiated in Lodge St Andrew meeting in that town.

The first Lodge started in Canberra was Lodge Canberra, No. 465, consecrated, under the sponsorship of Lodge St Andrew, in March, 1923. The foundation Master was the late Wor. Bro. Dr. D. Christie. The first candidates included Ivo Arlington Smith, who was later Secretary of the Lodge for 50 years, and received the conferred rank of Past Deputy Grand Master in his late years for his services to the Order.

The Lodge met for a short time in the old Queanbeyan Temple, and then built a Temple at Acton, where the first meeting, attended by M. Wor. Bro William Thompson, Grand Master, was held on 23 November 1923.

Mr Frank Clune in his book 'Across the Snowy Mountains' (at p 88) writes of his journey to Canberra in 1923, when he saw a funeral of a building construction worker who was a Freemason. 'The brethren of his Lodge wore their Masonic regalia. When the coffin was lowered, they threw something into the grave. It was rosemary for remembrance. At that time there were not more than 400 residents in Canberra, practically all building workers living in huts.'

The foundation Senior Warden was Bro. George Wieck, but he was transferred to Western Australia before the first election of officers and did not succeed to the chair. (He later attained the rank of Past Deputy Grand Master in Western Australia.) The foundation Junior Warden was Bro. Jim Kennedy, a Scotsman who remained active until his death many years later. He became the second Worshipful Master. Many other worthy and well-known Canberra men have passed through the chairs of this old Lodge in the forty odd years of its existence.

The Lodge's Temple at Acton (which is now the Youth Centre at Corroboree Park, Reid) was acquired by the Government, and the Lodge moved to a room, then the A.P.A. building in London Circuit where the Charcoal Inn is now. Subsequently a move was made to the Reid Methodist Church Hall, and later to the present Temple.

The second Lodge to be consecrated in Canberra was Lodge Capitol, No. 612, in 1927, sponsored by Lodge Canberra. The Foundation Master was Wor. Bro. W. Turner. This Lodge tended for many years to comprise tradesmen and small business men of various kinds. The foundation Senior Warden and second Master was that stout Freemason Tom Trevillian, and many worthy Masons have passed through this Lodge.

Lodge Commonwealth of Australia, No. 633, was the third Canberra Lodge and, sponsored by Lodge Canberra, was consecrated on 7 December 1929, with V. Wor. Bro. J. W. Kelf as the Foundation Master. The foundation Senior Warden and the second Master was Wor. (later V.Wor.) Bro. J. L. ('Joe') Fawcett. This was essentially a public servants' Lodge, and the list of Masters over the years reads like a roll of rather senior public servants. Many of the early members had been Masons in Victoria before their transfer to Canberra, and the early Canberra Lodges had somewhat of a Victorian air about them and followed some minor Victorian practices to which they had been used previously.

The three Lodges then in existence, having shared the accommodation in London Circuit and in the Reid Church Hall, worked energetically to get their own Temple. A Special Purposes Lease of a site at the corner of National Circuit and Broughton Street was granted by the Government, and each of the three Lodges contributed £1,500 as capital. The foundation stone was laid by the Grand Master, Lord Gowrie, on 9 May 1936, and the building of the Temple was completed soon afterwards. For such a relatively small body of Masons to have built this fine Temple during the years of the depression was a very fine achievement, for which all future Masons should be truly grateful.

The fourth Lodge to be consecrated was Lodge Gowrie, No. 71. It was sponsored by Lodge Commonwealth of Australia and consecrated on 20 September 1947, after the war. It was named after Lord Gowrie, Governor-General of Australia from 1936 to 1946, and Grand Master for New South Wales from 1935 to 1944. Archdeacon C S. Robertson, P.D.G.M., an enthusiastic Canberra Mason, was the Foundation Master. The foundation Senior Warden and second Master was that delightful Scot, Bill Crawford, whose spontaneous humorous speeches were always a delight to listen to.

Another early Master was (Rt.) Wor. Bro. T M ('Tom')Owen, Registrar of the Canberra University College, later the moving spirit in the organization of Lodge Philosophy, of which I became a foundation member.

The Grand Masters of New South Wales since I have affiliated with that State were:

1948–1951	(Sir) Frank McDowell, city merchant
1952–1955	Sir John Northcott, Governor of the State
1955–1959	Thomas Leslie Warren, a solicitor
1959 – 1962	Harry Rickards Maas, a wholesale merchant
1962–1966	Edward Leslie Beers, C.B.E., Chairman of the Water and Sewerage Board of New South Wales
1966–1969	Eric Aubrey Primrose, a timber merchant
1969 – 1972	Robert Arthur Hammond, a wool merchant
1972–	Victor Charles Nathaniel Blight, State Government Printer.

The Grand Secretary from 1939 was J.S. ('Syd') Miller. He was succeeded by Bob Burley and in 1971 by Ray Connon.

My next Masonic step after affiliating with Lodge Queanbeyan St Andrew was to join, under the auspices of Fred Beazley, the Order of Freemasonry with which I was to become closely associated in later years. This was the Ancient and Accepted Rite (or the Order of the Rose Croix of Heredom) under the Supreme Council 33° for England and Wales, the Dominions and Dependencies of the British Crown.

I joined the Canberra Chapter No. 334 on 10 March 1951. I was to become first the Most Wise Sovereign of this Chapter, later Inspector General for the District of New South Wales, Southern and Australian Capital Territory, and then Branch Secretary General of the Australian Branch Council inaugurated in November, 1969.

The Rose Croix, or 18th degree, which is conferred in a ceremony of perfection in a Rose Croix Chapter, is open to professing Christians. In this degree, the search for 'the Word', which is basic to several Masonic degrees, has a Christian connotation, and the references to the figure 33 refer to the years of the life of Jesus of Nazareth. The ceremony, in three 'Points' is said to be one of the most impressive in the whole of Masonry. Although there are 33 degrees in the Order, only a few of these are worked, and a brother enters the Order by taking the eighteenth degree.

So long as Freemasonry was automatically Christian in character, no need existed for anything beyond the Craft and the Royal Arch, but Anderson's Constitutions caused great concern to both Protestants and Roman Catholics. Then, in 1738, the Pope issued the famous Bull 'In Eminenti' placing a ban on Masons.

Immediately after this, semi-Masonic Orders sprang up like mushrooms. They were near enough to Masonry to satisfy the desires of those who wished to retain the Christian qualification which had been abolished in the Craft, and they were far enough from Masonry to by-pass the Bull.

From the first quarter of the 18th century to the middle of the 19th century there was an expansion of Masonic Orders and degrees. Many of these were established in France and found their way to England. One of these was the Rose Croix degree. The degree is said to have started about 1743, and the 'Grand Constitutions' of the Order were allegedly formulated in 1786. Rose Croix degrees had been worked in England by other Orders in the 18th century, and the French degree had also been worked in the British Isles. But it was not until 1845 that, the Supreme Council for England was set up under the sponsorship of the Supreme Council of the Northern Jurisdiction of America to control the Order in England and its colonies.

It is said that the Rose Croix degree was conferred on Bro. (Captain) Anthony Fenn Kemp of the 'Rum Corps' in Australia by French officers of a French exploration fleet in 1802.

On a TV documentary some time ago, the Napoleonic relics collected by Dame Mabel Brookes were displayed, and among them was clearly a collar 'jewel' of the eighteenth degree, though somewhat ornamented, indicating that Napoleon was probable a Mason and had taken the Rose Croix degree.

There are progressive offices in the Ancient and Accepted Rite as in other Masonic Orders, and the equivalent in this Order of the Worshipful Master is called the Most Wise Sovereign. When a member has

passed through the Sovereign's chair, he is eligible to take the 30°. The 31° and 32° may also be conferred, but are in the nature of Grand Lodge rank.

Each territory in the jurisdiction is divided into Districts over each of which is an 'Inspector General' who administers his District, as the representative of the Supreme Council. He is given the rank of 33°, and the ceremony for this degree is only conferred in London, by the Supreme Council itself, but he does not have to go through the ceremony in order to administer his District. The governing body in England is a Supreme Council of nine members.

There is also a Supreme Council for Scotland, which has issued Warrants to Chapters in Australia. Their system is substantially the same as ours, but with slight differences, especially in the ritual.

The first Chapter of the Order was chartered under the Supreme Council for England in 1859 as Metropolitan Chapter No. 11, to meet in Melbourne. One can see the formation of this Chapter as one of the results of the tremendous inflow of migrants to Victoria during the gold-rushes.

The next Chapter in Australia, Sydney Chapter No. 174, was not formed until 1912, over 50 years after the Melbourne Chapter, but since that date there has been an accelerating increase in the number of Australian Chapters, and today there are about 8,000 members in 130 Chapters of the English Constitution scattered in 18 Districts throughout Australia, as well as a lesser number of Scottish Chapters.

The Canberra Rose Croix Chapter No. 334 was consecrated on 2 March 1940, at Goulburn with Ill. Bro. H. B. Matthews, 30°, later to be the first Inspector General for New South Wales, of Sydney, as the first Most Wise Sovereign Excellent and Perfect Brother J. H. Starling was the first 1st General of the Chapter and became Most Wise Sovereign at the end of the first year.

I became Most Wise Sovereign of the Chapter in March 1958, and in December 1959, the Thirtieth degree was conferred on me, but I did not take part in the 30° ceremony until August 1960, when I went through it in Sydney.

Soon after joining the Ancient and Accepted Rite, I affiliated with the Canberra Mark Lodge No. 100, namely on 13 August 1951.

The first Mark Lodge in New South Wales was chartered by the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of England in 1858. Subsequently many more Mark Lodges were established under the Grand Lodge of England, and in 1873 a Provincial (later District) Grand Lodge was set up. There were also some Mark Lodges warranted by the Grand Chapter of Scotland.

In 1889, the United Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of New South Wales was inaugurated. The name 'United' refers to the union of the English and Scottish Lodges which formerly held the territory. One Lodge still remains under England.

The ritual worked under the United Grand Lodge is practically the same as that in Victoria, which is the English ritual; I therefore felt very much at home in the Canberra Mark Lodge.

The consecration of the Canberra Mark Lodge took place on 4 October 1930, and the Foundation Master was Wor. Bro. A. G. Pike. The Immediate Past Master was Wor. Bro. J. H. Starling, who was one of the leading Masons in Canberra at this time and for many years after. The foundation Senior Warden was Wor. Bro. N. V. Jeffreys, who succeeded Wor. Bro. Pike as Worshipful Master. Many enthusiastic Masons, some of whom had taken the degree in Melbourne, were among the foundation members.

At the time I affiliated, Stan Dusting was the Worshipful Master and Albert Arthur, who became the Government Printer later, was the Secretary. The personality of the Lodge, as of other Masonic Orders in Canberra, was Charles Roach. He was an engineer and Manager of the Transport Section of the Department of the Interior, responsible for the operation of Canberra's buses. He was a delightful person with a fund of stories of his life; a good living man and a helpful one. He was a born leader and had been the Scoutmaster of the Toorak (Melbourne) Troop of Scouts at the time when Bill Jackson, who married one of our St Luke's group of friends, was a member and later Scoutmaster. The Canberra Mark Lodge has always been an active and successful one, and the Mark degree is very popular with Masons.

On 18 July 1952, I affiliated with the Australia Chapter No. 87 of Royal Arch Masons in Canberra (N.S.W. Constitution.) This Chapter was consecrated on 3 October 1930, the day before the Mark Lodge was consecrated, and the foundation First Principal was M. Ex Companion J. H. Starling. It can be assumed that most of the foundation members were also foundation members of the Mark Lodge. Among those who became First Principals over the years were Gilbert Castieau, a senior officer of my Department; Canon Robertson, said to have been an 'aggressive' type of Mason; Frank Keane, the local Police Magistrate, who was a Roman Catholic and later resigned; Bert Joyce, later Auditor-General for the Commonwealth; Charles Roach, already mentioned; Vic. Skermer, also an Auditor-General; and many others.

Somewhat to my surprise as a former Victorian, I found that there was a Scottish Constitution operating in New South Wales and Canberra, and it had Chapters in Canberra, Queanbeyan, Yass, Goulburn and Cooma. I do not know the history of these Chapters, but later found that the membership of Chapters under the Supreme Grand Chapter of Scotland in New South Wales was about double that; of the Chapters under the Supreme Grand Chapter of New South Wales, and about two-thirds of the total membership throughout the world under the Scottish Grand body. There were no Scottish Chapters in Victoria, and in Queensland and Western Australia the former Scottish Chapters had formed a locally autonomous Grand body. At the time I affiliated, there was some bitterness between the two Constitutions, and inter-visitation was banned.

The Royal Arch story in New South Wales has been, in my view, a sorry one, which is still continuing to some extent.

Royal Arch Chapters were over the early years chartered by the three British Constitutions and in 1889 there were eight English Chapters (attached to English Chapters), nine Scottish Chapters and one Irish Chapter. A District Grand Chapter of New South Wales under the English Grand Chapter was set up in 1863 and one under the Scottish Grand Chapter two years later.

When the United Grand Lodge of New South Wales was formed in 1888, all the English Craft Lodges joined it, leaving the Royal Arch Chapters attached to them unsupported.

The Grand Chapter of England advised them either to form themselves into a Grand Chapter or to return their charters. Before this, meetings of all active Royal Arch Masons in New South Wales had been held with a view to establishing a single Royal Arch Grand Chapter., This was at first agreed to, but the proposal fell through and the English Chapters set up their own Grand body – the Supreme Grand Chapter of New South Wales – in 1889. They were formally recognized by every Grand Chapter in the world except the Grand Chapter of Scotland, under which the Scottish Chapters continued to operate and so operate to this day.

The ban on inter-visitation by the New South Wales Constitution members was lifted in 1957 after a plebiscite of members was taken and in 1972 after a visit to Scotland by the First Grand Principal of the New South Wales Constitution, the Supreme Grand Chapter of Scotland recognized the New South Wales Grand Body. However, feelers thrown out by the New South Wales Grand Chapter met with a cold response and unity between the two bodies seems to be a long way off.

The Canberra Chapter under the Scottish Constitution had attached to it, in accordance with the laws of that Constitution, the Canberra Cryptic Council, which worked the Cryptic degrees of Royal Master, Select Master and Super Excellent Master. The legends of these degrees bridge the gap historically between the building of the first Temple of King Solomon and its destruction. One of these degrees contains a beautiful disquisition on 'Death' – one of the most impressive in Masonry. Membership of the Council was open to Royal Arch Masons of the New South Wales Constitution, and I joined the Council on 9 May 1953.

The St Andrew Chapter at Queanbeyan under the Scottish Constitution likewise had attached to it a Lodge and Council, which worked the Royal Ark Mariner's degree and the Red Cross of Babylon degree. The Ark Mariner's degree is a minor one based on the story of Noah and the ark. It seems to have little connexion with the other degrees in Masonry and I do not know how it came into existence. However, like all the degrees in Masonry, it inculcates some moral lessons.

The Red Cross of Babylon degree, or rather degrees, are part of the capitular series historically. They are based on the biblical story surrounding the release of the Jews from their captivity in Babylon and their return to Jerusalem to re-build their Temple. One of my friends has referred to these as 'museum piece' degrees. These degrees were not formally worked in the New South Wales Constitution but in 1972 the Supreme Grand Chapter of New South Wales assumed to itself the right to work these degrees in its Royal Arch Chapters, and that is now being done.

Being eligible, I joined the St Andrew Lodge and Council on 3 June 1953, but I did not attend many meetings of either the Council or the Cryptic Council.

Soon after we moved to live in Canberra in early 1956, moves commenced to start a new Craft Lodge in Canberra as a University Lodge. The moving spirit was V. Wor. Bro. T. M. (Tom) Owen, who was the District Grand Inspector of Workings for the District and the Registrar of the Canberra University College. I was invited to the early meetings and threw in my lot with the group interested in the new Lodge. In the result, the Grand Lodge would not permit the formation of a 'closed' University Lodge, so it was to be an 'open' Lodge, but in fact the petitioners were all graduates of a University or qualified accountants, though such a qualification cannot be, and has not been, required of candidates.

The Lodge, named Lodge Philosophy, No. 916, was consecrated on 23 November, 1957, by M. Wor. Bro. T. L. Warren, Grand Master. Owing to a hold-up at Darwin of the plane bringing us back from an overseas trip, I missed the ceremony of consecration.

The Foundation Master was that well-known Canberra Mason Wor. (later Rt. Wor.) Bro. E. A. (Ted)Lightly. I was appointed as Director of Ceremonies, a position I held for several years. The Secretary was Dr. Keith Sinclair, a teacher of French at the Australian National University, as it had then become. There were many persons holding senior public service positions among the foundation members, and the name of the Lodge was intended to indicate the leaning of its members towards learning of all kinds. The foundation Senior Warden was Bro.(later V.Wor. Bro.)V.J.W.(Vic) Skermer, appointed Auditor General of the Commonwealth soon afterwards, who succeeded Ted Lightly as Worshipful Master.

Soon after my affiliation with the Australia Chapter of Royal Arch Masons, I started to go through the senior chairs of the Chapter and on 20 September 1957, I was installed as First Principal of the Chapter.

I had also been progressing through the chairs of the Canberra Rose Croix Chapter and was enthroned as the Most Wise Sovereign of that Chapter on 8 March 1958. During my term in the chair, we had our first visit from a Supreme Council delegation from England in the persons of Sir Thomas Lumley Lumley-Smith, Lieutenant Grand Commander; General J. B. Dalison, Grand Director of Ceremonies; and Sir Donald Macgill, Bart., Grand Secretary General. They were accompanied by their wives. I informed the British High Commissioner of their arrival, and they were invited to lunch at Government House by the Governor-General, Lord Slim, and Lady Slim. My wife and I were also invited, together with Mr J. H. Starling, C.M.G., O.B.E., a former Official Secretary to the Governor-General and Secretary to the Prime Minister's Department, and a few others. We held a combined District meeting to welcome the delegation, when the 18th degree was worked by representatives of the various Chapters in the District.

Now, at the age of 54 years began my period of greatest activity in Masonry.

I had recently been informed by Charles Roach that, a few years before, V. Ill. Kt. Harold Watch had approached him to start the Order of Constantine in Canberra, but he had not felt able to do so. We discussed the matter, and agreed to move together to bring it about.

'The Masonic and Military Order of the Red Cross of Constantine and the Appendant Orders of the Holy Sepulchre and of St John the Evangelist', to give it its full title, is a Christian Order the origin of which is 'wrapt in the mists of obscurity.' There is, however, no connexion between the medieval military order and the Masonic one. The first degree is based on the conversion of the Roman Emperor Constantine to Christianity in the 4th century, and the appendant degrees are built round the Christian story and set out to give the third degree a Christian significance. The degrees are said to have been established in 1865 by Robert Wentworth Little, a junior clerk in the office of the United Grand Lodge of England, though it is possible that it was in the process of formation much earlier. A Grand Council to control the Order was set up in that same year and the Order quickly grew. Progress was slow in England after 1900, but in 1970 there were eight Conclaves of the Order in New South Wales; five Conclaves in Victoria; and 21 Conclaves in Queensland and New Guinea. The Order is administered by the 'Grand Imperial Conclave' headed by a 'Grand Sovereign' and a 'Grand Viceroy', with a 'Grand Recorder' as the executive officers. The name of the Order and of its ruling body have been changed from time to time. The earliest Australian Conclaves were established at Melbourne and Bendigo respectively in 1884.

Charles Roach and I obtained promises of support from four Canberra Masons and on 27 June 1959, four of us attended, by arrangement, the Morning Star Conclave and were initiated into the Order, taking all the degrees at the one session. The potential founders had agreed that Charles Roach would be the Foundation Sovereign and that I would be the Foundation Viceroy. At another meeting of the Morning Star Conclave in September, Charles Roach and I were both consecrated as Eminent Viceroys and Charles was enthroned as a Sovereign.

Charles and I being thus qualified, the formation of the Canberra Conclave proceeded, and it was consecrated on 26 March 1960, as No. 217 under the English Constitution, with Charles Roach as Sovereign and myself as Viceroy. On 13 May 1961, I was enthroned as M. P. Sovereign of the Conclave.

New South Wales forms a Division of this Order, under an Intendant-General assisted by a Divisional Conclave. I was made Divisional Chamberlain in 1962, Almoner in 1963, Junior General in 1964, Senior General in 1965, and Deputy Intendant-General in August 1967, a post held for two years. I received the Grand rank of Past Grand Sub-Almoner (P.G.Sub-Almoner) in 1964 and that of Past Grand Orator (P.G.Orator) in 1967.

A number of Conclaves were warranted in New South Wales by the Grand Conclave of Scotland and soon after the establishment of the Canberra Conclave No. 217, the St Columba Conclave under the Scottish Constitution was founded in Canberra. A Scottish District Grand Conclave was set up in New South Wales in 1957.

In the Mark degree, the Canberra Mark Lodge formed part of District No. 16, comprising Canberra, Moss Vale and Goulburn. The District Grand Inspector of Workings for the District, V. Wor. Bro. George Harris of Goulburn, died in the middle of his term of office, and I was appointed in October 1959, to fill the office for the balance of the term, approximately one year.

While the establishment of the Order of Constantine was going on in Canberra, I formed the idea of bringing the Royal Ark Mariner's degree of the New South Wales Constitution to Canberra. With this end in view, I arranged with the members of the Sydney Lodge of Royal Ark Mariners for me to affiliate with the Lodge, which I was able to do by virtue of my membership of St Andrew Lodge and Council. This I did on 24 November, 1959, and by arrangement the rank of Honorary Commander was conferred on me by that Lodge, the chair degree being worked on me on 23 February 1960.

Further necessary arrangements having been made, the Canberra Lodge of Royal Ark Mariners No 100 (attached to the Canberra Mark Lodge) was Constituted and Consecrated by M Wor. Bro. Frank Henry, the Grand Master of the Mark Lodge, on 25 June 1960, with myself as Foundation Wor. Commander. There were seven petitioners.

Administratively, these Lodges come under the Ark Mariners Council which is part of the Grand Mark Lodge. Lately there have been proposals to enable Mark Lodges to work the degree on all members without the necessity to start a separate Lodge, but this has not affected the Canberra Lodge. Mark Grand rank carries through to the Ark Mariner Lodges.

Another Masonic project with which I was closely concerned at this time was the formation of a Conclave of the Order of the Secret Monitor in Canberra.

This project was initiated by Rt. Wor. Bro Stan Dobbie of Sydney, the Grand Guide, who came to Canberra to hold meetings with brethren interested.

The Order is a quasi-Masonic Order established in London in 1887 by the formation of a Conclave. The degree had derived from the United States, where the signs had been communicated in a free and easy association from about the 1820s. A Grand Conclave was founded in 1887 and up to 1950 over 100 Conclaves had been warranted, including some in Australia.

The first Australian Conclave was established at Geelong, Victoria, in 1896, but it went into recess the next year and was not revived until 1925. The 'Friendship Conclave' was established at Ipswich, Queensland, as the second Australian Conclave in 1926, and about five Conclaves were in existence in Victoria, Queensland and Tasmania by 1938, when it was decided to set up District Grand Conclaves of Northern Australia (north of the Queensland border) and Southern Australia (south of that border.) A warrant for a Canberra Conclave No. 931 was issued on 20 December, 1926, but it never got off the ground. I do not know the history of this.

No Conclaves appear to have been inaugurated in New South Wales up to 1950 (none are mentioned in the history of that date) but at some time afterwards a Conclave was started at Sydney and this was followed by several others. By 1958 the Order in New South Wales had expanded sufficiently for it to make application for a Grand Conclave of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory. This was part of the 'autonomous movement' occurring in New South Wales about that time. The request was granted in 1958.

There are two degrees in the Order, based on the friendship between David and Jonathan, the son of Saul.

On 13 August, 1960, several brethren of Canberra, including myself, were inducted into the first degree of the Order and admitted to the second degree in the Lachlan Valley (Cowra) Conclave holding its meeting in Canberra. On 29 October, 1960, the Canberra Conclave No. 13 was consecrated in Canberra by Wor. Bro. Sidney Holland, the Grand Supreme Ruler Rt. Wor. Bro Stan Dobbie was the Foundation Supreme Ruler, and I was appointed as Counsellor and succeeded Rt. Wor. Bro. Dobbie as Supreme Ruler There were 26 Foundation Members.

A year later I was appointed as Grand Steward and the next year as Grand Registrar, a position I still hold. I was made a Past Grand Guide (P.G.G.) in 1966 and a Past Grand Counsellor (P.G.C.) in 1967

Another Craft Lodge was consecrated in Canberra on 18 December 1959. This was Lodge Caledonia of Canberra, sponsored by Lodge Gowrie. The Foundation Master was Wor. Bro. J. S.(John) Bland, and the Senior Warden was Bro. F. J. (Fred) Maclean, who succeeded as Master at the end of the first year. As from

1 October 1960 I was appointed as the District Grand Inspector of Workings for our District, No. 102, under the United Grand Lodge, which I esteemed a great honour. For purposes of administration in Craft Masonry, the State of New South Wales including the Australian Capital Territory, as a sovereign authority in Australian Masonry, is divided into over one hundred Districts, and a District Grand Inspector of Workings represents the Grand Master in each District. The term of office is two years and the D.G.I.W. is expected to attend all Installations of the Lodges in the District and to visit those Lodges at least once more each year. He attends the annual Masonic Ball and the Ladies' Nights of the various Lodges, as well as Masonic Church Services and other special functions.

When I held the office, there were ten Lodges in the District, eight in Canberra and one each in Queanbeyan and Yass. The number has since increased.

The District Grand Inspectors of Workings for our District during the association with Masonry in New South Wales were:

1950–1952	V.(later Rt.) Wor. Bro. J. F. Beazley
1952–1954	V. Wor. Bro. R. S. Shannon
1954–1956	V. Wor. Bro. J. L. Fawcett
1956–1958	V. (later Rt.) Wor. Bro. T.M Owen (later O.B.E.)
1958–1960	V. (later Rt.) Wor. Bro. E .A. Reynolds
1960–1962	V. (later Rt.) Wor. Bro. H. E. Renfree, O.B.E. (later C.B.E.)
1962–1964	V. (later Rt.) Wor. Bro. E. W. (later Sir Edwin) Hicks, C.B.E.)
1964–1966	V. (later Rt.) Wor. Bro. A.J.Barbour
1966–1968	V. Wor. Bro. N. Wright
1968–1970	V. Wor. Bro. J. M. Firth
1970–1972	V. Wor. Bro. V. J. W. Skermer, C.B.E.
1972–1974	V. Wor. Bro. J. O. Barrett

My next promotional Masonic project was to establish the Order of the Temple (the Knights Templar and the Knights of St John) in Canberra.

Although the Masonic Order has no historical or ritual connexion with the medieval military orders, it is symbolically based on them. The regalia worn is a copy of the off-duty clothing worn by the Knights, and the ritual has a military similarity. It is of course a Christian Order, and the ceremonies are quite impressive. The story of the Crusades and of the two Orders of Knights referred to can be read in any encyclopaedia. During our 1973 trip, we spent several days in Rhodes and inspected the Grand Master's Palace of the Order of the Knights of St John, an imposing edifice. We also saw the former hospital of these Knights, the care of the sick being one of the principal objectives of the Orders,

The Masonic Order of the Knights Templar is of considerable antiquity and its origins are somewhat obscure. It was one of the orders that sprang into being to bypass the Papal Bull of 1738 which proscribed Freemasonry.

An official pamphlet issued by the Order says:

By about 1740 a number of degrees with a Christian background appeared in France and gradually spread over Europe. The most important of these were a Masonic Templar Rite and a Rose Croix degree.

It is not known how, or precisely when, the Templar Malta Rite reached the British Isles, but traces of it are found in the 1760s and the wide variety of the ritual forms extant by the end of the century suggests that they came from different sources. In all cases the degrees appear to have been adopted by Royal Arch Chapters and, at first, worked by them under their existing warrants

'After the failure of an attempt by the Baldwin Encampment at Bristol to organize matters on a national basis, an approach was made to Thomas Dunckerley, who received sufficient support throughout the country to form a Grand Encampment. In 1791 he presided over the first 'Grand Conclave composed of seven independent Encampments'. It was some years before the movement received general acceptance.

During the first quarter of the 19th century, there was some opposition in the United Grand Lodge of England to the Order. The Grand Conclave ceased to function and the degree was conferred almost surreptitiously, but in 1843 the Grand Conclave meetings resumed and normal conditions were restored. The governing body in England was first called the Grand Conclave but after another change is now called the 'Great Priory of the United Religious and Military Orders of the Temple and of St, John of Jerusalem, Palestine, Rhodes and Malta in England and Wales and the Dominions and Dependencies of the British

Crown.' As already stated, the first Grand body was established in 1791, with Thomas Dunckerley as the Grand Master.

In 1839, a charter from Ireland authorized the Royal Fusiliers Lodge No. 33 (Irish Constitution) to form an encampment of Knights Templar at Hobart. This continued until 1850, when it became extinct.

The first existing Preceptory (as an Encampment came to be called) in Australia was established under the English Constitution at Melbourne in 1857 during the gold rushes. It was named the Pembroke Preceptory of Australasia, No. 51. A Provincial Priory was established in the same year. The Percy Preceptory No. 57, English Constitution, was consecrated in South Australia in 1858.

In 1866 the Encampment of St Elmo under the Irish Constitution was working in Sydney for some years but it is now defunct. It was not until 1904 that a Preceptory (Broken Hill, No. 180) was established in New South Wales under the English Constitution, followed in 1907 by the Preceptory of Sydney, No. 186.

A Scottish District Grand Prior was appointed in 1882, but after his death in 1895 there are no further records of the Scottish Constitution until 1908, when the Kintore Preceptory was started.

In 1907, a Provincial Priory of New South Wales under the English Constitution was set up, and a District Grand Priory of the State under the Scottish Constitution in 1921.

On 19 May, 1961, I became a member of the Order in the Sydney Preceptory No. 186 and was installed as a Knight of the Holy House of the Temple. On 1 July 1961 I travelled to Murrumburrah with Dr Keith Sinclair, who had taken the degrees in England on a recent sabbatical leave, and I went through the ceremony of the Knight of Malta in the Preceptory of St Paul of that town. Arrangements for a new Preceptory in Canberra were then well in hand and, on 12 August, 1921, the Preceptory of St John, Canberra, was consecrated by V. Em. Kt. B. Burdekin, G.C.T., the Provincial Prior, and I was installed as the Foundation Eminent Preceptor. Dr Keith Sinclair was the 1st Constable, and succeeded me in the chair.

The Marshal for the first few years was Arthur Richards of Murrumburrah, who used to travel to our meetings regularly from that town, which is 80 miles from Canberra.

While we were making arrangements to start the Preceptory, certain Scottish brethren in Canberra decided to form a Preceptory under the Scottish Constitution and their Preceptory (St Paul's) was consecrated just before ours.

In our Constitution, New South Wales (including the A.C.T.) is a 'Province' of the Order, and I was made Provincial Captain of the Guards in 1964; Standard Bearer (V.B.) in 1965; Almoner in 1966; Deputy Marshal in 1967 and Chancellor in 1968. The Great Priory rank of Past Grand Master's Banner Bearer (P.G.M.B.B.) was conferred on me in 1968.

Towards the end of 1961, I was invited by the Supreme Council to become Inspector General of the District of New South Wales, Southern, and Australian Capital Territory, comprising the Canberra, Bega, Bombala and Goulburn St Saviour Chapters. I accepted and was advanced to the 33rd degree, although at that time I was only 30°. I went through the ceremony of the degree in London in 1964, I was appointed on 12 October, 1961, and was installed at Canberra by V. Ill. Bro. M. F. Carrick on 10 March 1962.

The seventh Lodge to be formed in Canberra was consecrated on 19 March 1962, during my term as D.G.I.W. It was called Lodge Perfect, No. 951. The Foundation Master was Wor. Bro. A. J. (Arthur) Martin, and the foundation Senior Warden was Bro. Bob Brack.

On 14 November 1962, the rank of Past District Grand Inspector of Workings (P.D.G.I.W.) was conferred on me by the Supreme Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of New South Wales. The rank of Past Grand Joshua (Third Grand Principal) or P.G.J. was conferred on me on 5 March 1966.

The next year I applied to join the Sydney Council, No. 48, of the Allied Masonic Degrees, and took the five degrees of this Order in Sydney between 11 February 1963, and 4 May 1966. They are called St Lawrence the Martyr; Knight of Constantinople; Grand Tilers of Solomon; Red Cross of Babylon; and Grand High Priest., These were degrees which previously had no Masonic 'home' in the sense of a Grand body to control them, and eventually the Grand Council of the Allied Masonic Degrees of England and Wales, etc, took over, by agreement, all degrees which were not controlled by the other accepted Grand bodies of Masonry.\$

I had on 29 June, 1961, affiliated with the Perram Council No. 49 of Royal and Select Masters under the Grand Council of England, but did not attend the meetings, hoping that a Council could be started in Canberra later, as it was.

During 1963, I had also become a member of the New South Wales Tabernacle No. 16 of the Order of the Holy Royal Arch Knight Templar Priests, about which more later.

When my wife and I were on our world tour in 1964, I attended the Masonic cocktail parties on the SS. *Orcades* and *Oriana* respectively, and as the senior Mason on board on both occasions, was appointed President. On the *Oriana* returning from Europe via America, there were a number of American Masons, and they were all of 32° status, that degree under their system being in automatic progression from the Craft.

In 1963 and 1964 there occurred events that, in my opinion, were most unfortunate for the welfare of Masonry in New South Wales: I speak of the breakaway of a number of brethren from the Scottish Constitution of the Order of Constantine and of the Ancient and Accepted Rite.

Since 1961 the District Grand Conclave for New South Wales of the Order of Constantine had been asking formally that the Grand Imperial Conclave in Edinburgh should grant autonomy to the brethren in New South Wales. This was refused and on 1 March 1963, the District Grand Conclave purported to set itself up as an autonomous sovereign body of the Order for the State. Some Conclaves went over wholly to the new movement and in other Conclaves a part of the members went over. This caused great confusion and considerable bitterness in the Scottish Conclaves.

The new body was not recognized by the Grand bodies of the Order in either Scotland or England, and a ban on the irregular body was imposed affecting all members of the Order in Australia. The ban was extended by the Supreme Council to members of the Ancient and Accepted Rite as well. In the following year, several Scottish Rose Croix Chapters set up their own 'Australian' Supreme Council 33° and a number of Scottish brethren of that Order joined them.

A very small number of brethren owing allegiance to the English Grand body also joined up with the new body, which in its turn was treated as irregular by all the Supreme Councils which were in amity with Scotland.

Because of the disturbance caused by these moves, the Grand Commander of the Supreme Council in England, Major R. L. Loyd, O.B.E. (who was also head of the Order of Constantine in England) and the Grand Secretary General, Sir Donald Makgill, Bt., came to Australia and visited all areas to clarify the position and to consolidate the English Chapters. In fact the move had little appreciable effect on the English Chapters in Australia.

However, the Supreme Council set up a 'Supreme Council Committee' of six members representative of all States for the purpose of securing better co-ordination and more effective development of the Rite in Australia.

As a result of the recommendations of the Supreme Council Committee, the Supreme Council of England decided to set up an Australian Branch Council with certain limited powers with respect to Australian Chapters. It was decided that Canberra would be the appropriate place for the headquarters of this Australian body, and I was asked to become the Branch Secretary General, which I agreed to do.

It was decided to hold an inaugural ceremony at Canberra on 8 November 1969, and the organization of the function was left to me with the assistance of Canberra brethren. The Grand Captain General, Sir Ralph Hone, 33°, and the Grand Secretary General, Sir Donald Makgill, Bt, 33°, came out from England to conduct the ceremony, which was held at the Albert Hall. At the ceremony, there were over 400 brethren present from all over Australia, some of whom had travelled more than 2,000 miles each way in order to be present, and over 150 of their ladies came to Canberra with them and were entertained by the local ladies at a theatre party. It was necessary to have two separate banquets of 200 each to cater for the large crowd. Twenty Inspectors General of the English Constitution were present, as well as a number from the Scottish Constitution. All present voted it to be one of the great Masonic occasions of their lives.

The first members of the Branch Council were:

- M. Ill. Bro. J. A. Ellis, C.B.E., 33° (WA), Branch Commander
- M. Ill. Bro. M. F. Carrick, 33° (NSW)
- M. Ill. Bro. C. L. Hughes-Hallett, 33°, (NSW) Branch Treasurer-General
- M. Ill. Bro. O. R. Turner, M.B.E., 33° (SA)
- M. Ill. Bro. H.E. Renfree C.B.E., 33° (ACT) Branch Secretary General
- M. Ill. Bro. the Hon. B H. Matthews, 33° (Qld)
- M. Ill. Bro. A.S. Horton, 33°, (Tas)
- M. Ill. Bro. K. A. McLaughlin, 33° (Vic)

The Branch Council meets twice a year in a different capital city each time and appears to be operating successfully.

Not long before this Inauguration, we had a semi-official visit from the present Sovereign Grand Commander, Sir Eric Studd. He visited several places in Australia, including Canberra, and I entertained him at my home to meet senior brethren of my District.

During 1968 I had the rank of Past Deputy Grand Master conferred on me by the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons, and the rank of Past Junior Grand Warden was conferred on me by the United Grand Lodge of New South Wales in 1969.

The next new Masonic body to be established in Canberra was a Council of the English Constitution Royal and Select Masters (the Cryptic degrees already discussed) I had taken the degrees with the Scottish Cryptic Council in Canberra and had affiliated with the Perram Council in Sydney of the English Constitution.

I had not been able to qualify as a Thrice Illustrious Master in this Order, but another Canberra Mason, Arthur Pratley, had. He took the necessary steps to organize a Council in Canberra, and the Australia Council, No. 101, was consecrated at Canberra by R. Ill. Comp. F. J. D. Edmonds, Deputy District Grand Master, on 15 November 1969. Ill. Comp. Arthur Pratley was the Foundation Thrice Illustrious Master and I was the Principal Conductor of the Works. As the Deputy Master, Comp Fred Osmond died within the first year, I succeeded Arthur Pratley as Thrice Illustrious Master on 21 November 1970.

At about this time, negotiations were proceeding with the Grand Council in England to agree to the establishment of an autonomous Grand Council in New South Wales, where there were 22 Councils. Approval for this was granted and a new Grand Council for New South Wales was inaugurated on 7 November 1972. The Grand Master, Dr. A. S. Hollins, O.B.E., accompanied by Dr. Colenso Jones, came from England to conduct the ceremony.

Some Scottish brethren set about starting a Provincial Grand Lodge of the Royal Order of Scotland and it was consecrated in 1969. So far as I am aware no English Constitution brethren were invited to become foundation members, but afterwards some of us arranged to be invited to become members, and I was advanced and promoted in the two degrees of the Order on 21 February 1970.

Like the history of many other Masonic Orders, the history of this Order is somewhat obscure. It seems to have been fathered in England between 1725 and 1741 and was probably another of those Christian Masonic Orders set up to by-pass the Papal Bull of 1738. It is accepted that the birthplace of the Order was London, and in 1741 there was a Provincial Grand Lodge in London. But the Order became extinct there in 1751. A charter had been given to one William Mitchell, a Scotsman, to establish the Order in the Netherlands in 1750. He returned to Scotland three years later and erected a Chapter of the Order at Edinburgh in 1766, which became the Grand Lodge of the Order in 1767. By a fiction, King Robert Bruce was regarded as the first Grand Master. The 'King of Scotland' is the traditional head of the Order, but he (she) is not in fact a member, a vacant chair being left for him at all meetings. The head of the Order is the Deputy Grand Master and Governor.

The Order first prospered in Edinburgh and then declined, but it was revived in 1839. Chapters were warranted in various British colonies and other places in the succeeding years. The first one in Australia was at Sydney in 1939, followed by one in Melbourne in 1945, Perth in 1952 and Brisbane in 1953. The Order is unique in having only one governing body for the whole world, and the Grand Lodge must always meet in Scotland. The Provincial Grand Master of the Lodge set up in Canberra was Rt. Wor. Bro. D. C. Hutchinson-Smith.

Two degrees are worked in this Order – the 'Harodim' and the 'Rosy Cross'. The former is conferred in a 'Chapter' and the latter in a 'Lodge', though both are the same body. The ritual is in curious old Border verse, and much of it is in the form of catechisms. There are some matters in the ritual similar to that in other Orders, but which came first it is impossible to say. Each may have influenced the other.

The last Order which I have joined, and the second last which is available to me in Australia, is the 'Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia', a quasi-Masonic body. It admits none but Master Masons and is not to be confused with the philosophic Rosicrucian body known as 'A.M.O.R.C.'. The Order is a philosophic one and ideally there is a philosophic lecture each meeting. There are nine 'grades' divided into three 'Orders'. Progress through the first five grades is automatic, subject, to certain time bars; thereafter there is a chair grade and some Grand Lodge type grades.

There are two Constitutions operating and these have shared Australia between them. One is English and the other Scottish, but the rituals are identical and the grades can be taken in either Constitution. I joined the Demiurgus College (founded in 1886) in Melbourne on 28 October 1970, and took the first and fourth

grades there. I later joined the Aurora Australis College (Scottish Constitution) in Sydney , taking the second and third grades there.

This College suffered a set-back some years ago when a number of brethren broke away and set up an 'In Terra Australia' body in Sydney (not recognized by the other two Societies) They have also set up a College in Canberra.

The most recent new Masonic body to be established in Canberra was the Order of the Holy Royal Arch Knight Templar Priests, or Order of Holy Wisdom.

This is a Christian Order with headquarters in Newcastle-on-Tyne in England, being governed by a 'Grand College of the British Commonwealth of Nations and their Dependencies. The qualification for the degree is to be a Past Master of the Graft and a Knight Templar (involving of course being also a Royal Arch Mason.) The ritual is highly religious and much of it consists of readings from the Bible. The ceremonies revolve around seven pillars of wisdom. Although the Order is comparatively modern, its ceremonies seem to have a base in some workings of the 18th century.

The New South Wales Tabernacle, the first in the State, was only founded in 1951, and there are only a few Tabernacles in Australia. I had joined the New South Wales Tabernacle in 1963.

Arthur Thomas, an enthusiastic Sydney Mason, and a Past High Priest, was transferred to Canberra a few years ago, and set about obtaining a warrant for a Tabernacle of the Order at Canberra. He was successful, and the Canberra Tabernacle No. 43 was consecrated by V. Ill. Kt, H. G. Stalker at Canberra on 4 March 1972.

Arthur Thomas was the Foundation High Priest, and I was the Seventh Pillar. Owing to my absence overseas in 1973, I could not succeed Arthur Thomas as High Priest but expect to do so in 1974.

During 1972, the Supreme Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons decided to work the Red Cross of Babylon degrees. By arrangement with the Supreme Grand Chapter of Queensland, which works the whole series of the capitular degrees, the degree was conferred on a number of members in Sydney during the year, I had already taken the degree in a Scottish Lodge and Council. The Supreme Grand Chapter then got up a team to work the degree, and they visited Canberra on 21 July, 1972, and worked the degree on several Canberra and visiting brethren and then worked the degree of Most Excellent Chief (the chair degree) on all Past Principals present, including myself.

The 50th Anniversary of Lodge Canberra was held at the Lyneham High School on 2 March 1973, when the Grand Master attended and addressed a large gathering of brethren.

We had a visit from the Grand Sovereign of the Order of Constantine, M. Ill. Kt. Brigadier C. B. S. Morley, to Sydney and other cities and a combined meeting was held at Sydney on 9 November 1973. He was accompanied by V. Ill. Kt. Dr. L. C. Colenso-Jones, Grand Marshal.

Since the consecration of Lodge Perfect, four more Lodges have been consecrated in our District, Lodge Ethos, No. 963 , sponsored by Lodge Caledonia of Canberra, was consecrated on 29 February 1964, with Wor. Bro. Max Robinson as Foundation Master and Bro. Norm Snedden as Senior Warden.

Lodge Commercial of Australia, No. 969, sponsored by Lodge Queanbeyan St Andrew and meeting at Queanbeyan, was consecrated on 17 March 1967, with Wor. Bro. J. H. W. (Harry) Shoobert as Foundation Master and Bro. J. W. Sawyers as Senior Warden.

Lodge Campbell No 972, a 'Services' Lodge sponsored by Lodge Canberra, was consecrated on 24 May 1969, with V. Wor. Bro. E. A. Reynolds as Foundation Master and Bro R. F. Creighton as Senior Warden.

Lodge Woden Valley. No. 974, sponsored by Lodge Ethos, was consecrated on 16 October 1971, with Wor. Bro. Tom Amos as Foundation Master and Bro K. P. R. Carey as Senior Warden.

During the 1960s there was a noticeable falling off in membership of Freemasons' Lodges and much anxious thought was given to the causes. No one reason seems to have accounted for the position, which is part of the changed attitudes and values in the community generally. I believe the downturn has now stopped and that the Order is on a level keel. Masonry has always gone in cycles, and I am confident that such a worthwhile institution will continue to exercise its influence in the community for many decades to come.

My own approach to Masonry can be well summed up in the following extract from an address by a Past Grand Master of North Carolina:

A man is known by what he believes in and lives by; and he lives by, in large part, what he believes in. If we believe in that which is good, more likely we will live accordingly. As Masons, we know what we believe in; we don't always live by them. But in just believing and living by them part of the time, we are better than if we did not believe and never lived by them.