

# The Genesis of Freemasonry

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Apr 2012

Note: the below text has been reformatted in this present transcription in an attempt to reduce the line breaks occasioned by footnotes. Likewise, the text has been reduced from 490 to 108 pages, without the loss of any of the text.

An Account of the Rise and Development of Freemasonry In Its Operative, Accepted, and Early Speculative Phases  
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MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY PRESS  
1947

Published by the University of Manchester at The University Press  
(H. M. McKechnie, M.A., Secretary), 8-10 Wright Street, Manchester, 15

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## PREFACE

WE make no apology for adding yet another book to the vast mass of masonic literature; but we should like to offer two explanations. In the first place, whereas it has been customary to think of masonic history as something entirely apart from ordinary history, and as calling for, and justifying, special treatment, we think of it as a branch of social history, as the study of a particular social institution and of the ideas underlying that institution, to be investigated and written in exactly the same way as the history of other social institutions. In the second place, it is now some sixty years since Gould's History of Freemasonry made its appearance, and more than thirty since Begemann's volumes on early English, Irish and Scottish masonry were published in Germany. The ensuing years have seen not only much new material brought to light, and old material examined from new angles, but have revealed the existence of various unsolved problems, mostly concerning the practices prevailing among freemasons at different periods, which were formerly regarded as outside the scope of masonic history. We feel, therefore, that, as frequently happens in other branches of history, the time has come to endeavour to re-write the history of freemasonry in its earlier phases. We realise that such re-writing cannot be definitive in character, but can see no reason why serious students of masonry should not have available, in one volume of reasonable size, a continuous and connected account of the rise and development of freemasonry, in place of the sectional studies at present scattered over a large number of separate publications.

Taking our Short History of Freemasonry to 1730, published in 1940, as a basis, we have greatly amplified it, made some necessary corrections, and provided detailed references. We have paved the way for this fuller approach to the subject by editing in 1943 and 1945, in conjunction with our colleague, Douglas Hamer, two volumes of documents [V] otherwise not easily available, The Early Masonic Catechisms and Early Masonic Pamphlets, thus doing away with the need for an appendix of illustrative documents. As there can be no question of printing a complete bibliography, we prefer to print none, and to allow the numerous references in text and footnotes to serve instead. We do, however, append a bibliographical note on masonic bibliographies and on collections of masonic documents.

Some of the information incorporated in this volume was originally published in papers or articles contributed by us to Ars Quatuor Coronatorum, Economic History, the Economic History Review, the Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects, the Transactions of the Anglesey Antiquarian Society and Miscellanea Latomorum, and we have to thank the editors of these publications for allowing us to make such use as we desired of those papers and articles.

We desire to record a deep obligation to our colleague Douglas Hamer, Lecturer in English Literature, for valuable advice and criticism on numerous points, and especially in connection with the legends of the Craft and the Enter'd Prentices Song. Without his present help and past collaboration many parts of this book, and especially Chapter IV, would have been very much poorer.

We desire also to thank our colleague A. G. Pool for reading the proofs and Mr. H. M. McKechnie, Secretary of the University Press, for his continued advice and assistance.

D. K.  
G. P. J.

THE UNIVERSITY, SHEFFIELD October 1946

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## CHAPTER I

### THE SCOPE AND METHOD OF MASONIC HISTORY Schools of Masonic History

IN the course of time the scope of masonic history has undergone great changes. So far as we know, the first attempts to write masonic history were made in the fourteenth century, and resulted in the accounts of the Craft which, in the Regius Poem, the Cooke MS., and in other versions of the MS. Constitutions of Masonry, (1) were passed on to freemasons of later times. The motives underlying these early versions of the history of freemasonry can only be conjectured. The purpose may have been to provide the masons with something resembling the charters, or records of privileges, possessed by craft guilds at that time. Or possibly some clergyman, or other relatively learned person connected with the building industry, out of interest in the mason's craft and a desire to show how ancient and honourable it was, may have compiled its history. The results, whatever the motive, cannot be taken very seriously today; but the compilers probably did their best according to the standards of their time, basing their accounts mainly upon scriptural and such other received authorities as were directly or indirectly known to them. In these accounts masonry was treated as equivalent to **geometry**, one of the seven liberal arts, and as a consequence Euclid was a leading character in the story. The narratives bring the history of masonry down to the reign of Athelstan (925-40) and must, we believe, be regarded as myths.

1 We refer to all masonic manuscripts by their conventional masonic names, the origin of which we discuss in our paper, "The Nomenclature of Masonic MSS.", A.Q.C., liv (1941). The MS. Constitutions of Masonry form the subject of Chapter IV of this book. [1]

In 1721, if we accept his own account, Grand Lodge ordered the Rev. James Anderson to 'digest' the old 'Gothic' Constitutions in a new and better method, (1) and he accordingly revised, elaborated and brought up to date the legendary matter of the MS. Constitutions of Masonry. 'Anderson may be presumed to have had much better opportunities to write masonic history than his fourteenth-century predecessors, but his performance, viewed in relation to those opportunities, is poorer than that of the despised medieval compilers. His anachronisms, e.g., in making Nebuchadnezzar 'Grand MasterMason', and the Emperor Augustus 'Grand-Master of the Lodge at Rome', (2) are as absurd as anything in the MS. Constitutions of Masonry. The effect of the Renaissance is evident in Anderson's preference for the Palladian style in architecture, but he did not apparently bring much classical learning to bear on his subject, and as a humanist he does not shine in comparison, for instance, with the anonymous author of *A Defence of*

Masonry, 1730. (3) Despite his contempt for the 'Gothic' Constitutions, he is himself very uncritical, and his picture of the development of building and architecture is a strange mixture of fact and fiction. It is certainly not a history of freemasonry in the sense of describing the organisation prevailing from time to time among freemasons. Although written in 1722, and published in 1723, it does not even mention the establishment of Grand Lodge in 1717, though it does imply the existence of Grand Lodge by referring in

1 Constitutions of 1738, 113. The New Book of the Constitutions of the Antient and Honourable Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons ... By James .Anderson, D.D. London ... 1738 is the second edition of the Book of Constitutions. It is reproduced in facsimile in Q.C.A., vii (1890), with introduction by W. J. Hughan. It is commonly known as Anderson's Constitutions of 1738.

2 The Constitutions of the Free-Masons ... London ... 1723, 16, 2 5. The editor's name is not on the title page, but among the names appended to the Approbation (pp. 73-ϕ) appears against Lodge XVII: "James Anderson, A.M. The Author of this Book. Master." This is the first edition of the Book of Constitutions; it was reproduced in facsimile by Quaritch in 1923, with an introduction by Lionel Vibert. It is commonly known as Anderson's Constitutions of 1723.

3 E.M.C., 160. [2]

one very lengthy sentence(1) to "Our Present Worthy Grand-Master ... John Duke of Montague" [G.M. 1721-2]. On the other hand, it deals with events as recent as 1721, such as the laying of the foundation stone of the Church of St. Martin's in the Fields.

Even in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the so-called "history" of masonry embodied in the MS. Constitutions of Masonry and subsequently in Anderson's Constitutions of 1723, had its critics. Dr. Robert Plot, the antiquary, in his Natural History of Staffordshire, published in 1686, stigmatised the history of masonry, as contained in a version of the MS. Constitutions, as false and incoherent; (2) the Briscoe pamphlet of 1726 (3) The Free-Masons Accusation and Defence, 1726,(4) An Ode to the Grand Khaibar, 1726,(5) and a letter of 'A. Z.' in The Daily Journal of 5 September 1730,(6) poked fun at contemporary versions of masonic history and ridiculed the idea of any connection between modern freemasonry and King Solomon. The critics at that period, however, were greatly in the minority, and Anderson's version of masonic history was accepted by the premier Grand Lodge and incorporated in all the eighteenthcentury editions of its Book of Constitutions. It was followed closely by William Preston (1742-1818) in his Illustrations of Masonry, which ran through seventeen editions between 1772 and 1861, some of the later ones being edited by the Rev. George Oliver (1782-1867), another disciple of Anderson. At a subsequent date, these writers were described as belonging to the imaginative or mythical school of masonic historians. It was against such writers as these and some of their opponents that Henry Hallam, more than a century ago, directed part of his well-known gibe that "the curious subject of freemasonry" had been treated "only by panegyrist or calumniators, both equally mendacious".

1 We quote the sentence (Constitutions of 1723, 47-8) as a specimen of Anderson's involved and verbose style:

And now the Freeborn BRITISH NATIONS, disintangled 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 was wisely propagated, and the Royal Art duly cultivated, and the Cement of the Brotherhood preserv'd; so that the whole Body resembles a well built Arch; several Noblemen and Gentlemen of the best Rank, with Clergymen and learned Scholars of most Professions and Denominations, having frankly join'd and submitted to take the Charges, and to wear the Badges of a Free and Accepted Mason, under our present worthy Grand-Master, the most noble PRINCE John Duke Of MONTAGUE.

2 E.M.P., 33.

3 The Secret History of the Free-Masons ... London: Printed for Sam Briscoe ...[1724], commonly known as the Briscoe pamphlet. E.M.P., 120.

4 E.M.P., 169-70.

5 Ibid., 191.

6 Ibid., 233. [3]

The pioneer of a new and more scientific study of the subject was a German doctor, George Moss (1787-1854), whose *Geschichte der Freimaurerei in England, Irland und Schottland* was published in 1847. The work of another German masonic student, J. G. Findel (1828-1905), is much better known in England than that of Moss, because an English translation of Findel's *History of Freemasonry*, 1861, was published in 1865. In the course of the next decade or two, A. F. A. Woodford (1821-87), R. F. Gould (1836-1915), W. J. Hughan (1841-1911) in England, D. Murray Lyon (1819-1903) in Scotland, Albert G. Mackey (1807-81) in America, and William Begemann (1843-1914) in Germany were working along similar lines. These writers are generally regarded as leaders of the so-called authentic or verified school, named in contrast with the former mythical or imaginative school. The two schools, however, are not as antithetical as is sometimes implied. Actually, the imaginative school did not consist of writers utterly careless as to their facts; nor ought the verification of facts, which is characteristic of the authentic school, to be considered sufficient in itself, and as excluding all need of imagination. Imagination as a substitute for facts is useless; as a guide to facts it may be invaluable.

Unfortunately, the proper function of the imagination in the writing of history is not always understood by masonic students. Even today there are still some writers who, whilst claiming to submit themselves to the ordinary canons of historical research by taking no fact [4] for granted until proved, appear to have a secret hankering after the old imaginative treatment of masonic history. The earlier history of practically all institutions of the last thousand years or so is more or less shrouded in uncertainty. This is true, for example, of the history of central and local government, of land tenure, and of the gild system. No one can reasonably expect a detailed or continuous treatment of the evolution of some particular institution in its earlier phases. Historians realise the lacunae and seek to fill them by searching for new facts. In masonic history there are many gaps and obscurities, not only in medieval times, but in relatively modern times, such as the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, for which record material might well be found, if only diligent search were made. Instead, however, of seeking new facts to help to fill the gaps, some present-day masonic writers draw upon their imaginations to paint a full picture of the development of freemasonry, of which only the bare outlines have a

factual basis. These writers may best be described as belonging to a neo-imaginative school. It was probably such writers that Mr. John Saltmarsh had in mind when, as recently as 1937, he described masonic history as "a department of history which is not only obscure and highly controversial, but by ill luck the happiest of all hunting grounds for the light-headed, the fanciful, the altogether unscholarly and the lunatic fringe of the British Museum Reading Room".(1)

One weakness of the members of all these different schools is that they seldom, if ever, clearly define the subject-matter of their studies; the reader is left to form his own opinion as to what any particular author has in mind by the term 'masonry' or 'freemasonry'. And there can be little or no question that different writers have not always the same thing in mind, and that this, partly at least, accounts for the very conflicting views held by masonic students concerning the rise and development of freemasonry. If the very common method of defining a subject by reference to its principal function or functions is applied to freemasonry, then it would almost necessarily appear to follow that a definition will be adopted which is not universally true, i.e., one which does not apply at all periods and in all places, because in the course of time, and in the course of transmission from one country to another, the main motifs of freemasonry have changed.

1 Ec. H. R., Nov. 1937, P. 103. [5]

#### THE MOTIFS OF FREEMASONRY

In the early eighteenth century, 'conviviality' appears to have been a prominent characteristic of the lodges; there were many convivial societies at that period in this country, all inclined to convert the means of innocent refreshment into intemperance and excess. In the opinion of some Masonic students, e.g., G. W. Speth, first secretary of the Quatuor Coronati Lodge, and a very sound writer, freemasons' lodges were probably not very different from the generality of contemporary convivial societies.(1) In 1722, freemasons had the doubtful honor of a special inclusion in an English version of a French book, *The Praise of Drunkenness*,(2) in which the fifteenth chapter treats "Of Free Masons and other learned Men, that used to get drunk". There is some reason for thinking that the translator editor was a freemason, which suggests that drunkenness was regarded as but a venial sin. Francis Drake, the York antiquary, was certainly a freemason when, as junior Grand Warden of the Grand Lodge of All England at York, he delivered a speech in 1726, in which he drew attention to "the pernicious custom of drinking too deep which we of our nation too much indulge", and added "I wish I could not say, that I have frequently observed it in our own Most Amicable Brotherhood".(3) Eighteenth century Masonic gatherings being associated with the drinking of many toasts, and no clear cut distinction between lodge ceremonies and after proceedings having as yet developed,(4) the convivial aspect of freemasonry probably continued very much to the fore until the end of the century or even later.

1 A.Q.C., vii, 173.

2 E.M.P., 108.

3 Ibid., 200 1.

4 C. H. Poole, "Masonic Song and Verse of the Eighteenth Century", A.Q.C., xl, 7 18, and G. Norman, "Notes on the Working of a Lodge about 1760", Maw. Tranr., xxvi, 27 32. [6]

Though Francis Drake drew attention to the excessive consumption of alcohol among freemasons, he also, like his contemporary, Edward Oakley, (1) another leading freemason of the 1720s, commended the giving of lectures in lodge, more particularly on architecture or **geometry**. So also a few years later did William Smith, editor of the first Pocket Companion and of *The Book M*. (2) Drake goes so far as to state that he is credibly informed that in most lodges in London and several other parts of the Kingdom, a lecture on some point of **geometry** or architecture is given at every meeting; (3) but according to William Smith such lectures were only occasional. This is confirmed by a Dutch official proclamation of 1735 relating to an English lodge of freemasons recently established at The Hague, which states that "it is in no way to be supposed that the study of architecture is the sole or principal object of their meetings". (4) According to Martin Clare, a prominent freemason of the 1730s, the principal motive for first entering into, and then propagating, the Craft is 'good conversation'. (5) The Address in which his observations are contained was translated into French and German, and would doubtless make a strong appeal to German masons, who always showed a special interest in the philosophical side of freemasonry.

During the second half of the eighteenth century much attention was directed to Masonic symbolism. Wellins Calcott, in his *Candid Disquisition of the Principles and Practices of... Free and Accepted Masons*, 1769, was probably the first writer to endeavor to explain the symbols of the Craft, a subject more fully discussed by William Hutchinson in his *Spirit of Masonry*, 1775. Hutchinson has been termed by Woodford s the father of Masonic symbolism.

1 See his Speech of 31 December 1728, E.M. P., 210.

2 See p. 138 below.

For facilities to consult R Pocket Companion for Free Masons (London, 1735) and *The Book M* (Newcastle upon Tyne, 1736) we are indebted to the Hallamshire College S.R.I.A. and the Provincial G.L. of Yorkshire W.R.

3 E.M.P., 207.

4 Ibid., 3336 See his Address of 11 December 1735, Ibid., 327.

5 Kenning's Cyclopaedia of Freemasonry, 323. [7]

Dr. Oliver (1) describes Hutchinson's book as the first efficient attempt to explain the true philosophy of masonry, there represented as a Christian institution which should be open only to those who believe in the doctrine of the Holy Trinity.(2) Though many of Hutchinson's views cannot be accepted, his work undoubtedly did much to elevate freemasonry and to direct attention to, and probably to extend the use of, Masonic symbolism, which, to judge by the surviving documents, played little or no part in operative masonry in the Middle Ages, or in Accepted Masonry in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Though the *Regius Poem* of circa 1390 is full of moral precepts, and the *Cooke MS.* of circa 1410 rather less so, in neither of these early manuscripts, nor in the later versions of the *MS. Constitutions of Masonry*, those peculiarly Masonic documents written about masons for masons, is there any sort of symbolism based on the mason's tools. Likewise, in the re arranged and greatly elaborated Masonic ritual which appears to have been associated with the first ten or twenty years following the establishment of Grand Lodge in 1717, only very slight traces of symbolism are to be found (3) So long as lodges were mainly convivial societies, or institutions for discussing

architecture and **geometry**, there could be little scope for symbolism. That would not arise until freemasonry had become primarily a 'system of morality.'

1 Preface to the 1843 edition of *The Spirit of Masonry*.

2 His views being what they were, and completely in conflict with the First Charge of all editions of the Book of Constitutions since it was first published in 1723, it is somewhat surprising to find that the book was issued with the official approbation of the Grand Master and Grand Officers of the year. Cf. pp. 150 1 below.

3 See E.M.C., *passim*, and pp. 134 5 below. [8]

Since the Middle Ages, the MS. Constitutions of Masonry had contained in the Articles and Points, or Charges General and Singular, a code of industrial and moral conduct. In so far as the accepted masons made use of versions of the MS. Constitutions in their ceremonies of admitting new members, as they almost certainly did, then presumably the Charges General and Singular were read or recited to candidates, although most of the precepts contained in the MS. Constitutions were inapplicable to men who were not working masons, or seeking to become such. As during the eighteenth century a new ritual of admission was gradually evolved by the 'accepted' or by the early speculative masons, largely out of the somewhat crude usages and phrases associated before the end of the seventeenth century with the giving of the Mason Word in Scotland (a subject discussed in Chapter X below), there was elaborated a new and wider moral code, which gradually came to be taught largely by means of symbols. At the same time, the old moral precepts, embodied in the MS. Constitutions of Masonry, were mainly eliminated from the ceremonies and, in part at least, transferred, with or without modification, to the Book of Constitutions, where they still appear under the heading "The Charges of a Free Mason". It was almost certainly not until the second half of the eighteenth century that freemasonry had become so modified in character that it could justly be defined as **a peculiar system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols**.

Of the motifs of freemasonry which have characterized the Craft at different periods, the only one apparently which has been associated with it for centuries, as far back, in fact, as the period when the earliest surviving versions of the MS. Constitutions of Masonry, the Regius and Cooke MSS. of circa 1400, were copied, is the inculcation of morality. The morality in question has never been in any sense a complete code of moral conduct, still less a religion, as being concerned with what is essential for salvation. In the course of generations, the moral precepts of freemasonry, and the relation of freemasonry to existing religions, have undergone very considerable changes. Consequently, the subject is capable of being treated historically, but, in our opinion, a student of the rise and development of freemasonry, working on the basis of the definition that freemasonry is a system of morality, is almost certain to go astray, because of confusion with the fuller and more usual definition, which states that the morality is illustrated by symbols. As already indicated, symbolism is a comparatively late introduction into the Craft. Symbolism, [9] *per se*, has undoubtedly had a very long history, but not, according to the surviving evidence, in connection with freemasonry. The mere fact that symbolism is of considerable antiquity, and that teachers at an early date made use of the mason's tools to inculcate moral lessons, is no evidence that masons themselves moralized upon their tools. A present day Masonic student who asserts that they did, is simply reading into sixteenth and seventeenth century masonry ideas which, at a later date, prevailed in the Craft. So far as we are aware, there is no evidence whatsoever that operative masons ever moralized upon their working tools, or that accepted or speculative masons did so prior to the eighteenth century.

#### DEFINITIONS OF FREEMASONRY

Were a writer who adopted the definition of freemasonry as a system of morality to adhere rigidly to his view, his study would consist mainly in tracing the changes in the moral truths inculcated and in the relation of freemasonry to existing religions. We touch upon some aspects of this subject in Chapter VIII, but it is only one relatively small problem in the rise and development of freemasonry. A much more comprehensive and universally true definition of the subject is called for, if an adequate picture of the genesis of the Craft is to be given.

It is partly over the question of the definition of freemasonry that a new school of Masonic historians, which is now emerging, differs from the older authentic school. Members of the authentic school concerned themselves almost exclusively with the development of organization among freemasons, an unduly narrow conception, in our opinion, of the scope of the subject. They may further be criticized for their premature attempt at finality. We are convinced that until much more evidence is available there can be no question of writing a definitive history of freemasonry, such as Begemann attempted. In reviewing his work in A.Q.C., liii, we pointed out (i) that large fields of knowledge concerning masonry are but slightly explored; (ii) that there is a possibility of new discoveries of important Masonic documents, such as the Edinburgh Register House [10] MS. and the Graham MS.; (iii) that opinions regarding the scope of the subject and the method of approach are apt to change. The evidence on most problems of Masonic history is incomplete, and consequently Masonic history is necessarily, in part at least, provisional in character. We endeavor, in the course of this volume, to formulate working hypotheses to relate the established facts, more especially regarding the origins and evolution of Masonic ceremonies, but we should be the first to admit and to stress that our conclusions are purely tentative, based on the evidence at present available.

The most satisfactory definition of freemasonry from the Masonic historian's point of view would appear to be the organization and practices which have from time to time prevailed among medieval working masons and their 'operative' and 'speculative' successors, from the earliest date from which such organization is traceable down to the present time. We have already drawn attention to some of the changes which have occurred in course of time in the ideas underlying freemasonry, but there remains to be emphasized the all important problem of continuity. In discussing the genesis of freemasonry, it is not sufficient to show that freemasons had an organization in the Middle Ages and that they enjoy an organization today; it is essential to be able to show that such medieval institution and the modern are indissolubly connected in historical development. In Europe in the Middle Ages and early modern times there was more than one organization of masons. Thus we find the corps de metiers and later the compagnonnages in France; a supposed company of mason-architects in Italy; the Steinmetzen in Germany and Austria; guilds in Flanders; lodges and incorporations in Scotland; 'assemblies' and later craft guilds and companies in England.

Of these various organizations, it is only the early Scottish and English ones which can be shown to have a definite connection with modern freemasonry, and much of this book is devoted to tracing that connection. Chapter III, in which the organization of masons in the Middle Ages is discussed, though primarily devoted to conditions in England and Scotland, contains brief accounts [11] of the

continental organizations, from some, if not all, of which Masonic students have from time to time sought to derive modern freemasonry, though in each case the evidence of continuity is lacking.

A further problem connected with the scope of Masonic history is the exact meaning to be attached to the word 'freemason'. In older records the terms commonly used were the Latin words *cementarius* and *lathomus*, (1) or occasionally *lapicida*, (2) and the Norman French word *masoun*. (3) *Cementarius* was the word in almost universal use in the thirteenth and earlier centuries, and in frequent use at a later date. *Latomus* is found in the London municipal records as early as 1281, (4) but was most widely used in the fifteenth century. *Masoun*, in the form *mazon*, occurs as early as the twelfth century, (5) but was perhaps used most frequently in the fourteenth. In the York Minster Masons' ordinances of 1370, (6) which were written in English, the word used is "masonn" [? msoun]. The first occurrence known to us of the word 'freemason' is in the City of London Letter Book H., under date of 9 August 1376, (7) when the Common Council was elected from the mysteries instead of from the wards: an entry showing Thos. Wrek and John Lesnes as "fre masons" is struck out and replaced by another showing Wrek, Lesnes and two others as "masons". From this time onwards the word 'freemason' occurs in various documents, (8) though never as frequently as 'mason'. In the two earliest versions of the MS. Constitutions of Masonry, the Regius and Cooke MSS. of circa 1400, the word used is always 'mason', the term 'freemason' not occurring at all. At Norwich in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, twelve freemen were admitted under the description "freemason", eleven under the description "roughmason", and 135 under the des-

1 M.M., 82.

2 Bateson, Records of Leicester, ii, 158.

3 M.M., 82.

4 Cal. Letter Book B., 9.

5 Pipe Roll, 1165 6.

6 Raine, 181.

7 See photographic reproduction, A.Q.C., li (1938), following p. 136.

8 See W. J. Williams, "The Use of the word 'Freemason' before 1717", A.Q.C., xlviii (1935). [12]

cription "mason". (1) Of thirty two sixteenth century building accounts which we have examined, twenty contain the word 'mason' and twelve the word 'freemason'. (2)

The words 'mason' and 'freemason' appear to have been largely interchangeable. Thus in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries we find the same men, e.g., John Marwe of Norwich, (3) John Croxton of London, (4) and Gabriel Coldham of London, (5) sometimes described as 'mason' and sometimes as 'freemason'. It may further be noted that the London organization of the trade is, in its own muniments, called a company sometimes of masons and sometimes of freemasons. (6) Similar, though later, associations at Newcastle, Norwich, Lincoln, Kendal, Ludlow, Canterbury and Exeter were officially known as companies of masons; those at Oxford, Durham, Gateshead, Alnwick and Bristol were called companies of freemasons. (7) In some cases, however, the word 'mason' was used in a wider sense than 'freemason' to include all stoneworkers, (8) whereas the term 'freemason' in early building documents would appear to be contrasted with 'roughmason', or with 'layer' (itself commonly equivalent to roughmason), or with 'hardhewer' (concerned with the preparation of the hardstone of Kent). (9) In sixteenth century building accounts 'freemason' signifies hewer or setter of freestone, (10) a usage which in our opinion explains the adjective free in 'freemason'.

1 J. L'Estrange, Calendar of Freemen of Norwich.

2 See our XVI C.M.

3 R. Howlett, "Fabric Roll of Norwich Guildhall 1410 11", *Norf. Arch.*, xv, 176; G. W. Daynes, "A Masonic Contract of A.D. 1432", A.Q.C., xxxv (1922) 37.

4 Cal. Letter Book K., 250, 257, 276, 314.

5 XVI C.M., 199.

6 See W. J. Williams, "Masons and the City of London", A.Q.C., xlv (1932), *passim*.

7 M.M., 229 33; *Misc. Lat.*, xix, 129.

8 XYI C.M., 198.

9 M.M., 85.

10 XVI C.M., 199. [13]

In this matter we follow Wyatt Papworth, the well known architectural writer, Dr. G. G. Coulton and Prof. Hamilton Thompson, two distinguished scholars, and Dr. W. Begemann, the German philologist and Masonic historian, in believing that the freemason, like the marbler who worked in marble and the alabasterer who worked in alabaster, was so called as a rule from the material in which he worked, namely, freestone. Freestone (1) is any finegrained sandstone or limestone that can be freely worked in any direction and sawn with a toothed saw, (2) as, for example, the tractable limestones found in a belt stretching from Dorset to the Yorkshire coast. This was the stone par excellence for carving and undercutting; and the freemason was one who carried out the finer work possible only in freestone. It may be significant that in Scotland, where there is little or none of it, (3) 'freemason', as a trade name, does not appear to have been current.

This explanation of 'freemason' is strengthened by the actual occurrence of the term 'freestone mason'. In Latin we find *sculptores lapidum liberorum* mentioned in London in 1212, (4) and a *magister lathomus liberarum petrarum* at Oxford (5) in 1391. The Anglo French equivalent, *mestre mason de franche peer*, occurs in the Statute of Laborers of 1351. In English, 'freestone masons' alternates with 'freemasons' in the early seventeenth century Wadham College building accounts; (6) and both terms were used also in the Christ's College, Cambridge, accounts of the early eighteenth century, to describe the famous contractor, Robert Grumbold. (7) The term 'freestone mason' also occurs in Norwich church accounts of 1638 and 1652. (8) Secondly as corroborative evidence of a trade appellation derived from the material used, we may cite 'hardhewer', designating a worker in the hard and stubborn stone of Kent. Thirdly, it may be pointed out that 'freemason' has its opposite in 'roughmason' or 'rowmason', used to describe layers (even bricklayers) who, when they shaped stone, did so only roughly with axe or scappling hammer.

1 Translation of Old French *franche pore*, where the adjective means "of excellent quality" (O.E.D.).

2 J. Watson, *British and Foreign Building Stones*, 9.

- 3 SM., 73 4.  
 4 London Assize of Wages, 1212.  
 5 H. E. Salter, *Med. Zrch. of the Univ. of Oxford*, 22.  
 6 *Arch. J.*, viii, 390.  
 7 Willis and Clark, *passim*.  
 8 Records of the church of St. Peter, Mancroft, Norwich, *Norf. Antiq. Misc.*, ii, pt. ii, quoted by Daynes, A.Q.G., xliii, 223. [14]

Mention may also be made of other explanations of the adjective free which have been advanced by various writers: it may indicate either status in a municipality or company (as in freeman of London) or freedom from feudal serfdom. The adjective may occasionally have been used in one or other of these senses. It should be noted, however, that a great number of masons could hardly be counted free of a company. Also, though the Fourth Article of the Regius and Cooke MSS. of circa 1400 laid it down that an apprentice should not be of bond blood, and though the migratory character of the mason's trade meant by the fourteenth century that he could hardly be bound to the soil of the manor, yet his calling was in earlier times not incompatible with servile status. (1)

Finally, if 'freemason' in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries commonly referred to an operative mason engaged in hewing or setting freestone, nevertheless a new meaning of the term was creeping in during the seventeenth century. Elias Ashmole, the antiquary, wrote in 1646 that he had been made a "Free Mason", and in 1682 that he had attended a lodge at Masons' Hall, London, when certain persons, later referred to as new accepted masons, were admitted into the "Fellowship of Free Masons". (2) In 1686, Dr. Robert Plot, the antiquary, wrote about the "Society of Free Masons", a fellow of which, he informs us, was called an "accepted mason". (3) In 1686, John Aubrey, another antiquary, wrote about the "Fraternity of Free Masons", whom he describes also as "adopted masons" and "accepted masons". (4) In 1688, Randle Holme III, the Chester genealogist and antiquary, described himself as a member of that "Society called Free Masons". (5)

An anti Masonic leaflet of 1698, warning people against "those called Freed Masons", was probably directed against men who were not operative masons. (6)

- 1 M.M., 108.  
 2 E.M.P., 40 1.  
 3 *Ibid.*, 31, 32.  
 4 *Bodl. Aubrey MS. 2*, pt. ii, fo. 73, reproduced in facsimile in A.Q.C., xi, facing page 10.  
 5 E.M.P., 34  
 6 *Ibid.*, 35; and A.Q.C., iv, 152. [15]

#### THE METHODS OF MASONIC HISTORY

We differ from members of the authentic school regarding not only the scope of Masonic history but also the method of approach. Present day students are disposed to employ both analytical and comparative methods, whereas the authentic school was mainly descriptive in its methods, and inclined to regard Masonic developments in each country in isolation. W. J. Songhurst's approach to the problem of the origin of the Royal Arch, (1) and R. J. Meekren's study of the Aitchison's Haven Lodge minutes, with a view to proving the early existence of two degrees, (2) may be quoted as good examples of the analytical method. The attempts we have made to trace the connection between Scottish operative and English accepted masonry, (3) and to co ordinate English and Irish experience in order to throw light on Masonic development in the later seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries (4) are illustrations of the comparative method.

In this volume we make use of both the analytical and the comparative methods.

- 1 A.Q.C., xxxii, pp. 34 5. See also p. 292 below.  
 2 A.Q.C., liii, p. 147. See also p. 95 n. below.  
 3 A.Q.C., ii, 211; iv, 296 7, 316 18. See also Chap. X below.  
 4 A.Q.C., iv, 5 7, 13 15. See also Chap. XI below.  
 [16]

## CHAPTER II

### THE MEDIEVAL BUILDING INDUSTRY The Building Arts in Early England

EARLY medieval building in this country differed greatly from that of today. The main materials were wood and clay; the artisans engaged were consequently carpenters and daubers, not masons and bricklayers. The Britons and Scots were apparently unfamiliar with stone building involving the use of squared stone and mortar.' This art was probably introduced by the Church, and at first presumably required the importation of craftsmen from the Continent. Certainly Benedict Biscop, soon after the founding of Wearmouth Abbey in 674, sought in Gaul for craftsmen to build a stone church in the Roman style.(2) St. Wilfred, too, who died in 709, is said by a twelfth century chronicler to have brought masons from Rome to build his church.(3) Other instances of stone building in pre Norman England are recorded thus Bede (4) (675 735) mentions stone churches at Lastingham and Lincoln; according to the Old English Chronicle, Towcester was provided with a stone wall in 921 ; William of Malmesbury,(5) writing two centuries after the event, and without quoting his authority, states that Athelstan (925 40) fortified Exeter with towers and a wall of squared stone. Probably once the arts of building and carving in stone had been introduced from abroad, some knowledge of them was acquired by native artisans, but the likelihood is that early building work was performed not by specialized masons, but by men whose main occupation was connected with agriculture, stone working in many cases still being a by occupation of farming at a much later date (see page 117 below).

- 1 See Plummer, *Baedae Opera Historica*, II, for 2.  
 2 Bede, *Historia Abbatum*, 5 (Plummer, *op. cit.*, I, 368).

3 William of Malmesbury, *De Gestis Pontificum*, Rolls Series, 255.

4 Plummer, *op. cit.*, I, 176, 117.

5 *Gesta Regum*, I, 148 (17)

To judge by the fewness of the records and the paucity of surviving remains, the number of English stone workers was very small until after the Norman Conquest, as even in France, architecturally much more advanced than this country, the substitution of stone for wood only began in the late tenth century.<sup>(1)</sup> It was doubtless Norman influence and example which led to the development of stone building in this country, the main structures at first being abbeys, priories, cathedrals and castles. The rebuilding of Westminster Abbey by Edward the Confessor (1042-66), and the erection of the Tower in the reigns of William I (1066-87) and William Rufus (1087-1100) imply the presence in London of masons in considerable numbers in the second half of the eleventh century. It was not, however, until the last quarter of the twelfth century that London Bridge was first built of stone.<sup>(2)</sup> In Scotland, the use of stone for building came even later; the motte, or earliest type of castle, was a timber stronghold,<sup>(3)</sup> and these structures did not disappear until the fifteenth century. The earliest record of stone being used for the walls of Stirling Castle relates to 1288.<sup>(4)</sup> Both north and south of the Tweed the use of stone and brick in domestic architecture was a still later development, these materials coming into use gradually for chimneys and floors, but it was not until the seventeenth century that they came to be commonly used in house building.

#### THE ORGANISATION OF BUILDING OPERATIONS

The fact that the erection of abbeys, priories, cathedrals and castles provided most of the work for masons in this country in the later Middle Ages implies that the Church and the Crown were directly or indirectly the principal employers of masons. Although the Crown was mainly interested in the erection and repair of castles for military purposes, the English kings also incurred vast expenditure on ecclesiastical works, such as Westminster Abbey, Vale Royal Abbey and Eton College. The nobility and landed gentry erected castles or houses for residential and, in some cases, for defensive purposes, but in England, though not in Scotland, the Crown was generally strong enough to prevent unlicensed private castle building. The municipalities were responsible for a certain amount of stone building, especially town walls, guildhalls and bridges.

1 V. Mortet et P. Deschamps, *Recueil de Textes relatifs à l'Histoire de l'Architecture*, p. xxxiii.

2 C. Welch, *History of the Tower Bridge*, 29 seq.

3 W. Mackay Mackenzie, *The Medieval Castle in Scotland*, 31.

4 *Ibid.*, 38. [18]

The prevalence of large building enterprises had a very important influence on the organization of the industry. Whereas the typical medieval artisan was a 'little master' who owned his material, worked it up with the assistance of an apprentice or journeyman, and disposed of the finished article, the medieval mason, like the modern workman, was generally a wage earner. Commonly it was an agent of the party for whom the building was being erected who employed the mason; less frequently it was a contractor; occasionally it was an independent small scale employer who specialized in supplying rough dressed stone, ashlar, mouldings, or partly worked images and figures. This type of employer is sometimes described as a mason shopkeeper.<sup>(1)</sup>

1 See L.M., 19 seq. [19]

**The Direct Labor System** - To judge by the surviving records, larger buildings in this country in the Middle Ages were generally executed by what we should now call the "direct labor" system, by which the employer appointed one or more officials, such as a master mason and a clerk of the works, who directed a complicated sequence of operations. These included the digging of stone and sand, their transport by land and water, the hewing and setting of stone, the making and laying of bricks, the felling and sawing of timber, and the various works of joiners, carvers, tilers, smiths, plumbers and glaziers. This type of integration had certainly developed by the thirteenth century, and probably existed at an earlier date, though for want of surviving records this cannot be proved. Vale Royal Abbey in 1278-80, Beaumaris and Caernarvon Castles in the early fourteenth century, and Eton College in the fifteenth century, are examples of buildings erected by this method on a large scale. At Adderbury Chancel in the early fifteenth and at Kirby Muxloe Castle in the late fifteenth century the organization was similar but on a smaller scale. <sup>(1)</sup> In connection with certain large structures, where maintenance, repairs, or additions were frequently involved, there commonly existed a more or less permanent works department, employing a regular staff of masons and other artisans, which was expanded or contracted according to requirements. Most cathedrals, an abbey such as that at Westminster, as well as important bridges such as London Bridge and Rochester Bridge, had works departments of this kind associated with them.<sup>(2)</sup>

**The Clerk of the Works** - At all the larger medieval building operations, whether cathedrals, monasteries or castles, a dual system of management was established, the financial administration being separate from the technical. The former, in royal building works, was the concern of one of the king's clerks, or of an Exchequer official, known as clerk, or keeper, or in exceptional cases surveyor of the works. Two men who at one period occupied such positions, but are famous for other reasons, were William of Wykeham,<sup>(3)</sup> the founder of New College and of Winchester College, and Geoffrey Chaucer.<sup>(4)</sup> On monastic or cathedral buildings the care of the fabric was commonly the business of the sacrist, though in special cases some other monastic or chapter official might be appointed keeper (*custos*). In the fifteenth century, the title "master of the works" was sometimes borne by the chief financial official. Thus Roger Keyes, sometime Warden of All Souls, was master of the works at Eton College in 1448-50,<sup>(5)</sup>

1 See Y.R.; B. and C.; Eton; T. F. Hobson, *Adderbury Rectoria* (Oxford Record Society); A. H. Thompson, "Building Accounts of Kirby Muxloe Castle, 1480-1484", *Leics. Arch. Soc. Trans.*, xi.

2 See Raine; F. R. Chapman, *8acrist Rolls of Ely*; G. G. Scott, *Gleanings from Westminster Abbey*; R. B. Rackham, "Nave of Westminster", *Proc. Br. 14cad.*, igog io; L.B.; M. J. Becker, *Rochester Bridge, 1387-1856*.

3 M.M., 24.

4 *Ibid.*, 23 n., 92 n.

5 Eton, 75. [20]



and the same office at Windsor Castle in 1473 was held by the Bishop of Salisbury.(1) At the Abbey of St. Albans, as early as 1429 30, the obedientary responsible for repairs within and without the church was described as "master of the works".(2) In Scotland, in the sixteenth century and earlier, the Crown, the Church, and municipalities appointed "masters of work" who discharged financial and administrative functions.(3)

**The Master Mason** - On the technical side, the chief official was the master mason. On very large works in the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the master mason was sometimes called "master of the works". Walter of Hereford (fl.1278 1315) bore that title at Vale Royal Abbey and later at Caernarvon Castle.(4) and so did William Orchard at Magdalen College as late as 1479. (5) The same was the case at Aberdeen in 1484 when John Gray, mason, was received as Master of Work of St. Nicholas; it is recorded that he has taken upon him to be continually laboring and diligent ... and to do all care concerning the said work that accords to a master of work, both in laboring of his own person, in devising, and in supervising the masons and workmen under him.(6)

The surviving evidence enables us to draw a fairly detailed picture of this very important official. So far as we can tell, he commonly rose from the ranks. Richard Beke, master mason at Canterbury Cathedral from 1435 to 1458, worked at London Bridge as an ordinary mason from 1409 to 1417, and as Chief Bridge Mason from 1417 to 1435.(7)

Robert Stowell, appointed master mason at Westminster Abbey in 1471, had worked there as a mason in 1468 9.(8) Christopher Horner, master mason

1 W. St. J. Hope, Windsor Castle, I, 238.

2 M.M., 31 n.

3 S.M., 20 4.

4 Y.R., 6 7; B. and C., 8 9.

5 Willis and Clark, i, 410.

6 S.M., 23

7 L.B., 15 16, and Oswald, "Canterbury Cathedral", Burlington Mag., December 1939, 222.

8 Rackham, op. cit., 34. [21]

at York Minster from 1505 to 1523, worked on that fabric as an apprentice in the 1470s and as a mason in the 1490s.(1) The case of Richard Beke, who passed from lay to ecclesiastical work, and from one town to another, was by no means exceptional. Henry Yevele, employed by the Black Prince in the 1350s and by the Crown from 1360 onwards,(2) was later master mason at Westminster Abbey and, as recent investigations (3) show, was very possibly responsible for the design of the nave of Canterbury Cathedral in the 1390s. William Wynford, overseer of the masons at Windsor Castle in the 1360s, was some thirty years later master mason at the rebuilding of the nave of Winchester Cathedral. (4)

Among the duties enumerated in the terms of John Gray's appointment at Aberdeen in 1484 was "devising". Until recently it was often too easily assumed that bishops and other ecclesiastics, who did much to further certain building operations, were in some sense the architects of their churches or monastic houses. It is by now clear enough that, though some bishops and abbots may have delighted in architecture, the medieval architect has to be looked for among medieval masons.(5) In the Middle Ages, plans and designs do not appear to have played the same part as they do nowadays. In early building contracts or instructions, detailed directions concerning dimensions often appear to have taken the place of plans or 'plots'. In all cases of this type the presumption is that the master mason or the mason contractor, as the case might be, prepared some kind of working drawings, though very possibly they were not done on parchment or paper. It was doubtless for the purpose of drawing that tracing houses were provided at larger building operations. Thus we find references to a tracing house at Windsor Castle in 1350 and 1397, at Exeter Cathedral in 1374 5, and at Westminster Abbey in 1460 1. The inventory of the masons' lodge at York Minster in 1400 shows that

1 Knoop and Jones, A.Q.C., xlv, 234, and Raine, passim.

2 Yevele, 802, 804.

3 Oswald, loc. cit.

4 Yevele, 809.

5 A. Hamilton Thompson, "Mediaeval Building Documents", Trans. Somer. Arch. Soc. (1930), reprinted in Misc. Lat., xii. [22]

the equipment included two tracing boards; this not only implies drawing, but strongly suggests that it was masons who drew. In 1531 there was a tracing house at Westminster Palace, the accounts recording the payment of 8s. for "two pairs of screws for tracery rods provided for the master mason to draw with in his tracery house", a reference which leaves no doubt as to who did the drawing. Some early building contracts contain reference to plans, e.g., in 1381 Nicholas Typerton, mason, undertook to erect for John, Lord Cobham, part of the Church of St. Dunstan in Tower Street, London, according to the design (devyse) of Henry Yevele, the most prominent mason of his period. In 1395 two masons undertook to do certain work at Westminster Hall "according to a form and mould" made by advice of Master Henry Zeveley. In 1475 William Orchard, freemason, undertook to make a great window of seven lights in the West End of Magdalen College Chapel, Oxford, "according to the portraiture made by the said William".(1) The post of master mason was in some instances more or less a full time appointment. That was the case with William Hoton, master mason at York Minster from 1351 to 1368,(2) and with Richard Beke at Canterbury.(3) Even so, the terms of Hoton's appointment contemplated the possibility of his being employed elsewhere, and we know that Beke, on at least one occasion, did consultative work outside Canterbury.(4) In other instances, the post was definitely a part time appointment, such as that of William Wynford at Wells Cathedral in 1364: he was to receive a retaining fee of 40s. a year and a wage of sixpence a day when in Wells working on the fabric.(5) William Colchester held the post of master mason at Westminster Abbey and at York Minster simultaneously from 1407 to 1420.(6) Henry Yevele, his predecessor at Westminster

1 This paragraph is based on our paper, "The Decline of the Mason Architect in England", J.R.I.B.A., September 1937.

2 Raine, 166 7.

3 Hist. MSS. Com., 9th Report, 114.

4 L.B., 16.

5 Hist. MSS. Com., Wells MSS., i, 267.

6 Misc. Lat., xxii, 34 6. [23]

Abbey, was a pluralist on a much greater scale.(1) The surviving evidence shows that master masons were men of considerable standing, much more like architects than foremen masons; they were provided with new robes at Christmas and Whitsun; and, if King's master masons, they were members of the royal household, with the status of minor esquires. The services of William Wynford were recognized by placing his picture in the East Window of Winchester College Chapel which he had built.(2)

**The Contract System** - Smaller building jobs, and occasionally parts of larger ones, were not infrequently done by contract(3) The oldest form of contracting was task work (opus ad tascam), of which an instance occurred at Windsor Castle in 1165 6, and several at Westminster Abbey in 1253, and elsewhere about the same period. After the Black Death in 1349, task work of the contract variety (as distinct from piece work) appears to have become more common, which may perhaps be accounted for by the scarcity of labor and the need for finding more economical methods of working. Task work or "bargains" probably offered the working mason in the Middle Ages the best opportunity of rising from the ranks of the wage earners to a position of greater economic independence. If he were paid by small installments, as was commonly the case, the system would call for little or no capital on the part of the contractor, especially if he did not have to provide materials. In this respect medieval contracts varied considerably; it is possible to distinguish four types of contract according to what the contractor undertook to provide: (i) workmanship only; (ii) workmanship and stone, but not carriage; (iii) workmanship and carriage, but not stone; (iv) workmanship, stone and carriage. Medieval contracts also varied in respect of the method of payment, which might be either by the great (in grosso as it was called in the Middle Ages) or by measure. Work by the great meant a contract similar to that of the two freemasons, Symons and Wigge, who in 1598 for a sum of £3,400 undertook in four years to build the second court of St. John's College, Cambridge. A fourteenth century example of work by measure is provided by John Lewyn's contract, according to which he was to receive 100s. per perch at Bolton Castle, Wensleydale, plus a payment of So [50] marks.

1 Yevele, *passim*.

2 G. H. Moberley, *Life of William Wykeham*, 261 n.

3 This paragraph is based on our paper, "The Rise of the Mason Contractor", J.R.I.B.A., October 1936. [24]

In Scotland, the contract system appears to have been more widespread than in England. The erection of numerous small stone buildings over a wide area favored the growth of small master tradesmen employing one or two servants. Thus the system of independent craftsmen or 'little masters' appears to have flourished in Scotland in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but the surviving evidence suggests that these 'little masters' were not always contractors; in some cases they worked with their servants on a job as wage earners.(1) In England also there were contractors who one month might be carrying out a piece of work with the assistance of a number of journeymen, and who next month might themselves be working as masons on salaries or wages. In addition to this type of contractor, there were probably in the later Middle Ages, and certainly in early modern times, masons who either in addition to, or instead of, undertaking contracts, set up yards or workshops and had stoneworkers more or less regularly in their employment. In some cases these 'little masters' or mason shopkeepers sold stones of more or less standard sizes which they and their servants had dressed; in other cases, they undertook small contracts to erect a wall or repair a chimney; in yet others, they were primarily statuary and tombmakers who supplied carvings, effigies, or complete tombs, the last in many cases being elaborate structures involving much general masonry. In the seventeenth century, if not earlier, these sculptors and tombmakers often entered into general masonry contracts. Thus William Stanton, Edward Pearce, Jaspar Latham and Joshua Marshall were seventeenth century monumental masons or tombmakers who executed substantial masonry contracts in London

1 S.M., 9 14. [25]

after the Great Fire. A different type of 'little master' was the quarrymaster who in some cases not merely employed masons and supplied dressed stone, but undertook contracts for the erection of buildings. Thomas Crump of Maidstone in the fourteenth century, William Orchard of Oxford in the fifteenth, and four generations of the Strong family, originally of Little Barrington and Taynton, in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, are well known examples of quarrymasters acting as mason-contractors.(1)

#### CLASSES OF STONE WORKERS

Relatively few masons could hope to attain eminence as master masons, or to achieve success as mason contractors or as mason shopkeepers. The great majority could expect little or no reward beyond a daily wage. Although journeyman stoneworkers are described in medieval building documents by a good many different names, the masons, as distinct from quarriers, cowans, and hardhewers, appear to have fallen into two main classes:

(a) Hewers or freemasons dressed stone with mallet and chisel, or more roughly with a stone axe. The superior craftsmen belonging to this category were sometimes described as "carvers". Hewers or freemasons who had cut the freestone required to build up a rose window or other elaborate tracery, or who had prepared the arch stones for a vault, appear frequently to have set their own work. When engaged as "setters" (Positores) they sometimes received higher wages than when engaged on their ordinary work of dressing stone.

(b) Layers (cubatores) or roughmasons laid ashlar and "rockies", rough hewn with a scappling hammer, for the preparation of which they themselves were frequently responsible. In some cases they roughly dressed stone with an axe.

1 This paragraph is based on our papers, "The Rise of the Mason Contractor", J.R.I.B.A., October 1936, and "The English Medieval Quarry", *Ec. H. R.*, November 1938. [26]

Although the main work of hewers or freemasons was to dress stone, and the main work of layers or of roughmasons was to erect stonework, yet even where a considerable degree of specialization existed on big jobs, the former craftsmen did some setting or laying, and the latter did some preparing or dressing of stone. On smaller jobs, there was often little or no specialization. Thus at London Bridge in the fifteenth century the masons appear to have done all varieties of mason work. The same was true in Scotland in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.(1)

To judge by the tools used, the work done by "quarriers" appears to have been of three kinds: (i) uncovering stone, for which shovels, spades, mattocks and trowels were used; (ii) breaking and splitting stones by means of picks, wedges, crows and various types of hammer; (iii) rough hewing or dressing stone by means of scappling hammers and broaching axes.(2) Those quarriers who were competent to discharge this third function were obviously capable of doing work closely resembling, if not identical with, that done by roughmasons, and the dividing line between the higher type of quarrier and the lower type of mason must often have been very indeterminate. When in the same Caernarvon Castle building account of 1316 17 we find examples of hewers (cementarii) working in the quarry as cutters (taylatores) preparing "coynes et assler", of layers (cubatores) working in the quarry as scapplers (batrarii), and of a quarrier "digging and breaking stone, each stone in length two feet, height one foot, breadth one foot and a half", we feel that the boundaries between one stoneworking occupation and another were by no means rigid and that the conversion of a skilled quarrier, who worked with axe and hammer, into a roughmason, who also worked with axe and hammer, could not have been very uncommon in the days before guilds (if such ever existed in country districts) with their definite ideas of industrial demarcation.(3) Many examples, both English and Scottish, of masons working in quarries could be quoted .(4) In some cases, to judge by the existence of lodges at quarries, masons were engaged there solely in dressing stone; in other cases, more particularly in Scotland, masons in quarries were paid for winning as well as for dressing stone.

1 M.M., 83; L.B., passim; S.M., 30 1.

2 Quarry, 35 6.

3 M.M., 78.

4 Quarry, 33 4; S.M., 27 8. [27]

The exact functions discharged by the stone worker known in Scotland as a 'cowan' are not too clear. Jamieson's Scottish Dictionary defines 'cowan' as "one who builds dry walls, otherwise denominated a drydiker", and the O.E.D. gives the same meaning "one who builds dry walls". Such evidence as we have been able to collect from seventeenth century documents does not entirely support this definition. At Canongate in 1636 a cowan was permitted to do "any work with stone and clay alone, without lime"; at Glasgow in 1623 John Shedden was received and booked as a cowan and authorized "to work stone and mortar and to build mortar walls, but not above one ell in height, and without power to work or lay hewn work, or to build with sand and lime". The Schaw Statutes of 1598 and 1599 prohibited masons from working with cowans, which suggests a secondary and wider meaning of the word, which is given by both Jamieson and the O.E.D., viz., a man who does the work of a mason but has not been regularly apprenticed or bred to the trade.(1)

'Hardhewers' worked the hardstone of Kent, which they also sometimes set, in which case they were occasionally referred to as 'hardlayers'.(2) At Eton College in the 1440s three categories of mason were distinguished in the building accounts, viz., (a) ffr' masons, (b) harde hewers, (c) row masons; these categories, however, were not absolutely rigid, as two of the hardhewers became freemasons, and two other hardhewers worked as roughmasons and stonelayers.(3)

On the other hand, we have traced no case of a freemason or of a roughmason becoming a hardhewer.

1 S M., 28 30.

2 XVI C.M., 200.

3 Eton, passim. [28]

#### METHODS OF TRAINING MASONS

As suggested above, quarries were very important recruiting grounds for masons. In support of this proposition, we would quote two pieces of evidence. First, in those early building accounts which we have studied more closely, Vale Royal (1278 80), Caernarvon (1316 17 and 1319) and Beaumaris (1316 17, 1319 20 and 1330), we find various masons bearing names of places where building stones were quarried, e.g., Leckhampton, Mount Sorrel, Norton, Stoke, Ross, Dorset, Lenton, Hope (Bowdler), Denbigh. Second, of the 51 layers named in the Beaumaris and Caernarvon building accounts, we know that four had worked as quarriers and one as a "portehache" in a quarry, before they became layers. The heavy cost of transporting stone from quarry to building site was a strong reason why masons or potential masons should practice or learn the art of stone dressing in quarries, dressed stone being obviously less bulky to transport than rough hewn stone. Dressing stone in the quarry offered the further advantage that work spoilt by the masons or learners would involve no, transport charges at all.

A second method of recruiting masons was by promoting men who had served as servants or famuli to masons. Thus after William Warde had figured in the London Bridge accounts for some three years as famulus of the masons at 2s. a week (compared with their 3s. 9d.), we find the following entry on 1st July 1419:

Paid to William Warde, famulus of the said masons, because he works well as a sufficient mason, 3s. od.

The following week the entry runs "Williame Warde, mason, 3s. od.". It was not for another six years, however, that he received a mason's full wage, which in London at that date was 8d. a day.

In the third place, to judge by the advances in wages accorded to some low paid masons at Vale Royal Abbey during the period 1278 80, and by the appointment in 1359 of John of Evesham, mason, to give instruction in masonry to laborers at Hereford Cathedral, we think that there were young men who, without being apprenticed, were learners receiving a certain amount of instruction, and that, as they gained in experience and the quality of their work improved, they were rewarded with higher wages.

In the fourth place, a father might teach a son, an elder [29] brother might teach a younger brother, an uncle might teach a nephew, without any system of indentures.

Finally, apprenticeship might serve as a method of training masons, but the available evidence suggests that the number of masons' apprentices in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries was very small. In most early building accounts the word 'apprentice' or its equivalent does not occur. The earliest case we have traced is recorded in the Exeter Cathedral fabric rolls in 1382. As previously indicated, the great majority of masons at this period were journeymen with little or no security of tenure. Prior to the sixteenth

century, this type of journeyman does not appear to have had apprentices. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries such apprentices as there were appear to have been bound in one of three ways: (i) to master masons in charge of building operations; e.g., Stephen Lote, mason, disposer of the king's works at Westminster and the Tower, had two apprentices when he made his will in 1417; (ii) to a journeyman permanently in the service of Church or State; e.g., John Bell, who in 1488 held a life appointment as "special mason to the Prior and Chapter of Durham" was authorized to have an apprentice of his own; (iii) to a builder employer, such as an abbey, who could arrange for craftsmen to teach them. Thus several cases of monastic apprentices are recorded at the Cistercian Abbey of Cupar Angus towards the end of the fifteenth century. If the craft in its heyday in the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries had had to rely upon apprentices for its future supply of skilled journeymen, the stone building industry would never have expanded in the way in which it actually did. It was to the alternative methods of training masons that the craft at that period had mainly to look for its future supplies of skilled labor.

#### CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

The great majority of masons being wage earners, their probable earnings may next be considered. This raises three distinct problems: (1) the amount of the daily wage;

1 The paragraphs on the training of masons are based on our M.M., 160 8. [30]

(ii) the number of holidays observed, more especially holidays without pay; (iii) the length of the winter season during which building operations were suspended.

(i) In England from 1280 to 1350 the general level of masons' wages was 4d. a day; from 1350 to 1370 money wages were rising, as a result, no doubt, of the Black Death. From 1370 to the beginning of the sixteenth century, 6d. a day appears to have been the commonest wage outside London. This rise in money wages was greater than the rise in food prices. In some cases the wage was paid partly in food, a practice apparently commoner in Scotland than in England. In winter, when the working day was shorter, wage rates were reduced, the commonest reduction being one sixth in England. In Scotland, where there would be even less daylight in winter, the reduction was as much as 25 or 30 per cent. At York Minster in 1370, winter rates applied from Michaelmas to the first Sunday in Lent, when the hours were fixed as from daylight to dark, with an hour for dinner and fifteen minutes for "drinking" in the afternoon. The summer hours were from sunrise to thirty minutes before sunset, with an hour for dinner, half an hour for "sleeping", and half an hour for "drinking". At the Kirk of Our Lady, Dundee, in 1537 the summer hours were from 5 a.m. to 7 p.m., with half an hour for "disjune" at 8.30, one and a half hours for dinner at 11.30, and half an hour for "non shanks" at 4 p.m. In the season of the year when daylight hours were fewer, the masons were to start work as soon as they could see; between 1st November and 2nd February the working day was to be broken only by a spell of one and a half hours at mid day; during the rest of the year the masons were to enjoy the normal three breaks.(1)

1 Ibid., 236, 116 18; S.M., 40. [31]

(ii) Craftsmen engaged on medieval buildings, more especially those employed on ecclesiastical works, kept holiday on numerous saints' days and church festivals; but the extent to which these holidays were observed, and the practice of paying wages in respect of them, varied from one building operation to another. At Vale Royal Abbey, 27 were observed in 1279 and 22 in 1280; the number observed at the repair of Beaumaris Castle in 1319 20 was 20. Neither at Vale Royal nor at Beaumaris did the masons receive any wages in respect of feast days or holidays. It is not known how many feast days were observed by the masons at York Minster; but according to regulations made in 1352, if two feasts should fall in the same week the masons would work on neither and be paid for one; should three feasts occur in the same week, the masons would lose half a week's wage. A similar rule obtained at Westminster Abbey in 1253 and Exeter Cathedral in 1380. During the erection of Eton College the masons observed 38 holidays in 1444 5 and 43 in 1445 6 The freemasons were paid for all holidays except nine; the hardhewers were paid for five and the layers for three in the first year and four in the second. In Scotland, according to a statute of 1469, masons and wrights were to keep as holidays only those laid down by the Church as great and solemn festivals. According to the same statute they were to work on Saturdays and other vigils until 4 o'clock; the same was true at the Kirk of Our Lady in Dundee, 1537, except that work was to cease at 12 o'clock for Christmas, Easter, Whitsun and the Assumption of Our Lady. The York regulations of 1352 provided that work should stop at noon on the eves of feasts and on Saturdays. (1)

(iii) The close season in winter, during which building operations were stopped, was apparently fairly lengthy in the Middle Ages.

1 M.M., 118 20; S.M., 41 2. [32]

Building accounts frequently show the purchase of straw for covering the work in winter or for thatching the walls. The layers were more seriously affected than the hewers, because whereas frost would prevent all laying, only severe frost would interfere with hewing if it had been decided that the dressing of stone should continue during the winter in preparation for the resumption of active building operations in the spring. In some cases in winter, work was found for the layers as scapplers, but in other cases they were dismissed or suspended. Thus, at Rochester Castle in 1368 whilst the majority of the masons were paid for 252 working days, no layer was paid for more than 180 working days, the difference of 72 working days representing approximately three months during which presumably no laying was undertaken. At Kirby Muxloe Castle in 1481 the roughmasons or layers commenced work at the beginning of May and finished at the end of October. At Dunkeld Bridge in 1481 a mason's year was apparently treated as approximately equivalent to 22 weeks of full time employment.(1)

To convert a daily wage of q.d. or 6d. into annual earnings, allowance has to be made not only for reduced winter rates of pay, for numerous holidays without pay and for suspension of work in winter, but also very possibly for time lost on account of bad weather during the active building season. Where the wage was on a daily, and not on a weekly basis, the loss may quite well have fallen on the worker, though the surviving evidence is not very clear on the subject. Without going into details, however, we feel some doubt about the adequacy of masons' earnings to support wives and families even in the fifteenth century, and are quite clear that they were very inadequate in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, because of the great rise in prices resulting from the importation of silver from the New World. The solution of the difficulty appears to have been that many masons had agricultural holdings or other by occupations at which they themselves worked during slack periods in the building trade, and at which their womenfolk and

younger children, and very possibly their servants, worked at all times. In the twelfth century, masons, as also smiths and carpenters, on the estates of the Bishop of Durham held land in virtue of their calling, and this was common elsewhere. There is other evidence to suggest that farming was the most usual by occupation, but others which we have traced were hiring out horses and carts, shipowning, innkeeping, brewing and dealing in stone.(2) By occupations, whatever they were, had not merely to supplement masons' wages, but had presumably to provide maintenance for wives and families when husbands and fathers had jobs away from home, either voluntarily, or as a result of impressment.

1 M.M., 132; S.M., 35.

2 M.M., 99, 107. [33]

**Impressment** - The impressment of masons was only part of the much larger problem of purveyance and impressment in general, by which in the Middle Ages and early modern times goods were taken for the public service, horses and transport were requisitioned for royal use, artisans and laborers were forced to work in specified jobs, and in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries men were recruited for the army and navy. Three methods of operating the system can be distinguished. (i) The first was to issue orders to the sheriffs of particular counties instructing them to choose a stated number of masons and to send them to a particular building operation where they were needed. This method can be traced in use in connection with the erection of Welsh castles in the thirteenth century and, on a much larger scale, with works at Windsor Castle in the fourteenth. (ii) The second method was to issue a commission to the master mason, or to the clerk of the works, or to some other official, at some particular building operation, authorizing him to take masons either wherever they could be found, or in certain specified areas. To judge by the surviving records, this method appears to have been commoner than the first, and the great majority of the 356 orders and commissions of impressment which we have traced between 1344 and 1459 are of this character. (iii) The third method was to place the responsibility on the London Masons' Company.

Orders and commissions of impressment generally aimed at securing masons for some royal castle or other royal work where building was in progress. Occasionally, masons were taken to work in quarries. In some cases, the royal prerogative of impressment was exercised in favor of some ecclesiastical foundation in which the Crown was interested, such as Westminster Abbey or York Minster, or of other foundations for which the King was responsible, such as Eton College, King's College, Cambridge, and Trinity College, Cambridge. In other cases local authorities were granted powers of impressment for various purposes such as repairing the walls of Oxford and Newcastle upon [34] Tyne, building Rochester Bridge and erecting Norwich Guildhall. Very occasionally similar concessions can be traced in favor of great lords such as the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Earl of Rutland in 1396.(1)

The practice of impressment is also found in Scotland in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but apparently the system operated on a very much smaller scale than in England, unless it be that evidence of it is lost.(2) On the other hand, numerous Scottish building accounts show that messengers or overseers were paid their expenses "seeking masons". In some cases the expenses of masons coming from outside were repaid and in other cases their costs returning home in the autumn at the end of the building season.(3) Where masons for a building job were secured from a distance, some would appear to have been master craftsmen or 'little masters', accompanied by their servants and journeymen.(4) Thus little groups of masons may have moved from one job to another. The extent to which this can have happened must have depended, to some extent at least, upon the organization of masons in the Middle Ages, a subject discussed in the next chapter.

1 These two paragraphs are based on our paper, "The Impressment of Masons in the Middle Ages", Ec. H. R., November 1937.

2 S.M., 49 50.

3 Ibid., 48.

4 Ibid. 47. [35]

## CHAPTER III

### THE ORGANISATION OF MASONS IN THE MIDDLE AGES

#### Masonic Organisation in England And Scotland

NO very definite evidence pointing to early organization among masons in England and Scotland can be traced. On the contrary, the great diversity of wage rates which characterized the industry before the Black Death in 1349 suggests individual bargains, and consequently the absence of much, if any, strong organization. At Caernarvon Castle in 1304 there were 53 masons on the pay roll in receipt of 17 different rates of pay; in October 1316 there were 24 masons in receipt of 12 different rates of pay. At Vale Royal Abbey and at Windsor Castle the diversity was nearly as great: at the former in the summer of 1280, 51 masons were employed at 13 different rates; at the latter in 1344, 76 masons were employed at 13 different rates.(1) Nevertheless, we are satisfied that some organization among masons existed before the middle of the fourteenth century, and we discuss in connection with each type of organization examined below (a) the earliest date at which we have been able to trace its definite existence, and (b) the possibility, or even the probability, that it existed at an earlier date.

1 M.M., 109; Hope, Windsor Castle, i, 114. [36]

1. **Lodges** - The word 'lodge' (logia, 'lodge', 'loygge', 'luge', 'ludge') appears to have been used in England and Scotland in three different senses, which perhaps represent three stages of development.

(i) In both countries it was used to designate a masons' workshop, such as was usually erected in connection with all building operations of any size. The first mention of a lodge in England so far traced occurs in the Vale Royal Abbey building account of 1278, which shows that 45s. were paid in wages to carpenters for making lodges (logias) and dwelling houses (mansiones) for the masons and other workmen. Information is available also about the erection of masons' lodges or workshops at Catterick Bridge in 1421, Kirby Muxloe Castle in 1481 and Dunkeld Bridge in 1513. Instances of expenditure on repairs to lodges occur at Beaumaris Castle in 1330, at Westminster Abbey in 1413, and at Holyrood house in 1529 30 and 1535 6.(1) There can, however, be no doubt that lodges existed much earlier than 1278, for without them it is difficult to see how a church, abbey or castle of any size or pretension to ornament could have been erected. The lodge was, in fact, a workshop in which masons cut and dressed stone, but probably from a fairly early date it also served as a place where they could eat, drink and rest during the breaks permitted in the very

long medieval working day. That was certainly the case in the lodge at York Minster as early as 1370, and in the lodge at St. Giles, Edinburgh, in 1491. (2)

In so far as the lodge served as a kind of refectory and club, it is likely that questions affecting the masons' trade were discussed and grievances ventilated within its walls.

(ii) In both countries the word 'lodge' was sometimes used to denote the group of masons working together on some particular building operation of a more or less permanent character. Thus we have the lodge at York Minster whose by laws or ordinances of 1352, 1370 and 1408 (imposed in each case by the Dean and Chapter) have survived.(3) The "masons of the lodge" (lathami de la loygge) at Canterbury Cathedral in 1429 and subsequent years doubtless formed a recognized group, though unfortunately no regulations governing such group have been discovered.(4)

1 M.M., 56; S.M., 60.

2 Raine, 181; S.M., 61.

3 Raine, 171, 181, 198.

4 Register of the Prior of Christchurch, Canterbury, Bodl. Lib. Tanner MS., 165, fos. 132, 133, 143, 154, 157 [37]

The masons of the lodge at the Church of St. Nicholas, Aberdeen, appear to have been to some extent organized as early as 1483. At St. Giles, Edinburgh, a statute was made by the municipal authorities in 1491 laying down the conditions of employment of the master mason, his colleagues and servants. In a contract of 1537, in which the municipal authorities appointed George Boiss mason for life to the Church of Our Lady, Dundee, reference is made to "the auld use and consuetude of Our Lady Luge of Dundee", and there can be little doubt that these, as well as other conditions of the contract, were but written statements of old established customs governing the masons at that church.(1) It may well be that at York Minster, Canterbury Cathedral, St. Nicholas, Aberdeen, and St. Giles, Edinburgh, the masons' lodges or organizations were older than the respective dates 1352, 1429, 1481 and 1491 when record evidence of their existence can first be traced.

(iii) In Scotland the word 'lodge' was also used to describe an organized body of masons associated with a particular town or district. The word appears to be used in this sense in the Schaw Statutes of 1598 and 1599. In the latter, it is provided "that Edinburgh shall be in all time coming as of before the first and principal lodge in Scotland and that Kilwinning be the second as before". From the St. Clair Charters of 1601 and 1628 we know that there were similar 'territorial lodges' in St. Andrews, Haddington, Aitchison's Haven, Dunfermline, Dundee, Glasgow, Stirling and Ayr. The main functions of this type of lodge appear to have been to discharge certain official or semi official duties of a trade character, such as regulating the terms of apprenticeship, keeping records of the reception and entry of apprentices and the admission of fellow crafts, and assigning 'marks' to members of the lodge. Other rules concerned a master more particularly, such as not taking work over another master's head, not employing the apprentice or journeyman of another mason, and not employing cowans or causing his servants to work with them. The lodge also concerned itself with the settlement of disputes between masters and their servants. In addition, it collected funds, by way both of fees and fines, for pious uses and for the relief of distress among members, and indulged in a certain amount of feasting

1 S.M., 61 2. [38]

at the expense of candidates. Finally, it conferred the benefit of the Mason Word on qualified members.(1)

Since the Schaw Statutes of 1599 refer to the status of the lodges of Edinburgh and Kilwinning as of before, we may conclude that 'territorial lodges' were certainly older than 1599, but how much older there is no definite evidence to show. As these lodges appear to have derived their authority from the Warden General and Principal Master of Work to the Crown of Scotland, they were perhaps not older than that royal office. Though the best known holders of the office were doubtless William Schaw in the 1590s and Sir Anthony Alexander (of Falkland Statutes fame) in the 1630s, the office certainly existed at an earlier date; the first appointment that we have been able to trace was that of Sir James Hammyltoun in 1539. It is possible, therefore, that the 'territorial lodge' existed as early as the middle of the sixteenth century.(2)

**2. Incorporations** - These bodies existed in certain Scottish burghs for ruling and governing particular crafts, and furthering divine service among their members. They were established by what are known as seals of cause, which, in some cases at least, were rules and statutes made by the craftsmen and approved by the municipality. Where the masons belonged to an incorporation or privileged company under seal of cause, they were generally associated with the wrights. The principal incorporations of masons were those at Edinburgh, where masons and wrights obtained a seal of cause from the municipality in 1475; at Aberdeen, where a seal of cause was granted by the burgh to the coopers, wrights and masons in 1527 and ratified in 1541; and at Glasgow, where the organization dated from 1551, the wrights being separated from the masons in 1600. Other incorporations, mostly of somewhat later date, which included masons, were established at Canongate, Lanark, Ayr, Perth, Dundee and Dumfries.(3)

1 Ibid., 62 4.

2 Ibid., 54, 57.

3 This and the following paragraphs are based on Ibid., 51 2, 56, 64 8. [39]

Among the trade functions discharged by incorporations of masons were some very similar to those discharged by 'territorial lodges', e.g., the control of apprentices and servants, and the regulation of masters. In addition, the incorporations were also responsible for conducting periodic searches to see that the work done was "sufficient and good", or "loyally and truly done to all builders". The officers of the incorporations were also to examine, by an essay of craft, any person wishing to work at a trade, in order to ascertain if he was qualified. Further, in some cases at least, it was provided that no craftsman was to be allowed to work on his own account until he had been admitted a burgess and freeman. Thus an incorporation, like a craft guild, afforded some protection to the public, by seeing that work was properly done and that the craftsmen were properly qualified. On the other hand, to some extent at least, it protected the master tradesmen from the competition of masters who were not free of the particular burgh. We say "to some extent" advisedly, because by a Scottish Act of Parliament of 1540 anyone with buildings to erect was authorized to employ good craftsmen, freemen or others, because of the extortionate charges of craftsmen, especially in the burghs. There is little or no evidence to show how far the act, which was confirmed in 1607, was effective. Further, by the Falkland Statutes of 1636,

members of a privileged company, i.e., incorporation, and their servants might reside and work in any other company's bounds on payment of certain fees. The available evidence relating to Edinburgh and Glasgow in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries suggests that non freemen did work in those burghs from time to time, but that the mason burgesses endeavored to restrict, if not to prevent, the infringement of their monopoly of trade.

Information concerning the relationship between an incorporation of masons and a 'territorial lodge' of masons in the same burgh is not sufficient to permit of generalizations. At Edinburgh, the Incorporation seems to have left the bulk of the business affecting masons to the Lodge, the government of which appears to have been invested in the master masons who were members of the Incorporation. In the seventeenth century, the deacon, or chief officer of [40] the masons in the Incorporation, appears largely to have directed the Lodge, so that no clash between Incorporation and Lodge was very likely to occur. At Glasgow, on the other hand, the Incorporation appears to have kept a firmer hand over the Lodge and to have dealt with various matters which at Edinburgh were managed by the Lodge.

In England, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, trade companies or fellowships were set up and incorporated in various places.(1) They appear to have been organizations forced upon the various trades from above, schemes to facilitate municipal government at a time when Tudor monarchs were encouraging oligarchies and when, by the Statute of Apprentices of 1563, an attempt was being made to provide a national control of industry. These new organizations appear to have been established for political rather than for industrial purposes. In most, if not all, of these cases the masons were grouped in a company or fellowship with a variety of more or less associated trades. Except in the few cases of masons' companies pure and simple, able to trace their descent from former masons' craft guilds, these sixteenth and seventeenth century trade companies in England appear to have little or no interest for students of Masonic history. The problem of masons' craft guilds is discussed in the next section.

**3. Craft Guilds** - The expression 'craft guild' was the invention of nineteenth century economic historians to distinguish a particular type of medieval municipal organization, concerned with the industrial regulation of a particular trade or craft, from another medieval municipal organization, the merchant gild, concerned with the trade of a whole town. In medieval documents the organization in question is described as a fellowship or mystery, M.E. *mistere* = trade or craft, derived from O.F. *mestier* [Mod. F. *metier*]. The term has consequently nothing to do with secrets. In this volume we use the expression 'craft guild' in its technical sense.

1This paragraph is based on M.M., 232 3. [41]

Ever since the view came to prevail that speculative masonry is historically linked with the operative masonry of the Middle Ages, Masonic writers have devoted considerable space to the subject of masons' craft guilds. Their statements, however, are mostly based on false analogy with what happened in other trades, and not on first hand examination of the facts, which strongly suggest that there were few, if any, masons' craft guilds. Conder (1) is of opinion that the London Masons' Fellowship or Company was established in the early thirteenth century, at a time when London Bridge was being built, but produces no evidence whatsoever in support of his opinion. Gilbert Daynes,(2) referring to the London Regulations for the Trade of Masons, 1356, states that "prior to this date there must have been an organized guild of masons in London", for which statement, however, he too produces no evidence, contenting himself with a reference to Conder. Actually, not only is evidence lacking to prove that a masons' craft guild existed in London in the thirteenth or early fourteenth century, but, on the contrary, there is definite evidence to suggest that such a craft guild did not exist. The names of those elected and sworn in 1328 in divers mysteries of London, for the government and instruction of the same, have survived,(3) but no masons are included. In 1351, on the only occasion before 1376 when the Common Council was elected from the mysteries, instead of from the wards, the masons were unrepresented.(4) In 1356, the preamble to the Regulations for the Trade of Masons states that, unlike other trades, the masons had not been regulated in due manner by the government of the folks of the trade, which implies that there was no craft guild amongst London masons at that date. The first explicit reference to a permanent organization of masons in London does not occur until 1376, when four masons were elected to the Common Council to represent the mystery,(5) and the probability is that the guild was established at some date between 1356 and 1376.

Vibert(6) assumes that masons' craft guilds existed in other towns because in such places as Coventry, Chester, York and Newcastle masons participated in the performance of

1 Hole Craft, 56.

2 A.Q.C., xxxviii, 87.

3 Cal. Letter Book E., 278.

4 Cal. Letter Book F., 237.

5 Cal. Letter Book H., 43.

6 Freemasonry before the Existence of Grand Lodges, 26. [42]

miracle plays. This doubtless points to some kind of organization, but in our opinion not necessarily to a craft guild. The guild regulations of more than forty trades are preserved in the York Memorandum Book,(1) but there are no (2) regulations for the masons, nor are there any in the published records of Coventry. For Chester, the evidence appears to consist of late sixteenth or early seventeenth century transcripts of the actual plays.(3) At Newcastle the Masons' Company was incorporated in 1581 with certain craft powers and with certain 'social' duties, including the presentation of a Corpus Christi play. There is nothing to indicate an earlier organization of the masons, whereas the wallers, bricklayers and daubers claimed a charter granted in the reign of Henry VI, and the slaters an 'ordinary' dating from 1451.(4)

In no town in England or Scotland, other than London, have masons' craft ordinances been traced before 1450, or, with the exception of the Edinburgh seal of cause referred to on page 39 above, before 1500, though indirect evidence points to some organization at Norwich, where wardens of the masons were elected in 1440, and where there are references in 1469 to irregularities practiced by the masons, and in 1491 to failure to swear masters to search for defects. Norwich masons' ordinances of 1512, 1572 and 1577 have survived.(5) We cannot see any reason why masons' ordinances should have been lost, whilst others have been preserved, and we feel compelled to conclude that local guilds of masons were not strongly developed in medieval

boroughs, a conclusion which an examination of the conditions prevailing in the stone building industry would lead one to expect. Masons were doubtless organized, but on a looser and less localized basis than most contemporary trades. Before discussing this looser type of organization, however, this section on craft guilds may best be concluded by a brief review of the masons' regulations drawn up in London, the one municipality in England where a masons' craft guild is definitely known to have existed.

1 Surtees Society, Vols. 120 and 125.

2 Coventry Leet Book (E.E.T.S.).

3 Conder ("The Miracle Play", A.Q.C., xiv, 66) states that the date of the undiscovered original MS. has been placed at the end of the fourteenth century; Vibert (loc. cit.) plumps for 1327 as the date when masons participated in the Chester miracle plays; according to R. H. Morris, Chester in the Plantagenet and Tudor Reigns, 306, 317, the earliest reference to the masons' participation in the Corpus Christi pageants appears to be 1531.

4 Brand, History of Newcastle, ii, 346, 350, 351, 355

5 J. C. Tingey, "Notes upon the Craft Guilds of Norwich with particular reference to the Masons", A.Q.C., xv, 197-204; Walter Rye, "Extracts from the Records of the Corporation of Norwich", A.Q.C., xv, 205-12. [43]

The London Masons' Regulations of 1356(1) closely resemble those approved by the municipality for other trades at that period; they require a seven years' apprenticeship; they prohibit one mason from taking the apprentice or journeyman of another before the expiry of his term; they declare that any man capable of it may both hew stones and lay them; and they stipulate for sureties if a mason should take a contract. As there was no masons' guild at that time, they naturally provide no machinery for the administration of a guild. The regulations must be regarded as a statement of what was desirable, rather than as a statement of actual practice, for, as indicated on page 30 above, apprenticeship among masons was almost unknown before the fifteenth century, and even during that century most masons appear to have learnt their trade without serving a formal apprenticeship. Ordinances made in 1481 both imply that the Guild or Fellowship had been badly administered, and provide remedies. Wardens are to be elected every two years, and outgoing wardens are to present accounts to their successors within one month, under heavy penalties for disobedience. Admissions are not to occur without examination by the wardens and four or six honest persons of the craft. Members of the Fellowship are prohibited from enticing the workmen of another. Finally, the powers of the Fellowship are extended to include the right of search, oversight and correction of all manner of work pertaining to the science of masons within the city and suburbs.

1 This and the following paragraphs are based on our paper, "The London Masons' Company", Ec. Hist., February 1939 [44]

From the Ordinances of 1481 and the later ones of 1521, it is clear that we have in the London Masons' Company a medieval craft guild with an oligarchy formed or forming within it, as happened in other places and other trades. Persons made free of the Fellowship were, according to the 1481 ordinances, "once in every three years to be clad in one clothing [i.e., livery] convenient to their powers and degrees" and to wear it when attending mass every year on **the Feast of the Quatuor Coronati (November 8)**. Every two years, also, they were to go to mass together on the octave of Holy Trinity and thereafter to "keep their dinner or honest recreation. And to have their wives with them if they will", each paying 12d. for his own dinner and 8d. for that of his wife. A shilling would then represent a quarter of a mason's weekly wage, and, bearing in mind the livery and the quarterages payable by members, we may suppose that the Fellowship was tending to become too expensive for the journeyman mason to join. The 1521 ordinances show a marked tendency towards the establishment of a local monopoly. Foreigners, or non freemen, are neither to set up for themselves nor to be employed at all while a sufficient number of freemen is available. Restrictions are placed upon apprenticeship; no ordinary member is to have more than one apprentice, a liveryman only two, and men who have twice been wardens three at most. A statute of 1548 made illegal the limitation upon foreigners, but in the following year the section was repealed at the instance of the London livery companies, and the Masons' Company kept on trying to set up a monopoly until the Great Fire of 1666, and even later.

One problem relating to the masons' trade on which the various municipal ordinances and the records of the London Company might be expected to throw light is the subject of masons' marks. Thousands of marks of one kind or another have been found on the stones of medieval buildings, and it appears to be generally accepted that the main purpose was to distinguish the handiwork of one man from that of another. A similar need existed in many trades, and guild regulations not infrequently directed masters to set marks on their work, and prohibited the counterfeiting of marks. The helmet makers, blacksmiths, bladesmiths and braziers of London and the cutlers of Hallamshire may be cited as instances of crafts for which regulations concerning [45] marks existed. In London, no provision regulating the use of marks has been traced in the Masons' Ordinances, nor has any book survived in the archives of the Company recording the marks assigned to members, such as the Masons' Mark Book at Aberdeen which dates from 1670. The only London evidence which has survived is quite unhelpful, viz., a score of marks, either in lieu of, or appended to, signatures in the seventeenth century books of the Company, more particularly in the Accounts.

**4. Assemblies or Congregations** - The uniformity of conditions prevailing at different building operations in various parts of the country, as shown by surviving building accounts, points not only to some kind of organization, but to an organization or organizations covering a relatively wide area, in contra distinction to craft guilds, the jurisdiction of which was limited in each case to the area of a particular municipality. The nature of this organization is somewhat a matter for conjecture. In this connection we are disposed to rule out the congregations and confederacies of masons declared illegal by Statutes of 1360 and 1425, on the ground that they, like the similar associations of carpenters and cordwainers, were associations which aimed solely at securing higher wages, in violation of the Statutes of Laborers. These were clearly associations of wage earners. In such official or semi official organizations of masons as existed, we should expect masters to predominate. The existence of this type of organization is supported by two references in the Fotheringhay Church Building Contract of 1434,(1) according to which the mason contractor was required to 'latlay' the groundwork (2) "by oversight of masters of the same craft", and the fitness of the setters employed, in case of doubt, was to be determined "by oversight of master masons of the country".

The probability that masons had some kind of organization dealing with the government of their craft (3) is strengthened by the fact that the minstrels, who, to a considerable extent, like the masons, had to wander about the country in search of work, were subject to annual courts enjoying wide territorial jurisdiction. Jurisdiction over minstrels and artisans in the Earldom of Chester is said to have been conferred by Ranulph, the last earl, on his constable, de Lacy, who transferred the governance of minstrels to his



steward, Dutton, whose family had a recognized title thereto as late as 1597. The annual gathering of the minstrels being held at the time of the midsummer fair, a court was kept on that occasion by the heir of Dutton, at which laws and orders were made for the better government of the minstrels. A similar jurisdiction is believed to have been acquired by John of Gaunt, in virtue of which he established in 1381 a court at Tutbury in Staffordshire which was held annually on 16 August to enact laws for minstrels within five neighboring counties and to determine controversies affecting them.

1 M.M., 245 8

2 See our Note on "Laying the Groundwork", Misc. Lat., xxii. 29 31.

3 These paragraphs are based on our MM., 178 seq., and our "Evolution of Masonic Organization", Z.Q.G., xlv, 286. [46]

It is not impossible, therefore, that the masons had a somewhat similar system of government. **That, in any case, is what the Regius and Cooke MSS. of circa 1400 indicate.** The Cooke MS. (ll. 701 seq.) refers to annual or triennial provincial or county congregations of masters and fellows, said to have been first established by Athelstan, which were to govern the craft (ll. 904 seq.) and whose presiding master, if need be, was to be assisted by the sheriff of the county, or the mayor of the city, or the alderman of the town where the assembly was held. The Regius MS. (ll. 75 seq. and 407 seq.) contemplates a somewhat similar assembly or congregation, also said to have been first established by Athelstan, but with this difference, that it was to be attended not only by masters and fellows, but by great lords, knights and squires, the sheriff of the county, and also the mayor of the city, and also the aldermen of the town where it was held.

The existence of an assembly of some kind may be admitted without accepting the account of its origin given in the Regius and Cooke MSS., there being very little historical probability that it dated from Athelstan's time. The part attributed to Athelstan in Masonic development as pictured in the MS. Constitutions of Masonry, is discussed in Chapter IV and need not be enlarged upon here. Regarding the [47] constitution of the assembly, we think it not impossible that knights and esquires, for example, might attend as representatives of the authorities, but most unlikely that the sheriff of the county and also the mayor of the city should have been present as stated in the Regius MS. The statement of the Cooke MS. that the sheriff of the county or the mayor of the city attended, is much more nearly what we should expect, in view of the immunity from the sheriff's jurisdiction which it was the object of medieval towns to obtain and preserve. In our opinion, the sheriff would ordinarily be present at the assembly only if it were held outside the limit of municipal jurisdiction, though both sheriff and mayor might be present if the assembly were held in one of the few municipalities which had sheriffs of their own. On this matter we incline to follow the account in the Cooke MS. rather than the more fanciful account in the Regius MS. The object of the presence of such dignitaries as attended was no doubt, as stated in the Cooke MS. (ll. 910 11), to help the master of the congregation against 'rebels', or, in other words, to assist in the enforcement of discipline. The functions of the assembly, according to the Cooke MS. (ll. 713 seq.) were to examine the masters' knowledge of the Articles and so ascertain that they were qualified to do satisfactory work for employers; according to the Regius MS. (ll. 415 seq.) they were to make ordinances for the craft. The statements of the Regius and Cooke MSS. concerning the functions of the assembly are probably not so different as they appear at first sight. In the Middle Ages 'law' and 'custom' were closely related, and laws were often declarations or statements of accepted custom. As customs gradually changed, owing to the appearance of new conditions, new declarations or statements of custom might be called for. The business of the assembly would thus seem to have been to interpret and enforce the customs of the industry.

**Masons' Customs** - On page 38 mention was made of "the auld use and consuetude of Our Lady Luge of Dundee". An almost contemporary reference to masons' customs in England occurs in the 1539 building account of Sandgate Castle, which records that a jurat of Folkestone [48] was paid his expenses while riding to communicate with the master controller "concerning the use and custom of freemasons and hardhewers".(1) There is also evidence of local customs in an earlier period. Thus at Vale Royal Abbey in 1278 certain masons were paid for their tools, "because it is the custom that their tools, if they bring any, shall be bought"; (2) the accounts for work done at Nottingham Castle in 1348 explain that one feast day in the week was not counted towards wages, *ex antiqua consuetudine*; (3) London Bridge masons in 1406 were provided with drink on Shrove Tuesday *prout mos est antiquus*.(4)

If it is wellnigh certain that the masons' craft, like that of the lead miners and tin miners, who also carried on their occupations to a large extent outside the towns, was regulated by 'customs', i. e., old established but by no means unchanging usages and practices, the content and form of those customs is a different problem. In the case of the miners the 'customs' have survived; (5) unfortunately of "the use and custom of freemasons and hardhewers" no corresponding details have been traced. We are of opinion, however, that the Articles and Points of the Regius and Cooke MSS., which are a body of regulations with regard to masters, craftsmen, apprentices, wages and other matters, may be regarded as a statement of the masons' customs as they existed about the year 1400. If we accept the Cooke MS. statement that the charges and manners were written in the so called Book of Charges, then the presumption is that the customs had been set down in writing before the date of the Regius and Cooke MSS. That manuscript version of the customs probably dated from the third or fourth quarter of the fourteenth century. The reference in the first Article to the rate of wages being "after the dearth of corn and victual in the country", suggests a date after the Black Death (1349) when prices rose sharply and scarcity of

1 B.M. Harl. MS. 1647, fo. 109

2 P.R.O. Exch. K.R. 485/22.

3 P.R.O. Exch. K.R. 544/35

4 London Bridge accounts, quoted in our L.B., 24 n.

5 For those of the lead miners, see *The Liberty and Customes of the Miners* (1645), 1 3; for those of the Cornish tin miners, see *The Black Prince's Register*, iii, 71 3 [49]

labor caused wage questions to become acute, although it was not until 1389 that statutory recognition of the actual facts was accorded and justices were enabled to fix wages of masons, carpenters, etc., "according to the dearness of victuals".(1) The reference to a seven years' apprenticeship also suggests a date not earlier than the second half of the fourteenth century, apprenticeship being a relatively late development amongst masons, as indicated on page 30 above. In the legendary section of the Regius and Cooke MSS. the charges or customs are ascribed to the time of Athelstan; if they do go back to the tenth century, which is exceedingly doubtful, we can be perfectly sure that in their original form they were very different from the form they take in the

Articles and Points of the Regius and Cooke MSS.(2) It is in the highest degree improbable that there could have been any mention of apprenticeship in any tenth, eleventh, twelfth or thirteenth century masons' customs, or any reference to the fixing of wages according to the cost of victuals. As the thirteenth century was a period of great building activity, the customs may well have existed then, and it is quite possible that they date from the late eleventh or early twelfth century. This is the more likely, because a substantial period probably elapsed before the customs were set down in writing, as they were statements of usages and practices and not laws or orders enacted at some particular date and immediately recorded in writing. It may be, therefore, that the document or "book of charges" on which the author of the Cooke MS. based his Articles and Points was the oldest written version of the customs, and we are rather disposed to think this was so. If, as appears to be the case, the Articles and Points represent practices which were national in their application, we doubt if they could have been formulated before the third quarter of the fourteenth century. In their early stages it is probable that masons' customs, like miners' customs and manorial customs, were local in character, and that they differed from district to district. The only Masonic practices for which information is available before the middle of the fourteenth century, namely, the questions of payment for tools and payment for holidays, show very considerable diversity.

1 13 Richard II, c. 8.

2 For a possible earlier form, also embodied in the "Book of Charges", see pp. 77-8 below. [50]

Uniformity of customs would tend to be brought about partly by the influence of the King's Master Masons, and the Office of Works established in 1256, but principally by mobility amongst masons, which had doubtless existed to some extent from the earliest times. The use of the system of impressment in connection with the erection of Welsh castles at the end of the thirteenth century could hardly fail to lead to some interchange of ideas and practices. The influence exerted, however, was probably slight compared with that exercised by the greatly increased use of impressment from 1344 onwards, and in particular by its wholesale adoption in 1360-3, when masons from almost every county in England were assembled in such large numbers at Windsor Castle that the continuator of the Polychronicon could write that William Wykeham had gathered at Windsor almost all the masons and carpenters in England. (1)

Though the chronicler's statement was doubtless an exaggeration, the vast gathering of masons at Windsor in 1360-3 must have marked an epoch in Masonic history and probably contributed more than any other single event to the unification and consolidation of the masons' customs, and very possibly led to their first being set down in writing.(2)

1 See our "Impressment of Masons for Windsor Castle, 1360-63", *Ec. Hist.*, February 1937.

2 This section is based on our *M.M.*, 169 seq., and our "Evolution of Masonic Organization", *A.Q.C.*, xlv. [51]

In connection with masons' customs, or with the MS. Constitutions of Masonry, in whose Articles and Points, or Charges General and Singular, they are embodied, there is a common misconception among Masonic students, namely, that the customs were the property of a distinct category of 'church' or 'cathedral' masons. This is really a double misconception. (i) The customs belonged to the general body of masons. Apart from "the auld use and consuetude of Our Lady Luge of Dundee", the only independent evidence of customs, under that name, so far discovered occurs in documents relating to Crown or municipal building operations (Vale Royal Abbey in 1278, Nottingham Castle in 1348, London Bridge in 1406, and Sandgate Castle in 1539). Similarly, the only independent evidence of the ownership, or the use, of versions of the MS. Constitutions of Masonry by operative masons relates to the lodges of Stirling, Melrose, Kilwinning, Aberdeen, Dumfries, Aitchison's Haven, Alnwick and Swalwell, none of which would appear to have had church associations. (ii) We know of no record to suggest, let alone prove, that in the Middle Ages there existed two special kinds of mason, viz., 'church', or 'cathedral', or 'mobile' masons on the one hand, and 'town', or 'gild', or 'local' masons on the other. A study of building accounts and of impressment orders makes it clear that the same masons, whether master masons or ordinary hewers or layers, were often employed on different kinds of building erected in stone, for castles, cathedrals, churches, colleges and bridges, and that masons normally resident in towns were just as likely to travel, either voluntarily or compulsorily, in order to take part in some new work, as masons normally resident in the country.

#### MASONIC ORGANISATION ON THE CONTINENT

Although we are definitely of opinion that freemasonry had its genesis in Britain, we give a brief account of early Masonic Organization on the Continent, first, because it may conceivably have had some influence upon English and Scottish developments, and second, because it may be that the nature of the organizations among English and Scottish operative masons can be better understood, if compared with the corresponding organizations on the Continent.

**Gilds** - In general it would appear that the continental associations of masons during the Middle Ages and early modern times fall into two categories: (a) local gilds, similar in many ways to the municipal gilds of this country, and (b) associations on a wider territorial basis, having some similarity to the organization described in the Cooke [52] and Regius MSS. As an instance of the former kind we may cite the *maestri di pietra e legname* in thirteenth century Florence. It will be noted that the masons would not appear to have been sufficient in number or wealth to constitute a gild of the first importance. Below the joint gild (of masons and wrights as it would be called in this country) there were nine minor gilds; on a level with it were four other gilds of the middle grade; and above it were seven major gilds.(1) In a city so eminent for its architecture, a gild so closely connected with building might have been expected to take a higher rank; but the policy of the city authorities was, at any rate at times, unfavorable to corporate exclusiveness in the building trades. Not only were prices of materials subject to control, but, in the interests both of private builders and the city's undertakings, 'foreign' craftsmen were, by an early fourteenth century regulation, allowed to work within its boundaries without belonging to the gild or paying to it.(2) The masons and wrights, therefore, must have known difficulties similar to those which beset the London Masons' Company in the seventeenth century.(3) It may be noted that in medieval Paris, also, masons could not have been in a position to exercise a monopoly, since any skilled person was free to follow the mason's craft in the city. The trade was nevertheless to some extent organized, having customs and regulations of its own, and the craftsmen, of whom there were 123 in 1300, were associated in a fraternity whose patron was St. Blaise. Masons, plasterers, stone cutters and makers of mortar were subject to the jurisdiction of the King's Master Mason.(4)

- 1 A. Doren, Die Florentiner Zunftwesen, 61, 49
- 2 Doren, *ibid.*, 122. Doren quotes a similar regulation made in Cologne in 1335.
- 3 L.M., 10 seq.
- 4 Franklin, Dictionnaire Historique des Yrts etc. (1906). [53]

How far the structure of the Florentine guild resembled that of others, such as the **Gild of the Quatuor Coronati in Antwerp**, we do not know. The Antwerp gild or incorporation embraced all the building trades masons, stone cutters, paviors and tilers; it is mentioned in the city records as early as 1423, and its ordinances of 1458 have survived.<sup>(1)</sup> Nor are we so far very well informed about the existence of guilds in other cities. It is, however, not very likely that guilds in continental towns had any great or direct effect on those in England and Scotland.

**The Steinmetzen** - A hundred years ago it was believed that the organization of stonemasons in Germany originated in the cloister and especially in the Benedictine house of Hirschau, in the Black Forest, where the famous Abbot William (1069-91) trained lay brethren to serve as artificers not only for the building and decoration of his own abbey but also for many others. These men and their followers were, it is said, subject to rules, acquired secrets and were formed into brotherhoods which were given privileges in papal bulls and secular charters.<sup>(2)</sup> Search at the Vatican in 1773, <sup>(3)</sup> however, failed to discover any such bulls and none, apparently, have come to light since. Moreover the main authority for the wonderful work of Abbot William in technical education appears to be the Hirschau Chronicle of John Trithemius (1462-1518), a writer by no means restrained in his fancy. There is, on the whole, little reason to believe that the organization of the Steinmetzen was monastic in its origin.

It is of course true that the cathedrals of Strasburg, Regensburg, Vienna and Cologne could not have been built or maintained without lodges (Bauhütten) of masons, and that each of these lodges, like those of York and Canterbury, probably had its rules. It is also not improbable that the rules of the different lodges had something in common, and that the common element may well have become widespread through masons traveling from place to place.

1 See Goblet d'Alviella, "The Quatuor Coronati in Belgium", A.Q.C., xiii, where the ordinances of 1458 are printed in translation; and J. Wegg, *Intwerp 1477-1559*, 87, 93, 100, 102, 116, 249.

2 Karl Heideloff, *Die Bauhütte des Mittelalters in Deutschland* (Nürnberg, 1844)

3 F. Janner, *Die Bauhütten des deutschen Mittelalters* (Leipzig, 1876). See also T. Pownall in *Archaeologia*, 1789, p. 123 [54]

The earliest known text of them, and the first document relating to the organization of the Steinmetzen, certainly implies that a body of custom (gutte Gewohnheit and alt herkommen) had grown up, and states that certain masters and fellows, on behalf of the craft in German lands generally, had met in Regensburg in 1459 to renew the ancient customs and to unite amicably in a brotherhood to maintain them.<sup>(1)</sup> That a meeting of some kind did take place in the year and place named is evident from an independent entry in the cathedral accounts recording a gift of wine to the visiting master stonemasons, <sup>(2)</sup> but the entry does not make clear for what purpose they had gathered together; neither does it refer to fellows, who, according to the text of the ordinances, attended the legislating assembly. A document of 1462,<sup>(3)</sup> however, refers to meetings at Regensburg and Strasburg, and records the acceptance, by masters assembled at Torgau from Magdeburg, Halberstadt, Hildesheim and other places, of the book of ordinances drawn up at the earlier meetings. It may, further, be noted that the regulations of the stonemasons were confirmed by imperial authority in 1498 <sup>(4)</sup> and 1563.<sup>(5)</sup>

To discuss these ordinances in detail would be beyond our present scope, and we shall take space only to suggest that they arose naturally from the condition of the craft in the German lands and to state that we know of no evidence to show any direct connection between them and the form of the Old Charges. There are many resemblances between the two sets of rules; those of the Steinmetzen require members to be pious, charitable, and careful of the honor of the craft, and to avoid theft and adultery; **they take for granted the three medieval grades of apprentice, journeyman or fellow, and master**; they lay stress on apprenticeship (the ordinary term being five years); they prohibit the supersession of one master by another without cause; they demand the maintenance of work by the day wherever possible. In short they show, as the Regius and Cooke MSS. do, a concern to harmonize the interests of the 'lord', or person for whom building work is done, of the master mason (whether salaried or undertaking a contract), of the warden who is his cond in command, and of the mass of wage earning fellows.

1 Gould, i, 117-18; the ordinances renewed and revised at Regensburg in 1459 are printed in translation in Kenning's *Cyclopedia of Freemasonry*, 529 ref.

2 Janner, *op. cit.*, 55.

3 German text in *ibid.*, 294 seq. English translation in Gould, i, 134 seq.

4 Janner, *op. cit.*, 266 seq.

5 *Ibid.*, 272 .seq.; Gould, i, 119 seq. [55]

On the other hand, there are marked differences. The ordinances of the Steinmetzen, for example, are clear as to the monetary contribution required from members and as to masons' marks, points on which the Regius and Cooke MSS. are silent. It may further be noted that, according to the 1563 version of the ordinances, the Steinmetzen had a form of greeting and, perhaps, a grip,<sup>(1)</sup> which apprentices were forbidden to reveal. Finally, the German documents show that the Steinmetzen were organized on a regional basis, with a chief seat of jurisdiction in each district. No such divisions are indicated in the Regius and Cooke MSS., possibly because the smaller extent of England, and its political unity, made them less necessary than they were in the vast and in practice disunited Holy Roman Empire.

1 Janner, *op. cit.*, 231, 289, equates the Schenk (possibly 'gift') of the text with Handschenk ('grip'). See also Gould, i, 128, 147. [56]

**The Compagnonnages** - In France, though there were cathedrals and important churches in plenty, no organization on exactly the same lines as the Steinmetzen is known to have arisen. Nevertheless France produced a form of association which, in some respects, was more akin to freemasonry than either the guilds of Florence and Antwerp or the Steinmetzen of Strasburg, namely, the bodies called *compagnonnages*. These bodies are of uncertain antiquity and obscure origin. The earliest documentary proof of their existence does not go further back than the early sixteenth century, and the earlier records relating to them throw comparatively little

light on their exact character; but their judicious historian, Martin Saint Leon, considered, and with probability, that they existed long before 1500. He also thought it likely, though proof, as he frankly admitted, was absent, that they first developed in the twelfth or the thirteenth century among the workers employed on French cathedrals in the great age of Gothic architecture.(1)

For the economic historian the *compagnonnage* is important as marking a stage in the evolution of labor organization. The *compagnon* was a worker for whom the chance of becoming an independent master was disappearing, if not quite gone. As guild organization became more exclusive and oligarchic, the status of journeymen tended to become not temporary but permanent, and those who, by apprenticeship, had attained it had an increasing motive to stand by one another in defense of their interests against the patrons, or employers. Association for that purpose was disliked by the guild authorities (who might, however, decide to regulate and control associations whose existence they could not prevent), and was generally prohibited by law. Partly, no doubt, as camouflage and partly through simple piety, the *compagnonnages* assumed a religious aspect, and, perhaps by imitation of the guilds and their liveries, the *compagnons* adopted peculiarities of dress, were it only the wearing of ribbons.

Not a few of the trades in which this organization was found were connected with the *tour de France*, i.e., the journeymen were accustomed to wander, in search of wider experience or of employment, from town to town along a more or less well defined route. Consequently measures were taken for the reception of traveling craftsmen, so that they might be provided with work in the town to which they came, or helped on their way to another. In much the same way in England the masons were bidden to "receive and cherish strange masons ... and set them to work" or to refresh them "with money to the next lodge".(2) Given such an organization, it would be prudent to confine its benefits to those who were really *compagnons*, and who might be proved by passwords or in other ways. As societies opposed to the masters and obnoxious to the police, the *compagnonnages* required secrecy of their

1 E. Martin Saint Leon, *Le Compagnonnage*, Paris, 1901, p. 15.

2 See Thomas W. Tew MS., printed in Poole and Worts. For an account of a similar practice among trade unions see W. Kiddier, *The Old Trade Unions*, Chapter I. [57]

members. According to the theological faculty of Paris, in 1655: "les *compagnons* font jurer sur les evangiles a ceux qu'ils re-oivent de ne reveler ni a pere, ni a mere, femme ni enfants, ni confesseur ce qu'ils feront ou verront faire" \*(1) and the same causes which brought this about in the seventeenth century may well have had the effect in earlier times of compelling the *compagnon* to "hele the councelle of his felows in logge and in chambre".(2) Within the association a moral discipline was enforced without the help of external authorities, so that bad payers, thieves, and forsworn men were punished. Finally, it may be noted, the *compagnonnages* developed rituals for admissions and other occasions, such as the burial of a member, and ceremonies for their convivial meetings. They also possessed legends giving what were no doubt edifying, if utterly impossible, accounts of their origins.

\* companions do swear on the Gospels to those they re-oivent not reveal either a father or a mother, wife or children, or confessor what they will or will do.

There were in fact three legends, one for each of the competing branches into which the *compagnonnages* were divided. **One claimed to have been founded by Hiram, Solomon's master mason, said to have been slain by three wicked apprentices;** a second traced its origin to Hiram's colleague, *Maitre Jacques*, maker of two columns with pictures; and the third professed to be derived from *Father Soubise*, also one of Solomon's master workmen, who later quarrelled with *Maitre Jacques* after both had landed in France.(3) Two of these legends, it will be observed, have the motif of the slain master mason and one refers to two pillars. All three refer to Solomon's Temple, but there may, in the *Soubise* story, have been some confusion with the *Knights Templar*.

Unfortunately, it seems impossible to assign dates to these legends or to trace their evolution. Saint Leon takes it that they were orally transmitted from age to age from a comparatively early period and that below their surface absurdity they contain vestiges, at least, of history:

1 Saint Uon, 40.

2 Cooke MS., ll. 842 3 (Two MSS., 121).

3 Saint Leon, 10. [58]

The stories of the life and death of *Hiram*, *Maitre Jacques* and *Soubise*, the repeated allusions to the rebuilding of Solomon's Temple are but an allegory, a weakened and deformed memory of the works undertaken at Chartres, Paris, Noyon, Rheims and Orleans in order to build new temples for the Lord.(1)

On the other hand, the remarkable similarity between the *compagnonnage* rituals of initiation and English Masonic catechisms,(2) and Saint Leon's conclusion that the former were almost certainly modeled on the latter,(3) suggest that the *compagnons* may have borrowed legends as well as catechisms from eighteenth century freemasons. This, however, though it might explain *Hiram Abif*, can hardly apply to *Maitre Jacques*,(4) or *Father Soubise*. It seems reasonable, therefore, to conclude that it is at least possible that the *compagnonnages* and English and Scottish operative masonry had some common element in their traditions as well as resemblances in their organization and objects. Viewed in perspective, the operative lodges of Scotland, having the *Mason Word* and the practices connected with it, are not very different, with one important exception, from the *compagnonnages*, with their headquarters at a boutique of Angers, Chartres or Orleans. The exception is that the operative lodges of Scotland embraced masters as well as journeymen, whereas the *compagnonnages* consisted solely of journeymen.

1 *Ibid.*, 24.

2 *Ibid.*, 219 seq.

3 *Ibid.*, 223.

4 Unless *Maitre Jacques* was the original whence *Naymus Grecus* and the like were derived. See p. 75 below. [59]

The two bodies were, however, very different in their subsequent development. Operative masonry in England and Scotland, we believe, lost its ritual and organization, which were taken over, modified and elaborated into modern freemasonry first by the accepted masons and then by the 'speculatives'. The *compagnonnages*, on the other hand, retained them, and, though influenced

by Masonic ritual, kept quite apart from French speculative masonry. In short, the *compagnonnages* remained throughout the nineteenth century a form of labor organization, with economic and charitable objects and with essentially religious traditions. They could not fuse with the freemasons (men who had acquired their knowledge of masonry either directly or indirectly from England in the 1720s and 1730s, as explained on page 320 below) because in the first place, the French freemasons were not concerned with the journeymen's interests as such and, in the second place, they gradually became sceptical in religion.(1) On the other hand, the *compagnonnages* could not easily find a place among trade unions, because they belonged essentially to the ancient regime in industry. Even in their heyday they were a minority and a kind of aristocracy among workmen; and neither their ideas nor their practices were well suited to an age of factories and railways.

**The Comacine Legend** - Apart from local guilds of masons, the *Steinmetzen*, and the *compagnonnages*, for the existence of each of which there is record evidence, there is supposed to have been another Masonic organization. As reported by his fellow seventeenth century antiquary, John Aubrey,(2) Sir William Dugdale believed that the Fraternity of Freemasons or Adopted Masons was derived from a company of Italian architects or freemasons to whom, according to his statement, the Pope gave a bull or patent about the time of Henry III (1216-72) to travel up and down Europe building churches. The granting of the papal bull is not established, but there is no question that continental master masons did travel long distances to execute their work.(3) The evidence showing that architects of repute were not hindered by frontiers must not be regarded, however, as lending support to the legend of the Comacine brethren, who are supposed to have traveled together from place to place to build churches. Not a scrap of record evidence has been found to establish the existence of this migrant fraternity, belief in which seems to be based on widespread architectural similarities between different churches, and a mistaken etymology.

1 See Saint LÇon, 325 seq.

2 Bodl. Lib. Aubrey MS. 2, pt. ii, fo. 73, reproduced in A.Q.C., xi, facing p. 10. Aubrey's MS. was printed in 1807 as *The Natural History of Wiltshire*.

3 See Fagniez, *Documents relatifs d l'Histoire de l'Industrie et du Commerce en France*, i, 305; and Henri Stein, *Les architectes des Cathedrales Gothiques*, 103 seq. [60]

The word *comacinus* cannot be taken to mean a mason of Como or Comacina, the supposed district of the Comacini; it probably meant "fellow mason" (as *comonachus* meant "fellow monk"), without reference to Como or any other place.(1)

1 See A. Hamilton Thompson, "Medieval Building Documents", *Misc. Lat.*, xii, 50, 51. [61]

## CHAPTER IV

### THE MS. CONSTITUTIONS OF MASONRY The Old Charges

THE MS. Constitutions of Masonry, or more familiarly the Old Charges, of which the Regius and Cooke MSS. of circa 1400 are the oldest known versions, consist of a body of regulations relating to masters, craftsmen, and apprentices, and to wages and other matters affecting masons. These regulations, described in the documents either as Articles and Points, or as Charges General and Singular, are prefaced by a legendary narrative of how the building craft and the regulations came into being. About 115 versions of the Old Charges have been traced: of these, some ninety exist in manuscript; ten have survived only in print, whether in extenso, or in summary form; some fifteen are missing; and two are known to have been destroyed.(1) They present a wide field for investigation, and the texts have been studied in considerable detail.(2) In this volume we treat the subject only in broad outline, devoting ourselves to five main problems: (i) the origins of the legends or "history"; (ii) the evolution of the "history" between circa 1390 and circa 1725; (iii) the regulations and their evolution; (iv) changes in the form of the MS. Constitutions; (v) the part played by the MS. Constitutions

1 They are all recorded in our *Handlist of Masonic Documents* (1942) with various particulars, including an indication as to where the originals, and facsimiles, prints or reprints are to be found.

2 See, e.g., Hughan, *Old Charges of British Freemasons*, 1st ed., 1872; rev. 2nd ed., 1895; Gould, *Commentary on the Regius Poem*, Q.C.A., i (1889); Speth, *Commentary on the Cooke MS.*, Q.C.A., ii (1890); Begemann, *Freimaurerei in England* (1909), i, 106-309; Begemann, *Freimaurerei in Schottland* (1914), i, 110-80; Poole, *The Old Charges*, 1924; Poole, *The Old Charges in Eighteenth Century Masonry*, the Prestonian Lecture for 1933; Poole and Worts, *The "Yorkshire" Old Charges of Masons*, 1935; Knoop, Jones and Hamer, *The Two Earliest Masonic MSS. (the Regius and Cooke MSS.)*, 1938. [62]

in Masonic ceremonies. We accept the conventional nomenclature of the documents;(1) also the following classification (based on textual similarities and differences), as originally devised by Hughan and Begemann(2) (A.) Regius, (B.) Cooke family, (C.) Plot family, (T.) Tew family, (D.) Grand Lodge family, (E.) Sloane family, (F.) Roberts family, (G.) Spencer family, (H.) Sundry versions.

### THE LEGENDS OF THE CRAFT

**Masonry and Geometry** - The equating of 'masonry' and 'architecture' with 'geometry', which alone helps to explain much of the early portion of the legendary history of masonry, as portrayed in the MS. Constitutions of Masonry, does occur occasionally in non-Masonic works of late medieval writers, e.g., in Lydgate's *Falls of Princes* of circa 1435 and Henry Bradshaw's *Life of St. Werberge of Chester* of circa 1500,(3) but the short history of masonry, which precedes the Articles and Points in the Regius MS. of circa 1390, is the earliest English instance known to us of the word '**geometry**' being used to describe 'masonry' and 'architecture'.(4) Originally, **geometry** was a liberal art, even though it may have grown out of the practical problems of land mensuration. It was one of the circle of arts and sciences through which every free born Greek youth passed before proceeding to professional studies. It was included in the Roman *artes liberales*. Like other liberal arts, it was a pure science or academic study, which might be pursued apart from its practical applications, and was in no way associated with masonry. "All mechanics", Cicero declared, are engaged in vulgar trades, for no workshop can have anything liberal about it.(5) Seneca excluded painting, sculpture and marble working from the liberal arts.(6) That such was the attitude in ancient times was not

- 1 See our "Nomenclature of Masonic MSS.", A.Q.C., liv, 69 77  
 2 For Key to the Classification, see Poole and Worts, 30 2, 39 41  
 3 Two MSS., 156.  
 4 The famous sketch book, dating from the middle of the thirteenth century, of Villard de Honnecourt, who was probably the master mason of Notre Dame at Cambrai, claims to show "the method of portraiture and draughtsmanship according to the laws and principles of geometry".  
 5 De Officiis, I, xlii.  
 6 Epistolae Morales, lxxxviii. [63]

unknown in the Middle Ages, as is clearly indicated in Caxton's Mirror of the World.(1)

The Roman artes liberales covered a wide field and included gymnastics, politics, jurisprudence and medicine. It was not until Martianus Capella of Carthage wrote his Septem fortes Liberales (c. A.D. 420), that the number of liberal arts was, for the first time known to history, set down as seven. In the Arithmetica of Boethius (c. 470-525) we find the first attempt to divide the seven liberal arts into two groups, the trivium, containing the three literary arts of grammar, rhetoric, and logic or dialectic, and the quadrivium, containing the four mathematical sciences, arithmetic, music, **geometry** and astronomy. By the time of Isidore, Bishop of Seville from 600 to 636, the seven liberal arts had taken their place as the introduction to all knowledge. His Originum sive Etymologiarum libri xx commences with a summary of the knowledge of the day in each subject, before proceeding to medicine, law, religion and other sciences. His definition of the seven liberal arts became the model for later encyclopaedists, and is closely followed in the MS. Constitutions of Masonry:

There are seven liberal arts. First, grammar, that is, skill in speaking. Second, rhetoric, which on account of the grace and fluency of its eloquence is considered most necessary in the problems of civil life. Third, dialectic, also called logic, which by subtle discussion divides the true from the false. Fourth, arithmetic, which contains the causes and divisions of numbers. Fifth, music, which consists of songs and music. Sixth, **geometry**, which comprehends the measures and dimensions of the earth. Seventh, astronomy, which contains the law of the stars. (2)

There was some rivalry between the exponents of the various branches of the seven liberal arts as to which was the most fundamental. Usually grammar was accorded the first place since it was studied first and by it there were acquired the writing, speaking and reading of Latin, the language both of ecclesiastics and of other learned persons. At one place even the Cooke MS. (ll. 48 52) refers to grammar as the fundament of science, i.e., the foundation of knowledge, but previously (l. 45) and subsequently (ll. 85 6) the Cooke MS. emphasizes that **geometry** is the foundation of all knowledge, "the causer of all", an idea stressed also by the Regius MS., and by all later versions of the MS. Constitutions of Masonry. This is hardly surprising, as the people for whom the manuscripts were written had a professional interest in claiming **geometry** as the basis of all knowledge. The authors of the Regius and Cooke MSS. knew that by its etymology **geometry** was originally concerned with the mensuration of land, but they thought of it chiefly as the science of masonry.

- 1 E.E.T. S., Extra Series, CX (1913), 41.  
 2 Etymologiarum, I, ii. [64]

The explanations offered by the MS. Constitutions of Masonry regarding the origin or 'invention' of **geometry** or masonry hand on a confused tradition, and really give three different accounts:

- (i) The first is derived from the Bible; in this account we are told that **geometry** or masonry was discovered before the Flood by Jabal, who invented tents, which the Cooke MS., following Bede, interprets as "dwelling howsis". From this the Cooke MS. develops the tradition that Jabal was Cain's master mason at the building of Enoch, the first city recorded in the Bible.
- (ii) The second account is derived from Josephus and from the Hebrew apocrypha which tell very similar stories. Josephus says that Abraham taught the Egyptians arithmetic and astronomy, but he does not mention **geometry**. Yet before the close of the Middle Ages he is cited as one of the authorities for the belief that Abraham taught **geometry** to the Egyptians. Thus Honorius Augustodunensis states (1) that Abraham taught the Egyptians **geometry** but neither he, nor Peter Comestor,(2) to both of whom the Cooke MS. refers, mentions Euclid. Consequently, the tradition used by the Cooke MS. dates back to the early twelfth century, but that manuscript and later versions of the MS. Constitutions modify the story by claiming that Euclid founded **geometry**, which he had been taught by Abraham. By sacrificing chronology and ignoring the contradiction, Euclid, the most famous classical exponent of **geometry**, and Abraham, its inventor according to late medieval tradition, are brought into the same picture, whereas Abraham probably died some fifteen hundred years before Euclid was born.
- (iii) The third account is based on the classical tradition. The story of the invention of **geometry** through the flooding of the Nile is recounted by Diodorus Siculus, a contemporary of Julius Caesar, and probably became widespread in the Middle Ages through Isidore of Seville: "The art of **geometry** is said to have been invented first by the Egyptians, because through the covering of the land with mud by the inundations of the Nile, they first divided the land by lines and measures and gave its name." Here the discovery of **geometry** is attributed to the Egyptians without the assistance of Abraham; Hermes, identified with the Egyptian god Thoth and the Roman god Mercury, is the hero of the story. It is very probable that in the Hermes who was counselor to Isis and invented **geometry** we have the original of the Euclid who according to the Regius and Cooke MSS. invented **geometry** through the flooding of the Nile. Further, the statement of Diodorus that in ancient Egypt education, especially in **geometry** and arithmetic, was given only to the sons of priests (apparently to provide them with a livelihood) may be the origin of the statement in Masonic legend that education in **geometry** was sought by the 'lords' for their children:

- 1 De Imagine Mundi, written 1122 5, Migne. Pat. Lat., clxii, col. 168.  
 2 Historia Scholastica. Peter Comestor died circa 1185. [65]

How Hermes of the classical tradition became the 'Euclid' of Masonic legend can only be surmised. Once the importance of the seven liberal arts in general, and of **geometry** in particular, had been stressed, it was almost inevitable that Euclid, the representative figure of that science in all schemes of the seven liberal arts, should be brought into the picture. No other exponent of

**geometry** was recognized, not even **Pythagoras, a geometrician** as great as Euclid but allotted in the seven liberal arts to music on account of his researches into the theory of the musical scale. Thus medieval tradition, which associated [66] the name of **geometry** exclusively with Euclid, practically necessitated the replacement of Hermes by Euclid.(1)

**The Two Pillars**(2) - The two pillars which play such an important part in Masonic legend in the Cooke MS. and the subsequent versions of the MS. Constitutions of Masonry must not be confused with those erected in the porch of the Temple. The two pillars of Masonic legend are reputed to have been the medium by which certain knowledge was saved from destruction by flood or fire, and transmitted to posterity. They occur in the Hebrew apocrypha, but in origin the story is Babylonian. It has been traced by Bro. W. J. Williams in the writings of Berosus, a Babylonian priest (c. 330 to c. 250 B.C.) who apparently drew his information from ancient Assyrian cuneiform inscriptions dating from before the time of the Jewish captivity in Babylon, and the investigation has been carried further by Douglas Hamer. Berosus wrote in Greek a history of Babylon, which is now extant only in extracts by early writers. The following passage is a translation of one of these extracts:

The deity Chronos appeared to him in a vision, and warned him that upon the fifteenth day of the month Daesius there would be a flood, by which mankind would be destroyed. He therefore enjoined him to write a history of the beginning, procedure, and conclusion of all things and bury it in the city of the Sun at Sippara; and to build a vessel ... [p. q.5] and when they returned to Babylon and had found the writings at Sippara they built cities and erected temples, and Babylon was thus inhabited again.(3)

<http://www.sacred-texts.com/cla/af/af02.htm>

After the death of **Ardates, his son Xisuthrus** reigned eighteen sari. In his time happened a great Deluge; the history of which is thus described. The Deity, Cronus, appeared to him in a vision, and warned him that upon the fifteenth day of the month Dæsius there would be a flood, by which mankind would be destroyed. He therefore enjoined him to write a history of the beginning, procedure, and conclusion of all things; and to bury it in the city of the Sun at Sippara; and to build a vessel, and take with him into it his friends and relations; and to convey on board every thing necessary to sustain life, together with all the different animals; both birds and quadrupeds, and trust himself fearlessly to the deep. Having asked the Deity, whither he was to sail? he was answered, "To the Gods:" upon which he offered up a prayer for the good of mankind. He then obeyed the divine admonition: and built a vessel five stadia in length, and two in breadth. Into this he put every thing which he had prepared; and last of all conveyed into it his wife, his children, and his friends.

After the flood had been upon the earth, and was in time abated, **Xisuthrus** sent out birds from the vessel; which, not finding any food, nor any place whereupon they might rest their feet, returned to him again. After an interval of some days, he sent them forth a second time; and they now returned with their feet tinged with mud. He made a trial a third time with these birds; but they returned to him no more: from whence he judged that the surface of the earth had appeared above the waters. He therefore made an opening in the vessel, and upon looking out found that it was stranded upon the side of some mountain; upon which he immediately quitted it with his wife, his daughter, and the pilot. **Xisuthrus** then paid his adoration to the earth: and having constructed an altar, offered sacrifices to the gods, and, with those who had come out of the vessel with him, disappeared.

They, who remained within, finding that their companions did not return, quitted the vessel with many lamentations, and called continually on the name of **Xisuthrus**. Him they saw no more; but they could distinguish his voice in the air, and could hear him admonish them to pay due regard to religion; and likewise informed them that it was upon account of his piety that he was translated to live with the gods; that his wife and daughter, and the pilot, had obtained the same honour. To this he added, that they should return to Babylonia; and, as it was ordained, search for the writings at Sippara, which they were to make known to all mankind: moreover that the place, wherein they then were, was the land of Armenia. The rest having heard these words, offered sacrifices to the gods; and taking a circuit, journeyed towards Babylonia.

The vessel being thus stranded in Armenia, some part of it yet remains in the Corcyræan mountains of Armenia; and the people scrape off the bitumen, with which it had been outwardly coated, and make use of it by way of an alexipharmic and amulet. And when they returned to Babylon, and had found the writings at Sippara, they built cities, and erected temples: and Babylon was thus inhabited again.—*Syncei. Chron.* 28.—*Euseb. Chron.* 5. 8.

1 The paragraphs on geometry and masonry are based on Two MSS., 24 38

2 See Two MSS., 39 44; Williams, "The Antediluvian Pillars in Prose and Verse", A.Q.C., li, 100, and the joint comments of Douglas Hamer and ourselves on that paper, li, 120 2.

3 Cary's translation, printed in Geo. Smith, The Chaldaean Account of Genesis, 1876, p. 43. [67]

It will be noted that **the pillars were originally tablets of clay**, which had to be burnt hard after being inscribed, and that the writing on them had nothing to do with the seven liberal arts. Nor had it in the earliest Hebrew version, the apocryphal Vita Adae et Evae, in which Eve ordered Seth and his brothers and sisters to record on tables of stone and baked tile the words of the archangel Michael, when he brought the order for their expulsion from the Garden of Eden. Whereas the Babylonian version contemplated destruction only by flood, Eve also had fire in mind; hence the need for stone and clay: "If by water the Lord judge our race, the tables of clay will be dissolved and the tables of stone will remain; but if by fire, the tables of stone will be broken up and the tables of clay will be baked."(1) As the legend developed in pre Christian times, attempts were made to state more precisely what actually was set down in writing. In this development, Adam is made responsible for a general prophecy of ultimate destruction, the tables become pillars, and what was carved on them becomes a discovery or discoveries made by the children or descendants of Adam and Eve.

A new element in the story is that the astronomical discoveries of Seth were carved on the pillars. Josephus is the commonest source, and his account became the basis of both Byzantine and Western European versions of the story. The latter are affected by yet another account which comes from a separate Jewish tradition. In the second account it is Lamech's children who carve their discoveries on the pillars, discoveries useful for the service of man. According to the version embodied in The Chronicles of Jerahmeel only music was carved by Jubal upon the two pillars, one of white marble and the other of brick.(2) We have now, therefore, from the stories of Josephus and Jerahmeel the suggestion that two liberal arts, astronomy and music, were carved on the two pillars. From very early times we have the development of this idea in the story that Zoroaster, the traditional founder of

1 Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament, ed. R. H. Charles, Oxford, 1913, ii, 152.

2 The Chronicles of Jerahmeel, ed. M. Gaster, Oriental Translations Fund (1899), P. 50. [68]

the Magian religion, inscribed the whole of the seven liberal arts on fourteen pillars or columns, seven of brass and seven of baked brick, against a threatened judgment of God.<sup>(1)</sup> This version probably cannot be older than early Christian times since, as we have seen, the earliest known Latin record of the seven liberal arts dates from the early fifth century. The Zoroastrian pillars, as well as Jubal's pillars, are mentioned in Jerahmeel. Both pillar stories, that relating to the children of Lamech and that relating to Zoroaster, are also recorded by Peter Comestor in his *Historia Scholastica*, dating from about the third quarter of the twelfth century.

The story told in the Cooke MS. is an attempt to reconcile these various versions. It mentions the prophecy foretelling destruction by water and fire, but omits the name of Adam in connection with it. It records the manifold discoveries of the children of Lamech. It assumes that these were the seven liberal arts, and that it was these which were carved on the two pillars. In telling the story, the Cooke MS. introduces two elements, the one deliberately, the other unintentionally, for which there appears to be no authority. The former is a statement, on the supposed authority of the *Polychronicon*, that many years after the Flood, both pillars were found, one by Pythagoras and one by Hermes, who each taught the secrets they found written thereon. Actually, there is no such story in Higden's *Polychronicon*, and we have not found a parallel story elsewhere. This finding of both pillars by Pythagoras and Hermes is repeated in some of the later versions of the MS. Constitutions, e.g., the *Watson* and the *Tew*. The other peculiarity of the pillar story in the Cooke MS. is the belief that both pillars were made of stone, one of "marble", and the other of "lacerus". The second stone only came into existence because the writer or the copyist failed to recognise the Latin word *lateres* [= burnt bricks or tiles], through a not unusual difficulty of distinguishing between t and c in medieval manuscripts. Having made this initial blunder, the writer piles one misconception upon another. Marble was used for one pillar, he says, because it will not burn, whereas every medieval mason probably knew that it was burnt for making lime. His "lacerus" was used for the other pillar, he says, because it will not sink in water, which is obviously another misconception. Both misconceptions are repeated in subsequent versions of the MS. Constitutions; the word "lacerus" not unnaturally puzzled later Masonic scribes, and it appears in such forms as 'lathea' 'letera' 'lacerus' 'laternes' 'latres' 'lather' and 'saturns'.

1 *Ibid.*, p. 70. Cf. Peter Comestot, *Hist. Schol.*, "Genesis", xxxix. [69]

Although we have endeavored to trace the development of those legends of the craft for which biblical, apocryphal, classical, or medieval sources can be found, the mere discovery of the writings on which reliance was apparently placed, does not convert the legendary matter of the MS. Constitutions of Masonry into authoritative history. It merely proves that a good deal of the story related in the *Regius* and *Cooke MSS.* was not fabricated by the authors of those manuscripts; but for all that it must be regarded more or less as a myth. There are, however, other features of the Cooke "history" for which no sources have ever been discovered, e.g., the statements that Charles II organized masonry in France, that St. Alban organized masonry in England, and that Athelstan and his son gave English masons their charges. So far as we can ascertain, parallel statements find no place either in the early chronicles or in the recognized history books of the period, such as Higden's *Polychronicon* and John of Salisbury's *Polycraticus*. They are either inventions, pure and simple, of the author, or based on oral traditions current among contemporary masons, comparable doubtless with the tradition that King Alfred was the founder of Oxford University, or that King Athelstan first gave a constitution to the minstrels of Beverley, or that Robert the Bruce, after the Battle of Bannockburn (1314), instituted the Royal Order of Scotland with its headquarters at Kilwinning. Alfred, Athelstan and Bruce were doubtless in the stories to give ancient and royal sanction to institutions of later date and different origin. Actually, the legend that Athelstan, or an assembly convened by him, laid down charges for the masons accords ill with the weight of the available evidence, which shows [70] (a) that there was comparatively little building in stone in tenth century England, and (b) that the regulation of industry, when first imposed by external authority, was local and not national in character.

**The Four Crowned Martyrs** - There is still one legend of the craft to which reference must be made, viz., that of the Four Crowned Martyrs,<sup>(1)</sup> which does not occur in the historical section of any version of the MS. Constitutions of Masonry, but only in the later part of the *Regius MS.*, II, 497 534, under the heading **Ars Quatuor Coronatorum**. It was probably taken direct from the original Latin version in the Golden Legend. The oldest English account of the Quatuor Coronati, or Four Crowned Martyrs, a manuscript attributed to the second half of the tenth century, states that they were four Roman stone workers named **Claudius, Castorius, Symphorianus and Nichostratus**. They, together with their fellow worker and convert, Simplicius, because of their refusal to forsake Christianity, were by order of the Emperor [Diocletian] locked alive in leaden coffers and thrown into a river. According to a previous Latin account, written by Bede early in the eighth century, the first Quatuor Coronati were not the five craftsmen, but four men, named **Severus, Severianus, Carpophorus and Victorinus**, said by other medieval writers to be soldiers, who were put to death by Diocletian's orders for refusing to sacrifice to idols. The various writers agree that the commemoration of both groups of martyrs on the same day, **November 8**, was instituted by Melchiades or Miltiades, Bishop of Rome (312 14).

1 These two paragraphs on the Quatuor Coronati are based on Two MSS., 44 51 [71]

The commemoration of the Four Crowned Martyrs was fairly widespread on the continent in the Middle Ages, one church at Rome being dedicated to them at least as early as A.D. 595. They were the patron saints of various medieval guilds; the Antwerp guild of that name, embracing all the building trades, was mentioned on page 53 above. They were also held in honor in many other cities of the Low Countries. Furthermore, they were the patron saints of the German *Steinmetzen*. It is far from clear, however, by what route and at what time the Quatuor Coronati came to mean anything to medieval operative masons in England. That their memory was preserved by the Church is shown both by the dedication of a church to them at Canterbury in the seventh century, and by their inclusion in various medieval English and Scottish martyrologies. We know, however, of no English evidence before the fifteenth century to show that English masons held the Four Crowned Martyrs in special honor, and even then the evidence is but very slight. So far as we know, the guilds and fraternities to which English and Scottish masons belonged had other patron saints; thus the London masons honored St. Thomas of Acon, and the Edinburgh masons St. John. The Quatuor Coronati were apparently not held in special honor by English masons before 1450, and their feast day, November 8, was not kept as a holiday at a time when saints' days and church festivals were very freely recognized. The first occasion on which we find it observed was in 1453 at the building of Eton College; it was then kept as a holiday by the freemasons, but unlike other feast days, it was a holiday without pay. The same



somewhat grudging recognition of November 8 occurred at Eton College in 1456, 1458 and 1459. We have not been able to trace November 8 as a holiday at any subsequent building operations, except possibly at the Tower of London in 1535, when three out of the four masons absented themselves from work that day. The reason for this may have been, as mentioned on page 45 above, that the London Masons' Ordinances of 1481 required each member to attend mass on that day. It was not, however, the gild's great day; that, once every two years, was "the Day of Oeptas [Utas, octave] of the holy Trinitee", when after mass the members and their wives feasted together. It thus appears probable that such recognition as was accorded to the Quatuor Coronati by English masons commenced only in the fifteenth century, and the existing evidence hardly justifies us in saying that at any period in England were they venerated as patron saints of the masons.

The association, such as it was, of the Four Crowned Martyrs with freemasonry is commemorated [72] in the name of the oldest Masonic lodge of research, the Quatuor Coronati Lodge, No. 2076, London.

#### THE EVOLUTION OF THE CRAFT LEGENDS, CIRCA 1390 TO CIRCA 1725

The legendary portion of the MS. Constitutions of Masonry is in essence a "history" of the building craft from biblical times onwards. This "history", like others, was from time to time revised and altered. How often that happened between the late fourteenth and the early eighteenth century is not known, but the "history" has come down to us in five main forms, apart from the version prepared by the Rev. James Anderson for The Constitutions of the Free-Masons (1723).

(i) The earliest form of the "history" is that contained in the Regius MS., ll. 1 86, and the Cooke MS., ii. 643 726. It is impossible to determine by internal evidence exactly when either manuscript was written, but examination of the handwriting suggests to the paleographical experts of the British Museum that the Regius MS. was written about 1390 and the Cooke MS. about 1400 or 1410.(1) These texts are descended from a common ancestor, which was probably in existence by circa 1360.(2) According to this version, which may be styled the Old Short History, and can be regarded as the ancestor or common original of all the surviving versions, **geometry** (= masonry) was founded by Euclid in Egypt, as a means for the children of Egyptian nobles to make a living. Euclid taught the children **geometry**, ordained the rank of master mason, and provided that the less skilled were to be called fellows. Thereafter, **geometry** was taught in many lands and came to England in the reign of Athelstan, who ordained congregations and articles. No descendant of the Regius MS., the only known version of the Old Charges in verse, has been traced.

(ii) The second version is that given at the beginning of the Cooke MS., ll. 1 642. This version, which may be styled the New Long History, after dealing with the seven liberal arts (cf. Regius MS., ll. 551 76), **the biblical invention of geometry** and other sciences, with the Two Pillars and the Tower of Babel (cf. Regius MS., ll. 535 50), **explains how Abraham taught geometry to Euclid**, who founded the craft of masonry. It then refers to the Israelites learning masonry in Egypt and to Solomon building the Temple in Jerusalem. It goes on to explain how masonry was organized by Charles II in France and by St. Alban in England. Finally, it states that Athelstan and his son gave English masons their charges. It was probably written after 1350, but before circa 1390. The descendants of the Cooke MS., and the modifications they introduce into the "history", are discussed in the next paragraph.

1 Two MSS., 3.  
2 *ibid.*, 59. [73]

(iii) The third is the version appearing in the **Henry Heade MS. (1675)** and the **William Watson MS. (1681)**, and more briefly in abstracts known as the **Ralph Poole MS. (1665)** and the **Plot MS. (1686)**. This version, which is descended from the Cooke MS. Original (in which the Old Short History and the New Long History were first brought together) differs from the New Long History of the Cooke MS., which it follows closely for the first 596 lines, in its amplification of the English portion of the history, and in particular by the addition of the statement that the charges had been seen and approved by "our late sovereign lord, King Henry VI" and his Council, a statement for which as yet no confirmation has been found. It possibly has reference to a statute of 1437, 15 Henry VI, c. 6, which provided that no gild, fraternity, or company should make any new ordinance without first submitting it to the authorities for approval. The biblical names in these manuscripts appear in post Reformation spellings, but it is possible that this represents a second revision, and that the main changes had been made in an earlier pre Reformation revision. The reference to "our late sovereign lord, King Henry VI" is generally assumed to date the first revision as falling in the reign of his successor, Edward IV (1461 83), but this does not necessarily follow. Had Henry VI been the previous sovereign, he would probably have been described as "our late sovereign lord, King Henry". The fact that "VI" was added seems to imply that Henry VII was dead. Thus in [74] our opinion the first revision (the Watson MS. Original) probably dates from the first half of the reign of Henry VIII (1509 47).

(iv) A fourth version of the "history" is presented in the Grand Lodge No. z MS. of 1583 and most of the later manuscripts, including those of the Sloane and Roberts families. Strictly speaking, we are here concerned with several versions differing slightly from one another, but nevertheless sufficiently alike in their main features to be regarded for our present purpose as constituting one version of the "history". They all apparently spring either from an expansion of the Old Short History, an expansion very similar to that of the New Long History of the Cooke MS., though freer from ambiguities and contradictions, or from a revision of the New Long History. The most important modifications are those introduced into the French legend: first, Charles II is replaced by Charles Martel; second, it introduces "a curious [= skilful] mason called **Naymus Grecus**", who is said to have been present at the building of the Temple at Jerusalem and to have brought the craft to France. He thus corresponds to the Maitre Jacques of the *compagnonnage* legend.(1) Who "Naymus Grecus" was is uncertain; E. H. Dring's identification of him with Alcuin, the teacher of Charlemagne,(2) has recently been contested by Douglas Hamer, who identifies him, much more probably, with Nehemiah.(3) The name "Naymus Grecus" has come down to us in nearly as many forms and spellings as there are surviving texts, which shows that it has been copied and mis copied many times, the presumption being that the form "Naymus Grecus" is itself an erroneous transcription. This makes it possible that the particular expansion of the Old Short History, or the revision of the New Long History, as the case may be, from which these versions are descended, was made about the same time as the Cooke MS. Original was prepared, that is, towards the end of the fourteenth century. How many intermediates there are between the expansion, or the revision, on the one hand, and the Grand Lodge No. 1 MS. of 1583 on the other, it is impossible to say. Obviously, the Grand Lodge MS. Original, from which the Grand Lodge No. 1 MS. was copied in 1583, must be older than 1560, the date of the manuscript from which the **Levander York MS.**, a member of the Grand Lodge family, was copied circa 1740; the language and style hardly suggest a date before the first half of the sixteenth century.

1 See pp. 58 9 above; cf. Misc. Lat., x, 128; and xi, 62.

2 A.Q.C., xviii, 179 95; xix, 45 62.

3 Ibid., xlvi, 63 7. [75]

A variant of this fourth version of the "history" appears in the **Thomas IV. Tew MS.** and in other members of the Tew family. In this version the historical account of masonry, including the French legend, is in the revised form which we find in the Grand Lodge family, but in two respects it differs from **Grand Lodge No. 1 MS.**, and bears a marked affinity to the Watson and Heade MSS. In the first place, it relates that the two pillars, on which the seven liberal arts were carved to keep them from perishing, were both found after the Deluge, whereas the Grand Lodge texts speak of the finding of one pillar only. In the second place, the charges are prefaced by a brief summary of the "history". Further, the charges of the Tew MS. itself (as distinct from the other members of the family) closely resemble those of the Watson, Heade and Dautesey MSS., in being intermediate between those of the Regius MS. and the ordinary seventeenth century version. It seems likely, either that the Tew family derives from the Cooke MS. Original by a line other than the Grand Lodge family, or that the Tew MS. Original, from which the Tew MS. was copied early in the eighteenth century, was built up from two different sources. In any case, the Tew MS. Original appears to be older than the other versions containing the Grand Lodge account of the "history", but that does not necessarily imply that it is the ancestor of those versions.

(v) The fifth version is that occurring in the Spencer family. This form appears to be a revision of the Grand Lodge version, through an intermediate which combines the characteristics of both the Spencer and the Grand Lodge versions, such as the **Cama MS.**(1) The principal changes are the omission of Naymus Grecus and Charles Martel (Augustine being substituted in the line of transmission),

1 Poole, Two Versions of the Old Charger, 3. [76]

the introduction of the Second and Third Temples and other prominent building operations, and the expansion of the narrative leading to Athelstan and Edwin. Other modifications are the naming of King Solomon's master mason as Hiram Abif, the description of Edwin as brother of Athelstan, and the fixing of the year 932 as the date of Edwin's assembly at York. All the texts of this family appear to date from 1725 or shortly afterwards. In some respects, the Spencer "history" resembles that in Anderson's Constitutions of 1723, but in Vibert's opinion the Spencer texts owe nothing to Anderson.(1) On the other hand, Bro. Poole inclines to the view that the compiler of the Spencer texts may have been acquainted with Anderson's Constitutions, and have deliberately avoided using new material included by Anderson(2)

#### THE REGULATIONS AND THEIR EVOLUTION

The Regulations are statements of masons' customs; though on some points, such as apprenticeship and payment of wages for holidays, they must be taken as indicating what was considered desirable, rather than what was the common practice in the late fourteenth century. It is likely that the customs were originally preserved and transmitted orally, and that they were not set down in writing, in anything like the comprehensive form in which they are embodied in the Articles and Points of the Regius and Cooke MSS., until the third quarter of the fourteenth century. It is possible, however, that they were committed to writing in a much more rudimentary form before 1350. In the Cooke MS., ll. 418 24, there is the twofold statement (i) that there were charges in earlier [medieval] times, and (ii) that contemporary masons also had charges, both written a in Latin and French, and both telling the story of Euclid. If we accept this twofold statement, as we are inclined to do, provided that by "earlier [medieval] times" no very remote antiquity is implied, the presumption is that these written versions a contemporary one, and an earlier one - were contained in what the Cooke MS. describes as the "book."

1 Vibert, ed., The Constitutions of the Free Masons 1723 (1923), xx.

2 Poole, op. cit., 4. [77]

As the contemporary, i.e., late fourteenth century, version is fathered by the Cooke MS., ll. 696 '726, on Athelstan (A.D. 925 40), it is possible that the earlier written version is that fathered by the Cooke MS., ll. 365 417, on Nimrod (c. 2350 B.C.). That charge, said to have been given by Nimrod to the masons whom he sent to build Nineveh for Assur, provided that they were to be true to their lord, to discharge their work truly, and not to take more reward in respect of it than they deserved; that they were to love one another, and finally, that he who had the most cunning (= skill) was to teach his fellows.

If what we may call the 'Nimrod' charge was based on the earliest written version of the Regulations contained in the Book of Charges, as seems not unlikely, the second earliest surviving version, likewise based on the Book of Charges, is that embodied in the nine Articles and Points of the later part of the Cooke MS., ll. 727 959, and there attributed to Athelstan and his council. Actually, it represented the contemporary practice at the time it was set down in writing, in the third quarter of the fourteenth century. This second version is an amplification of the first or 'Nimrod' version (which possibly dates from the first half of the fourteenth century). The Articles, mainly addressed to masters, provide that the master shall not pay a higher wage than is warranted by the cost of victuals, that every master mason shall attend the general congregation; that no master shall take an apprentice for less than seven years, or take as apprentice a bondman or one not whole of limb, or take more wages from his employer for his apprentice than the latter's work deserves; that no master shall harbor a mason who is a thief or robber; that a less skilled journeyman shall be replaced by a better skilled man; and that no master shall supplant another who has already begun his work. The Points, mainly addressed to journeymen, require the mason to love God and uphold the Church, his master and his fellows; to do an honest day's work for the wages paid; to be true to the craft and to take his pay without dispute; to postpone the investigation of quarrels until the next holiday; not to covet his master's wife or daughter; if appointed warden, to be true to his master and to mediate fairly between [78] the master and the fellows. Further, a skilled mason is to assist a less skilled one, and an apprentice is not to disclose his master's secrets or whatever he may hear or see in the lodge. In addition, there are some unnumbered points in ll. 901 51, which deal with the constitution of the Assembly, the forswearing of thieving, the loyalty of masons to master, king and craft, and the punishment of false masons.

Although the Cooke MS. dates from about 1410, its version of the Regulations, as embodied in the Articles and Points, is undoubtedly older than the more elaborate Regulations contained in the Articles and Points of the Regius MS. of circa 1390, so that

the compiler of the Cooke MS. must have used an older text of the Book of Charges than did the author of the Regius MS. As the latter cannot have used a text later than circa 1390, the Articles and Points of the Cooke MS. must be based on a text written before circa 1390, though internal evidence shows that it was written after 1350.

The third oldest surviving version of the Regulations is that contained in the Articles and Points of the Regius MS. of circa 1390. These Regulations bear evidence of further revision and amplification, but like the Articles and Points of the Cooke MS., are also fathered on Athelstan (Regius MS.) ll. 67-86). The Articles and Points of the Regius MS. repeat the substance of those contained in the Cooke MS., though they amplify the admonition to do an honest day's work for the wages paid, by the statement that the mason will then be paid for his holidays. They supplement those of the Cooke MS. by six further Articles and Points, though the last four Points really correspond to the four unnumbered Points of the Cooke MS. The new Articles provide that the master is to be certain of being able to carry through any work which he undertakes; that no mason shall work at night except in study; that no mason shall disparage another's work; that the master shall be responsible for the instruction of the apprentice; that no master shall take an apprentice unless he can be certain of giving him full instruction; that no master shall claim to maintain more masons than he actually does. The new [79] Points provide that the steward of the hall shall charge each man alike, pay for all food, and keep accounts; further, that if a mason leads a bad life or is a bad workman, he shall be ordered to appear before the next assembly.

The fourth version of the Regulations, in chronological order, is that contained in the William Watson, Thomas W. Tew, Dautesey, and Henery Heade MSS. These manuscripts date from the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century, but their charges are probably based on a late fifteenth or early sixteenth century document, and possess more affinity to the Articles and Points of the Regius MS. than do those of the remaining modern texts. These Regulations, whilst continuing most of the older provisions, with their close resemblance to gild rules, "omit certain provisions, e.g., the prohibition of night work, the fixing of the apprentice's wage, the substitution of a more perfect for a less perfect craftsman, and the fixing of wages according to the cost of victuals. On the other hand, they introduce several new provisions, e.g., that task work is not to be substituted for day work; that masons are not to play cards or dice; that no fellow shall go into town at night without another fellow to bear witness that he has been in honest company; that no master shall make a mould or square for a layer, or set a layer to work in the lodge. The most striking new provision is one permitting fellows, as well as masters, to take apprentices.

The fifth and last version of the Regulations is that which appears in the Charges General and Singular of the Grand Lodge No. 1 MS. of 1583 and the remaining modern texts of the MS. Constitutions of Masonry. They follow the fourth version closely, the main differences being that they omit the provisions relating to holidays, serving as warden, being a mediator between master and fellows, acting as steward, and helping a fellow who is less skilful.

1 See Knoop, "Gild Resemblances in the Old MS. Charges", A.Q.C., zlii (1929). [80]

#### CHANGES IN THE FORM OF THE MS. CONSTITUTIONS

In an endeavor to trace changes in the form of the MS. Constitutions, we propose to leave aside the Regius MS, which is in a class by itself. It is a poem giving the Old Short History, and the Articles and Points, together with directions regarding an assembly, an account of the Four Crowned Martyrs, a description of the building of the Tower of Babel, an account of the seven liberal arts, portions of John Mirk's Instructions for Parish Priests, and the whole of Urbanitatis, a metrical treatise on manners. Instead, we treat the Cooke MS. as the oldest version. This consists of five elements:

- (i) a statement of man's debt to God;
- (ii) the New Long History;
- (iii) the Old Short History;
- (iv) the Articles and Points;
- (v) a brief Closing Prayer.

The first element is replaced in most of the later versions by an Invocation to the Trinity. The second element, the New Long History, in one or other of its revised forms, is found in nearly all versions.(1) The third element, the Old Short History, tends to disappear in the course of revisions, and can be traced, in a very abbreviated form, in only a few of the later versions, e.g., the William Watson and the Thomas W. Tew MSS. Between the History and the Regulations, most of the later versions have two new elements, an Instruction regarding the administration of the oath to observe the Regulations, and an exhortation to take heed of the Charges. The fourth element, the Articles and Points, in their new guise as Charges General and Singular, constitute the second principal portion of most of the later versions.(2) The fifth element, the brief Closing Prayer, is preceded in those later versions which contain the Charges, by a brief Admonition to keep well and truly the Charges which have been rehearsed. Thus the commonest form of the later versions of the MS. Constitutions of Masonry is as follows:

- 1 An exception is the Drinkwater No. 2 MS., which consists of charges only.
- 2 An exception is the Taylor MS., which is a remnant having no charges. [81]

- (i) an Invocation to the Trinity;
- (ii) the "History" of Masonry;
- (iii) an Instruction regarding the administration of the oath to observe the Charges;
- (iv) an Exhortation to take heed of the Charges;
- (v) the Charges General and Singular;
- (vi) a brief Admonition to keep the Charges;
- (vii) a brief Closing Prayer.

Certain important further additions, however, appear in some versions. First, there are nearly a score which contain an Apprentice Charge of a definitely operative character, similar in content to the conditions of an apprentice's indentures. Secondly, of the versions which contain an Apprentice Charge, there are four or five, belonging to the Roberts family, which also contain a code of New Articles, of a definitely speculative character, laying down the conditions on which a person can be accepted as a freemason., Thirdly, at least nine versions contain a special reference to Masonic secrets. Thus, the Harris No. 1 MS. (second half seventeenth

century), Dumfries No. 3 MS. (late seventeenth century) and Thos. Carmick MS. (1727) provide for the appointment of a tutor to instruct the candidate in secrets which must never be committed to writing. The Drinkwater No. 2 MS. (c. 1710) contains an oath, in terms which resemble those of certain Masonic catechisms, to keep secret the signs and tokens to be declared to the candidate, and the Buchanan MS. (c. 1670) contains a somewhat similar oath. The Grand Lodge No. 2 MS. (second half of the seventeenth century), the Harleian MS. 1942 (of about the same date) and the Roberts Print (1722) give the oath of secrecy to be taken by a person before he can be accepted as a freemason. Bound up with Harleian MS. 2054 (second half of the seventeenth century), and in the same handwriting, is a scrap of paper referring to the "severall words and signes of a free Mason" to be revealed to the candidate and kept secret by him. Finally, three versions the Gateshead MS., which includes an Apprentice Charge, the Xnwick MS., and the Taylor MS. have Orders appended, of a definitely operative character, fixing the fines to be paid for various offences. Thus the MS. Constitutions of Masonry, in their most complete form, consist of the previously enumerated seven elements together with

- (viii) the New Articles;
- (ix) an Oath of Secrecy;
- (x) an Apprentice Charge.

1 The Apprentice Charge and the New Articles will be found in the Roberts printed version of the MS. Constitutions, reprinted in E.M.P., 7, 83. [82]

The Harleian MS. 1942 and the Grand Lodge No. 2 MS., for example, each contain these ten elements. The remaining element the Orders does not appear in versions which have the New Articles or an Oath of Secrecy, and there is, consequently, no single version which contains all eleven elements.

Practically all versions of the MS. Constitutions contain a provision regarding secrecy. According to the third Point of the Regius MS. the apprentice shall swear to keep secret the master's teaching, and whatever he sees or hears done in lodge; according to the third Point of the Cooke MS., the prospective mason shall "hele" the counsel of his fellows in lodge and in chamber. The fourth General Charge of most of the later versions requires every mason to keep true counsel both of lodge and chamber and all other counsels that ought to be kept by way of masonry. As the mason swore to observe the charges, secrecy might be deemed to have been covered in his general oath; we are disposed to think, however, that these secrets of the apprentice, the prospective mason, and the mason were trade or technical secrets. That is possibly the meaning of the fourth Charge in versions belonging to the Roberts family: "you shall keep secret the obscure and intricate parts of the science, not disclosing them to any but such as study and use the same". The Oath of Secrecy, which we describe as the ninth element in our analysis, related, in our opinion, mainly, if not entirely, to any esoteric knowledge imparted to the candidate. Thus Harleian MS. 1942 appears to contemplate two Oaths: one, taken immediately after the reading of the Charges, to observe and keep those Charges; the other, taken immediately after the reading of the last of the New Articles, which states that no person shall be accepted a freemason, or know the secrets of the said society, until he has first taken the oath of secrecy hereafter following. In the Masonic catechism, Sloane MS. 3329, of circa 1700, the two Oaths [83] are combined in one,(1) and the candidate swore to keep secret "the mason word and everything therein contained" and truly to observe "the charges in the constitution". This distinction clearly implied that the Mason Word or esoteric knowledge was not included in the provision in the charges regarding secrecy.

1 E.M.C., 42-3 [84]

#### THE MS. CONSTITUTIONS AND MASONIC CEREMONIES

The general problem of the origin of Masonic ceremonies, including the part played by the MS. Constitutions in such ceremonies, is examined in Chapter X. Here we are concerned only with the original purpose served by the MS. Constitutions in the early days, when they were used by operative masons. Although the charges were statements of the 'customs' of the trade, they undoubtedly corresponded to the ordinances, regulations, or articles of ordinary municipal craft guilds. Amongst these it is possible to distinguish two types of rule, the one concerned primarily with the social or religious activities of the guild, the other with the trade activities. The former are sometimes described as 'fraternity' regulations, the latter as 'mystery' regulations. Not infrequently 'fraternity' regulations and 'mystery' regulations were embodied in one set of guild ordinances. Similarly, the masons' charges combine both kinds of regulation: the Charges General roughly correspond to the 'fraternity' regulations of a craft guild and the Charges Singular to the 'mystery' regulations. The common practice among the guilds was that the guild ordinances should be read (or recited) to newcomers; who had then to swear to observe the ordinances. As an example, the oath of the Guild of St. Katherine at Stamford may be set out in full in modern spelling: I shall be a true man to God Almighty, to Saint Mary and to St. Katherine, in whose honor and worship this Guild is founded; and shall be obedient to the Alderman of this Guild and to his successors, and come to him and to his Brethren when I have warning and not absent myself without reasonable cause. I shall be ready to pay scot and bear lot and all my duties truly to pay and do; the ordinances, constitutions and rules of the Guild to keep, obey, perform, and to my power maintain, to my life's end, so help me God and holydom and by this Book.(1)

In this matter, masons no doubt followed ordinary guild practice. Many versions of the MS. Constitutions of Masonry, at the end of the historical section, contain an instruction, usually in Latin, that the person to be made a mason should lay his hand on the Book (= the Bible), held by one of the oldest masons, whilst the Charges were read out, the Charges being introduced by an Exhortation that every mason should take heed of the Charges which he had sworn to keep. As the instruction in various versions begins "Then shall one of the elders . . .", or words to that effect, the presumption is that the "History", introduced by the Opening Prayer or Invocation, had previously been read to the candidate. This presumption is greatly strengthened by an entry of 1670 in the Mark Book of the Lodge of Aberdeen, where the Mason Charter, or version of the MS. Constitutions now known as the Ilberdeen MS., is written. The statement by the then members, described as "the authors of this Book" runs: "We ordain likewise that the Mason Charter be read at the entering of every entered prentice."(2) There is nothing in the Cooke MS. of the early fifteenth century to show whether the "History" and Regulations were read or recited to the candidate, and whether he had to swear to keep the Articles and Points, but it is quite possible that this practice was followed at that date, just as the masons at York Minster had to swear "upon ye boke" to keep the Ordinances laid down by the Cathedral Chapter in 1370.(3) The earliest versions of the MS. Constitutions to contain the

instruction are the Levander-York MS. Original(4) of 1560, the Melrose MS. Original,(5) of 1581, and the Grand Lodge No. 1 MS. of 1583.

1 Toulmin Smith, English Guilds (E.E.T.S., xl), 188.

2 Miller, 21.

3 Raine, 181.

4 From which the Levander York MS. was copied, circa 1740.

5 From which the Melrose No. 2 MS. was copied in 1674 [85]

Although there is no definite evidence before the second half of the sixteenth century that a version of the MS. Constitutions was read or recited to the person about to be made a mason, yet the probability that this did occur in late medieval times among operative masons is strong. On the other hand, there is no evidence to suggest that at this early period masons had a ceremony of admission differing from that of contemporary guilds. Subsequent modifications of the ceremonial, associated with the development of accepted masonry, and influenced, in our opinion, by Scottish practices connected with the giving of the Mason Word, are reflected in certain seventeenth century versions of the MS. Constitutions. These modifications will be discussed in Chapter X, where we examine more fully the origins of Masonic ceremonies. [86]

## CHAPTER V

### THE MASON WORD

BESIDES the MS. Constitutions of Masonry, embodying the legends and the regulations of the craft, which constitute one link between present day speculative and medieval operative masonry, there is another link, namely, the Mason Word and the practices associated with its communication. Two important differences, however, between the MS. Constitutions and the Mason Word must be noted. First, whereas versions of the former were in existence as early as the late fourteenth century, the latter has not been traced before the sixteenth century. Second, whereas the former would almost certainly appear to be of English origin (the few surviving Scottish versions being direct or indirect copies of English originals), the Mason Word, as an operative institution, is almost certainly of Scottish origin. No traces of the Mason Word, or of any other secret means of recognition, have been found among English operative masons in the Middle Ages; nor, so far as we know, is there any evidence even to suggest it. The system of recruitment by impressment, so common in England in the Middle Ages, implies that the 'pressed' man, if reasonably efficient, would be retained on the work, whether in possession of secret methods of recognition or not. Moreover it was provided by the eighth Article of the Regius and Cooke MSS. that a less skilled journeyman was to be replaced by a better skilled man as soon as practicable, which strongly suggests that, according to the masons' customs, skill, and not a password, was the recognized test leading to employment. No doubt English medieval operative masons had secrets, but as indicated on page 83 above, it may be presumed that the secrets referred to in the third Point of the Regius and Cooke MSS. and the fourth General Charge were trade or technical secrets, relating, for example, to the designing of an arch, or to the way in which a stone should [87] be laid so that its grain ran, so far as possible, as it did in its native bed in the rock. The Mason Word, as an operative institution, would appear to have been a Scottish practice (though its influence possibly extended to the two northern counties of Northumberland and Durham) and consequently in this chapter we are concerned almost entirely with Scottish conditions. The influence which this Scottish operative institution had on English accepted masonry in the seventeenth century, and subsequently on English speculative masonry, is discussed in Chapter X. Here we endeavor to describe the setting or background in which the Mason Word, as an operative institution, existed. We shall call attention to four points of importance, namely, (1) the scope, (ii) the purpose, (iii) the Organization, and (iv) the antiquity of the Mason Word.

1 The Secret Commonwealth of Elves, Fauns and Fairies (3rd ed., 1933), 108. An earlier, though briefer, reference to the Mason Word occurs in Kirk's "London in 1689 90" (Trans. Lond. and Mid. Arch. Soc., N.S., vii [1933], 139), where he recounts that when, in October 1689, he dined with Dr. Stillingfleet, Bishop elect of Worcester, the conversation turned on second sight. In the midst of the record of that conversation occurs the sentence: "The Dr. called the Mason Word a Rabbinical mystery, where I discovered somewhat of it." [88]

#### THE SCOPE OF THE MASON WORD

In Scotland there developed in early modern times a system of recognition to which, by the later part of the seventeenth century at the latest, there had been joined other elements. According to the Rev. Robert Kirk, Minister of Aberfoyle, writing in 1691, the Mason Word is like a Rabbinical Tradition, in way of comment on Jachin and Boaz, the two Pillars erected in Solomon's Temple (i Kings, vii, 21) with one Addition of some secret Signe delyvered from Hand to Hand, by which they know and become familiar one with another.(1)

A letter of 1697, written from Scotland, and preserved among the Portland MSS., states that he Laird[s] of Roslin ... are obliged to receive the mason's word which is a secret signall masons have throughout the world to know one another by. They alledge 'tis as old as since Babel, when they could not understand one another and they conversed by signs. Others would have it no older than Solomon. However it is, he that hath it will bring his brother mason to him without calling to him or your perceiving of the signe.(l)

Unfortunately, we have too little documentary evidence to enable us to trace, with any certainty, changes in the scope of the Mason Word, or to ascertain from what sources the esoteric knowledge connected with it was introduced. The Edinburgh Register House MS.(2) written in 1696, suggests that the essence of the matter lay in words, signs, a grip, and postures, which, together with "the five points of the fellowship", were communicated to members, either upon their admission as entered apprentices, or subsequently when they became fellow crafts. The "five points" are not explained, but simply listed as follows: foot to foot, knee to knee, heart to heart, hand to hand, and ear to ear. An explanation of a slightly different set of "five points" is given in the recently discovered Graham MS.(3) written in 1726, by means of a gruesome story relating to Noah. His three sons, desirous of finding something about him to lead them to the valuable secret which their father had possessed for all things needful for the new world were in the Ark with Noah went to Noah's grave, agreeing beforehand that if they did not find the very thing itself, the first thing they found was to be to them as a secret. They found nothing in the grave except the dead body; when the finger was gripped it came away, and so with the

wrist and elbow. The sons then reared up the dead body, supporting it by setting foot to foot, knee to knee, breast to breast, cheek to cheek and hand to back. Thereupon "one said here is yet mar[r]ow in this bone and the second said but a dry bone

1 Hist. MSS. Com., Portland MSS., ii, 56. For particulars of the Lairds of Roslin, a branch of the St. Clair family, and their claim to be protectors and patrons of the Craft in Scotland, see Lyon, 64 72. Cf. PP 97 8 below.

2 E.M.C., 31.

3 Ibid., 84. [89]

and the third said it stinketh (1) so they agreed for to give it a name as is known to free masonry to this day".

Another possible explanation of the "five points" is provided by a story relating to Hiram, of which the oldest known form is that in Prichard's *Masonry Dissected*, first published in 1730.(2) An advertisement of 1726, quoted by Sadler,(3) which refers to "the whole History of the Widow's Son killed by the Blow of a Beetle", strongly suggests that a version of the story was known in 1726. Anderson's long footnote on Hiram, in the *Constitutions of 1723*, makes it not impossible that masons were acquainted with a version of the story as early as 1723. The story may even have been known in 1721, if Anderson's description (*Constitutions of 1738*, p. 113) of the Deputy Grand Master's Chair in June 1721, as that of "Hiram Abbiif", correctly represents the usage of that year, when Dr. Beal was installed in that Chair, and not merely the practice of 1738, at the time when the description was written. According to this story, which is also connected with a search for a secret, three masons murdered Hiram, King Solomon's master of the works at the building of the Temple, in an attempt to extort from him the secrets of a master mason. On his being missed, **fifteen fellow crafts** were ordered to search for him, and they agreed that if they did not find the word in or about him the first word should be the master's word. Ultimately his body was found under a covering of green moss, and King Solomon ordered that it should be taken up and decently buried. When they took him by the forefinger the skin came off, whereupon they took a firmer grip of his hand and raised him by the five points of fellowship, viz., hand to hand, foot to foot, cheek to cheek, knee to knee, and hand to back.

The marked similarity between the Noah story and the Hiram story in its oldest known form is very striking; both have the same main motif the attempt to obtain a secret from a dead body, and both have the same subsidiary motif;

1 The remark may be reminiscent of medieval and sixteenth century satires on relics.

2 E.M.C., 108.

3 A.Q.C. xxiii, 325, reprinted in E.M.P., 193. [90]

the intention to provide a substituted secret, failing the discovery of a genuine one. Where either story originally came from, or how it became associated with masonry, is unknown. It is possible, however, that the Noah story had some connection with the narrative in Genesis ix. 21 7 of the shaming of Noah, to which it is in some respects parallel. The stories of Noah and Hiram call to mind the fact that in Biblical instances of the miraculous restoration of life,(1) the prophet or apostle lay full length upon the body and breathed into its face. In the case of Elisha, who raised the son of the Shunammite woman (2 Kings iv. 34 5) the process is described in detail:

34. And he [Elisha] went up, and lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands: and he stretched himself upon the child; and the flesh of the child waxed warm.

35. Then he returned, and walked in the house to and fro; and went up, and stretched himself upon him: and the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes.

Here complete coincidence between living and dead was established twice, first by placing mouth to mouth, eyes to eyes and hands to hands, and secondly, by stretching at full length upon the body. It is thus not impossible that the original stories of Noah and Hiram may have been those of attempts to restore these men to life, because their secrets had died with them.

The Biblical examples show that the idea of complete coincidence of living and dead was associated with the restoration of the dead to life. This might develop into necromantic practices, and in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the idea would survive only as necromancy. It would seem not inconceivable that one story was modeled on the other, and that the original story rested on an old tradition connecting Ham, son of Noah, with magic and the black arts. The disinterment of Noah was clearly an act of necromancy, and it is therefore pertinent to note

1 Kings xvii. 17 23; 2 Kings iv. 34 5; Acts xx. 9 12. [91]

that Ham, son of Noah, is connected in medieval tradition, if not with necromancy in its narrower sense, at any rate with the black arts. The tradition is recorded in Reginald Scot's *Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1586),(1) and the connection is asserted in the thirteenth century *Speculum Historiale* of Vincent de Beauvais.(2) In the later part of the seventeenth century a connection between magic and the Mason Word was suspected in at least one part of Scotland. It would appear that in 1695 the household of Andrew Mackie, a mason living in Kircudbrightshire, was troubled by happenings of an apparently diabolic origin. The minister of the parish, the Rev. Alexander Telfair, who tried to exorcise the agent, and also published an account of the matter in 1696,(3) recorded that "The said Andrew Mackie being a meason to his employment, 'tis given out, that when he took the meason word, he devoted his first child to the Devil; but I am certainly informed he never took the same, and knows not what that word is".

The word itself is as obscure in origin as the story. The bone, being the first thing found according to the Noah story, must presumably have some significance. Whether the phrase "mar[r]ow in this bone" is significant is not so certain. It may be noted that the word marrow, in addition to its ordinary meaning, has certainly another, and possibly a symbolical meaning, for Scottish masons. It was used in Northern Middle English, and in Scotland down to the nineteenth century, to denote 'partner', 'fellow', 'mate', and it is not uncommon in that sense in sixteenth and seventeenth century Scottish building accounts.(4) "Here is yet mar[r]ow in this bone" may thus have been a reminder that fellowship was of the essence of masonry. It is also possible that "mar[r]ow in this bone" may have been intended to serve as a mnemonic. In that case, it was conceivably to call to memory the word **mahabyn**, which, according to the Masonic catechism Sloane MS. 3329 5 of circa 1700, was the master's word, or the somewhat similar

1 Ed. Montague Summers, 222.

2 Book ii, chap. ci.

3 For Telfair's Tract, see A.Q.C., xiv, 56; also C. K. Sharpe, A historical account of the belief in Witchcraft in Scotland, 1884, 234.

4 S.M., 95, n. 2.

5 E.M.C., 42. [92]

form **matchpin**, given as the master's word in another Masonic catechism, the Trinity College, Dublin, MS.(1) of 1711. Whether the master's word should be regarded as the Mason Word is very uncertain, and the same is true of its meaning. That, for our purpose, is less important than the fact of its existence, and the obvious usefulness of the word and the five points of fellowship for ceremonial purposes, a subject more fully discussed in Chapter X below.

#### THE PURPOSE OF THE MASON WORD

The obscurity of the Mason Word and the strangeness of the stories connected with it, by inviting the inquirer to seek an explanation of such unusual things, tend to distract attention from one important point, namely, that the Mason Word came into existence because it was useful. Its form may have been decided by other factors, and, once adopted, it may have become the nucleus of accretions of various kinds; but the thing itself, as distinct from its form and later associations, arose directly, like political society itself, out of necessity and utility. It may thus be compared with the aprons and gloves of Masonic ceremony, which, however decorative and symbolical they became, were at first practical things made to meet an everyday need. Our business, therefore, is to inquire into the conditions in which the Mason Word considered generally as a system of secret methods of recognition used among operative masons - was useful and necessary.

Little reflection is required in order to realize that the Mason Word could have had little or no use merely as a means of distinguishing skilled masons from others. That could have been better done by a practical test, by requiring the man who claimed to be skilled to prove his ability on the spot by hewing or laying stones. That, indeed, was the reasonable practice at York Minster in 1370: "no mason shall be received at work ... but he be first proved a week or more upon his well working".(2) The same thing seems to be implied by the eighth Article of the Regius and Cooke MSS. of circa 1400, which provided that a less skilled journeyman was to be replaced by a better skilled man as soon as

1 Ibid., 64.

2 Raine, 181 2. [93]

practicable. As early as 1356, Gilbert de Whitele had been appointed to survey the king's castles and manors with power, *inter alia*, to "remove any workmen found to be unskillful and to replace them by others more skilful".(1) When, therefore, we find masons providing themselves with the Word, we may presume that they intended thereby to enable a man to demonstrate, not his possession of skill, but his membership of a group or trade organization. A greater or lesser degree of skill was, indeed, necessary in order to qualify for membership, but it was not the only qualification. Possession of the Mason Word was an indication that the man to whom it had been communicated accepted the rules and shared in the privileges of the body, legalized or other, which guarded it. The Mason Word, in short, was evidence not simply of a technical, but of a social or corporate qualification, enabling the man who possessed it to claim, at need, benefits in the way of employment and possibly of relief.(2)

The need for some secret method of recognition arose from two conditions peculiar to Scotland, namely, the possibility of employment as masons open to the stoneworkers known as 'cowans', and the existence of an industrial grade, without exact parallel south of the border, that of the entered apprentice. Reference has already been made to 'cowans', a term originally used to describe builders of drystone walls, but later applied derogatorily to men who did the work of masons, without having been regularly apprenticed or bred to the trade. It was partly at least to prevent cowans from doing the work of qualified masons that the latter were entrusted with the Mason Word as a means of proving themselves. This explains a minute of Mother Kilwinning Lodge in 1707, "that no meason shall imploy no cowan, which is to say [one] without the word to work".(3)

1 Cal. Pat. Rolls, 1354 58, 413.

2 Lyon, 28; Miller, 30.

3 See O.E.D. under 'cowan'; and Lyon, 23 4. [94]

The system of entered apprenticeship, by creating a distinct class of semi qualified ex apprentices, further threatened the position of the fellow craft or fully qualified mason. In Scotland in the seventeenth century, and possibly earlier, apprentices and entered apprentices formed two distinct classes or grades.(1) The Schaw Statutes of 1598 provided that an apprentice must be bound for at least seven years, and that, except by special permission, a further period of seven years must elapse before he could be made a fellow craft. At Lanark, where a new seal of cause was granted to the masons and wrights in 1674, it was provided that no craftsman was to take an apprentice for a shorter period than three years, and that no apprentice was to be admitted a freeman without serving as a journeyman to a freeman for two years after the expiration of his apprenticeship.(2) The Laws and Statutes of the Lodge of Aberdeen, 1670,(3) show that three years had to elapse between the termination of an apprenticeship and reception into the fellowship. At Glasgow in the early seventeenth century an apprentice apparently served for seven years and a further two years "for meat and fee".(4) During his second term the ex apprentice was an entered apprentice, and normally worked as a journeyman for a master, though the Schaw Statutes did permit an entered apprentice to undertake a limited amount of work on his own account. That this general ordinance applied locally is shown by the Mutual Agreement of 1658, which regulated the affairs of the Lodge of Perth.(5) This provided that no entered apprentice should leave his master, or masters, to take any work or task work above 40s. Scots. Further, it was expressly provided that he was not to take an apprentice.

1 The evidence supporting this view was examined by Douglas Knoop in *The Mason Word* in 1938 (S.M., 86 90), and by R. J. Meekren in "The Aitchison's Haven Minutes", A.Q.C., liii (1941), and is not repeated here. Prior to 1938 Masonic writers assumed that the words "apprentice" and "entered apprentice" were equivalent.

2 Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Lanark, 196.

3 Miller, 57 folg.

4 J. Cruickshank, Lodge of Glasgow St. John, 63.

5 D. Crawford Smith, Lodge of Scoon and Perth, Chap. V. [95]

Lodge records show that the entered apprentice had a real, if subordinate, share in the government of the craft and in its privileges. Thus at Kilwinning in 1659 two fellow crafts and one entered apprentice out of each quarter, together with the Deacon and Warden, were appointed to meet each year at Ayr to deal with transgressors.(1) At Melrose the entered apprentices were parties to the Mutual Agreement of 1675, which regulated the affairs of the Lodge.(2) At Aberdeen in 1670, as the Laws and Statutes of the Lodge show, the entered apprentices received the benefit of the Mason Word at their entry; (3) further, each entered apprentice had his mark,(4) the same being the case at Dumfries in 1687.(5) The Schaw Statutes of 1598 provided that no master or fellow craft should be received except in the presence of six masters and two entered apprentices, and the early minutes of the Lodge of Edinburgh prove that this requirement was observed.(6)

An entered apprentice, having been properly trained, though officially but semi qualified, might well be as competent as many fellow crafts, and consequently able, in a district where his status was unknown, to compete successfully with the fellow crafts for employment. To prevent this, the fellow craft was entrusted with secret methods of recognition distinct from those of the entered apprentice.

#### THE ORGANISATION OF THE MASON WORD

Since the object for which the Mason Word was instituted would be defeated if the secrets were communicated irregularly or by unauthorized persons, it follows that the control of the process was an important function of the existing organizations of masons in Scotland. To that end there were required local organizations capable of co operating with each other and some supervising authority with a wide jurisdiction.

1 Minute of the Lodge, dated 29 December 1659, quoted in R. Wylie, History of Mother Lodge, Kilwinning, 2nd ed., 60.

2 Printed in W. F. Vernon, Freemasonry in Roxburghshire and Selkirkshire, 13.

3 Miller, 57.

4 See page from Mark Book reproduced in Miller, facing p. 28.

5 See regulation of Lodge of Dumfries printed in J. Smith, Old Lodge of Dumfries, 9.

6 Lyon, 79 [96]

**The Local Organizations** - The local organization which conferred the benefit of the Mason Word was a certain type of lodge consisting of an organized body of masons associated with a particular town or district. This body we describe as a "territorial lodge" to distinguish it from the temporary or permanent workshop or lodge associated with a particular building operation. These "territorial lodges" enjoyed an official or semi official position and were fairly widespread in Scotland. In England, so far as we are aware, there were no official or semi official organizations bearing the name of "lodge". The only bodies of masons discharging official or semi official functions were described as "companies" or "fellowships", which roughly corresponded to the Scottish "incorporations". At the beginning of the eighteenth century, however, there do appear to have been in the North of England lodges of a "territorial" type, but with no official status, such as those at Alnwick (1) in Northumberland, and Swalwell (2) in County Durham.

Co operation among "Territorial Lodges" (3) By the end of the sixteenth or the beginning of the seventeenth century, there are various indications of co operation among Scottish lodges. The chief examples of voluntary co operation are afforded by the documents known as the St. Clair Charters of 1601 and 1628. By the first, representatives of the Lodges of Edinburgh, St. Andrews, Haddington, Aitchison's Haven and Dunfermline, on behalf of the deacons, masters and freemen of the masons within the realm of Scotland, and with the assent of William Schaw, King's Master of Work, agreed that William St. Clair of Roslin should purchase from the King, for himself and his heirs, "Liberty, Freedom and jurisdiction" over all the masons of Scotland. The second charter, signed by representatives of the Lodges of Edinburgh, Dundee, Glasgow, Stirling, Dunfermline, Ayr and St. Andrews, on behalf of the deacons, masters and freemen of the masons and hammer men within the kingdom of Scotland, is a confirmation and elaboration of the first charter. The interest of these charters lies not only in the claims of the St. Clairs of Roslin to exercise an hereditary right of supervision over the masons of Scotland, a claim which appears to have been disallowed by the Court of the Exchequer in 1635, but in the uniting of no fewer than five lodges in 1601 and of seven lodges in 1628, or of nine different lodges in all, from places more than 80 miles apart, to support that claim.

1 See W. H. Rylands, "The Alnwick Lodge Minutes", A.Q.C., xiv, 4 13, and the reproduction of the Minute Book printed by the Province of Northumberland and Durham, S.R.I.A., in 1895.

2 See "The Minute Book of the Lodge of Industry [Swalwell], Gateshead", Masonic Mag., Vol. iii (1875 6), 72 6, 82 5, 125 7, 348 9.

3 This section is based on S.M., 52 6. [97]

Of compulsory or semi compulsory collaboration more illustrations can be given. They mostly center in the office of Master of Work to the Crown of Scotland, which we describe more fully in the next section. Three pieces of evidence, dated during the period when William Schaw held that office, point to some kind of widespread collective activity amongst masons. (i) On 28 December 1598, there was promulgated by William Schaw, "with the consent of the masters after specified", what are known as the Schaw Statutes of 1598.(1) Unfortunately, the names of the masters who consented do not appear to have been preserved in the copies which have survived, and thus we do not know from what lodges representatives attended. (ii) A year later, on 28 December 1599, a further set of Statutes and Ordinances was issued by William Schaw,(2) directed more particularly to the Lodge of Kilwinning. It gave to that lodge certain supervisory powers over other lodges in the Nether Ward of Clydesdale, Glasgow, Ayr and Carrick. From the last clause it would seem that the Statutes were issued on the authority of the Warden General and Principal Master of Work, at the request of the Lodge of Kilwinning, but that certain privileges and powers which the lodge desired could not be granted at the time, because of the absence of the King from Edinburgh, and because no masters, other than the masters of the Lodge of Edinburgh, were present at the meeting in Edinburgh on 27 and 28 December. This implies that for certain purposes an assembly of masters from one lodge only was insufficient. Both on account of this implication, and because of the powers which the Lodge of Kilwinning exercised over other lodges in the West of Scotland, these statutes throw an interesting light on Masonic organization.



1 Printed in Lyon, 9.  
2 Ibid., 12. [98]

(iii) An entry in the Minute Book of the Lodge of Edinburgh, under date 27 November 1599,(1) records that a general meeting was to be held at St. Andrews on 13 January 1600, "for settling and taking order with the affairs of the Lodge of St. Andrews". The meeting was to be attended by (a) two commissioners from "everie pircular [? Particular] lodge", (b) by the whole of the masters and others within the jurisdiction of the Lodge of St. Andrews, and (c) by the masters of Dundee and Perth, the penalty for failure to attend being £10 Scots in each case. To judge by the context, "pircular" lodges were probably subordinate lodges under the jurisdiction of the Lodge of St. Andrews, which in that case very possibly exercised some kind of supervision over Fifeshire lodges, corresponding to that exercised by the Lodge of Kilwinning over West of Scotland lodges. The "others within the jurisdiction of the Lodge of St. Andrews" were presumably the fellow crafts and entered apprentices. As Dundee and Perth were mentioned separately and were to be represented in a different manner from the other lodges, the presumption is that the Lodges of Dundee and Perth were somewhat of the standing of the Lodge of St. Andrews.

Another and earlier example of jurisdiction exercised over masons resident in a fairly wide area is afforded by the election of Patrick Copeland of Udaught, by choice of a majority of the master masons of the district, to the office of Warden and justice over the masons within the counties of Aberdeen, Banff and Kincardine.(2) This particular election was ratified by the King in 1590.

The most definite evidence of co operation or collaboration to secure freedom of movement amongst masons is afforded by what are known as the Falkland Statutes of 1636,(3) which provided for the better regulation of masons, wrights and other artificers engaged in the building industry, by the foundation of unprivileged companies outside those places where the trades in question were organized as privileged companies or incorporations, under seals of cause. The Statutes contemplated three sorts of conditions in which masons might be working away from home: (a) masters and servants associated with a particular unprivileged company might work in the area of another unprivileged company on payment of certain fees; (b) artificers residing near a free burgh in which a privileged company was established by seal of cause might be examined by that company and, if found proficient, admitted to the craft; they could then work outside their own area, in any unprivileged place, on payment of certain fees; (c) members of a privileged company and their servants might reside and work in any other company's bounds on payment of certain fees.

1 Extract printed in Lyon, 40.  
2 Ibid., 4, 5.

3 Promulgated at Falkland on 26 October 1636 by Sir Anthony Alexander, General Warden and King's Master of Work; printed in Laurie, *History of Freemasonry*, 2nd ed., 1859, 445 seg., and in D. B. Morris, *The Incorporation of Mechanics of Stirling*, 31 seg. [99]

**The Supervising Authority** - The long series of volumes of Master of Work Accounts preserved in the Edinburgh Register House is a clear indication that the King's Master of Work was an administrative and financial officer, whatever other functions he might discharge. The various writs of appointment(1) throw some light upon the duties of the officer. He was to superintend the appointment of workmen and to agree with them about rates and prices and other conditions. In at least one case he was given power to hold courts by himself or his deputies, and to punish transgressors at the works under his charge.(2) Originally an appointment related to a particular work, such as Stirling Castle or Linlithgow Palace, but at a later date the authority of the official extended to all royal works, in which case the holder was usually described as Principal Master of Work. The earliest of these wide appointments which we have been able to trace are those of Sir James Hammyltoun in 1539, of John Hammyltoun in 1543, and of Sir Robert Drummond in 1579.

1 A score of these, preserved in the Registers of the Privy Seal, are printed in R. S. Mylne, "Masters of Work to the Crown of Scotland", *Proc. Soc. Antiq. Scot.*, 1895 6, 49 68.  
2 Mylne, *op. cit.*, 60. [100]

The writs of appointment as Principal Master of Work make no reference to the closely associated office of Warden General of the Masons, likewise a royal appointment. In more than one case, e.g., those of William Schaw and Sir Anthony Alexander, the two offices were held simultaneously by the same man, but we are unable to say whether that was always the case. Murray Lyon (p. 91) refers to Sir Anthony Alexander presiding at the Falkland Meeting on 26 October 1636 "in the double capacity of General Warden and Master of Work to his Majesty", which seems to imply that the two offices were distinct. We are disposed to think that it was as General Warden that he exercised a supervisory authority over the "territorial lodges" and the craft in general, the Principal Master of Work being apparently concerned primarily, if not entirely, with masons employed on royal works.

The existence in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries of a considerable measure of co operation and collaboration among masons in different parts of Scotland, such as is clearly indicated by the various cases to which we have drawn attention, provided the widespread association among masons without which the institution of the Mason Word could not have existed. That the various lodges scattered over Scotland should have communicated to qualified masons the same secret methods of recognition, and that they should have kept in touch with the changes and developments in those secrets, is really very remarkable. It would certainly not have been possible without close association among the interested parties, and probably not without some overriding authority, such as that of the Warden General and King's Principal Master of Work, to control the whole institution.

The kinds of worker comprised in the organization we have described are clearly indicated in the Laws and Statutes of the Lodge of Aberdeen, 1670; and some light on their respective shares in the secrets associated with the Mason Word may be gained from the Schaw Statutes of 1598, the Edinburgh Register House MS. of 1696, and the Chetwode Crawley MS. of circa 1700. The lowest grade of organized workers, the handicraft apprentices, were [101] bound by their indentures to keep secret their masters' concerns, but had no share in the government of the lodge, and were not given the Mason Word. The entered apprentices, on the other hand, were effective members of the organization and, according to the Statutes of this Lodge, received the benefit of the Mason Word "at their entry". What additional esoteric knowledge, if any, was imparted to the fellow crafts or master masons in 1670 is not clear from the Lodge Statutes. The Schaw Statutes of 1598 required the selection of intenders or instructors by each new fellow craft on his admission, a provision which was effective, as is shown by minutes of the Lodge of Edinburgh for the first decade of the

seventeenth century.(1) The minutes of the Lodge of Aitchison's Haven for 1598 (2) show not merely that a new fellow craft on being admitted chose two fellow crafts as his intenders and instructors, but that a new entered apprentice on his admission chose two entered apprentices as his intenders and instructors. As candidates had to give satisfactory proofs of their technical qualifications before admission, it is difficult to understand what function these intenders discharged, unless it were to instruct the candidates in the esoteric knowledge associated with their particular grade. Assuming, as seems probable, that these intenders corresponded to the "youngest mason" and the "youngest master" of the Chetwode Crawley MS.,(3) who taught the candidates the signs and postures, then it may well be that there were two sets of secrets in 1598, those of the entered apprentice and those of the fellow craft, and that it was these which the intenders imparted to the newly admitted entered apprentices and fellow crafts respectively.

1 Lyon, 17.

2 Wallace James, A.Q.C., xxiv, 34

3 E.M.C., 36. According to the closely related Edinburgh Register House MS. of 1696, the candidate for admission as fellow craft (as well as the candidate for admission as entered apprentice) went out of the company with the "youngest mason" to learn the signs and postures. Presumably, this is a misscript of the copyist and should read "youngest master". [102]

The fact that the Schaw Statutes required two entered apprentices, together with six masters, to be present when a fellow craft or master was admitted would not necessarily prevent secrets being communicated to fellow crafts. One possibility is that the entered apprentices retired for a time when this stage of the proceedings was reached; another is that the candidate retired with his intenders and received the esoteric knowledge outside the lodge, as was to some extent the method portrayed in the Edinburgh Register House and Chetwode Crawley MSS; the third possibility is that about 1600 the fellow craft secrets were such as could be communicated in the presence of entered apprentices, as, for example, a word communicated in a whisper, and possibly a grip. By 1696 there were undoubtedly two sets of secrets, one for entered apprentices, and another for fellow crafts or masters, and the entered apprentices had to leave the company before fellow crafts were admitted. This problem is discussed more fully in Chapter X, where the influence on early Masonic ceremonies of the Mason Word, and the practices associated with its communication, are examined.

#### THE ANTIQUITY OF THE MASON WORD

It may be presumed that the Mason Word, like other institutions, was not fully formed at its beginning, and that the various elements of which it was composed in the early eighteenth century were not all equally ancient. If, as is probable, the main line of development was from the relatively simple to the more elaborate, it may be supposed that the process started with a bare word or words, together, very possibly, with test questions and answers. This would explain why the institution, however elaborate it may ultimately have become, was apparently always referred to as the Mason Word, tout court. In course of time accretions would occur, possibly because of the general adoption of local variations introduced by way of additional safeguard or explanation, or arising from modifications of phrases or gestures, which would take place relatively easily in the days of oral transmission. Gradually the signs and postures of the entered apprentice and the grip of the fellow craft may have been added, to be followed at a later date by the postures and five points of fellowship [103] of the fellow craft, the explanatory story being a still later introduction. However that may be, the Mason Word as an institution may be approximately dated with reference to the circumstances which made it useful and its working possible.

There are at least five indications which may help to date the institution. (i) As the purpose of the Mason Word was to enable a man to demonstrate his membership of a trade organization, viz., what we have described as the "territorial lodge", it cannot have come into existence until that type of lodge was established. From the Schaw Statutes of 1599 we learn that Edinburgh shall be in all time coming "as of before" the first and principal lodge in Scotland, and that Kilwinning shall be the second lodge "as of before". The phrase, "as of before", shows that the Lodges of Edinburgh and Kilwinning existed prior to 1599, but how much earlier there is no evidence to show. (ii) As in our opinion it would have been very difficult to operate the institution without the existence of a supervisory authority, which at the end of the sixteenth century was the Warden General and King's Principal Master of Work, it would seem unlikely to have existed before the establishment of those offices. The earliest appointment of King's Principal Master of Work that we have been able to trace was that of Sir James Hammyltoun in 1539. (iii) As the Mason Word was a privilege associated with the termination of an apprenticeship or the admission to a fellowship, it might be as old as the system of apprenticeship which can be traced at Cupar Angus(1) in 1406 and at Edinburgh(2) in 1475. (iv) In so far as the Mason Word was connected with the admission to the grade of entered apprentice, it could have existed in 1598, by which time that grade was well established. As entered apprenticeship was connected with limitation of the number of entrants to full membership of the trade, it might have originated earlier than 1598, for a tendency to exclusiveness in craft organization was by no means new at the close of the sixteenth

1 Rental Book of the Cistercian Abbey of Cupar Angus, i, 304.

2 Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Edinburgh, 1403 1538, 31 2. [104]

century. On the other hand, entered apprenticeship did not exist as early as 1475, as, according to the Edinburgh seal of cause of that year,(1) each apprentice at the termination of his seven years' term was to be examined and, if found proficient, admitted a fellow of the craft. The institution of that part of the Mason Word which enabled fellow crafts to prove their superiority to entered apprentices was presumably older than 1599 and newer than 1475. (v) In so far as the object of the Mason Word was to protect qualified masons from the menace of unqualified masons, the problem is to decide when that menace became so serious as to stimulate the establishment of the institution. We know that the Schaw Statutes of 1598 prohibited masters and fellow crafts from employing cowans, or sending their servants to work with cowans, under penalty of £20 Scots for each offence, which implies that the menace existed in a fairly acute form by 1598, but how much earlier it existed in a form which called for action we do not know.

Among unqualified masons, there might be not only (a) drystone wallers, or 'cowans' in the original sense of the word, but (b) masons who had not served a lawful apprenticeship, and (c) men who had served apprenticeships as masons, but had not been admitted afterwards "according to the manner and custom of making masons". (2) Men of the second class are described as "loses" in Melrose MS. No. 2 (1674), where the conditions are defined which make an apprenticeship lawful, conditions approximating very

closely indeed to those regulating apprenticeship in the Schaw Statutes of 1598. Masons were not to employ "loses" if freemen were available, and if "loses" were employed, they were not to be allowed to know "the privilege of the compass, square, level and plumbrule". A mason of the third class is described as a "lewis" in the late seventeenth century Dumfries MS. No. 3, where

1 Ibid.

2 To judge by London experience in the seventeenth century, ex-apprentices who did not take their freedom were by no means uncommon. Of 1,302 mason apprentices presented in London during the 70 years from 1619 to 1688, only 579, or 44 per cent. of the apprentices bound, ultimately took up their freedom (L.M., 63) [105]

it is laid down that a master or fellow "shall not make any mould, square or rule for any who is but a lewis".(1)

By the end of the sixteenth century, the Mason Word would appear to be serving two distinct purposes, (a) to protect entered apprentices and fellow crafts from the competition of cowans or other unqualified masons, and (b) to protect fellow crafts from the competition of entered apprentices. There would seem to be three possibilities regarding the antiquity of this double barreled weapon. (i) The danger from unqualified masons and the establishment of the grade of entered apprentice may have arisen simultaneously, leading to the setting up in one operation of the Mason Word in its twofold form. (ii) The menace may have been older than the establishment of the grade of entered apprentice. In that case, fellow crafts or masters presumably possessed a single Mason Word as a protection against cowans, etc., a Mason Word in which entered apprentices, when that category was subsequently established, were permitted to share. (iii) The establishment of the grade of entered apprentice may have been older than the competition of unqualified masons. In that case, fellow crafts or masters presumably possessed a single Mason Word as a defense against entered apprentices, a weapon to which a second element, shared by entered apprentices, was subsequently added as a protection against the menace of unqualified masons. We feel that there is not sufficient evidence to enable us to decide in which of these ways the Mason Word, as an institution, came into being, or to fix the exact date or dates when it was established. A review of the possibilities examined in this section suggests that it was not established before about 1550. This conclusion harmonises with one of the earliest references to the Mason Word, namely, that contained in a report of the Presbytery of Kelso, dated 24 February 1652, to the effect that "in the purest times of this Kirk" masons had that word.(2) To a Presbytery, the expression "in the purest times of this

1 For a discussion of the term lewis see Knoop, Jones and Hamer, *The Wilkinson Manuscript*, pp. 40-5.

2 Scott, ii, 132. [106]

Kirk" would almost certainly relate to a period beginning in 1560, when John Knox and his colleagues produced the Confession of Faith, and ending either in 1584, when the so called "Black Acts" provided for the appointment of bishops and weakened the position of the Presbyteries, or in 1610, when the Episcopacy was definitely established.(1)

Although we do not think that the Mason Word, as an institution, was established before circa 1550, we do not wish to suggest that it was suddenly and deliberately invented in Scotland about the middle of the sixteenth century. The use by masons of passwords, with which very possibly test questions and answers were associated, may have sprung up at an earlier period more or less spontaneously in various parts of Scotland. This might be at a time when the system of apprenticeship was developing there in the second half of the fifteenth century; before some recognized system of training existed, it is difficult to conceive what purpose passwords could serve. Such local passwords, if they did exist, would be comparable with the local customs relating to tools and holidays which were found in England in the second half of the thirteenth and the first half of the fourteenth centuries. Just as these and other local customs were more or less unified and reduced to writing in the second half of the fourteenth century, so divergent Scottish practices in the matter of masons' passwords, assuming such existed, may, with the growth of district and central organizations, have become sufficiently unified and systematized about 1550 to be regarded as an institution. However informal and local in character masons' secret methods of recognition may have been originally, there can be little question that by the seventeenth century the Mason Word, as an operative institution, had acquired an official or semi official recognition; that this was so in the early eighteenth century is clearly shown by the fact that one lodge actually went to law in 1715 to secure the right to give the Mason Word.(2)

1 R. S. Rait, *History of Scotland*, 139, 146, 151.

2 Seggie and Turnbull, *Annals of the Lodge of Journeymen Masons No. 8*, Chap. 1. [107]

## CHAPTER VI

### THE PERIOD OF TRANSITION

#### The Renaissance, The Reformation, And The Opening Up Of The New World

UNTIL fairly recently, the industrial developments of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were relatively neglected by English economic historians, whose attention was largely concentrated on the great changes in industrial processes and organization which occurred during the later eighteenth and earlier nineteenth centuries. It has been realized for a considerable time that the transition from small to large scale production began long before 1750, and that the improvement of technique was not a new process beginning more or less suddenly about 1733 with Kay's fly shuttle. Indeed, a recent writer says that "there have been at least two 'industrial revolutions' in Great Britain. The first occurred in the century preceding the Civil War", and it is mainly with that period that we are concerned in this chapter. By that time largescale production and the simultaneous employment of vast numbers of workers in one enterprise were an old story in the building industry, as we have endeavored to show in Chapter II. It follows that the transition from medieval to modern conditions in the building industry did not occur in the way, or at the time, with which the student of the later 'industrial revolution' is familiar.

1 J. U. Nef, *J. Of Pol. Econ.*, xlv, 289. [108]

The sixteenth century was a period of outstanding importance in the history of the building industry in this country, not because it marked any sudden break in continuity, but because it saw the speeding up of certain changes which had commenced in the fifteenth century or earlier, and the beginning of other changes which did not reach their full development until the seventeenth

century or later. It would be a great mistake to think that the changes in the building industry were entirely independent of the much greater and more far reaching developments which were taking place in other spheres of social activity at the same period. The Renaissance, the Reformation, and the opening up of the New World, each exercised a considerable direct or indirect influence on the building industry. Of these three great movements, it was probably the Renaissance, with its stimulus to planning and designing by gentlemen and scholars, which ultimately led to the transformation of operative into accepted masonry. Its more immediate effect on the building industry was seen in the great change in architectural styles which took place about this time.

The influence of the Reformation was also considerable, though not in the way that Gould has suggested: "The Reformation; no more churches built; the builders die out."<sup>(1)</sup> The decline in the relative importance of the Church as an employer of masons had begun in the fifteenth century, or even earlier; the Reformation merely accelerated that decline. The place of the Church was taken by other employers and it is a complete misconception to suggest that the builders died out. Plenty of buildings were erected during the sixteenth century; the mere fact that the classical style was gradually substituted for the Gothic in no way affected the operative masons who dressed and laid the stones. Two indirect effects of the Reformation were of considerable importance to the development of the building industry. First, the gifts of land and buildings to supporters of Henry VIII, following the Dissolution of the Monasteries, led to much building or rebuilding to house the new owners of the monastic estates. Second, the replacement of Roman Catholicism by Protestantism exercised a considerable influence on masons' working conditions, by causing a great reduction in, if not the entire disappearance of, the many holidays associated with saints' days and church festivals.

1 A.Q.C., iii, II. [109]

The effects on the building industry of the opening up of the New World were indirect. The great influx of the precious metals from Mexico and South America led both to an increase and to a redistribution of the existing wealth. The new resources of the gentry and of the trading community caused a considerable expansion of private building; the increasing wealth of the more prosperous masons and quarry owners enabled them to develop the contracting side of their activities, thus accelerating the gradual displacement of the 'direct labor' system by the contract system. The great rise in prices, unaccompanied by a proportionate rise in money wages, brought about a fall in real wages. This not only impoverished the majority of masons, but stimulated building activity by lowering real building costs, in so far as these consisted of wages.

#### CHANGES IN EMPLOYERS

To present a comprehensive picture of building activity in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and of the changes in employers during that period would require the examination of far more building accounts and studies based upon building accounts than it has been possible for us to undertake. Consequently, we deal with the subject only in very general terms. So far as we can tell, there was very little ecclesiastical building for a good many years before the Reformation; the completion of the nave of Westminster Abbey, the erection of King Henry VII's Chapel at Westminster,<sup>(2)</sup> the finishing of St. George's Chapel, Windsor,<sup>(3)</sup> and of King's College Chapel, Cambridge,<sup>(4)</sup> all of which took place in the first quarter of the sixteenth century, were financed by the Crown, in part or in whole, and should probably be regarded as representing royal, rather than ecclesiastical, building activity. Henry VIII (1509-49) was a great patron of the building crafts, both for residential and for military purposes. At York Place,<sup>(5)</sup> Westminster Palace,<sup>(6)</sup> Nonsuch

1 Rackham, Nave of Westminster, 46.

2 G. G. Scott, Gleaning from Westminster Abbey, 69.

3 Hope, Windsor Castle, ii, 384.

4 Willis and Clark, 1, 481.

5 P.R.O. Exch. K.R., 474/7

6 P.R.O. T.R. Misc., 251, 252; Bodl. Rawl. D. 775; B.M. MS. 10109. [110]

Palace,<sup>(1)</sup> Bridewell Palace,<sup>(2)</sup> Eltham,<sup>(3)</sup> Grafton,<sup>(4)</sup> Dartford,<sup>(5)</sup> and Greenwich,<sup>(6)</sup> Henry VIII spent greater or smaller sums, and after the death of Wolsey in 1530 provided himself with yet another residence by completing the vast palace which the Cardinal had commenced at Hampton Court.<sup>(7)</sup> Another building enterprise of Wolsey's, the accounts for which are preserved among the State Papers, was Cardinal College [Christ Church], Oxford.<sup>(8)</sup> Among military works undertaken by Henry VIII, those at the Tower of London,<sup>(9)</sup> Sandgate Castle,<sup>(10)</sup> Calais<sup>(11)</sup> Dover<sup>(12)</sup> and Beaumaris<sup>(13)</sup> may be mentioned.

Under Edward VI, Mary, and Elizabeth some royal building still took place, though most of these royal operations were on a small scale. On the other hand, we find a big expansion of private and corporate building in the second half of the sixteenth century, in part at least stimulated by royal gifts of land and buildings formerly belonging to monastic houses, such buildings being pulled down and the stone used for other purposes.<sup>(14)</sup> This new activity can be illustrated by what took place at Cambridge,<sup>(15)</sup> where substantial work was undertaken at King's in 1562, Trinity Hall in 1562-3, Caius in 1565-75, Corpus Christi in 1579, Emmanuel in 1584, Peterhouse in 1590-5, Trinity in 1593 and 1598-9, Sidney Sussex in 1596-8, and at St. John's in 1598-1602. Other private enterprises of this period for which building accounts are available are Lincoln's Inn (1567-8),<sup>(16)</sup>

1 P.R.O. Exch. K.R., 477/12; L. & P. Henry VIII, 13, ii, 130.

2 Bodl. Rawl. D. 776, 777.

3 Bodl. Rawl. D. 777.

4 Bodl. Rawl. D. 780.

5 Bodl. Rawl. D. 783, 784.

6 Bodl. Rawl. D. 775, 776, 777, 780.

7 E. Law, Hampton Court Palace, passim.

8 L. & P. Henry VIII, 4, ii, 1129.

9 Bodl. Rawl. D. 775, 778.

10 B.M. Harl. MSS. 1647, 1651; Rutton, 228.

11 L. & P. Henry VIII, 14, ii, 80.

12 P.R.O. Exch. K.R., 462/29 and 30.

13 P.R.O. Exch. K.R., 489/12 and 15; Knoop and Jones, Trans. Anglesey Antiq. Soc., 1935, 59.

14 M.M., 189, 190.

15 Willis and Clark, passim.

16 Black Books of Lincoln's Inn, i, 445. [111]

Loseley Hall (1561-19) (1) and various works of Bess of Hardwick(2) and of Sir Thomas Tresham.(3) The change in employers naturally led to a change in the type of work. Churches, palaces and castles tended to be replaced by private residences and collegiate buildings. Public works also appear to have become more common, and increasing attention appears to have been given to bridges and harbor works.(4)

In Scotland, also, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the importance of the Crown and Church as employers in the building industry appears to have declined, whilst that of the municipalities and of the nobility and landed gentry grew. The municipalities were responsible not only for the erection of markets, prisons and other buildings required for administrative purposes, but also for the building and maintenance of urban churches, such as St. Giles, Edinburgh, the Tron Church, Edinburgh, Our Lady Church, Dundee, and St. Nicholas, Aberdeen. The nobility and landed gentry were mostly concerned with the erection of castles and houses for defensive or residential purposes.(5)

1 S. Evans, Arch., xxxvi, 284.

2 Stallybrass, Arch., lxiv.

3 Hist. MSS. Com., Various Collections, iii, pp. xxxiii folg.

4 XVI C.M., 10.

5 S.M., 6 8. [112]

#### CHANGES IN THE ORGANISATION OF BUILDING OPERATIONS

The change in employers had its repercussions on the Organization of building operations. The operations undertaken by municipalities and by private employers were usually much smaller than those formerly undertaken by the Church or the Crown. Being more limited in extent and of more manageable size, these new works offered greater scope for contractors than did the huge and almost interminable royal and ecclesiastical building operations of earlier centuries. Thus the tendency for the use of the contract system to expand at the expense of the 'direct labor' system was accentuated. The growing wealth of the community, brought about by the influx of precious metals from the New World, tended to have the same effect. On larger operations the direct labor system was still used in the first half of the sixteenth century, e.g., on important works at Hampton Court,(1) Westminster Palace,(2) Nonsuch Palace(3) and Sandgate Castle.(4) It continued to be used in the second half of the sixteenth and early part of the seventeenth centuries as, for example, at Berwick in 1557(5) at Hardwick Hall about 1590(6) and at Bolsover Castle in 1613,(7) but with more parts of the work done by task or by 'bargain' than had formerly been the case.(8) The erection of more substantial works by contract appears to have become commoner in the sixteenth century. St. George's Chapel, Windsor,(9) and King's College Chapel, Cambridge,(10) in which the main work had been done on the direct labor system in the fifteenth century, were finished by contract in the early sixteenth century. Trinity College, Cambridge, let its first masonry contract in 1528 9,(11) having previously relied upon the direct labor system, and St. John's College, Cambridge, introduced the new system in 1598 1602,(12) when the second court was erected by contractors.

At Caius College,(13) the Perse building was erected by contract in 1617 and the Legge building in 1619. In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, Robert Grumbold's services as mason contractor and mason architect were in great demand at Cambridge.(14) At Edinburgh the erection of the Tron Church in 1635 8 and that of the Parliament House in 1632 40 are relatively late examples of important municipal works undertaken on the direct labor system. In many more cases surviving accounts show that during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries much mason work was given out by task, and numerous surviving masons' contracts bear witness to the wide use of the contract system.(15) It is difficult to generalize as the change was only gradual; thus Sir Thomas Tresham, who did a good deal of building in

1 E. Law, op. cit., passim.

2 P.R.O. T.R. Misc., 251, 252.

3 P.R.O. Exch. K.R., 477/12.

4 Rutton, passim.

5, P.R.O. Exch. K.R., 483/16.

6 Stallybrass, op. cit.

7 Bolsover.

8 XVI C.M., 10.

9 Hope, op. cit., ii, 384.

10 Willis and Clark, i, 479.

11 Ibid., ii, 454.

12 Ibid., ii, 249.

13 Ibid., i, 186 7.

14 Contractor, 1069.

15 S.M., 11. [113]

Northamptonshire in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, sometimes employed contractors and at other times made use of the direct labor system.(1) At Oxford in 1610, Wadham College was being erected on the direct labor system(2) and Merton College was being extended by mason contractors.(3)

How widespread the contract system was amongst masons in London in the first part of the seventeenth century we cannot say with certainty; the direct labor system still prevailed to some extent. The Banqueting House at Whitehall was partly erected on that system in 1619 22, and substantial repair work at Old St. Paul's in the 1630s and minor repair work at various palaces in 1662 were also apparently organized on the old system. On the other hand, the available evidence suggests that the building of Lincoln's Inn Chapel in 1619 24, the rebuilding of the Goldsmiths' Hall in the 1630s, and the erection of Clarendon House in the early 1660s were done by contractors. After the Great Fire, building activity enormously increased and much more information is available. From this time onwards, in any case, the direct labor system appears to have been almost universally displaced by the contract system. We find the masonry work in connection with royal, ecclesiastical and municipal building being let to contractors almost without exception. In all probability private jobs were conducted in the same way. The rebuilding of Masons' Hall in 1669 70 is an example of a private job done by contract.(4)

With the growth of the contract system, though the building operations might sometimes be as large as they had been formerly, or even larger, there occurred a decline in the scale of production, in the sense that a number of relatively small firms took the place of the large 'integrated' and centrally controlled undertakings which had characterized the building industry in the Middle Ages.

1 Hist. MSS. Com., Various, iii, pp. xxxiii folg.

2 T. G. Jackson, Wadham College, 29.

3 T. W. Hanson, "Halifax Builders at Oxford", Trams. Halifax Antiq. Soc., 1928.

4 This paragraph is based on L.M., 39 folg.

THE PERIOD OF TRANSITION

CHANGES IN MASONS' WORKING CONDITIONS

**Wages** - Though the number of mason contractors and mason shopkeepers undoubtedly grew in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, most masons do not appear to have had the capital, or possibly the initiative, necessary to set up for themselves as 'little masters', and most workers in the trade continued to be, as they had been for centuries, wage earners for the greater part, if not all, of their working lives. The position of the wage earner during this period was one of much difficulty, as the outstanding feature of stone masons' wages in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was their marked increase in terms of money and their great decline in terms of purchasing power.

It was doubtless the rise in prices, primarily brought about by the vast influx of silver from Mexico and South America, and in a lesser degree by the debasement of the coinage, which led to the increase in money wages, the extent of which can be illustrated by the experience of the masons employed at London Bridge: about 1500 they received 8d. a day; about 1600, 16d. a day; and about 1700, 32d. a day. Whilst money wages were thus doubling and redoubling themselves, prices were roughly quadrupling and then doubling themselves, so that the purchasing power of the mason's wage both in 1600 and in 1700 was approximately only half what it had been in 1500. We summarize the changes in masons' daily money wages in the following table, (1) money wages in 1501 10 being treated as equal to 100. For purposes of comparison, the corresponding figures for (1) wholesale food prices, (ii) daily real wages, (2) and (iii) weekly real earnings (3) are set out in parallel columns

1 M.M., Appendix I, "Statistics of Masons' Wages and of Prices".

2 Obtained by dividing the index numbers of money wages by the corresponding index numbers of prices.

3 In calculating the weekly real earnings, we assume (i) that between 1501 and 1540, on account of holidays, they were equivalent to five days' wages; and (ii) that between 1541 and 1702, in view of the relative absence of holidays and the prevalence of overtime referred to in some detail on pages 119 20 below, they were equivalent to six days' wages. [115]

Years	Masons' money wages. 1501 10= 100	Wholesale food prices. 1501 10= 100	Masons' daily real wages. 1501 10= 100	Masons' weekly real earnings. 1501 10= 100
1501-1510	100	100	100	100
1511-1520	100	101	99	99
1521-1530	100	132	76	76
1531-1540	103	131	79	79
1541-1550	108	180	60	72
1551-1560	163	290	56	67
1561-1570	172	260	66	79
1571-1582	192	298	64	77
1583-1592	196	318	62	74
1593-1602	196	437	45	54
1603-1612	200	470	43	52
1613-1622	223	506	44	53
1623-1632	232	520	45	54
1633-1642	251	519	48	58
1643-1652	293	557	54	65
1653-1662	320	541	59	71
1663-1672	325	554	59	71
1673-1682	325	596	55	66
1683-1692	329	585	56	67
1693-1702	346	682	51	61

The articles selected for the purpose of calculating these index numbers of wholesale prices do not include either bread or beer, in those days two of the most important items of diet among the laboring classes, though they do include the various grains from which bread and beer were made. There is, however, some ground for thinking that the prices of bread and beer did not rise as much as the prices of the grains from which they were produced. (1) Thus the index numbers of prices quoted may exaggerate the rise in the cost of living. It should also be noted that wage earners, where they were paid partly in food, as was certainly to some extent the case in Scotland, (2) may not have borne the whole burden of rising prices. In England official wage assessments made by justices of the

1 J. U. Nef, "Prices and Industrial Capitalization in France and England, 1540 1640", Ec. H. R., May 1937, 166.

2 S.M., 11 12, 39. [116]

Peace under the Statute of Artificers, 1563, commonly laid down two scales of pay, one with food and drink, and one without, and building accounts show that provision of board for masons was not unknown. (1) Our information is not sufficient for us to be able to say that, as a set off to the fall in the purchasing power of money wages, the system of paying wages partly in kind came to be more extensively used in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, than had formerly been the case. The system almost certainly existed at an earlier date, just as at an earlier date masons had agricultural holdings and other by occupations at which they themselves worked during slack periods in the building industry, and at which their womenfolk and younger children worked at all times. We think it not unlikely, however, that both these systems were adopted more extensively during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as a means of supplementing inadequate money wages during a period of rising prices.

There was one new sixteenth and seventeenth century device which, in certain cases at least, tended to make the position of the more responsible journeyman masons rather less intolerable, in the face of the fall in real wages, than would otherwise have been

the case. That was the extended use of the system of apprenticeship, as a result of which not merely master masons and mason contractors but also journeyman masons took apprentices. We drew attention on page 80 above to the fact that the regulations of the newer versions of the MS. Constitutions of Masonry permitted fellows, as well as masters; to take apprentices, but we did not stress the implications of this innovation. It was not the apprentice who received the relatively high wage paid in respect of his services, but his master, who, being responsible for the board, lodging and clothing of the apprentice, was entitled to any wage earned by him. As the apprentice's wage appears to have varied with the years of service from about 60 to 100 per cent of that of a fully qualified craftsman,(2) we feel that it more

1 XVI C.M., 13.

2 L.M., 65; M.M., 163; London Masons' Ordinances, 1521 (M.M., 256); Norwich Masons' Ordinances, 1777 (A.Q.C., xv, 210). [117]

than covered his master's out of pocket expenses in maintaining him, and that it was a method of partly compensating such journeymen as had apprentices for the great rise in the cost of living during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Under these conditions, the number of apprentices employed appears to have become not inconsiderable. Thus the 'general search' conducted by the London Masons' Company in 1694 showed that of the seventy masons employed in connection with four of the St. Paul's contracts, no fewer than twenty six, or 37 per cent, were apprentices.(1) Further, in some cases where journeymen's apprentices were employed, their masters were not engaged on the same job. Thus the old rule that no one should set an apprentice to work except in the presence of his master(2) was clearly no longer enforced, if it still existed. Consequently, it was possible for a journeyman mason to supplement his income by hiring out the services of his apprentice.

**Holidays** - Reliable information concerning holidays can generally only be obtained from those building accounts which were kept in the form of a register, or which contain some special entry, such as that in the Brent Bridge Account, 1530,(3) for the week ending 30 July: "That the sayd Gabriell [Caldam], Kyngysfeld, Parker & Tukker masons clayme to have ther Wage for seynt Annys day because ther was this weke ij holydays the wiche is yet respected." The second holiday referred to was probably St. James (25 July), and the masons claimed to be paid for one holiday according to an old custom, which was still observed at York Place in 1515,(4) that where two feasts fell in the same week, the masons lost only one day's pay,(5) though if three feasts occurred they lost half a week's wage. The entry is also interesting because of its suggestion that saints' days were no longer being honored as in former times. This no doubt did come to pass, but a Tower of London Account for 1535 6(6) shows an actual increase in the number of

1 L.M., 65.

2 London Regulations for the Trade of Masons, 1356 (M.M., 250).

3 Trans. Lond. and Mid. Arch. Soc., N.S., v (1929), 454

4 P.R.O. Exch. K.R., 474/7.

5 M.M., 119.

6 Bodl. Rawl. D. 778 [118]

holidays compared with Eton College in 1444 5 (38 days) and 1445 6 (43 days).(1) At the Tower in 1535 6, 51 days were observed as holidays by the masons, 27 with pay and 24 without. The holidays observed at Dartford in 1541 2 were fewer by approximately one third.(2) To judge by a Berwick Account of 1557,(3) holidays had almost entirely disappeared by that year.

**Overtime** - Long before the coming of the factory system, overtime in all its various forms encroachment upon mealtimes, evening work, night work, employment on Saturday afternoons, on Sundays and on recognized holidays can be traced in surviving building accounts of the sixteenth century. It was apt to be required not only of masons, but of all categories of building artificers and laborers. We have found no example of systematic overtime before the sixteenth century, and are inclined to attribute its appearance in the reign of Henry VIII to the great speeding up of building which took place then.

The more leisurely methods and the less certain financial resources of the Middle Ages, as illustrated by the rebuilding of the nave of Westminster Abbey during the hundred and fifty years from 1376 to 1528,(4) yielded to something approaching modern hustle, which permitted the erection of Sandgate Castle in eighteen months in 1539 40.(5) It was not only works of defense, however, which were treated as very urgent; a similar speed was shown in the erection of royal residences. As we have discussed the subject more fully elsewhere,(6) we content ourselves here with giving a single example of each type of overtime:

Encroachment upon mealtimes During the five weeks ending 13 July 1538, 40 freemasons and 63 layers at Nonsuch Palace worked their "hour times and drinking times", some as few as five 'hours', others as many as 47.(7)

Evening and Saturday afternoon work At Dartford(8)

1 Eton, 86.

2 Bodl. Rawl. D. 783, 784.

3 P.R.O. Exch. K.R., 483/16.

4 Rackham, op. cit., passim.

5 Rutton, passim.

6 "Overtime in the Age of Henry VIII", Ec. Hist., February 1938.

7 P.R.O. Exch. K.R., 477/2.

8 Bodl. Rawl. D. 783. [119]

In the week commencing 27 February 1542, a mason named John Ayllyn was paid for half a day's overtime (presumably equivalent to four or five hours) on the Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, when it was probably worked from 6 or 7 to 10 or 11 p.m., and again on the Saturday, when it was probably worked in the late afternoon, since there is some reason for thinking that Saturday was a short day.(1)

Work on recognized holidays In 1541, Robert Lynstead, the senior mason at Dartford, who worked on the Assumption V. M. (15 August), St. Bartholomew (24 August) and the Nativity V.M. (8 September), which would normally have been holidays with pay, received double pay for so working.(2)

Work on Sundays At the manor of Canterbury, all the freemasons worked on Sunday, October 19 and 26, 1539.(3)

Night work In May 1531, twenty four layers at Westminster worked at night (in addition to day work), two being paid for five nights, two for four nights, two for three nights, eight for two nights, and ten for one night.(4)

**Impressment** - The system of impressing masons to work on royal building operations, so common in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, is still to be found in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. 'Preste money', at the rate of either 6d. for 20 miles, or of 1/2d. per mile, was paid to the men who were taken. Thus at York Place in 1515 six masons were paid 12d. each for the journey from Cambridge, and one 9d. for the journey from Walden.(5) At Westminster Palace in 1531 on four separate occasions men were paid for riding to take masons; the building account does not show the places where they were impressed, but the numbers and payments are indicated, showing that 132 masons were taken, and were paid 'preste money' in respect of distances ranging from 20 to 150 miles,(6) the average distance being 54 miles. At Nonsuch Palace in

1 M.M., 120.

2 Bodl. Rawl. D. 783.

3 Bodl. Rawl. D. 779.

4 P.R.O. T.R. Misc., 251.

5 P.R.O. Exch. K.R., 474/7.

6 P.R.O. T.R. Misc., 251. [120]

1538 one freemason was paid his expenses for riding 30 days in Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire arresting and taking up masons, and another his expenses for 10 days on the same errand in Northamptonshire and Bedfordshire. In all they brought back five freemasons and thirty three rough layers.(1) At Sandgate Castle in 1539 and 1540, masons were impressed on four occasions, 211 men being taken in all, more than half of whom were taken in the West Country.(2) At Berwick in 1557, eight hardhewers impressed in Kent were paid 12s. 8d. each in respect of 304 miles from Maidstone to Berwick.(3) In 1562 3 at Trinity College, Cambridge, Thomas Warde was paid 4s. 8d. "going with the Commission into Northamptonshire and Lincoln for freemasons".(4) In 1564, when the erection of the New Court of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, was about to begin, a commission was obtained by Dr. Caius from Queen Elizabeth protecting the workmen on the building from impressment for a period of five years,(5) which is further evidence that the system of impressment was still in vogue at that date. As this commission implies, masons were not the only workmen to be pressed; we know that tilers were impressed for work at Greenwich in 1532,(6) bricklayers for work at the Tower of London in 1533,(7) and that artificers were arrested and taken by commission from different places for work at Cardinal College [Christ Church] in 1526.(8) Masons were pressed for the works at Dover Pier in 1580.(9)

In the seventeenth century, the responsibility for the impressment of masons was apparently placed on the London Masons' Company. We do not know how early this method was adopted, for the Company's records prior to 1619 are lost, but their account book shows that they pressed men for the King's service in 1629(10) and 1636,(11) whilst in 1667 the Lord Mayor of London was commanded to call

1 P.R.O. Exch. K.R., 477/12.

2 Rutton, 235.

3 P.R.O. Exch. K.R., 483/16.

4 Willis and Clark, ii, 568 n.

5 Ibid., i, 171.

6 Bodl. Rawl. D. 775.

7 Ibid.

8 L. & P. Hurry VIII, 4, ii, 1130.

9 S.P. Dom. 1547 80, 674.

10 Conder, 153.

11 Ibid., 161. [121]

before him the authorities of the Masons' and Bricklayers' Companies in order to get men for the royal works at Sheerness.(1) In the by laws of the Masons' Company, approved after they received their charter of incorporation in 1677,(2) it was provided that if His Majesty or his successors should have occasion for masons to erect, build, repair or finish any structure, fort, tower, castle or fortification, it should be lawful for the Master, Wardens and Assistants of the Company to provide as many masons, members of the Company, as should from time to time be ordered by the Master Mason of England for the time being.(3)

#### CHANGES IN ORGANISATION AMONG MASONS

Since the only positive reference to masons' 'customs' as such with which we are acquainted occurs in 1539 in connection with the erection of Sandgate Castle,(4) it is possible that as late as 1539 what was presumably a revised version of the medieval 'customs', as embodied in the Articles and Points of the Regius and Cooke MSS.(5) was still observed. It is uncertain how far the changes in the building industry, which we discuss in this chapter, were accompanied by changes in the regulations of the masons' craft. It is probable that the old system of regional 'assemblies', administering and periodically revising the 'customs', in so far as it really existed during the Middle Ages, slowly disintegrated. Here and there it may have been replaced by the ordinances of municipal companies, equipped with charters and usually including other crafts as well as that of the masons, which were set up in some towns in the later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. A possible example of this new type of regulation is provided by the Company and Fellowship of Free Masons which, "att a Lodge held att Alnwick Sepr 29 1701 ", adopted certain "Orders". These are written in the Minute Book

1 S.P. Dom. 1667, 408, and Conder, 187.

2 Printed in .4.Q.C., xliii, 117 24.

3 Conder, 199.

4 The accounts (B.M. Harl. MS. 1647, fo. 109) show that the jurat of Folkestone had communication with the master controller at Sandgate "concerning the use and custom of free masons and hardhewers".

5 See pp. 49 folg. above. [122]



of the Alnwick Lodge immediately following the Charges General and Singular of the so called Alnwick MS. They<sup>(1)</sup> fix the fines to be paid for various offences which are not unlike breaches of the precepts contained in the Charges. On the reverse of the Taylor MS. of circa 1690,<sup>(2)</sup> in a different and later hand, are "Articles and Orders condescended concluded and agreed upon by ye company and ffellowship of ffreemasons", together with the fines for violating the articles and orders, but with no indication as to where the company was located. In the Minute Book of the Lodge at Swalwell [now Lodge of Industry No. 48, Gateshead], early entries in which date from circa 1730, are a set of "Penal Orders" (of a similar character to the Alnwick and Taylor Orders) following "Orders of Antiquity", "Apprentices Orders", and "General Orders".<sup>(3)</sup> So far as we are aware Swalwell was not a municipal borough, so that the Penal Orders are unlikely to have had the sanction of a local authority behind them. It is just possible, however, that they represent such regulation as the county justices were able to impose in accordance with the Statute of Artificers of 1563.

Though the 'assembly' may have become obsolete in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, it is not certain that the MS. Constitutions of Masonry thereafter ceased to be the embodiment of living regulations governing operative masons. As late as 1756, a version of the MS. Constitutions known as the Thistle MS.<sup>(4)</sup> was entered in the Minute Book of the Journeymen [now Thistle] Lodge, Dumfries (constituted in 1753), and the members of this operative lodge bound themselves to observe the regulations of this version of the MS. Constitutions by subscribing their signatures to the document. The Thistle MS. shows signs of late revision by the introduction into the charges of homely and practical precepts for operative masons, e.g., a mason is to pay honestly for meat, drink, washing and lodging at the

1 Printed in M.M., 276 8.

2 Printed in Poole and Worts, 193 8

3 These four sets of Orders (referred to as the Gateshead MS.) are printed in Masonic Mag., iii (1875 6), 82 5.

4 Printed in A.Q.C., xxxv, 41 65. [123]

place where he boards; he is to relieve the poor, visit the sick, and be affable and kind to widows and the fatherless; he is to avoid drunkenness. How late this revision was made we are unable to say; the earliest version known to us of the charges in this revised form is Dumfries No. 4 MS., written fairly early in the eighteenth century.<sup>(1)</sup> It is possible, therefore, that the regulations of the MS. Constitutions were revised in Scotland as late as circa 1700.

1 E.M.C., 45 [124]

#### CHANGES IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF BUILDING OPERATIONS

Decline in the Status of the Master Mason The master mason was an official of great importance in the medieval building economy but before the end of the Middle Ages his standing tended to decline. On big undertakings it was in many cases much lower than that of Walter of Hereford when he held the combined offices of master mason and master of the works at Vale Royal Abbey in 1278 80 and later at Caernarvon Castle. Even in an era of great building activity at Windsor Castle about 1360, the position of the two chief masons, Master John de Sponle, master mason and ordinator of the works of the King's masons, and Master William Wynford, apparellator, was somewhat overshadowed by the prominence of William of Wykeham, the clerk who held the office of Surveyor of the King's Works in the Castle of Windsor.

At the erection of Eton College in the middle of the fifteenth century, the clerical holder of the office of master of the works was a much more important personage than the chief mason. Thus the great authority of surveyors and controllers in the sixteenth century, and the marked increase in the number of officials, to the detriment of the position occupied by the chief mason, were the result of a tendency which can be traced as early as the fourteenth century. The fact that plans and designs in the sixteenth century were, as we shall show, sometimes prepared by non masons was doubtless another reason for the declining status of the chief mason. Thus at Sandgate Castle in 1539 40, where the planning and designing were almost certainly done by the engineer and 'devisor', Steven von Hashenberg, in receipt of a salary of 4s. a day, the chief mason, Robert Lynstead, at a wage of 10d. a day, was described as "warden of the masons". The further fact that the 'direct labor' system of conducting building operations was being displaced in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries by the contract system implied that master masons working for employers for whom large buildings were being erected were replaced by overseers or wardens or foremen working for mason contractors. This was more especially the case where contractors had undertaken two or more jobs simultaneously. Thus Nicholas Stone employed a certain Gabriel Stacey as his overseer on various occasions in the 1630s; later in the century, Samuel Fulkes and Nathaniel Rawlins, before they themselves became large mason contractors, appear to have served as overseers to the Strongs on their St. Paul's contracts.<sup>(1)</sup>

**Growing Importance of Plans and Designs** - Long before the advent of the sixteenth century, plans and designs must have played a part in all the more important building operations, as we endeavored to show in Chapter II. In the sixteenth century we find not only more references to plans or 'plats',<sup>(2)</sup> but also indications that some of them were prepared by persons other than masons, thus marking the beginning, or the extension, of a practice which ultimately led to the establishment of the modern profession of architecture.

In this connection, it may be noted that the first English book on architecture, The First and Chief Groundes of Architecture by John Shute "paynter and archyctecte", was published in 1563, and again in 1584. Among the non masons who drew 'plats' were James Nedham at Windsor in 1532 3,<sup>(3)</sup> and Lawrence Bradshaw at Amptill in 1543.<sup>(4)</sup> The former was appointed King's Carpenter in 1531, clerk and overseer of the King's Works in 1533, and Master of the London Carpenters' Company in 1536.<sup>(5)</sup> Bradshaw was also a carpenter, who in due course succeeded

1 This sub section is based on XYI C.M., 7 9 and L.M., 33.

2 For details, see XYI C.M., 6.

3 Bodl. Rawl. D. 775.

4 B.M. MS. 10109.

5 L. & P. Harry VIII, 5, 104; *ibid.*, 6, 191; Jupp and Pocock, Company of Carpenters, 623. [125]

Nedham as Surveyor of Works.(1) According to Horace Walpole, a much more famous architect, **Inigo Jones** (1573-1652), was apprenticed to a joiner, but there appears to be no certain evidence of this.(2) However that may be, he was well known as an ingenious designer of scenery and costumes for masques years before he accomplished anything great in architecture. He had acquired a first hand knowledge of Renaissance art by travel in Italy, but to judge by the drawings in the sketch book which he carried with him, he was mainly concerned with scenery and costumes prior to 1616, when he was appointed Surveyor of His Majesty's Works.(3) It was not until 1619, when he was 46 years old, that he designed the Banqueting House, Whitehall, the first truly Italian building to be put up in England. At its erection in 1619-22, Nicholas Stone was master mason, and it was doubtless to his skill and knowledge of detail that the building owed much of its character.(4) In those days, as in the Middle Ages, when there were few complete working drawings, detailed specifications or quantities, a great deal was left to the master mason and workmen who followed the traditions of the craft in which they had been brought up.(5)

This co-operation between the men who prepared the 'plans' (plans) and 'uprights' (elevations) and the master masons or mason contractors who erected the buildings, helps to explain how persons who were not masons by trade gradually developed into amateur or professional architects. Those who were carpenters doubtless had some knowledge of building technique, but many of the seventeenth century architects were gentlemen who had acquired a knowledge of design from travel and from the study of the writings of Vitruvius and Palladio. Even the greatest English architect of his age, Sir Christopher Wren (1632-1723), was not trained for architecture; he had attained eminence as a scientist and astronomer before he designed his first building.(6) He is a late example of the connection between mathematics and architecture, which in medieval times had led writers to treat masonry as equivalent to **geometry**. Other examples are John Thorpe (fl. 1570-1610) and Inigo Jones. Peacham's Gentleman's Exercise of 1612 describes Thorpe as "an excellent geometrician and surveyor".(1) Not very much is known about his architectural activities, but his book of drawings (preserved in the Soane Museum) contains plans and elevations of buildings of the period circa 1570 to circa 1600.

1 Jupp and Pocock, 623; Cal. Pat. R. 1547-8, 231.

2 Gotch, 10.

3 Ibid., 14.

4 Ibid., 114.

5 Sir Thomas Jackson, Renaissance of Roman Architecture: England, 96.

6 Briggs, 272. [126]

**Inigo Jones** is said to have taught his pupil, John Webb, mathematics as well as architecture.(2) John Webb (1611-72), long regarded as a nonentity and underling of Inigo Jones, but now accepted as an architect of the first rank, responsible for the great scheme of the Palace at Whitehall and for the design of King Charles's block at Greenwich,(3) is an example of a seventeenth century architect who underwent professional training. On leaving the Merchant Taylors' School at the age of seventeen he became a pupil to Inigo Jones and worked in his office until Jones's death in 1651. Later in the century, another man who subsequently made his mark in architecture, Nicholas Hawksmoor (1661-1736), at the age of eighteen became Wren's "scholar and domestic clerk", gradually working his way up through subordinate appointments to independent practice.(4) Sir John Vanbrugh (1664-1726), on the other hand, entered architecture comparatively late in life, without any professional training, being a soldier and dramatist before becoming an architect.

At the erection of Blenheim Palace, his best known work, he had Edward Strong in partnership with Edward Strong, junior, as mason contractor from 1705 to 1712,(5) and the Palace doubtless owes much to the skill and knowledge of detail acquired by the Stronges on their work at St. Paul's and elsewhere. Examples of amateurs acting as architects in Scotland occur in 1633, when Dr. William Gordon, Professor of Medicine at Aberdeen, designed the crown of the steeple at the college to replace one which had been blown down(6) and in the 1680s when

1 Ibid., 243.

2 Ibid., 266.

3 Ibid., 265; Gotch, 99-113.

4 Briggs, 286, 309.

5 Ibid., 303; L.M., 45.

6 Macgibbon and Ross, The Architecture of Scotland, v, 563. [127]

Patrick, first Earl of Strathmore, was his own architect in remodeling Glamis Castle.(1) The eighteenth century also had its amateur architects, such as Lord Burlington, Lord Pembroke, Dean Aldrich, 'Doctor' Clarke, Sir James Burrough, and James Essex.(2) Lord Burlington's architectural activities are mentioned incidentally by Anderson in his Constitutions of 1723 (p. 48 n.), where he states that Burlington House, Piccadilly, the Dormitory of King's School, Westminster, and Tottenham Park, Wiltshire, were "design'd and conducted" by the Earl of Burlington, "who bids fair to be the best Architect of Britain (if he is not so already)". The influence of amateur interest in architecture in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries on the development of accepted masonry is discussed in the next chapter.

1 Strathmore, The Book of Record, a diary ... and other documents relating to Glamis Castle, 1684-1689, 42.

2 Briggs, 296.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE ERA OF ACCEPTED MASONRY Operative, Accepted, and Speculative Masonry

THIS chapter may best be introduced by a brief examination of the terms employed. By 'operative masonry' we understand the organization and practices which from time to time prevailed among working masons in England and Scotland in the later Middle Ages and early modern times. Men who were not masons by trade but who joined such an organization, as frequently happened in Scotland during the seventeenth century, we call 'non-operative masons'. In Scotland, such non-operative masons, or 'non

operatives' for short, were known in the seventeenth century as 'gentleman masons'. This term occurs in Prichard's *Masonry Dissected* of 1730,(1) where, in response to the question "What do you learn by being a Gentleman Mason?", the answer is given: "Secresy, Morality and Goodfellowship." Presumably the operative masons also learned these qualities as well as the matters indicated by Prichard, namely "Hue, Square, Mould stone, lay a Level and raise a Perpendicular". 'Secresy' was doubtless associated with the Mason Word, 'Morality' with the Charges General and Singular of the MS. Constitutions, and 'Goodfellowship' with conviviality at the lodge meetings.

By 'speculative masonry', or what Murray Lyon calls 'symbolical masonry', we understand a peculiar system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols. In other words, we regard it as synonymous with 'freemasonry' in its modern sense. The word 'speculatyf' occurs in the Cooke MS. of circa 1410(2) in the sense of theory or speculative knowledge, as contrasted with practical knowledge. A fifteenth century 'speculative mason', had the expression been used, would have been a person interested in pure **geometry** (one of the seven liberal arts), or possibly in the mathematical side of architecture, and not a 'speculative mason' in the modern sense. We do not think that any question of morality or symbolism was implied in the fifteenth century by the 'speculatyf' of the Cooke MS., such as is implied at the present time when we contrast operative with speculative masonry.

1 E.M.C., 114.

2 Line 622 (Two MSS., 103). [129]

Speth, in commenting upon the occurrence of the word 'speculatyf' in the Cooke MS., says(1):

. . . in the 15th, and again in the 18th century Masonic documents use the word in precisely the same sense; but the curious part is that intervening manuscripts reveal no trace of its usage. And yet, I believe, it was handed down amongst the masons, and not reintroduced fortuitously by Anderson or his contemporaries.

Speth implies that 'speculative' was used by Masonic writers in the early eighteenth century as the opposite of 'operative' or 'practical'. We cannot check this interpretation, however, because we do not know what Masonic document or documents he had in mind. Apart from the Woodford and Supreme Council MSS., which are exact copies of the Cooke MS. made by William Reid in 1728, we cannot discover that the word 'speculative' was used in Masonic documents of the early eighteenth century, or that it was reintroduced by Anderson or his contemporaries. Chetwode Crawley repeats the statement about Anderson, when he writes(2) that the word 'speculative' was adopted by Anderson in his *Old Charges* in 1723. Unfortunately, neither Speth nor Chetwode Crawley gives chapter and verse for his statement, and we have failed to trace the word in Anderson.(3) Though he possibly does use it in some connection or other, we are quite clear that the terms commonly employed by Anderson in his Constitutions to describe the masons associated with the newly established Grand Lodge were 'free mason' and 'accepted free mason' in 1723, and 'free and accepted mason' in 1738.

1 In his commentary on the Cooke MS. in Q.C.A., ii, the pages of which are unnumbered. The passage occurs about 31 pages from the end.

2 Caem. Hib., i, 6.

3 The nearest we have got to it is at second hand, where Conder (A.Q.C., ix, 38) refers to "the tradition mentioned by Anderson in the Constitutions of 1723, that 'before a man could join the London Masons Company he must be initiated into the mysteries of Speculative Masonry'. The sentence which Conder prints in quotation marks is a very free rendering of what Anderson prints in a Note on page 82 of his Constitutions of 1723: "that in former Times no Man was made Free of that Company [the London Company of Freeman Masons] until he was installed in some Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons, as a necessary qualification". In the original, there is no mention of "speculative", nor, incidentally, of "initiated", a term not commonly used at that period, and, so far as we are aware, first occurring in Oakley's Speech of 1728 (E.M.P., 6). [130]

The earliest use of the expression 'speculative mason' with which we are acquainted occurs in a letter which Dr. Manningham, Deputy Grand Master, wrote to Bro. Sauer at The Hague on 12 July 1767, to assure him that freemasonry consists of three Degrees and no more: ". . . I believe you can scarcely imagine, that in ancient time the Dignity of Knighthood flourish'd amongst Free Masons; whose Lodges heretofore consisted of Operative, not Speculative Masons."(1) **The earliest reference to 'speculative masonry' known to us occurs in the second edition of Preston's Illustrations of Masonry,' published in 1775(2) ". . . Masonry passes and is understood under two denominations, it is operative and it is speculative."**

**Between the operative masonry of circa 1600 and the speculative masonry of circa 1800, there is a gap of some 200 years, and the problem of how it was filled remains.** One possibility is that the operative masonry of the early seventeenth century continued practically unchanged until the early eighteenth, and that it was then suddenly transformed by Desaguliers, Anderson, and other prominent masons of the newly formed Grand Lodge in London, into something approximating to the speculative masonry of the early nineteenth century. This, for example, appears to

1 A.Q.C., v, 110. We have to thank Bro. J. Heron Lepper for drawing our attention to this reference.

2 Section VI, p. 17. We have to thank Bro. H. H. Hallett for drawing our attention to this reference. We have since discovered that it is mentioned in Begemann, Freimaurerei in Schouland, 391 n. [131]

have been the view held by Murray Lyon, who describes Desaguliers as "the co fabricator and pioneer" of English symbolical masonry,(1) Anderson being presumably cast for the other principal part. The whole weight of the evidence, however, is against any such revolutionary transformation. If we look forward from circa 1723, we find various indications of a series of changes lasting until after the union of the two Grand Lodges in 1813. Looking backwards from circa 1723, we find less direct evidence to guide us, but there is certainly no reason to think that this process of change was other than gradual, just as it was after 1723. In our opinion, as we shall endeavor to show in some detail in Chapter XI, there would seem to be fairly good grounds for thinking that some of the important changes introduced by accepted masons into the old operative ceremonies had already occurred by the last decades of the seventeenth century, thirty years or more before the formation of Grand Lodge in 1717.

In England, non operatives, who can first be definitely traced in the seventeenth century, do not appear to have belonged to lodges of operative masons as was the case in Scotland; on the contrary, they appear to have been made masons either at occasional, or

at semi permanent, lodges consisting mainly, or exclusively, of non operatives or of 'gentleman masons' (as defined by Prichard). An instance of the former kind is the lodge held at Warrington on 16 October 1646 to admit Elias Ashmole, the antiquary; instances of the latter kind are the London 'Acception' (connected with the London Masons' Company), and the lodge at Chester (to which Randle Holme III, the Chester genealogist and antiquary, belonged). The freemasons made in these English lodges, which are discussed more fully below, were described by seventeenth century writers, such as Dr. Robert Plot<sup>(2)</sup> and John Aubrey,<sup>(3)</sup> as 'adopted' or 'accepted' masons. They were largely, if not entirely, independent of operative control, and were consequently in a far better position than the non operatives in Scotland to modify, amend, or elaborate Masonic ceremonies. This changing body of Masonic ceremonies, practiced by the accepted masons during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, can best be described as 'accepted masonry'. In our opinion, it formed the link connecting operative and speculative masonry; the latter, for reasons which we state later in this volume, we are disposed to regard as commencing about 1730

1 Lyon, 163.      2 E.M.P., 32.      3 *ibid.*, 42. [132]

#### NON OPERATIVES AND THE CRAFT

An inquiry into the development of freemasonry during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries cannot but raise the question what induced non operatives to join Masonic lodges; but the question is far easier to ask than to answer, for only occasionally did such men even record the fact they had joined the craft, and very rarely indeed did they state their reasons. It is possible to make some inferences from the known interests of such people as Elias Ashmole and Randle Holme; but the inferences cannot be checked and, in any event, it is not possible to tell how far their reasons or motives were typical. A similar difficulty exists for the religious historian of the period, seeking to explain why some men became Quakers or Baptists while others remained in the Church of England. With regard to some the answer is in part, humanly speaking, accident, such as happening to be in a place where George Fox was testifying. With others the answer may lie in relationship: a son may have been a Baptist because his father was one, or by reaction, may have decided to join some other body. There is indeed one notable difference between the problem of the historian of a sect and that of the Masonic historian. The former has to explain why people were attracted to a body whose practices and beliefs were relatively open and published, so that a man could tell beforehand to what principles he was committing himself. The latter has to explain why men joined a body whose fundamentals were, in part at least, unknown to them at the time of joining, the secrets and rites not being disclosed until the candidate had bound himself to the body by an oath.

This very secrecy, with some, may well have been the [133] motive for joining. To find out a secret or to share one is a not uncommon human desire; and, in some ways, the seventeenth century may be considered to have been more preoccupied with the pursuit of secrets in alchemy, astrology, Rosicrucianism, the Apocalypse and the Bible in general than other periods. It is not impossible, therefore, that some candidates thought they were on the track of a *secretum secretorum*. One eighteenth century clergyman, the celebrated Welsh poet, Goronwy Owen, expected to find in freemasonry the hidden wisdom of the ancient druids;<sup>(1)</sup> Dr. William Stukeley, the well known eighteenth century antiquary, states in his autobiography that "curiosity led him to be initiated into the mysteries of Masonry, suspecting it to be the remains of the mysteries of the ancients"<sup>(2)</sup> The existence of a secret, however, though it might attract some, repelled others, such as the author of a handbill, directed against freemasonry, published in 1698.<sup>(3)</sup>

A different attraction, for some types of mind, may have lain in the possibility of moral lessons being drawn from the experiences of the building crafts, though actually there is no evidence that the use of symbolism had been introduced into freemasonry as early as the seventeenth century. The earliest evidence known to us relates to the early eighteenth century. Several of the catechisms contain certain symbolical questions and answers, concerning the height of the lodge, the key of the lodge, the number of pillars in the lodge and the color of the master's habit, said to have been yellow and blue with reference to the compass, made of brass and iron. This last answer occurs in Dumfries No. 4 MS. of circa 1710. Some twenty five years later in *The Book M* (1736), the Newcastle upon Tyne version of *Smith's Pocket Companion* (1735), there is also reference to the compass: masons are invited to "live within compass" and to walk like upright men "who square their actions to the glorious law of doing as we would be done by". The first suggestion known to us of a possible moralizing by masons upon their working tools is contained in the Postscript to Anderson's *Constitutions of 1723* (p. 72), where it is explained that the Installing Officer is to present the newly installed Master of a Lodge with the *Constitutions*, the *Lodge Book*, and the *Instruments* of his Office, one after another, and after each of them "shall rehearse the short and pithy Charge that is suitable to the thing presented". If this implies moralizing upon the instruments, a not unreasonable interpretation, then accepted masons in 1722 had adopted the practice of moralizing upon the mason's tools. The use of the expression "the short and pithy Charge", instead of "a short and pithy Charge", seems to suggest that the Charge referred to was already in existence. If that be so, then the practice may have been introduced by accepted masons at an earlier date. That they did so is not proved by the passage quoted but may not unfairly be deduced from it.

1 J. Morris Jones, ed., *Llythyrâu Goronwy Owen*, 100 1.

2 *Surtees Soc.*, lxxiii, 51.

3 *E.M.P.*, 34 5 [134]

However hostile the great age of puritanism may have been to the use of symbols which were considered popish, by no means all puritans were wholly antagonistic to symbolism, or unmindful of its use for edification, and not a few of them commonly expressed themselves in allegories. The building crafts, frequently mentioned in the Scriptures, provided plenty of material; John Bunyan drew a host of moral lessons from a spiritual consideration of Solomon's Temple.<sup>(1)</sup> Such considerations do not suffice to prove that the puritan attitude of mind was especially favorable to freemasonry; but at least they indicate that it was not likely to be completely opposed, and that some puritans, at least, would not think their souls endangered by entering a lodge. The Scottish operatives who gave and received the Mason Word, and who were presumably Presbyterians, cannot have thought so, nor presumably did the Laird of Auchinleck, who joined the Lodge of Edinburgh at some date prior to June 1600,<sup>(2)</sup> or the Ministers of Slaines and of Fyvie, who belonged to the Lodge of Aberdeen in 1670.<sup>(3)</sup> The reply of the Presbytery of Kelso, when consulted in 1652 with reference to a certain Rev. James Ainslie having received the Mason Word, is deserving of note:

1 See John Bunyan, *Solomon's Temple Spiritualized*. For a different allegorical treatment of Solomon's Temple, see Dumfries No, 4 MS. of circa 1710 (*E.M.C.*, 58 folg.).

2 Lyon, 52 3.  
3 Miller, 20, and facing 22. [135]

that to their judgment there is neither sin nor scandal in that word, because in the purest times of this kirk, masons having that word have been ministers; that masons and men having that word have been and are daily in our sessions, and many professors having that word are daily admitted to the ordinances.(1)

Attention must now be directed to three other, and probably stronger motives, which are likely to have drawn non operatives into the craft; one is an interest, whether aesthetic or technological, in building; a second is an interest in antiquity; a third is a desire for convivial society. Brief reference was made to these matters in Chapter I when we discussed the motifs of freemasonry.

**Amateur Interest in Architecture** - In the seventeenth century various buildings were erected to 'plats' or plans prepared by gentlemen or other non masons, who practiced architecture either as amateurs, or as architects who had not received a professional training. When the edifices in question were constructed, their designers were brought into close contact with masons, particularly the master masons, or the mason contractors, responsible for the actual work, and this association may well have led to further intercourse between operatives and non operatives, aiming at the extension of the architectural knowledge of the non operatives. Most gentlemen at this period probably never designed buildings that were actually erected, but in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries a knowledge of architecture, more particularly of the Orders, was regarded as an essential part of every gentleman's education.(2) At least one well known book on architecture, published in London in 1624, was written by a layman, Sir Henry Wotton, *The Elements of Architecture ... from the best Authors and Examples*.(3) Wotton (1568 1639) was a diplomatist who had acquired a profound knowledge of the spirit of the Renaissance by long residence in Italy, and it was

1 Scott, ii, 132. We have modernized the spelling.  
2 Briggs, 251.  
3 *Ibid.*, 250. [136]

doubtless on the Grand Tour that most gentlemen developed their architectural taste and knowledge. Until the end of the sixteenth century, and even later, masons had been the professional architects, and even in the second half of the seventeenth century men who were mason-trained, such as Robert Grumbold in Cambridge,(1) and Robert Mylne in Edinburgh,(2) still practiced architecture, and association with mason architects may either have supplemented, or taken the place of, knowledge of architecture acquired on the Grand Tour.

We have no certain knowledge of the traditions and practices of accepted masons in the seventeenth century, such as would enable us to say that an interest in architecture was a distinguishing characteristic of accepted masonry at that period, but for the early eighteenth century we are better informed. When Anderson in 1721 2 digested the old Gothic constitutions in a 'new and better method,'<sup>3</sup> he enlarged and revised the legendary history of masonry, and among other changes warmly approved of Vitruvius,(4) denounced the "confusion and impropriety of the Gothic Buildings",<sup>(5)</sup> and praised the Augustan style, the revival of which he attributed to various Italian architects, and more especially to "the great Palladio".<sup>(6)</sup> In denouncing the Gothic, and in praising the Palladian, style of architecture in his *Constitutions of 1723*, Anderson was ranging himself, and presumably the craft generally, on the side of contemporary educated opinion, which commonly regarded Gothic architecture as a barbarous product of the Dark Ages. A few years later, Francis Drake,<sup>(7)</sup> the York antiquary, like his contemporary, Edward Oakley,<sup>(8)</sup> another leading freemason of the 1720s, commended the giving of lectures in lodge, more particularly on architecture or **geometry**. As mentioned in Chapter I, Drake went so far as to state that he was credibly informed that in most lodges in London and several other parts of the kingdom a lecture on some point of **geometry** or architecture was given at every meeting.

1 Contractor, 1069.	4 Constitutions of 1723, 25.	6 <i>Ibid.</i> , 39.
2 S.M., 13, 27.	5 <i>Ibid.</i> , 39.	7 Speech of 1726 (E.M.P., 207)
3 Constitutional of 1738, 113.		8 Speech of 1728 (E.M.P., 213) [137]

Information concerning one such lecture has survived; Dr. Wm. Stukeley in his *Diary* (1) refers to a lecture on "The Roman Amphitheatre at Dorchester" which he gave to his lodge on 4 October 1723, and of which a printed version is preserved in the British Museum.(2) Even in the following decade Masonic interest in architecture apparently continued, for the minutes of the Old King's Arms Lodge, under date 1 August 1737, show that the Master, Martin Clare, read part of the *Architecture of Palladio*, "to which the Society were very attentive", and that Bro. Geo. Payne (G.M. 1718-19 and 1720 21) "gave the Lodge a Curious Acct of the Manner of Building in Persia".(3) Even if Drake exaggerated the amount of attention given by lodges to the study of architecture and **geometry**, his remarks do suggest that an interest in architectural problems played some part in accepted masonry in the early days of Grand Lodge, and not improbably at an earlier period. **As late as 1735, W. Smith, in the Preface to his Pocket Companion for Free Masons, London, 1735, stresses the importance of a knowledge of architecture by freemasons:**

No Man ought to attain to any Dignity in MASONRY who has not, at least, a competent Knowledge in **Geometry** and Architecture; and if the Sciences were more follow'd in the LODGES, what is unhappily substituted in their Places [? conviviality] would not prevail as it does.

An association of freemasonry with an amateur interest in architecture was almost certainly present in the mind of the author of *The Free Mason No. 1 of 13 November 1733*,(4) when he attempts to be humorous at the expense not only of freemasons, but of masons in a wider sense, namely connoisseurs of building, to whom he extends the term. Thus we think it likely that a desire to further their architectural education was a principal object for which some men in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries joined the craft.

1 *Surtees Soc.*, 1xxiii, 72.  
2 *Dring, A.Q.C.*, xxv, 359.  
3 *A.Q.C.*, xxxi, 188.  
4 *E.M.P.*, 301 [138]

Antiquarian Interest in Masonry Although gentlemen in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had a strong bias towards the Palladian style in architecture, and a contempt for the Gothic style, nevertheless some of them at least did show a certain archaeological and antiquarian interest in old buildings. Thus John Aubrey, the antiquary, notwithstanding that he thought Gothic architecture barbarous, made careful drawings of certain windows and porches and endeavored to formulate a systematic chronology of Gothic styles or periods.(1) Sir Christopher Wren, who in general strongly favored the classical style, and objected to Gothic, partly at least on the ground that it often implied bad construction, on occasion built in the Gothic manner, as at Tom Tower, Oxford, and at certain city churches.(2) Sir William Dugdale, compiler of the *Monasticon*, and author of a *History of St. Paul's*, may be cited as an instance of a seventeenth century antiquary for whose labors the modern student of ecclesiastical antiquities has cause to be grateful.

Incidentally, it may be noted that Dugdale was acquainted with the Fraternity of "Adopted" Masons, which he appears to have regarded as derived from a company of Italian freemasons, to whom, according to his statement, the Pope gave a bull or patent about the time of Henry III (1216-72) to travel up and down Europe building churches.(3) Another seventeenth century antiquary, with an interest in medieval buildings, was Elias Ashmole, who collected materials for a work on Windsor Castle. These materials, which are preserved in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, were used by Tighe and Davis in the middle of the nineteenth century for their *Annals of Windsor*, and much more recently by St. John Hope in compiling his great work on Windsor Castle. Ashmole, whose third wife was a daughter of Sir William Dugdale, was not merely acquainted, like his father in law, with the Fraternity of Adopted Masons, but was himself a freemason. His contemporary, Randle Holme the third, the Chester antiquary and genealogist, was also a freemason, as he clearly states in a well known passage in his *Accademie of*

1 Briggs, 284. n.

2 *Ibid.*, 283-4.

3 Dugdale's views, as reported by John Aubrey (*E.M.P.*, 42), were referred to on p. 60 above. [139]

Armory(1) "I cannot but Honor the Fellowship of the Masons because of its antiquity; and the more as being a Member of that Society, called Free Masons." His practical interest in the antiquity of the Fellowship is shown by the fact that he made a copy of a version of the *MS. Constitutions of Masonry*, which is now in the British Museum.(2) Yet another seventeenth century antiquary who very possibly had an interest in medieval masonry, if not in medieval building, was John Theyer, the Gloucestershire scholar, who at his death in 1673 owned the *Regius MS.*(3)

The studies made by such antiquaries as Dugdale and Ashmole may have been carried far enough to show them, in the first place, that the men responsible for medieval buildings were often neither scholars nor professional architects in the modern sense, but master masons who had passed through the stage of being working masons to positions in which they planned and designed the buildings at the construction of which they presided. In the second place, their studies might show them that the masons' fraternity had associated with it, in addition to working or ex working masons, some persons of higher social standing. Some of these, such as the mayor, or the sheriff, or the local gentry; were probably associated with the masons' assembly more or less as representatives of the authorities, just as gentry were associated with the minstrels' courts held in Cheshire and Staffordshire. Others may very possibly have been non operative members of the Fraternity, just as some members of a gild or company might have no connection with its particular trade. In the case of a craft gild, or of a company, membership offered certain definite privileges: it was commonly a stepping stone to the freedom of the city or town, and carried with it the right to trade and to share in the government of the municipality. So far as is known, membership of the masons' fraternity carried with it no definite privileges, and the presumption is that the non operatives who first linked themselves with the Fraternity were men who, as clerks of the works, or in some supervisory capacity, came into fairly

1 *E.M.P.*, 34.

2 *B.M. Harl. MS.* 2054

3 *Two MSS.*, 51.2. [140]

close contact with masons in their work, and were interested in the problems of construction and ornamentation involved. Further, the social position of master masons in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries was such that the clergy might be quite ready to associate with them. When a mason's contract provided in one case in 1436 that he and his man were to have "honorable maintenance",(1) and in another in 1398 that a mason was to have "his board in the county hall as a gentleman", (2) and when we find masons in 1397 dining with the Fellows at New College, Oxford,(3) their treatment suggests that some masons had attained a certain social standing. The fact that two master masons, Henry Yevle and William Wynford, as early in their careers as 1369, were members of the King's Household and grouped with the "esquires of minor degree", (4) gives further support to this inference.

**Desire for Convivial Society** - Another motive for becoming a freemason was possibly the natural human desire to be social and convivial. Many no doubt could find all the society they wanted elsewhere, in family gatherings, or visits to neighbors, or at quarter sessions; but it may well have been that for the members of the old Chester or York lodges, for instance, the meetings of the lodge provided a convenient opportunity for that compound of refreshment, smoking and conversation, in circumstances of ease rather than of elegance, and undisturbed by the society of women, in which many men can take a rational pleasure. Most members of the Chester lodge, being engaged in the building trades, as mentioned on page 151 below, probably often had business dealings with one another, and they may well have enjoyed a friendly meeting for other purposes at regular intervals, and the same may have been true of some members of the London Acception, to which reference is made on page 147 below. That such meetings were associated with a craft would not, of necessity, deter English squires or Scottish lairds from taking part in them. Class boundaries were not nearly so rigid in Britain as in other countries, and it was not uncommon for the gentry to feast with the London Companies, or with the officers of provincial corporations.

1. *Archaeologia*, xxiii, 331.

2 *Hist. Dunelm Scriptorum Tres.*, p. clxxx.

3 *Hist. MSS. Com.*, 2nd Report, 133.

4 *P.R.O. Exch. K.R. Wardrobe and Household Accounts*, 395/2, printed in *Life Records of Chaucer*, iv, [174]

## EARLY NON OPERATIVE MASONS

Persons who were not operative masons, but who held an office connected with building work, may well have had occasion to visit the masons' lodges at York Minster or elsewhere. Thus, according to an ordinance of the Dean and Chapter of York made in 1408,(1) a clergyman called a supervisor was required as far as possible to be present continually in the lodge in order to note all defects and to stimulate the masons to diligence. There is no definite evidence, however, to show that such people were in any real sense members of the lodge, or admitted to its secrets. The first definite evidence that a non operative was a member of an operative lodge occurs in the year 1600, when the minutes of the Lodge of Edinburgh for 8 June 1600 show that John Boswell, laird of Auchinlech, attended as a member of the lodge.(2) As possibly earlier instances we may cite those ministers of the kirk of Scotland who perhaps as early as 1560 had the Mason Word. We cannot point to any certain instance in the Middle Ages of a non operative member of an operative lodge, though it is possible that the unknown author of the Cooke MS. was a non operative mason. He certainly uses the first person plural in several places where the third person plural might have been expected from a non mason, e.g., "we haue now in owre charys", (3) but the "we" may only be editorial and consequently no safe conclusion regarding the Masonic status of the author can be drawn. Another possibility is that if versions of the MS. Constitutions of Masonry were read to candidates in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, as was almost certainly the case in the later sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries, then, presumably, a clerk would do the reading, in which case there may have been quite a number of non operative masons in late medieval times. On the other hand, it is much more likely that the Old Charges were recited to candidates in earlier times, thus dispensing with the service of clerks.

1 Raine, 198.

2 Lyon, 52 3.

3 Line 421; cf. ll. 418,423,640 1. [142]

There are, however, as Begemann has pointed out,(1) three respects in which some versions of the Old Charges suggest the fairly early existence of non operative members. In the first place, the William Watson MS. of 1687 states that the charges were provided for "all manner of men who shall be made and allowed masons", an expression which very possibly corresponds to an earlier reference to "every honest mason or any other worthy workman that hath any love for the craft of masonry, and would know how the craft of masonry came first into England". If these, or similar phrases, were in the Watson MS. Original, which Begemann would date about 1480, and which we should date about 1520, then provision would appear to have been made for non operatives about 1500. In the second place, in certain seventeenth century versions of the Old Charges, the expression "true Mason" in the statement near the beginning about "the charges that belongeth to every true Mason to keep", is replaced by "free Mason". This, on the assumption that "free mason" was coming to have something of its modern meaning in the seventeenth century, suggests the possibility that these particular versions of the Old Charges were used by non operatives. In the third place, the acrostic upon the name of "masonrie", written by William Kay for his friend Robert Preston, with which the York No. 1 MS. of circa 1620 begins.(2) would appear to be even stronger evidence of the particular manuscript being of non operative origin than the fact that it is one of the versions which substitutes "free Mason" for "true Mason".

The position regarding non operatives, in such English operative lodges of this period as can be traced, is uncertain. More detailed reference is made to the lodges at Alnwick and Swalwell in Chapter X; here it will suffice to state that there is no definite evidence of non operative members in the former before its re-organization as a speculative lodge in 1748.(3)

1 Freimaurerei in England, i, 329 31.

2 Poole and Worts, 111.

3 Rylands, A.Q.C., xiv, 7 8. [143]

In the latter there are indications, in minutes of 1732 and 1733, which point to the admission of gentlemen and other non operative masons before the lodge accepted a "deputation" or constitution from Grand Lodge in 1735.(1) The possibility that the Lodge at Chester, of which the great majority of members were non operatives in 1673, was an operative lodge, is briefly discussed below.

All our actual examples of non operative masons (as distinct from accepted masons) have to be drawn from Scotland. The case of John Boswell, laird of Auchinlech, who was a member of the Lodge of Edinburgh in 1600, has already been mentioned. Other members of the nobility or gentry who were made masons at the Lodge of Edinburgh include Lord Alexander, Sir Anthony Alexander and Sir Alexander Strachan in 1634,(2) Henry Alexander (who succeeded his brother Sir Anthony as Master of Work to His Majesty) in 1638,(3) and General Alexander Hamilton in 1640;(4) whilst Quartermaster General Robert Moray (Murray) was received into the craft at Newcastle on 20 May 1641 by certain brethren of the Lodge of Edinburgh in whose Minute Book the transaction is retrospectively recorded.(5) The Hon. Alexander Seaton, brother of the Earl of Winton, was admitted to the Lodge of Aitchison's Haven in March 1672.(6) In the 1670s the Earl of Cassillis, the Earl of Eglintoune, Sir Alexander Cunningham and Lord William Cochrane entered the Lodge of Kilwinning.(7) In the Lodge of Aberdeen, when the records commence in 1670, we find that of the forty nine fellow crafts or master masons who were then members of the Lodge, only ten were operative masons; the other thirty nine consisted of four noblemen, three gentlemen, eight professional men, nine merchants and fifteen tradesmen.(8)

1 Masonic Mag., August 1875, 73, 74.

2 Lyon, 84 5.

3 Ibid., 86.

4 Ibid., 86.

5 Ibid., 103 4

6 Begemann, Freimaurerei in Schottland, 327.

7 Lyon, 53.

8 Miller, 21. [144]

That the presence of fifteen tradesmen among the non-operative members of the Lodge of Aberdeen was not an entirely abnormal occurrence is shown by the fact that the membership of the Lodge at Chester in 1673, as indicated below, was somewhat similarly constituted. Most of the tradesmen were connected with the building crafts, but some had no such association. As in these cases neither architectural education nor antiquarian interest is likely to have been the motive for joining the lodge, the reason is rather to be sought in ties of personal friendship with some of the operative members, or in a wish to share in the "good fellowship"

associated with the lodge, or possibly, in the case of the Lodge of Aberdeen, in a desire for such benefits as were provided by the Mason Box, maintained in accordance with the fourth statute of that Lodge.(1)

#### LOCAL ORGANISATION OF ACCEPTED MASONRY

The account of accepted masonry given in Plot's Natural History of Staffordshire, 1686,(2) although written, so far as we are aware, by a non mason, is the most circumstantial that we possess. According to Plot, the custom of admitting men into the "Society of Free masons" was spread, more or less, over the nation, but more especially in Staffordshire; next, he referred to a large parchment volume they had amongst them containing the history and rules of the craft of masonry which he very briefly summarized, this summary of a version of the MS. Constitutions of Masonry being known to present day students as the Plot Abstract. He continued:

86. Into which Society when any are admitted, they call a meeting (or Lodge as they term it in some places) which must consist at lest of 5 or 6 of the Ancients of the Order, whom the candidates present with gloves, and so likewise to their wives, and entertain with a collation according to the Custom of the place: This ended, they proceed to the admission of them, which chiefly consists in the communication of certain secret signes, whereby they are known to one another all over the Nation, by which means they have maintenance whither ever they travel: for if any man appear though altogether unknown that can shew any of these signes to a Fellow of the Society, whom they otherwise call an accepted mason, he is obliged presently to come to him, from what company or place soever he be in, nay tho' from the top of a Steeple ... to know his pleasure, and assist him ...

1 Ibid., 59.

2 85 6, reprinted in E.M.P., 31 4 [145]

This passage is to some extent supplemented by a passage in John Aubrey's Natural History of Wiltshire,(1) which was completed in 1686, though not published until 1847. He refers to the "Fraternity of adopted Masons" and adds:

... They are known to one another by certain Signs and Watch words: it continues to this day. They have several Lodges in several Countries for their reception; and when any of them fall into decay, the brotherhood is to relieve him &c. The manner of their Adoption is very formall, and with an Oath of Secrecy.

Aubrey's words are followed very closely by Dr. Richard Rawlinson in a memoir of Elias Ashmole contained in the introduction to Ashmole's Antiquities of Berkshire published in 1719.(2) Thus it may be concluded from Plot, Aubrey and Rawlinson, that accepted masons as well as operative masons, such as those of the Lodge of Aberdeen mentioned in the previous paragraph, provided friendly benefits, the knowledge of which may have attracted certain persons to seek admission to the craft.

In most cases the records, if any; of these lodges of accepted masons have been lost. This was very possibly the case at Kendal, where there is some reason for thinking that such a lodge existed as early as 1594, in connection with the Company of Wrights, to which masons and members of other building crafts belonged.(3) From one source or another we are able to trace seven such lodges.

(i) The earliest known lodge of accepted masons which has been definitely traced was the so called "Acception" connected with the London Masons' Company,(4) to which members and non members of the Company were admitted.

1 E.M.P., 41 2.

2 Ibid.

3 Poole, A.Q.C., xxxvi, 20 2, 33.

4 By courtesy of the Court of Assistants, we have been permitted to examine the Company's records. These partly served as a basis for our paper, "The London Masons' Company", Ec. Hist., February 1939, and are utilized for this paragraph. [146]

This implies that the ceremony of admission to the Acception was different from any ceremony of admission to the freedom of the Company. The Acception can be traced in the earliest surviving Account Book of the Company, which opens with the financial year 1619 20. The items relating to it are all too few: two, in 1630 1 and 1646 7, relate quite briefly to expenses connected with the Acception; three, in 1645 6, 1649 50 and 1663 4, relate equally briefly to sums spent upon the Acception Dinner; one, in 1676 7, relates to a balance of some £6 received from the "last accepted Masons", presumably after meeting a dinner bill; one, in 1638 9, and a group of entries in 1649-50, in addition to indicating expenses or receipts, give the names of those taken into the Acception. Of the five admitted in 1638 9, Nicholas Stone and three others can be traced as old members of the Company; the same applies to four out of six admitted in 1649 50. The other two cannot be traced in the Company's books, and the fact that they paid 40s., or double the ordinary entrance fee, strengthens the probability that they were not members of the Company. The Acception was no doubt identical with the lodge held at Masons' Hall, London, to which Elias Ashmole refers in his Diary on 10 and 11 March 1682,(1) when he and some other non members of the Masons' Company were present, as well as the Master and several other prominent members of the Company. This chance entry in Ashmole's Diary shows that the Acception had continued to meet as late as 1682, although no reference to it can be traced in the books of the Company after 1677, when, in addition to the above mentioned entry in the Account Book, there is a reference in the first Court Book of the Company to buying a new banner with the balance of 46 of the Accepted Masons' money.

The history of the Acception subsequent to 1682 is unknown, and so is its history before the first casual reference in 1630 1. It is quite possible, however, that an entry in the Account Book in 1620 1, "At the making masons", when seven men paid 26s. 8d. each, refers to the

1 E.M.P., 40 1 [147]

Acception.(1) Items in inventories of 1665 and 1676 make it appear likely that the Company possessed at least one version of the MS. Constitutions of Masonry, or Old Charges, and it is reasonable to conclude that this was used in connection with the ceremony of admission to the Acception.



Finally, attention may be drawn to three possible references to the activities of the Acception in the last quarter of the seventeenth century. One is a "divertissement" published in Poor Robin's Intelligence of 10 October 1676.(2) Although the whole paragraph is obviously a skit, the fact that it refers, amongst other organizations, to "the Company of Accepted Masons", suggests that at that date the existence of accepted masonry was known in London outside the immediate circle of the Masons' Company. The second is an addendum of 18 May 1691 to the manuscript of Aubrey's Natural History of Wiltshire, which states that on that day a great convention of the Fraternity of Accepted Masons was to be held at St. Paul's Church, where Sir Christopher Wren and certain others were to be adopted as Brothers.(3) The problem of Wren's connection with freemasonry is discussed in Chapter VIII below; here we need only say that "a great convention of the Fraternity of Accepted Masons to be held at St. Paul's Church" hardly sounds like a meeting of the Acception, which, when held at Masons' Hall on the occasion of Ashmole's visit in March 1682, was attended by ten masons, apart from six candidates.(4) The third is an

1 Among the Account Book items relating to that year there are separate lists of admission to the freedom (6 @ 3s. 10d.), to the livery (2 @ , £3) and "at the making, masons" (7 @ . 26s. 8d.), the name of James French occurring in both the second and third lists. It is difficult to understand what this last list refers to, unless it be to admission to the Acception. It has to be recognized, however, that the fee charged does not tally with that charged in 1649 50 (20s.). Apart from the original Account Book, the best source of information regarding the Acception is Conder, "The Masons' Company ... and the Lodge of Accepted Masons connected with it", A.Q.C., ix, 28 46.

2 Reprinted in A.Q.C., xlv, 312 13, with comments by Vibert; and in E.M.P., 30.

3 Bodl. Aubrey MS. 2, pt. ii, fo. 72 verso (reproduced in facsimile in A.Q.C., xi, facing p. 10).

4 E.M.P., 41. [148]

anti Masonic leaflet of 1698,(1) printed for M. Winter and addressed to "all godly people in the citie of London"

Having thought it needful to warn you of the Mischiefs and Evils practiced in the Sight of GOD by those called Freed Masons, I say take Care lest their Ceremonies and secret Swearings take hold of you; and be wary that none cause you to err from Godliness. For this devilish Sect of Men are Meeters in secret which swear against all without their Following. They are the Anti Christ which was to come leading Men from Fear of GOD. For how should Men meet in secret Places and with secret Signs taking Care that none observe them to do the Work of GOD; are not these the Ways of Evil doers?

Knowing how that GOD observeth privily them that sit in Darkness they shall be smitten and the Secrets of their Hearts layed bare. Mingle not among this corrupt People lest you be found so at the World's Conflagration.

This may not be an attack on the Acception, but it would certainly appear to be one on accepted masonry in London at that period. Until the recent discovery of this leaflet, there was no evidence known to us of the existence of accepted masonry in London between Aubrey's reference of 1691 and the mention of the signs and tokens of freemasons in The Tatler of 9 June 1709,(2) with its implication that freemasonry and its external characteristics were not unknown to London readers at that period. If "M. Winter", whom we cannot trace, thought it worth while incurring the expense of printing and distributing his anti Masonic leaflet in 1698, it would seem to imply that at that date accepted masonry in general, if not the Acception in particular, was active.

(ii) Our only knowledge of a lodge at Warrington is derived from the well known entry in Elias Ashmole's Diary, under date of 16 October 1646:

... I was made a Free Mason at Warrington in Lancashire, with Coll: Henry Mainwaring of Karincham in

1 Reprinted in facsimile in .A.Q.C., lv, 152 4, with comments by ourselves, and in E.M.P., 34 5.

2 E.M. P., 35 6. [149]

Cheshire. The names of those that were then at the Lodge, Mr. Rich Penket Warden, Mr. James Collier, Mr. Rich: Sankey, Henry Littler, John Ellam, Rich Ellam & Hugh Brewer.(1)

The investigations of W. H. Rylands suggest, first, that none of the persons present was a mason by trade, and, second, that there is some reason for thinking that the version of the MS. Constitutions of Masonry known as Sloane MS. 3848, which was completed by Edward Sankey on the very day that Ashmole was made a mason, was used at this particular ceremony of acceptance.(2)

(iii) Early freemasonry in Chester is closely associated with the name of Randle Holme III (1627 1699/1700), whose statement, in his Accademie of Armory (1688) that he was "a Member of that Society, called Free Masons" was quoted on page 140 above, where it was also mentioned that he made a copy of a version of the MS. Constitutions of Masonry, known as Harleian MS. 2054. This is contained in a volume which consists of various tracts and papers, among which are three of Masonic interest, all in the handwriting of Randle Holme III:(3) (i) fos. 29 32 contain the above mentioned version of the Old Charges; (ii) fo. 33, a scrap of paper torn off irregularly, contains an oath of secrecy in respect of "several words and signes of a free Mason"; (iii) fo. 34 contains 26 names, including that of Randle Holme, arranged on no obvious principle, together with certain translinear strokes and monetary entries, the meaning of which is anything but clear. The top line, which may be a heading, reads:

William Wade wt. give for to be a free Mason.

1 We quote from the original manuscript version which is printed side by side with the 1717 printed version in E.M.P., 40.

2 "Freemasonry in the Seventeenth Century", Masonic Mag., December 1881. The second suggestion rests on the assumption that Edward Sankey, the scribe, was the son of the "Mr. Rich: Sankey" who was present at lodge when Ashmole was admitted. Rylands discovered that a son of "Richard Sankey, Gent." was baptised at Warrington on 3 February 1621/22. This "Richard Sankey, Gent." was not necessarily the same as the "Mr. Rich: Sankey" who attended the lodge, nor was Edward Sankey, the scribe, necessarily the 'son' in question; nevertheless Rylands's suggestion is not unreasonable. Even if Edward Sankey was a brother, or more distant relative, of Richard Sankey, the suggestion might well hold good.

3 All three are reproduced in facsimile in Q.C.A., iii. The second and third are reproduced in facsimile in A.Q.C., xlv, facing p. 74.

The third is reproduced in facsimile in A.Q.C., li, facing p. 134. [150]

As these documents contain all the known evidence concerning accepted masonry in Chester in the seventeenth century, they have naturally been subjected to close examination by Masonic students.<sup>(1)</sup> There are no special features about the version of the Old Charges, which belongs to the Sloane branch of the Sloane family, and dates from the second half of the seventeenth century. The words of the second document resemble those in certain versions of the MS. Constitutions which contain a special reference to Masonic secrets, of which mention was made in Chapter IV above, and to which further reference will be made in Chapter X below. With regard to the third document, we accept the conclusion to which those who have studied this document most closely have generally come, viz., that the information contained in it, such as it is, relates to a lodge existing about 1673 at Chester, to which city most, if not all, of the men named in the document belonged. In our opinion, the purpose of the voting, indicated by the strokes in the upper part of the sheet, was to decide whether William Wade, one of five candidates, was to pay 20s., 15s., 10s., 8s. or 5s. for his admission to the lodge. The occupations of the 26 men named in the document were originally investigated by Rylands, and more recently by Coulthurst and Lawson. They consist of 6 masons, 6 bricklayers, 3 carpenters, 3 slaters and plasterers, 2 glaziers, 1 painter, 1 tanner, 1 tailor, 1 beerseller, 1 gentleman, and 1 man who has not been identified. As most of the leading building trade employers of the city were members of the lodge, it is quite possible that the lodge was in some way connected with the Company to which the masons and other building crafts belonged. It may even be that, on the analogy of the Lodge of Aberdeen, it was an operative lodge, notwithstanding the predominance of non operatives amongst its members. We do not, however, think it likely; the London Acceptation consisted mostly of operative masons, but was not an operative lodge, and we see no reason why the position at Chester should have been different. As Randle Holme made a copy of the Old Charges, it is not unlikely that this particular copy, or the original from which it was made, was used at ceremonies of acceptance in the Chester Lodge.

1 See Rylands, "Freemasonry in the Seventeenth Century", *Masonic Mag.*, January and February 1882; Gould, *History*, ii, 185 folg.; Hughan, *Old Charges* (1895), 100 folg.; Begemann, *Freimaurerei in England*, i, 378 folg.; Coulthurst and Lawson, "The Lodge of Randle Holme at Chester", *A.Q.C.*, xlv, 68 folg.; and our "Record of the Old Lodge at Chester", *A.Q.C.*, li, 13 3 folg. [151]

(iv) The only information available concerning a lodge of accepted masons in Trinity College, Dublin, in 1688, is contained in a tripos, or satirical speech, delivered by a student at the Commencements of the University of Dublin in July 1688.<sup>(1)</sup> The speech suggests the foundation of a new college, into which there was to be introduced a Society of Freemasons, consisting of gentlemen, mechanics, porters, parsons, ragmen, hucksters, divines, tinkers, knights . . . after the example of the Fraternity of Freemasons in and about Trinity College, by whom a collection was lately made for, and the purse of charity well stuffed for, a reduced Brother....

1 See Chetwode Crawley's introductory chapter to *Sadler's Masonic Reprints and Revelations*; Lepper and Crossle, 36 7; R. E. Parkinson, "The Lodge in Trinity College, Dublin, 1688", *A.Q.C.*, liv, 96 folg. [152]

If allowance be made for the exaggeration likely to be associated with such a satirical speech, the reference to freemasons in Trinity suggests (i) that the lodge contained members belonging to various social classes as was the case at Chester in 1673 and at York in 1726; (ii) that the lodge relieved distressed brethren which, according to both Plot and Aubrey, was a characteristic of accepted masonry. Among the contributors to the "collection" was one "from Sir Warren, for being Freemasonized in the new way, five shillings". This possibly contrasts the modified working of accepted masons with that of operative masons, from which it was originally derived. The subsequent history, if any, of the lodge is unknown. There is, however, in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin, among the collected papers of Sir Thomas Molyneux (1661 1733), a famous Dublin doctor and scientist, a short catechism,<sup>(1)</sup> endorsed "Free Masonry Feb. 1711", which we suspect of being an accepted mason's aide memoire.<sup>(2)</sup> It is just possible, therefore, that this lodge, or a successor to it, was still in existence as late as 1711. Bro. J. Heron Lepper attributes the formation of the lodge to the presence at Trinity of numerous operative masons, as Trinity College was engaged for some years previous to 1688 on the erection of new buildings. We are disposed to think that, in view of the very close association at this time between Dublin and England, where, according to Plot, the custom of "admitting men into the Society of Free Masons" was "spread more or less all over the Nation", accepted masonry was introduced into Ireland from England, and did not develop independently out of Irish operative masonry.

(v) Our sole knowledge of a lodge at Chichester in 1696 is derived from a petition presented to Grand Lodge in 1732 by Bro. Edward Hall, then a member of the lodge at the Swan at Chichester (constituted in 1724). In this he stated<sup>(3)</sup> that he had been made a mason at Chichester by the late Duke of Richmond thirty six years previously. As the petition was recommended by his son, the second Duke, who was Grand Master in 1724 5, and as Grand Lodge voted Hall six guineas, it seems reasonable to assume that Hall was made a mason in 1696 as he claimed.

(vi) The earliest surviving minutes of the Old Lodge at York are contained in a parchment roll endorsed "1712 to 1730".<sup>(4)</sup> All the entries point to the lodge being non-operative, though from a speech delivered to the lodge in 1726 by Francis Drake, the antiquary, in which he addressed himself (a) to the working masons, (b) to those who were of other trades and occupations, and (c) to the gentlemen present, it would appear that the lodge closely resembled the lodge at Chester in its composition.

1 The so called Trinity College, Dublin, MS. is printed in *E.M.C.*, 63 4.

2 *E.M.C.*, 10.

3 *Minutes of Grand Lodge*, 2 March 1732 (*Q.C.A.*, x, 216).

4 Printed in Hughan, "The York Grand Lodge", *A.Q.C.*, xiii, 11 16. The York Lodge constituted itself a Grand Lodge in 1725.

5 *E.M.P.*, 196 207. [153]

The original minute book, beginning in 1705/06 and ending in 1734, was listed in a schedule of regalia, records, etc., of the York Grand Lodge, dated 15 September 1779. After the collapse of that Grand Lodge in the 1790s, its records were dispersed or lost. Several of the documents listed in the schedule have since been traced, and are now in the possession of York Lodge No. 236, but the minute book, described as "A narrow folio manuscript Book beginning 7th March 1705 06, containing sundry accounts and minutes relative to the Grand Lodge", is unfortunately still missing. It was, however, examined in August 1778 by the York Grand Secretary, Jacob Bussey, for the purpose of supplying certain information to Benj. Bradley of the Lodge of Antiquity. From Bussey's letter, which is still extant,<sup>(1)</sup> we learn that Sir George Tempest, Baronet, presided over the lodge in 1705 06; also that the lodge once met at Bradford in 1713, "when 18 gentlemen of the first families in that Neighborhood were made Masons". It is likely,

however, that this or some other lodge existed at York before 1705. A version of the Old Charges, York No. 4 MS., copied in 1693, bears below the signature of Mark Kipling, the copyist, five names set out under the heading "The names of the Lodge". Unfortunately, it is not stated where the lodge met, nor can Kipling's name, or that of any of the five members of the lodge, be traced in the Roll of Freemen of the city of York. The manuscript was presented to the York Grand Lodge in 1777, perhaps because of a previous association with that city. Possible evidence of a much older lodge at York is afforded by the Levander York MS. of circa 1740, which is written on the flyleaves of a copy of Anderson's Constitutions of 1738. At the end, in the same handwriting as the rest of the manuscript, appear the words: "From York Lodge copy'd from the Original engross'd on abortive [= fine vellum] in the Year 1560."

<sup>1</sup> The letter is printed in Gould, ii, chap. §viii, which is entirely devoted to Masonry in York in the eighteenth century. Another source of information, if available, is Hughan's *Masonic Sketches and Reprints*: i. *History of Freemasonry in York*. [154]

Unfortunately, the Levander York MS. Original, which must have existed as late as 1740, has not been traced, and there is consequently no means of checking the statements at the end of the Levander York MS. It must be pointed out, however, that though the original may have been engrossed in 1560, it may not have come into the possession of York Lodge until a much later date. It would certainly not be safe to deduce from this postscript to the Levander York MS. that the York Lodge existed in 1560. If it did, it was probably operative.

(vii) Our knowledge of a lodge at Scarborough in 1705 rests on an endorsement on the back of a version of the Old Charges, known as the Scarborough MS.,<sup>(1)</sup> to the effect that at a private lodge held at Scarborough, 10 July 1705, before William Thompson, Esq., President of the said lodge, and several other freemasons, the six persons whose names are subscribed thereto, were admitted into the Fraternity. It is possible that the lodge had no permanent existence, and that on 10 July 1705 Thompson and some other freemasons formed themselves into a lodge for the special purpose of admitting half a dozen friends into the Fraternity, the Scarborough MS. being used in connection with the ceremony of admission. It is also possible that the lodges at Warrington on 16 October 1646 and at Chichester in 1696, were of the same occasional character.<sup>(2)</sup> The London Acceptation, the Lodge at Chester, the Lodge at Trinity College, Dublin, and the Lodge at York, appear to have been more permanent organizations. In each of the seven cases, with the possible exception of that at Chester, the lodge, whether occasional or semi permanent, appears to have been organized for the purpose of admitting accepted masons, and in at least four of the instances a version of the MS. Constitutions of Masonry appears to have played a part in the ceremony of admission.

<sup>1</sup> Printed in Poole and Worts, 245 folg.

<sup>2</sup> The possibility that there were lodges of an occasional character in Ireland before 1713 must not be overlooked. If there is any truth in the tradition that as a young girl the Hon. Elizabeth St. Leger (1693-1773), only daughter of the first Viscount Doneraile [Arthur St. Leger], inadvertently witnessed the proceedings of a Masonic lodge held at her home at Doneraile House and, being discovered, was forced to submit to initiation, it shows that the nobility of Ireland were holding what we should describe as occasional lodges in their private houses at a period before 17 April 1713, when Miss St. Leger was married to Richard Aldworth. See Lepper and Crossle, 38-9. [155]

[Note: Elizabeth's nephew, Arthur Mohun St. Leger, 3rd Viscount of Doneraile, was the Grand Master of Ireland in 1748. See also The Hon. Miss St. Leger and Freemasonry. *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum*, vol. viii (1895) pp. 16-23, 53-56. vol. xviii (1905) pp. 46]

#### DISTRICT OR CENTRAL ORGANISATION OF ACCEPTED MASONRY

That there existed in England and Ireland in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries certain non operative lodges, or lodges of accepted masons, either occasional or semi permanent in character, is a fact about which there can be no question. The existence of a wider organization behind such lodges of accepted masons is problematical. In our opinion, no widespread and effective system of secret methods of recognition the essence of the freemasons' esoteric knowledge could exist at any period without some central authority, or at least co operation among local organizations, to control such a system. To our minds the only doubt is whether the machinery which regulated the Mason Word as an operative institution was sufficient to control it when widely used by non operatives. In Scotland, where non operatives belonged to operative lodges, there was probably no need for a separate central authority, but in England the position was different. If we are right in thinking that the English lodges of accepted masons adopted most, if not all, of their esoteric knowledge from Scottish operative lodges, then the more frequently such lodges of accepted masons were established in England, outside the jurisdiction of the Scottish central authority, the greater the likelihood of diversities being introduced. Although there were undoubtedly local differences in Masonic working, yet, to judge by the surviving catechisms of masonry, there appears to have been considerable uniformity in the matter of the esoteric knowledge imparted by the various lodges. This points to the possible existence of some central or district control in England in the second half of the seventeenth century, when non operative or accepted masonry was spreading.

The evidence in favor of the existence of some central [156] or district Masonic authority in England in the seventeenth century would appear to be briefly as follows. In the first place, Robert Padgett, who in 1686 made a copy of the Old Charges known as the Antiquity MS.,<sup>(1)</sup> described himself at the end of the manuscript as "clearke to the Worshipful Society of the Free Masons of the City of London",<sup>(2)</sup> and this description seems too general to apply to a single or local lodge. In the second place, some of the rules included in the code of New Articles found in those versions of the Old Charges which belong to the Roberts family imply the existence of some central or district authority. One rule refers to "the Master of that Limit and Division" where the lodge was kept, which seems to point to some kind of district authority; another rule provides for the future regulation and government of "the Society, Company and fraternity of free masons" by a Master, Assembly and Wardens as the said Company shall think fit to choose at every yearly general Assembly, which suggests some kind of central authority. The Macnab MS.<sup>(3)</sup> of 1722 says the New Articles were added to the former charges "by ye best Mrs. & fellows", without specifying a date; the Roberts print<sup>(4)</sup> of the same year says the New Articles were made and agreed upon at a General Assembly held 8 December 1663. The two earliest versions of this family, the Grand Lodge No. 2 MS.<sup>(5)</sup> and the Harleian MS. 1942,<sup>(6)</sup> dating from the second half of the seventeenth century, give the New Articles, but do not indicate how or when they were drawn up.

The evidence is not conclusive, especially as no piece of it reveals the actual existence of a governing body. Very possibly English lodges of accepted masons, since they appear to have derived their working directly or indirectly from Scotland, may have looked to Scotland for guidance on fundamental points. The proceedings in London in 1716 and 1717, which resulted in the formation of the Grand Lodge of England by four London and Westminster lodges, pointed to the recognized need for a central authority, without definitely indicating that one had previously existed.

1 Printed in Hughan's Old Charger, 1872.

2 This Society must not be confused with the London Worshipful Company of Masons, to which Thomas Stampe was clerk from 1681 to 1695, and to which Padgett was never clerk (Conder, 304.)

3 Printed in Poole and Worts.

4 E.M. P., 71.

5 Q.C.A. 4., iv.

6 Ibid., ii.[157]

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE FORMATION OF GRAND LODGE

The Rev. Dr. James Anderson

THE formation and early activities of Grand Lodge are, unfortunately, shrouded in almost as much obscurity as the rites and ceremonies practiced by English lodges in the first three decades of the eighteenth century. The minutes of Grand Lodge do not commence until 1723, and no minutes of any private lodge in London for so early a period appear to have survived. In the absence of official records, we have to rely upon secondary authorities, principally the Rev. Dr. James Anderson<sup>(1)</sup> (1679-1739), the second son of James Anderson (1649-1722), glazier, of Aberdeen. He was educated at Marischal College, Aberdeen, being an Arts student from 1694 to 1698, and a Divinity student from 1698 to 1702. He was then apparently licensed as a Minister of the Church of Scotland, and probably preached for some years in Scotland prior to moving to London in 1709. His first church was in Glasshouse Street; in 1710 he moved with his congregation to Swallow Street, Piccadilly (to a chapel which had originally belonged to the French Protestants), where he remained until 1734, when he became minister.

1 For this chapter, we rely mainly upon (i) Anderson's Constitutions of 1723 and 1738; (ii) commentaries on the Constitutions by Lionel Vibert ("Anderson's Constitutions of 1723", .A.Q.C., xxxvi; and Introduction to the Quaritch reproduction of Anderson's Constitutions of 1723); by Dr. Begemann (Freimaurerei in England, ii, Chaps. 1, 2, 3) and by Lewis Edwards ("Anderson's Book of Constitutions of 1738", A.Q.C., xlvi); (iii) studies of Anderson's other writings by Chetwode Crawley ("Anderson's Non Masonic Writings", *ibid.*, xviii) and by J. T. Thorp ("The Reverend James Anderson and the Earls of Buchan", *ibid.*, xviii); (iv) biographies of Anderson by A. F. Robbins ("Anderson of the Constitutions", *ibid.*, xxiii) and by A. L. Miller ("The Connection of Dr. James Anderson of the 'Constitutions' with Aberdeen and Aberdeen University", *ibid.*, xxxvi); (v) the minutes of Grand Lodge, and W. J. Songhurst's introduction to Q.C.A., x, in which the early minutes are printed [159] of a church in Lisle Street, Leicester Fields. In 1731 he received the degree of D.D. from his old University, though his claim to such recognition cannot have been very strong, if we accept the opinion of such a competent judge as Chetwode Crawley, according to whom his one time reputation as a profound Talmudic scholar had no foundation in fact, and his most ambitious publications in the realms of theology and philosophy did not rise above a dreary commonplace level. His Royal Genealogies, published in 1732, his most ambitious literary effort, is largely based on a German work of John Hubner, Genealogische Tabellen, published in 1719. In the prospectus inviting subscriptions, Anderson's book is described as a translation of Hiibner's work, "carefully collated and much improved, with many necessary additions by James Anderson, A.M.". Actually, the additional matter was apparently largely taken from Prideaux's The Old and the New Testament Connected. But for his association with freemasonry, the Rev. Dr. James Anderson and his work would undoubtedly have sunk into oblivion.

Although his father was very closely associated, as a non operative, with the Lodge of Aberdeen, being Clerk for many years and Master on two occasions, there is no evidence to show that the son was made a mason there; nor does he appear to have taken any part in the formation of Grand Lodge in 1716 and 1717, or in its early activities. We think it possible that the statement near the end of the 'historical' section of the Constitutions of 1723, to the effect that several noblemen and gentlemen of the best rank with clergymen and learned scholars of most professions and denominations<sup>(1)</sup> joined the Society during the Grand Mastership of the Duke of Montagu (1721-2) may refer to Anderson himself, among others. This possibility is not incompatible with Anderson's own account, according to which Grand Lodge in September 1721 (three months after Montagu's installation), "finding fault with all the copies of the old Gothic Constitutions, order'd Brother James Anderson A.M. to digest the same in a new and better Method". Vibert

1 The italics are ours: the passage is quoted in full in footnote on p. 3 above. [160]

assumes that Anderson was present at Grand Lodge on that occasion,<sup>(1)</sup> but that does not necessarily follow, as he would not have been eligible to attend unless at the time he was Master or Warden of a regular lodge. In June 1723, when Master of Lodge XVII (which has never been identified), he acted as Grand Warden. According to Anderson's Constitutions of 1738, William Hawkins had been appointed Grand Warden in June 1722, but in January 1722/3 James Anderson, A.M., was appointed warden "for Hawkins demitted, as always out of Town". The original entry in Grand Lodge minute book, under date 24 June 1723, reads:

Joshua Timson )  
 The Reverend Mr. James Anderson who } G: Wardens  
 officiated for Mr. William Hawkins )

The words printed in italics have been scratched out in the minute book, but are shown quite distinctly in a photograph.<sup>(2)</sup> There are no minutes for January 1722/3, but in the List of Grand Officers entered at the end of the first Minute Book of Grand Lodge, there appears under 1722 the following item:

Mr. Joshua Timson     )  
who demitted and then )  
James Anderson A.M. } Wardens  
was chosen in his place  
Mr. William Hawkins

The emendation, printed in italics, is in Anderson's handwriting.<sup>(3)</sup> From 1723 to 1730, he did not attend Grand Lodge, but probably for some years he was not qualified to do so, as Past Grand Wardens were not members of Grand Lodge until 1727. When he resumed attendance in August 1730, he acted as Grand Warden and is described in the minutes as "The Reverend Mr. James Anderson, G.W. pro tempore".

1 A.Q.C., xxxvi, 42.

2 For facsimile of the entry, see Q.C.A., x, 48. See also Songhurst's introduction, *ibid.*, p. xxiii.

3 For facsimile of this entry and of an authenticated specimen of Anderson's handwriting, see *ibid.*, 196. [161]

He was next present in June 1731 when his name appears among the Grand Officers, though actually he is described as "Dr. James Anderson, Author of the Book of Constitutions". He attended the following meeting of Grand Lodge in December 1731, being entered in the Minute Book as "Dr. James Anderson, formerly G. Warden". At all subsequent meetings of Grand Lodge which he attended he is usually described as "formerly G. Warden", or "late G.W.". These entries seem clearly to imply that at an earlier date he had been appointed Grand Warden, presumably on the occasion he claims, and that the emendation he made in the List of Grand Officers for 1722/3 was a genuine correction. He certainly made the alteration in his characteristic handwriting, so that there was nothing secretive about it. On the other hand, there is nothing to show that he did the scratching out of part of the entry in the minutes of June 1723, though it is quite possible that he did so, to make the minute tally with the amended list of Grand Officers. Amending minutes by scratching out words, instead of striking them out and initialing the correction, would appear to be most reprehensible according to modern ideas, even if done at the time the minutes came up for confirmation, and quite unpardonable if done at a subsequent date, but it is probably wrong to judge eighteenth century actions by twentieth century standards, just as it is probably wrong to attempt to judge eighteenth century historical writings by modern standards of historical accuracy, a problem to which we refer more fully below.

Dr. Anderson's claim to Masonic fame is as "author" of the Constitutions of 1723 and 1738. According to his own account, he was appointed by Grand Lodge in September 1721 to prepare the first edition, but very possibly Begemann is right in believing that the initiative came from Anderson, and that he volunteered to produce a Book of Constitutions. In December 1721, at the desire of Grand Lodge, the Grand Master appointed fourteen "learned Brothers" to examine Anderson's manuscript and to report to Grand Lodge; the Committee in March 17 reported that it had perused Anderson's manuscript, viz., the History, Charges, Regulations and Master's Song, and, [162] after some amendments, had approved it, upon which Grand Lodge desired the Grand Master to order it to be printed. On 17 January 1722/3 Anderson produced the new Book of Constitutions in print at the Quarterly Communication, where it was approved with the addition of the Ancient Manner of Constituting a Lodge. (1) The Constitutions were advertised for sale on 28 February 1722/3. On pages 73 and 74 was printed the "Approbation" of the Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master, Grand Wardens and Masters and Wardens of particular lodges. Two points about the Approbation are especially deserving of attention. (i) The name of William Hawkins appears, along with that of Joshua Timson, as Grand Warden. At first sight, this is not easy to reconcile with what has been said above about the Grand Wardenship of Hawkins, and his replacement by Anderson on 17 January 1722/3. The explanation doubtless is that, as the book was submitted in print at the meeting of the Quarterly Communication on 17 January 1722/3, the names had been printed at the latest in December 1722. That this must have been the case is shown by the fact that Matthew Birkhead, who died at the end of December 1722, is described as Master of Lodge V. Thus the Approbation was printed in advance of the meeting at which the publication of the Constitutions was sanctioned, and at which Anderson was chosen as Grand Warden in place of William Hawkins. (ii) The Master of Lodge XVII is stated to be "James Anderson A.M. The Author of this Book". It should be clearly understood that the word "author" in the eighteenth century had not necessarily its present signification, but might mean "editor". (2) There is no name on the title page of the 1723 edition of the Book of Constitutions, but, according to the title page, the 1738 edition was "By James Anderson, D.D.". Nevertheless, Anderson was only 'editor', and not 'author' in the modern sense, of the two earliest editions of the Book of Constitutions, and consequently a good deal more responsibility rests on the committee of fourteen learned brothers, and on the Grand Officers, present and past, to whom the manuscript of the 1738 edition was submitted (including Dr. J. T. Desaguliers, William Cowper, first secretary to Grand Lodge, and George Payne), than some critics of Anderson are disposed to recognize.

1 We give the particulars of approval from the 'historical' section of the Constitutions of 1738. The account printed in the 'Approbation' of the Constitutions of 1723 is rather less detailed.

2 Thus the Masonic catechism A Mason's Examination, of 1723, is contained in a letter "To the Author of the Flying Post" (E.M.C., 65); another early catechism, A Mason's Confession, is embodied in a letter of March 1755/6 "To the author of The Scots Magazine" (*ibid.*, 93). [163]

Although Anderson was only editor of the Book of Constitutions, and although it was issued with the approval of Grand Lodge, it was nevertheless his "sole property", out of the sale of which he doubtless hoped to make a profit. In other words, Anderson owned the copyright. In February 1735, when the first edition of the Constitutions was exhausted, he sought the approval of Grand Lodge for the preparation of a new and revised edition. The desired approval was granted, subject to the alterations and additions being reported upon favorably by a committee consisting of the then Grand Officers and their predecessors. It was not until January 1738 that Anderson announced in Grand Lodge that the new edition, after perusal and amendment by Grand Officers, was ready for the press; he sought and obtained approval for printing, and for a new regulation in regard to the removal of lodges, which he had prepared with the assistance of Bro. Payne, and desired to insert in the Book of Constitutions. The book was published during the course of the year, and this, too, was Anderson's sole property, like the first edition.

In February 1735, when seeking approval for a second edition, Anderson represented to Grand Lodge that a certain William Smith, in A Pocket Companion for Free Masons had pirated a considerable part of his Constitutions, "to the prejudice of the said Br.

Anderson, it being his Sole Property"; Grand Lodge resolved that the Masters and Wardens of the lodges should discourage their members from buying Smith's books. There was, however, a real demand for a cheaper, handier, and more concise version of the Constitutions, such as was provided by the Pocket Companion, and one edition followed another, until it was [164] finally superseded in popularity by Preston's Illustrations of Masonry in the 1770s. Anderson's debut as an historian was the result of his having been invited, or his having volunteered, to "digest" the MS. Constitutions of Masonry in what he called a new and better method. We briefly described his efforts in regard to the "historical" part, and contemporary criticism of them, in our first chapter, and need not repeat what is said there. Here we are concerned with the more serious scientific criticism of Anderson's "history", which is not found before the later part of the nineteenth century, the most searching and relentless critic being Begemann. If Preston believed everything that Anderson wrote, Begemann hardly believed anything, unless it was supported by independent evidence. He analyzed Anderson's statements in great detail, especially those relating to the period 1717 to 1723, and endeavored to show how unreliable or inexact they frequently were. Whilst it is undoubtedly desirable to have confirmation of any historian's statements, wherever possible, we are not prepared to follow Begemann when he accepts the omission of any reference to some event in the minutes of Grand Lodge, or in the contemporary press, as proof that such and such an event did not occur, in preference to accepting the positive statement of Anderson that it did occur. To judge by our experience of the uninformative character of early Masonic minutes, the mere fact that this or that event is not recorded there is very far from proving that such an occurrence did not take place. Similarly, the fact that no reference to some Masonic event, such as a public Masonic procession, has been traced in the contemporary press is very far from proving that some procession mentioned by Anderson is a pure invention. The surviving files of early eighteenth century newspapers are not complete and have not been exhaustively searched; moreover, the 'news' value of such a procession may have been considered negligible in 1721 by those journalists, if any, who happened to catch sight of it.

Further, Begemann accuses Anderson of deliberately misquoting his authorities. There can, indeed, be no question that Anderson's quotations, at the best, were never [165] strictly accurate, and at the worst were anything but faithful versions of the original. Thus in his Constitutions of 1738 he sets out the Old Regulations and the New Regulations in parallel columns, but in no single case does the Old Regulation, as printed in the 1738 edition, appear to be a correct quotation of that Regulation as originally printed in the 1723 edition. By way of illustration, we print the first General Regulation of the 1723 edition side by side with what purports, in the 1738 edition, to be the Old Regulation:

GENERAL REGULATIONS, 1723

I. THE Grand Master, or his DEPUTY, hath Authority and Right, not only to be present in any true Lodge, but also to preside wherever he is, with the Master of the Lodge on his Left hand, and to order his Grand Wardens to attend him, who are not to act in particular Lodges as Wardens, but in his Presence, and at his Command; because there for the GRAND MASTER may command the Wardens of that Lodge, or any other Brethren he pleaseth, to attend and act as his Wardens pro tempore.

OLD REGULATIONS (1738 version)

I. THE G. Master or Deputy has full Authority and Right, not only to be present, but also to preside in every Lodge, with the Master of the Lodge on his Left Hand; and to order his Grand Wardens to attend him, who are not to act as Wardens of particular Lodges but in his Presence and at his Command: the G. Master, while in a particular Lodge, may command the Wardens of that Lodge, or any Other Master Masons, to act there as his Wardens pro tempore.

As Anderson could not copy correctly even from his own writings, it is hardly surprising that he failed to do so from those of other writers. Begemann's criticism on this point, however, was perhaps too severe. Anderson may have been constitutionally incapable of copying accurately any passage which he wished to quote, and was possibly unconscious of the fact that he frequently embroidered the statements of other writers, attributing to them ideas which were not in the originals. Nevertheless, most, if not all, of Anderson's statements relating to masonry in England since the Conquest rest on some substratum of fact, though the facts may have become somewhat obscured in the process of "digestion". Anderson had also a tiresome habit of bestowing on prominent men throughout the ages recently established Masonic titles, such as Grand Master, [166] Deputy Grand Master and Grand Warden, just as fifteenth and sixteenth century painters represented biblical characters in Renaissance attire. In addition to these general defects, which he shares with contemporary writers, he had another, not unknown in writers of reminiscences, namely, a tendency to exaggerate the part which he himself had played in contemporary Masonic developments. In 1723, in the first edition of the Constitutions, although he refers in his "historical" section to events as recent as the Grand Mastership of the Duke of Montagu in 1721 2, there is no mention of the establishment of Grand Lodge in 1717. This is perhaps hardly surprising if, as we have suggested on page 16, above, he was very possibly not made a mason until after the installation of the Duke of Montagu as Grand Master on 24 June 1721. That he was present on that occasion seems unlikely; otherwise one would have expected him to refer to the old version of the Constitutions [the Cooke MS.] produced by Payne on that occasion, as reported by Stukeley.(1) Begemann points out that Anderson, in his account of the meeting of Grand Lodge, on 24 June 1721,(2) does not mention the fact that Payne "read over a new set of articles to be observed", as reported by Stukeley, but the sub heading to the General Regulations in the Constitutions of 1723 "compiled first by Mr. George Payne, Anno 1720, when he was Grand Master, and approv'd by the Grand Lodge On St. John Baptist's Day, Anno 1721, at Stationer's Hall, LONDON", clearly shows that Anderson knew all about this "new set of articles". It was not until 1738, in the second edition of the Constitutions, that he gave an account of the establishment of Grand Lodge the principal account we possess - and an abstract of the activities of Grand Lodge, year by year, from 1717 to 1738. Although this edition, like the first, was approved by Grand Lodge, the statements contained in it cannot be regarded as official, and must be subjected to close examination.

1 Family Memoirs of... William Stukeley, Surtees Soc., 1xxiii, 64.

2 Constitutions oft 738, 113. [167]

Anxious as he undoubtedly was to magnify the part he had taken in Masonic developments, Anderson did not venture to suggest, in the account which he wrote some twenty years after the event, that he himself was present at the formation or earliest meetings of Grand Lodge. This was very possibly because among former Grand Officers to whom the manuscript was submitted for approval and correction, such as George Payne (Grand Master 1718 19 and 1720 1), Dr. Desaguliers (Grand Master 1719 20), and William Cowper (Secretary to Grand Lodge 1723 4, Deputy Grand Master 1726 7), some may quite likely have been connected with Grand Lodge from its inception, and would, in any case, know that he could lay claim to no such connection. Apart from this check on Anderson's story of the formation and early years of Grand Lodge, there is some confirmation to be derived (a) from the list of Grand Officers, commencing in 1717, entered at the end of the first Minute Book of Grand Lodge; (b) from a list, probably written about 1724, of the Grand Lodge Feasts from 1717 to 1723, contained in the so called "E. Book" of the Lodge of Antiquity No. 2; (c) from an entry of 1721 in Dr. William Stukeley's Diary; and (d) from occasional contemporary newspaper references. The only other known account of the formation of Grand Lodge is that in *The Complete Free Mason or Multa Paucis for Lovers of Secrets*, published anonymously about 1763 or 1764. This differs somewhat from Anderson's account. In other respects, the "history" of freemasonry contained in *Multa Paucis* is based closely on Anderson, but it is possible that the author also had some other source of information at his disposal when he came to describe the inception of Grand Lodge. Thus, on this particular point, *Multa Paucis* may perhaps be regarded as an independent authority confirming Anderson in essentials.

#### THE ESTABLISHMENT OF GRAND LODGE

Taking all the available evidence into account, we are satisfied that the inception and establishment of Grand Lodge in 1716 and 1717 was not a pure invention of Anderson. The main facts of his story are probably correct, though some of the details and explanations are open to considerable doubt. With these reservations in mind, we may examine the account of the formation of Grand Lodge as given by Anderson and in *Multa Paucis*.

1 Reprinted as Vol. VII of the Leicester Masonic Reprints, 1924. [168]

(i) In both accounts, Sir Christopher Wren is the starting point. According to Anderson the few lodges in London in 1716 "finding themselves neglected by Sir Christopher Wren [previously referred to as 'Grand Master Wren'] thought fit to cement under a Grand Master as the center of Union and Harmony". The account in *Multa Paucis* is very similar. In view of the freedom with which Anderson bestowed the title "Grand Master" on historical characters associated with the building industry, as patrons or otherwise, such as Nimrod and Solomon in ancient times, William Wykeham and Henry Chichele in the Middle Ages, and Cardinal Wolsey and Inigo Jones in later times, we have no hesitation in regarding Anderson's description of Wren as Grand Master as simply a recognition of Wren's distinction as an architect. It is not even quite certain that Wren was a freemason; the main reason for thinking that he was a member of the craft is that in the manuscript of Aubrey's *Natural History of Wiltshire*, completed in 1686 but not published until 1847, there is an addendum of 18 May 1691(1) which states that on that day a great convention of the Fraternity of Accepted Masons was to be held at St. Paul's Church, where Sir Christopher Wren and certain others were to be adopted as Brothers. Conceivably Aubrey may have mistaken the place of meeting, which was probably not St. Paul's Church, but The Goose and Gridiron Tavern in St. Paul's Churchyard, where, according to Pine's *Engraved List of Lodges*, 1729, what is now the Lodge of Antiquity, No. 2, was constituted in 1691, and where, in 1717, the first Annual Assembly of Grand Lodge was held.

On Wren's death in 1723, only two of the contemporary newspapers referred to him as a freemason, and even they may have used the word in an operative sense; his family papers make no reference to his being an accepted mason; similarly, in 1723 in the first edition of the *Constitutions*, Anderson refers to him only as "the ingenious Architect, Sir Christopher Wren".

1 See facsimile in A.Q.C., xi (1898), facing p. to. [169]

In 1728, Edward Oakley, himself an architect as well as a freemason, when delivering a speech to the lodge of which he was then Master, refers to "that accomplish'd Architect Sir Christopher Wren", but does not claim him as a freemason.(1) Later writers, such as the author of *Multa Paucis*, and William Preston in his *Illustrations of Masonry*, who give particulars of Wren's Masonic career, doubtless copied them from Anderson's *Constitutions* of 1738, and cannot be regarded as providing independent confirmation on that point. As Aubrey apparently wrote his addendum before the event it refers to had taken place, and as no other reference to the meeting has ever been traced, an element of uncertainty remains. Taking everything into account, we are disposed to think that Wren probably did join the Fraternity in 1691, but that he took little or no active part in freemasonry after his acceptance.

(ii) According to both accounts, the meeting which decided to constitute Grand Lodge was held in 1716 at the Apple Tree Tavern in Charles Street, Covent Garden; Anderson does not specify a day; *Multa Paucis* names St. John's Day, but does not state whether the summer or the winter festival. According to Anderson, there were present, besides "some old Brothers", the lodges which met at the following places

1. the Goose and Gridiron Ale house in St. Paul's Churchyard,(2)
2. the Crown Ale house in Parker's Lane,(3)
3. the Apple Tree Tavern in Charles Street,(4)
4. the Rummer and Grapes Tavern in Channel Row, Westminster.(5)

In *Multa Paucis* it is stated, without giving any details, that the Masters and Wardens of six lodges assembled. Possibly "some old Brothers" may account for the two extra lodges of *Multa Paucis*, but it is not known what lodges, if any, in addition to the Four Old Lodges were represented at the inception meeting.

1, E.M.P., 211.

2 Now the Lodge of Antiquity, No. 2.

3 Lodge erased in 1736.

4 Now the Lodge of Fortitude and Old Cumberland, No. 12.

5 Now the Royal Somerset House and Inverness Lodge, No. 4 [170]

One was very possibly the lodge which in 1723 met at the Cheshire Cheese in Arundel Street, as in the MS. List of 1723 4.(1) it was placed in front of the Lodge at the Horn Tavern, Westminster, the fourth of the Four Old Lodges, notwithstanding the influential membership of that particular lodge. Regarding the decisions reached, it may be noted that, according to Anderson, those present constituted themselves a Grand Lodge pro tempore, and "forthwith revived the quarterly communication of the Officers of Lodges (call'd the Grand Lodge)". Further, they resolved to hold the Annual Assembly and Feast, and then to choose a Grand Master. The account in *Multa Paucis* is much the same, but less detailed. Both seem to agree that Quarterly Communications and the Annual Assembly were to be revived, but neither offers any evidence that Quarterly Communications ever had been held up to that time. Actually, the first one recorded by Anderson was not held until 27 December 1720, and in all probability that was the first ever held. Anderson states that according to a copy of the Old Constitutions a General Assembly was held on 27 December 1663, and made certain regulations which he quotes. The version of the Old Charges referred to would appear to be the so called Roberts Constitutions. This version was printed in five successive issues of *The Post Man* in August 1722,(2) and shortly afterwards was issued by Roberts as a pamphlet. The General Assembly mentioned was doubtless that described in the Roberts print as taking place on 8 December 1663, and the Regulations were presumably the "Additional Orders and Constitutions" stated in the Roberts print to have been made at that Assembly. In Anderson the date appears not as the 8th but as the 27th of December (St. John's Day in Winter), and the wording of the "Orders" has been modified. Thus Anderson provides no evidence, additional to that reviewed on pages 156 7 above, of the existence of any central or district Masonic authority in England before 1717. In *Multa Paucis* there is no mention of any General Assembly or Regulations in 1663.

(iii) According to both accounts, an Assembly was held at the Goose and Gridiron Ale House, St. Paul's Churchyard, on St. John the Baptist's Day, 24 June 1717, at which Anthony Sayer was elected Grand Master and invested and installed as such.

1 Q.C.A., x, 4.

2 E.M.P., 71. [171]

#### THE EARLY GRAND MASTERS

Very little is known about the first Grand Master, who was born about 1672 and died in 1742. He is described by Anderson as "Mr. **Antony Sayer**, gentleman", and the researches of J. Walter Hobbs (1) point to the possibility that he belonged to the Berkshire Sayers, who were landed gentry, and that he may have been the son of Joseph Sayer and Mary Pysley, who were married in December 1665. Efforts to trace his early career have been entirely unsuccessful. Towards the end of his life he was definitely in restricted circumstances, being a petitioner to Grand Lodge for relief on more than one occasion.(2) At the time of his death early in January 1741/42, he was tyler to what is now the Old King's Arms Lodge No. 28, a post which he had apparently held for some years.(3) In the early days of Grand Lodge he was a member of the lodge which met at the Apple Tree Tavern; (4) apart from serving as Grand Warden in 1719 20, he was not very active in Grand Lodge after leaving the chair.(5) He was clearly a man of less distinction, both Masonically and otherwise, than the only other commoners who have ever held the high office of Grand Master, namely George Payne, who held it in 1718 19 and 1720 1, and Dr. J. T. Desaguliers, who was Grand Master in 1719 20.

**George Payne** was an active member of Grand Lodge for nearly forty years. During his Grand Mastership in 1720 1, he compiled the Regulations of Grand Lodge which are printed in the Constitutions of 1723, and are referred to more fully in the next chapter. He was Grand Warden in 1724 5,(6) and was appointed member of the Charity Committee in 1727.(7)

1 A.Q.C., xxxvii, 218 seg.

2 Q.C.A., x, 123; A.Q.C., xiv, 1833.

3 A. F. Calvert, "Antony Sayer", A.Q.C., xiv, 181 4.

4 Q.C.A., x, 3.

5 *Ibid.*, passim.

6 *Ibid.*, 64.

7 *Ibid.*, 74. [172]

He is one of the former Grand Officers specifically mentioned in the Approbation of the Constitutions of 1738 as having approved of Anderson's manuscript. In 1754 he was appointed a member of the Committee to revise the Book of Constitutions,(1) of which a new edition, edited by the Rev. John Entick, was published in 1756. Apart from his Masonic activities, not a great deal is known about his career.(2) When he died in 1757 he was Chief Secretary to the Commissioners for Taxes, a post which he had held for fourteen years. In a newspaper announcement referring to the appointment of his successor, it was stated that Payne had been in the Taxes Office for forty years. His will shows that he was a man of some substance and a member of a family of a certain social standing, two of his nieces, daughters of his brother, the Rev. Thomas Payne, having married into the nobility, one being the **Countess of Northampton**, and the other **Lady Francis Seymour** [see below].

<http://thepeerage.com/p20821.htm#i208206>

Samuel Payne married Frances Kendrick.

Children:

1. [George Payne](#) b. 1685, d. 23 Feb 1757; married [Anne Martha Batson](#)
2. [Reverend Thomas Payne](#) b. 23 Dec 1689, d. c 1744

<http://thepeerage.com/p2423.htm#i24228>

Reverend Thomas Payne b. 23 Dec 1689 at Chester, Cheshire, England; d. ca 1744; son of [Samuel Payne](#) and [Frances Kendrick](#); m. [Sarah Andrews](#). He graduated from [Christ Church, Oxford University, Oxford, Oxfordshire, England](#), with a Master of Arts.

Children:

1. [Frances Payne](#) d. 25 Dec 1800
2. [Mary Payne](#)
3. [Reverend Thomas Payne](#) b. c 1718, d. 24 Dec 1797



4. [Reverend Joseph Payne](#) b. c 1721, d. 19 Aug 1786
5. [Sarah Payne](#) b. 1724, d. 17 Apr 1800
6. [Catherine Payne](#) b. 12 Jun 1726, d. 24 Dec 1801
7. [John Payne](#) b. 1727
8. [Edward Payne](#) b. 1728

**Catherine Payne** b. 12 June 1726 at Holme Lacy, Herefordshire, England; d. 24 Dec 1801; d/o [Reverend Thomas Payne](#) and [Sarah Andrews](#); m. [Very Rev. Lord Francis Seymour](#), son of [Edward Seymour, 8th Duke of Somerset](#) and [Mary Webb](#), in 1749.

Children:

1. [Col. Francis Compton Seymour](#) d. 1822
2. [Catherine Seymour](#)
3. [Frances Seymour](#)
4. [Edward Seymour](#)
5. [Mary Seymour](#) b. 5 Oct 1751, d. 12 Apr 1814

<http://thepeerage.com/p34056.htm#i340559>



Frances **Payne** d/o [Reverend Thomas Payne](#) and [Sarah Andrews](#), m1. 5 Mar 1748 [George Compton, 6th Earl of Northampton](#), son of [George Compton, 4th Earl of Northampton](#) and [Jane Fox](#) [from whom is descended the present Pro Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England]; m2. 26 Nov 1761 [Claudius Amyand](#). She died 25 Dec 1800.

< *George Compton, 6th Earl of Northampton*

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George\\_Compton,\\_6th\\_Earl\\_of\\_Northampton](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Compton,_6th_Earl_of_Northampton)

Known as the Honourable **George Compton** until 1754, he was a British peer and Member of Parliament. Northampton was the second son of George Compton, 4th Earl of Northampton, and Jane Fox, d/o Sir Stephen Fox. Prime Minister Spencer Compton, 1st Earl of Wilmington, was his uncle and Henry Fox, 1st Baron Holland, his first cousin. He was elected to the House of Commons for Tamworth in Jan 1727, a seat he held until August of the same year and then represented Northampton from 1727 to 1754. He served briefly as a Lord of the Treasury in 1742. In 1754 he succeeded his elder brother in the earldom and entered the House of Lords. Lord Northampton died childless in December 1758 and was succeeded in his titles by his nephew [Charles](#).

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**The Rev. Dr. John Theophilus Desaguliers** (3) (1683-1744) was the son of a Protestant pastor living near La Rochelle, who left France in 1685 after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. After a period in Guernsey father and son settled in England, the father being ordained by the Bishop of London. For a time the father was minister of the French Chapel in Swallow Street, and then a schoolmaster at Islington. The son was educated by his father, until the latter's death in 1698/99, and then pursued his studies under a Mr. Sanders at Sutton Coldfield. He entered Christ Church, Oxford, in 1705, taking his B.A. degree in 1709. He was ordained in 1710, and held livings at Stanmore in Middlesex, and at Bridgham in Norfolk; the latter he exchanged for the living of Little Warley in Essex. He was **chaplain to the Duke of Chandos**, the patron of the Stanmore living, and subsequently to **Frederick, Prince of Wales**. His bent, however, was rather scientific than theological. In 1710 he was appointed lecturer in Experimental Philosophy at Hart Hall, Oxford. After his marriage in 1712 he settled in Westminster where he supplemented his income by giving public lectures on natural philosophy. He proved himself a popular and successful exponent of the doctrines of Sir Isaac Newton, which at that time were arousing widespread interest. He was elected Fellow of the Royal Society in 1714, and held the office of Curator to the Society. He received his degree of Doctor of Laws at Oxford in 1718. In the craft he was Deputy Grand Master to the Duke of Wharton in 1722, to the Earl of Dalkeith in 1723 and to Lord Paisley in 1725. His best Masonic work was probably done in connection with the organization of the Charity Committee of Grand Lodge, to which more detailed reference is made in the next chapter.

1 Entick's Constitutions of 1756, 262.

2 See A. F. Calvert "George Payne, 2nd Grand Master", A.Q.C., xxx, 258 62.

3 This paragraph is based on the Inaugural Address given by John Stokes to the Q.C. Lodge On 7 November 1925 (A.Q.C., xxxviii, 285 307), and on the minutes of Grand Lodge (Q.C.A., x). [173]

Sayer, Payne and Desaguliers were succeeded by a long line of noble, and ultimately of royal, Grand Masters,(1) but we are concerned here only with their more immediate successors. The tenure of office was usually twelve months; the duties would not appear to have been unduly onerous, viz., to preside over such meetings of Grand Lodge as were held during the year, to constitute in person such new lodges in the London area as were authorized, and to be responsible for the secretarial expenses of Grand Lodge. Each noble Grand Master, however, was entitled to appoint a Deputy, who could preside at Grand Lodge, or constitute new lodges, in his absence. The financial responsibilities of the Grand Master were dealt with by Grand Lodge in 1735, when it was agreed that in future the Grand Master "shall be at no greater expense during his administration than 30 gns. for the Secretary's demand for his Charges, Trouble and Attendance".(2) In most, if not all cases the noblemen selected for the high office were relatively youthful, and masons of only quite short standing; further, they attended Grand Lodge but seldom, once they had passed through the chair.(3)

1 A chronological list of the Grand Masters is printed in the Masonic Year Book.

2 Q.C.A, x, 245.

3 Ibid., passim. [174]

**John, second Duke of Montagu** (1688 1749), G.M. in 1721 2, took an amateur interest in science and medicine.(1) **Philip, Duke of Wharton** (1698 1731), G.M. in 1722 3, is of special interest because of his subsequent connection with the Gormogons. **Charles, second Duke of Richmond**(2) (1701 50), G.M. in 1724 5, was for several years Master of the Horn Lodge. He would appear to have shown a more active interest in the craft than his noble predecessors or immediate successors, with the possible exception of **James, fourth Lord Kingston** (1693 1761), G.M. in 1728 9. The latter's Masonic activities after 1730 related to Ireland, where he was Grand Master in 1731, 1735, 1745 and 1746.(3) Quite recently Bro. Lewis Edwards has made a more particular study of the lives of **Francis, Earl of Dalkeith** (1694/5 1751), G.M. in 1723 4; **James, Lord Paisley [Earl of Abercorn]** (1687 1744), G. M. in 1725 6; and **Henry, Lord Coleraine** (1693 1749) G. M. in 1727 8, but his conclusions regarding the early Grand Masters appear to be of more general application:

Most of the men, conspicuous by birth and station as they were, were not in the front rank of national affairs ... Their interest in the Craft was not generally long sustained ... The class of man attracted was generally that of the dilettante ... with a taste for polite letters, for mathematics, or for art, occasionally also for foreign travel.(4)

Though the early Grand Masters undoubtedly lent distinction to the craft, we find it difficult to believe that they can have exercised much influence, if any, in determining the policy of Grand Lodge in the various difficulties which faced that body in the 1720s and 1730s. If we desire to discover those who took a prominent part in Grand Lodge affairs, it seems much more probable that we must look to the men who held the office of Deputy Grand Master, men like Dr. Desaguliers (D.G.M. in 1722 3, 1723 4 and 1725 6), Nathaniel Blackerby (D.G.M. in 1728 9 and 1729 3!), and Thos. Bateson (D.G.M. in 1730 1, 1731 2 and 1732 3). The minutes of Grand Lodge certainly suggest that these brethren were active in Masonry, but that is by no means the same thing as demonstrating that they were, in any real sense, directing forces in the craft. In the early days when Grand Lodge had no headquarters of its own, and no full time officials, when Deputy Grand Masters served for three years at the most, and usually only for one or two, we doubt if there were as yet any brethren who could be described as unofficial leaders of the Fraternity, though some doubtless were more influential than others.

1 See Gould, "The Rev. Wm. Stukeley, M.D.", A.Q.C., vi, 134.

2 A.Q.C., xxx, 176 folg.

3 Lepper and Crossle, 146 8.

4 We quote from the rough proof of "Three Early Grand Masters", a paper by Bro. Edwards which, in due course, will be printed in A.Q.C., lviii. [175]

#### THE TENETS OF FREEMASONRY

Accepting Anderson's statement that in September 1721 he was ordered by Grand Lodge to digest the old Gothic Constitutions in a new and better method, we have discussed the resulting version of Masonic history and Anderson's reliability as an historian. In addition to editing the "historical" section of the MS. Constitutions of Masonry, he also edited the Charges General and Singular. These make their appearance in 1723 as "The Charges of a Free-Mason", and in 1738 as "The Old Charges of the Free and Accepted Masons". As Anderson and his contemporaries had no great pleasure in medieval architecture, as previously mentioned, though doubtless having some antiquarian interest, so they had no overwhelming veneration for the Old Charges, which Anderson somewhat contemptuously refers to as "the old Gothic Constitutions". Consequently, it seemed natural and laudable to strip the MS. Constitutions of their outward garments in order to dress them in the fashion of a more enlightened age. One of the widespread desires of the age was for 'modernization' or 'contemporisation'; not only was Shakespeare modernized, but also the classics of Rome, in many so called 'imitations'. This movement probably also accounts for the re casting of the Old Charges. The intention was not to change the essentials of masonry, but to modernize the expression of them. To do that was, of course, to risk sacrificing something of tradition and romance; but the age was not romantic. [176]

When Anderson's Constitutions appeared, the age of reason had long dawned not merely in politics and philosophy but also in masonry:

Where sceptred Reason from her Throne  
Surveys the Lodge and makes us one.(1)

In the process of 'digesting' or 'modernizing' the Old Charges, some of the old operative charges remain practically unchanged; others are modified or amended to make them more applicable to accepted masons; yet in other cases, they are transformed out of all recognition. In this section, we propose to examine those charges which refer to the relationship of freemasonry to (i) charity, (ii) politics, and (iii) religion.

**Charity** - In this case Anderson contents himself with somewhat modifying the Old Charge to receive and cherish strange masons, either by setting them to work for at least a fortnight, or by refreshing them with money to the next lodge. In its revised form it appears thus (2):

Behavior towards a strange Brother

... if you discover him to be a true and genuine Brother, you are to respect him accordingly; and if he is in want, you must relieve him if you can, or else direct him how he may be reliev'd: You must employ him some Days, or else recommend him to be employ'd. But you are not charged to do beyond your Ability, only to prefer a poor Brother, that is a good Man and true, before any other poor People in the same Circumstances.

Actually, as early as the 1680s, the operative masons' practice of relieving brethren in distress had apparently been adopted by accepted masons in England and Ireland, to judge by John Aubrey's previously mentioned statement of 1686 that when any of them

falls into decay, the brotherhood is to relieve him, (3) and by the reference in the Dublin tripos of 1688 to the help given to a reduced brother by

1 A Collection of Songs, 1734, Song XII (E.M.P., 322), which appears in the Constitutions of 1738 as "The Treasurer's Song".

2 Constitutions of 1723, 55.

3. A.Q.C., xi, 10. [177]

the Fraternity of Freemasons in and about Trinity College.(1) From these early references, and from Francis Drake's mention in 1726 of "our three Grand Principles of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth to one another", (2) it is clear that accepted masons both before the days of Anderson and outside the jurisdiction of the premier Grand Lodge regarded benevolence as a Masonic ornament. Thus in inculcating the need to practice charity Anderson was merely expressing in words a doctrine which had already been approved.

**Politics** - In the MS. Constitutions masons were charged to be true liegemen to the King, and, if aware of any treason, either to amend it, or to warn the King, or his council, or his officers. This 'treason' charge is considerably modified in Anderson and a prohibition of political discussions in lodge is introduced. We think that both the modification and the prohibition were dictated by practical expediency, in view of the unsettled political conditions following the Revolution of 1688 and the rising of 1715. We do not think that either was first instituted by Anderson, who, in our opinion, merely embodied in the revised charges principles which had already been adopted. The essential part of the 'treason' charge, as redrafted by Anderson, reads as follows:

II Of the Civil Magistrate supreme and subordinate

A Mason is a peaceable Subject to the Civil Powers, wherever he resides or works, and is never to be concern'd in Plots and Conspiracies against the Peace and Welfare of the Nation ... if a Brother should be a Rebel against the State, he is not to be countenanc'd in his Rebellion, however he may be pitied as an unhappy Man; and, if convicted of no other Crime, though the loyal Brotherhood must and ought to disown his Rebellion, and give no Umbrage or Ground of political Jealousy to the Government for the time being; they cannot expel him from the Lodge, and his Relation to it remains indefeasible.

1 Sadler, Masonic Reprints and Revelations, p. xxi.

2 Drake's Speech of 27 December 1726 (E.M.P., 204). [178]

The prohibition of political discussions is contained in the Sixth Charge "Of Behavior"

2 Behavior after the Lodge is over and the Brethren not gone

... no private Piques or Quarrels must be brought within the Door of the Lodge, far less any Quarrels about Religion, or Nations, or State Policy, we being only, as Masons, of the Catholick Religion (1) ... we are also of all Nations, Tongues, Kindreds, and Languages, and are resolv'd against all Politicks, as what never yet conduc'd to the Welfare of the Lodge, nor ever will. This Charge has been always strictly enjoin'd and observ'd; but especially ever since the Reformation in Britain, or the Dissent and Secession of these Nations from the Communion of Rome.

We know of no evidence to support the claim that "this Charge has been always strictly enjoin'd and observ'd", but we feel that the practice of avoiding political discussion had been gradually established and confirmed by experience in the interests of amity.

Anderson was not the first person to charge masons to avoid political and religious disputes. An earlier recommendation to this effect is contained in the Dedication to Long Livers, dated 1 March 1721/2, addressed by 'Eugenius Philalethes junior' to the Grand Master, Masters, Wardens and Brethren of the Most Ancient and Honorable Fraternity of Free Masons of Great Britain and Ireland:(2)

The next Thing that I shall remember you of is, to avoid Politicks and Religion: Have nothing to do with these, as you tender your own Welfare ... Ours is the best Policy, it is Honesty; it is the Policy of the holy Jesus, who never disturbed Governments, but left them as he found them, and rendered to Caesar the Things that were Caesar's....

It is the same thing in relation to the Religion we profess, which is the best that ever was, or will, or can be;

1 This part of the charge was transferred in 1738 to the first section of the sixth charge, "Behavior in the Lodge before closing".

2 E.M.P., 43. The passage we quote is reprinted on pp. 49 5 [179]

... for it is the Law of Nature, which is the Law of God, for God is Nature. It is to love God above all things, and our Neighbor as our self; this is the true, primitive, catholick, and universal Religion, agreed to be so in all Times and Ages ...

**Religion** - In the immediately preceding paragraphs reference has been made to the prohibition in the Sixth Charge of religious and political disputes. The main statement on the relation of freemasonry to religion is embodied in Anderson's First Charge "Concerning God and Religion". Whereas most versions of the MS. Constitutions commence with an invocation to the Trinity and contain in the first of the Charges General an injunction that a mason shall be a true man to God and the Holy Church, and shall avoid error and heresy, in Anderson there is no invocation or reference to the Trinity, and the First Charge, as stated by him, makes no specifically Christian belief obligatory:

A Mason is oblig'd, by his Tenure, to obey the moral Law; and if he rightly understands the Art, he will never be a stupid Atheist, nor an irreligious Libertine. But though in ancient Times Masons were charg'd in every Country to be of the Religion of that Country or Nation, whatever it was, yet 'tis now thought more expedient only to oblige them to that Religion in which all Men agree, leaving their particular Opinions to themselves; that is, to be good Men and true, or Men of Honor and Honesty, by whatever Denominations or Persuasions they may be distinguish'd; whereby Masonry becomes the Center of Union, and the Means of conciliating true Friendship among Persons that must have remain'd at a perpetual Distance.

It has frequently been held that Anderson introduced a striking innovation by basing freemasonry on deism instead of on Christianity. We find it impossible to believe that this Charge represents a deliberate and successful attempt on Anderson's part to impose upon accepted masons a fundamental point in his own personal beliefs. In the first place, apart from this Charge, there would seem to be no [180] evidence that Anderson favored deism, though he might tolerate it in a fellow freemason. For all that is known to the contrary, he held the Calvinistic beliefs of the Presbyterian Church in which he was ordained. In the second place, it must not be overlooked that the responsibility for the Charge lies not on the shoulders of Anderson alone, but on those also of the previously mentioned committee of fourteen learned Brothers who read, amended and finally approved of the text in 1722. We take it that they and the craft in general would have detected and prevented any attempt, had Anderson been personally disposed to make one, to change what were regarded as the fundamentals of freemasonry. It follows that the Charge "Concerning God and Religion" must have seemed in form and content right and reasonable to at least the great majority of freemasons of Anderson's time. It certainly harmonizes with the views expressed a year previously by 'Eugenius Philalethes junior' [?=Robert Samber] in the dedication to Long Livers, as quoted on page 179 above. The problem is to explain how a society whose origins and primary documents are medieval came to accept without question the deistic attitude of the First Charge.

In the interval between the dying down of the old fires of seventeenth century puritanism, and the revival of puritanism in its Methodist form, there came an age in which 'enthusiasm' in religion and politics was suspect, and a greater value was set on calmness and common sense. That such a spirit should prevail in the lodges in Anderson's day is not strange. The majority of their members had no doubt lived through the Revolution of 1688, and many of them could remember something of the controversies and disturbances which preceded that event. After the persecutions of the sixteenth century, and the convulsions of the seventeenth, men might well incline in religion, as Walpole did in political questions, to the practice of *quieta non movere*, and it is not improbable that a large proportion of those who joined the craft at this period were influenced by the rule that topics likely to provoke hot discussion should be barred from the lodges, or, to use Anderson's own words:(1)

1 Constitutions of 1738, 114. [118]

Ingenious Men of all Faculties and Stations being convinced that the Cement of the Lodge was Love and Friendship, earnestly requested to be made Masons, affecting this amicable Fraternity more than other Societies then often disturbed by warm Disputes.

This essential harmony was not to be reached by identifying masonry with any one of the prevailing creeds, or by teaching that all or some of the creeds were false. It was rather to be sought by ignoring the creeds or at least ignoring the points in which they differed, and by asserting at the same time that a freemason might have two distinct religious beliefs. As an individual, he might profess the creed, or one of the creeds, of his country; as a freemason, he must hold what in Anderson's Sixth Charge is called "the Catholick Religion", or "the oldest Catholick Religion", as it is named in the Constitutions of 1738.

By "the oldest Catholick Religion" was presumably meant the same thing as "the Religion in which all Men agree". It is also doubtless identical with what in the "Short Charge to new admitted Brethren", first printed in Smith's Pocket Companion of 1734 5, is called "the Universal Religion, or the Religion of Nature". The essence of Natural Religion was belief in God and understanding of a moral law; these two fundamentals constituted a religion which was at the same time natural and universal, in the sense of being held by, or binding upon, all men irrespective of time or country. If we are right in taking the "religion in which all men agree"(1) as equivalent to "natural religion", the First Charge was wide in scope, and cannot, as has sometimes been suggested, be rightly interpreted as restricting membership of the craft to entrants who were Christians, of whatever denomination, or to those who were either Trinitarians, Unitarians or Jews. The only persons explicitly excluded are the "stupid atheist" and the "irreligious libertine", and the two terms may have been intended to describe the same man, that is, "the fool" who "hath said in his heart, There is no God" (Ps. xiv. i), and who, believing in no divine sanctions, was considered to have no motive to obey the moral law.

1 According to the First Charge as printed in the Constitutions of 1738, the religion in which all men agree is equivalent to "the 3 great Articles of Noah". We discuss these Articles in our *Freemasonry and the Idea of Natural Religion* (1942), 9 12, and must refer any reader who is interested in the Noachian precepts to that paper. It is reprinted in A.Q.C., lvi, 38 48. 1[82]

Theoretically, Moslems, Parsees and Hindus, for example, might be eligible. Anderson, and presumably his colleagues, believed that the Zoroastrians were freemasons and that in Eastern Asia in his day there was still a remnant of them "who retain many of the old usages of the Free Masons".(1) It may, nevertheless, be questioned whether the London and Westminster lodges in Anderson's day would have admitted orientals. Begemann(2) holds that the First Charge should be interpreted as excluding Jews, on the ground that Anderson wrote a pamphlet against modern Jews and anti trinitarians, but in our view Anderson's personal opinions and beliefs do not enter into the problem; he was endeavoring to set down in writing the tenets and principles prevailing among masons of his day, even if he failed to do so in a concise and lucid manner. It is known, as a matter of fact, that Jews were admitted to the craft within a few years of the publication of Anderson's Constitutions of 1723,(3) though whether that was the original intention of the Charge, or only a proceeding rendered possible by its somewhat obscure wording, we cannot say.

The early eighteenth century lodges were not societies of philosophers or doctrinaires. There may well have been some 'intellectuals' among the accepted masons, but the underlying tenets of freemasonry, such as the comparative freedom from tests, the exclusion of political and religious discussion from the lodge, and the practice of charity, had in all probability grown up gradually among the operatives.

1 Constitutions of 1738, 23.

2 Op. Cit., ii, 207.

3 In The Daily Post of Monday 22 September 1732 there is a reference to a Masonic lodge held "on Sunday" (? 14 September 1732) at the Rose Tavern in Cheapside, which was attended by "several Brethren of distinction, as well Jews as Christians". The Master, Daniel Delvalle, is described as "an eminent Jew Snuff Merchant" (Chetwode Crawley, A.Q.C., xi, 30). Possibly the statement in A Letter from the Grand Mistress of 1724, that freemasons refuse to swear by the New Testament (E.M.C., 181) is intended to refer to the admission of Jews into the craft. [183] and early accepted masons, the results probably of empirical solutions of practical difficulties, rather than actions based on fundamental beliefs. In due course these tenets were adopted by the

speculatives from the operative and the accepted masons. Masonic tenets and principles, like Masonic ritual, were a slow growth, and not the sudden creation of any one or two men.

The early minutes of Grand Lodge throw no light upon the tenets of freemasonry, other than the practice of charity.

From non Masonic or anti Masonic writings of the period very little is to be gathered concerning the tenets of freemasonry; this rather implies that there was nothing novel about them and that they harmonized with contemporary thought in the matter of religion and politics. An anti Masonic letter published in *The Post Man* of 10 July 1722 (1) makes no reference to the tenets of the craft. In the Briscoe pamphlet of 1724 (2) there is a section on Anderson's Constitutions of 1723, but the criticism is directed against Anderson's version of Masonic history, and not against his Charges, and the same is true of *In Ode to the Grand Khaibar* published in 1726,(3) and a letter of 'A. Z.' which appeared in *The Daily Journal* of 5 September 1730.(4).

The writer of *The Free Masons Accusation and Defence*, 1726,(5) casts various aspersions upon the Fraternity without actually charging it with anything in particular, even though he comments upon Anderson's Constitutions in some detail. In referring to the Charges, however, he makes no mention of the First, "Concerning God and Religion", or the Second, "Of the Civil Magistrate supreme and subordinate", but quotes in full the Fifth, "Of the Management of the Craft in working", and asks what that particular Charge (where Anderson followed the Old Charges of the operative masons far more closely than in his First or Second Charge) has to do with gentlemen or men of a liberal education. In a review of Anderson's Constitutions in *The Grub Street journal* of 21 October 1731, over the signature of "Spondee", (6) the reviewer quotes Anderson as saying that "A Mason is obliged by his tenure to obey the moral law", and that "his relation to the Lodge remains indefeasible, tho' he should prove a rebel against the State", but makes no comment on these extracts from Anderson's Charges.

1 E.M.P., 68.

4 *Ibid.*, 233.

2 *Ibid.*, 120.

5 *Ibid.*, 171 3.

3 *Ibid.*, 185.

6 *Ibid.*, 276. [184]

In a letter of "Verus Commodus" concerning the Society of Freemasons, appended to the Masonic catechism, *The Grand Mystery of the Free Masons Discover'd*, 1725,(1) there is an attack not so much upon the tenets of freemasonry, as upon the religious views of certain unnamed, and presumably prominent, masons. Finally, in the anti Masonic leaflet of 1698,(2) the "Freed Masons" are attacked as the Anti-Christ. If this reference implies that they were anti-trinitarian, then we have a suggestion that freemasons had adopted a deistic attitude towards religion twenty five years before the publication of Anderson's First Charge "Concerning God and Religion". That tends to support our opinion that the change in the masons' attitude towards religion had made itself felt before 1723, and that Anderson was not introducing a striking innovation by basing freemasonry on deism instead of on Christianity.

1 *Ibid.*, 136. This catechism is the second edition of *The Grand Mystery of Free Masons Discover'd*, 1724. (E.M.C., 70)

2 E.M.P., 35. We have reproduced the leaflet in facsimile, with comments, in A.Q.C., lv, 152 4. We reprint the text on p. 149 above.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE EARLY DAYS OF GRAND LODGE

#### Restricted Jurisdiction of Grand Lodge

THE events of 1716 and 1717 which led to the formation of Grand Lodge have been referred to as "a resuscitation of English Masonry" and as "the Revival".(1)

These descriptions are somewhat misleading; the events of 1716 and 1717 related not to English masonry in general, but to masonry in London and Westminster in particular.

There is nothing in the surviving accounts to suggest that the members of the Four Old Lodges had anything more in mind than a gathering or organization of local lodges. Even six years later, in Anderson's Constitutions of 1723 (but not, it should be noted, in those of 1738) the Charges were stated to be "for the use of the Lodges in London", (2) and the General Regulations "for the use of the Lodges in and about London and Westminster". (3) According to the MS. List of Lodges which was begun 25 November 1723, and entered on the first pages of the original minute book of Grand Lodge, (4) the "regular constituted lodges" further afield were at 'Edgworth' [? Edgware], Acton and Richmond.

The fact that Grand Lodge in 1723 and 1724 passed various resolutions concerning lodges "in or near London", (5) "within the Bills of Mortality", (6) and "within ten miles of London", (7) indicates the restricted jurisdiction of Grand Lodge in those years. Even within these somewhat narrow limits, the authority of Grand Lodge was far from complete. As the resolutions quoted in footnotes 5, 6 and 7 opposite show, Grand Lodge had to contend both with lodges that were not regularly constituted (in accordance with General Regulation VIII) and with brethren meeting irregularly to make masons.

1 A. F. A. Woodford, *Kenning's Cyclopaedia of Freemasonry*, 577.

2 *Constitutions of 1723*, 49.

3 *Ibid.*, 58.

4 Q.C.A., x, 3 21.

5 25 November 1723: "That no new Lodge in or near London without it being regularly constituted be countenanced by the Grand Lodge . . ." (Q.C.A., x, 54)

6 19 February 1723/4: "That no Brother belong to more than one Lodge at one time within the Bills of Mortality ... and whereas some Masons have Mett and formed a Lodge without the Grand Master leave Agreed that no such person be admitted into Regular Lodges" (Q.C.A., x, 56).

7 20 November 1724: "That if any Brethren shall meet irregularly and make Masons at any place within ten miles of London the persons present at the making (The New Brethren Excepted) shall not be admitted even as visitors into any Regular Lodge whatsoever . . ." (Q.C.A., x, 59). [186]

A good example of "irregular" Masonic activities at this period is afforded by the proceedings of the Philo Musicae et Architecturae Societas, whose by laws and minutes from 18 February 1724/5 to 23 March 1726/7 have survived.(1) According to the preamble to the Fundamental Constitution of the Society, "Musick and Architecture, the happy produce of Geometry, have such Affinity, they justly may be stil'd Twin Sisters, and Inseparable . . ." In practice, the Society was a musical society, the 'architecture' in its title being represented by an interest in freemasonry, in accordance with the old conception which equated masonry with geometry and architecture. According to rule nineteen of the society, no person was to be admitted as a visitor unless he were a freemason, and the minutes record visits from the masters and members of various London lodges. Further, there was an unwritten rule that all members of the society must be freemasons; if a candidate did not possess that qualification some of the eight founders of the society, who were all freemasons, seven having been made masons at the regular lodge meeting at The Queen's Head in Hollis Street, and one at a lodge at The George in Long Acre,(2) performed the requisite ceremonies, in order to render the candidate eligible for membership. Obviously, the Masonic activities of the Musical Society did not meet with the approval of Grand Lodge. On 20 May 1725 Grand Lodge summoned certain members of the society, all members of the Lodge at The Queen's

1 "The Fundamental Constitution and Orders of the Society intituled Philo Musicae et Architecturae Societas. Apollini.", B.M. Add. MS. 23202. Printed in Q.C.A., ix, edited by W. Harry Rylands.  
2 Q.C.A., ix, 6 7 [187]

Head, Hollis Street, to attend the next Quarterly Communication,(1) but there is nothing in the subsequent minutes of Grand Lodge to show whether they attended, and if so, what happened. On 2 September 1725, George Payne, Junior Grand Warden and former Grand Master, visited the society,(2) but on this occasion no Masonic ceremony would appear to have been performed. In December 1725 both Payne and the Grand Master, the Duke of Richmond, wrote letters to the Society, as recorded in the following entry in the Society's minutes, under date of 16 December 1725:(3)

A Letter Dat. the 8th Instant from Brother Geo : Payne Jun. Grand Warden directed in form to this Society inclosing a Letter from the Duke of Richmond Grand Master ... directed to the Preside and the rest of the Brethren at the Apollo in which he Erroneously insists on and Assumes to himself a Pretended Authority to call Our Rt Worshipfull and Highly Esteem'd Society to an account for making Masons irregularly ... ORDERED That the Said Letters do lye on the Table.

It is clear from the minute that the members of the Society resented the intervention of Grand Lodge, in as much as they had done nothing which accepted masons of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries had not done, when they formed themselves into occasional lodges. Over those members whom the society itself had made masons, Grand Lodge had obviously no control, though they could be refused admission to regular lodges. On the other hand, those members of the society who belonged to regular lodges were clearly within the jurisdiction of Grand Lodge. In December 1725 and January 1725/6 the society continued to make masons. Then, to judge by the minutes, the practice ceased, but neither the minutes of the society nor those of Grand Lodge throw any light on how this came to pass. The Lodge at The Queen's Head in Hollis Street, to which the founder members of the society mostly belonged, cannot be traced in any list of lodges subsequent to 1725, but whether it disappeared because several of its members were members of the Musical Society and the Society's irregular Masonic activities met with the strong disapproval of Grand Lodge there is no evidence to show.

1 Q.C.A., x, 62.  
2 Ibid., ix, 62.  
3 Ibid., 87. [188]

Later references to the irregular making of masons occur in the minutes of Grand Lodge as late as 31 March 1735,(1) 30 June 1739 (2) and 12 December 1739.(3) It is possible, though hardly likely, that when the Grand Master [the Earl of Crawford] on 31 March 1735 "took notice (in a very handsom Speech) of the Greivance of making extraneous Masons in a private and clandestine manner", he was referring, among other cases, to an episode revealed in the correspondence of Charles, second Duke of Richmond (G. M. 1724 5),(4) which shows that, in December 1734, a no less prominent mason than the Rev. Dr. J. T. Desaguliers (G.M. 1719 20, D.G.M. 1722 3, 1723 4, 1725 6), whilst visiting the Duke of Montagu (G.M. 1721 2) at Ditton, took part in what can only be described as an irregular making of a mason, when on a Sunday night at a lodge held in the Library, a certain Bob Webber, of "tender years", (5) was admitted apprentice.

In the provinces at this period there were various lodges of accepted masons, such as those traced by W. R. Makins at Leeds and Pontefract in 1721 and at Darlington in 1725,(6) as well as the previously mentioned lodge at York, over which Grand Lodge in London neither claimed nor exercised control. But from 1725 onwards, a marked change began to take place. The MS. List of Lodges, 1725 8, entered in the first minute book of Grand Lodge,(7) shows, in addition to numerous lodges in the London area, lodges at Bath, Bristol, Norwich, Chichester, Chester, Reading, Gosport, Carmarthen, Salford, and Warwick, also reveals the existence of a Provincial Grand Master, a Deputy Provincial Grand Master, and Provincial Grand Wardens in Cheshire and in South Wales.

1 Q.C.A., x, 250.  
2 Ibid., 319.  
3 Ibid., 323.

4 Published in the Earl of March's A Duke and His Friends, London, 1911. The book served as a basis for W. Wonnacott, "Charles, second Duke of Richmond (Grand Master 1724 5) and some of his Masonic Associates", A.Q.C., xxx (1917), 176 folg. The letter of Mick Broughton to the Duke of Richmond, dated 1 January 1734/5, is reprinted in A.Q.C., xxx, 190.

5 This expression used by Broughton suggests that Webber was under age. According to General Regulation No. IV (Constitutions of 1723, 59), 25 was the minimum age for admission.

6 Misc. Lat., xii, 27 8.  
7 Q.C.A., x, 22 47. [189]

Early in 1727 the Provincial Grand Officers of Cheshire wrote to the Grand Master to thank him for a visit to the Lodges of the Province by the Deputy Grand Master;(1) a few months later the Provincial Grand Officers of South Wales wrote to acknowledge a

letter received from the Grand Master.(2) It was in 1725, too, that part of General Regulation XIII, "Apprentices must be admitted Masters and Fellow Craft only here [in Grand Lodge], unless by a Dispensation", was repealed,(3) having presumably become unworkable, if it ever was observed, owing to the wider geographical distribution of the lodges under the jurisdiction of Grand Lodge.

The motive behind the regulation that apprentices were to be admitted "Masters and Fellow Craft" only at Grand Lodge, and the problem how this system worked in practice, have exercised the minds of Masonic students for many years. Regarding the motive, there is some ground for thinking that very few apprentices at that period proceeded to the degree of master; according to *The Mystery of Free Masonry*, 1730, "there is not one Mason in an Hundred that will be at the expense to pass the Master's Part, except it be for interest".(4) If this was so, and if, as we believe, "Master [Mason]" and "Fellow Craft" were alternative or convertible terms about 1723, and not the descriptions of two distinct degrees, as at the present time, a problem discussed on pages 270-1 below, then most freemasons were apprentices, and consequently not eligible to be either wardens or masters of lodges. According to the Fourth Charge "No Brother can be a Warden until he has pass'd the part of a Fellow Craft; nor a Master until he has acted as Warden." (5)

1 Q.C.A., x, 73

2 Ibid., 75. Edward Oakley, in the printed version of his speech of 31 December 1728, referred to on p. 170 above, describes himself as "late Provincial Senior Grand Warden in Carmarthen, South Wales".

3 Ibid., 64. The motion is quoted on p. 271 below. The bearing of Regulation XIII, in its original and amended forms, on the question of the establishment of the trigradal system, is discussed on pp. 266-72 below.

4 E.M.C., 105.

5 Anderson's Constitutions of 1723, 52. [190]

In the "Manner of Constituting a New Lodge", printed as a Postscript to Anderson's Constitutions of 1723, there is reference to "the new Master and Wardens being yet among the Fellow Craft", (1) which seems to imply that the injunction in the Fourth Charge was effective. Thus a state of affairs apparently existed in which there were very few masons eligible to hold the office of master or warden, or to admit apprentices to the Master's Part. Stukeley's remark in his *Commonplace Book*, "I was the first person made a freemason for many years. We had great difficulty to find members enough to perform the ceremony", (2) presumably relates to the Master's Part, as in January 1720/1, when Stukeley was initiated, there were at least the Four Old Lodges in London and Westminster, all of which were presumably prepared to admit apprentices. The regulation in question, therefore, seems to suggest one of two things:

i. That the members of most, if not all, private lodges in the opinion of Grand Lodge were not qualified for technical or other reasons to perform the master's ceremony, and that in the interests of proper working it was desirable to restrict the admission of masters and fellow crafts to Quarterly Communications of Grand Lodge; or

ii. That Grand Lodge wished as far as possible to control the selection of brethren for promotion to the more responsible positions in private lodges.

Although, as we shall show later, there is some reason for believing that circa 1730 Grand Lodge did not attach great importance to excellence in the rendering of Masonic work, the fact that about 1722 the ceremony of constituting a new lodge and of installing the master was being elaborated or evolved under the aegis of Grand Lodge, does suggest that circa 1722 Grand Lodge was not unconcerned about standards. On that assumption we are inclined to favor the first explanation as to why apprentices were to be admitted as masters and fellow crafts only at Quarterly Communications.

1 Ibid., 71.

2 *Surtees Soc.*, lxxiii, 51. [191]

With regard to the working of the regulation in practice, we may note, in the first place, that there is no evidence that dispensations were issued to private lodges to pass masters and fellow crafts, and little evidence that degrees of any kind were conferred at Grand Lodge, but that may be merely on account of the imperfections of the records. The only case we have traced occurred on 24 June 1721, when on the morning of the day of the Annual Assembly and Feast at the Stationers' Hall, a Grand Lodge was held at the King's Arms Tavern, St. Paul's Churchyard, where "they made some new Brothers, particularly the noble **Philip, Lord Stanhope**\*, **now Earl of Chesterfield**". (1) In the second place, there would seem to be no question that before the repeal of the regulation in November 1725, masters were made in private lodges, but whether with or without dispensations from Grand Lodge it is impossible to say. According to the preamble of the Fundamental Constitution and Orders of the *Philo Musicae et Architecturae Societas*, four of the founders of the Musical Society who had been made masons at the lodge at The Queen's Head in Hollis Street in December 1724 were, prior to February 1724/5, "regularly Pass'd Masters in the before mentioned Lodge of Holles Street". (2) What happened at that particular lodge doubtless happened at other London lodges, and this probably led to the repeal of the regulation. That does not prove, however, that there had not been a need for the regulation a year or two previously.

\* The 3rd Earl of Chesterfield in 1721 was Philip Stanhope, b. 3 Feb 1673, d. 27 Jan 1726, at which time his son Philip Dormer Stanhope was created as the 4th Earl of Chesterfield.

#### THE "REVIVAL" OF 1717

The "revival" of 1717, in so far as there was one, was, according to Anderson, (3) a revival, not of freemasonry but of (a) Quarterly Communications and (b) the Annual Assembly. With regard to the former, we have previously mentioned that probably none had ever been held before the one recorded by Anderson as having met on 27 December 1720, (4) so that in this respect there was probably no question of a revival. Regarding the Annual Assembly, the reader may be reminded that in our opinion operative masons in the Middle Ages probably did hold annual or triennial assemblies or congregations, as described in the Regius and Cooke MSS.

1 Anderson's Constitutions of 1738, 112.

2 Q.C.A., ix, 7-8.

3 Constitutions of 1738, 109.  
4 Ibid., 111. [192]

The only relatively modern assembly of masons presumably of accepted masons of which any indication has been traced, is that recorded in the Roberts version of the Old Charges, of which the earliest known text is that printed in *The Post Man* in August 1722. The Roberts MS. Original, from which the newspaper version was transcribed in 1722, has unfortunately not been discovered. It is described by the copyist as "a most valuable Piece of Antiquity",<sup>(1)</sup> which was preserved for several hundred years in the Archives of the Society.<sup>(2)</sup> This statement must be accepted with reserve, as at least part of the document was written after 8 December 1663, namely its reference to an Assembly stated to have been held on that day: (3) "Additional Orders and Constitutions made and agreed upon at a General Assembly held at the 8th Day of December 1663." This statement was subsequently repeated by Anderson in his Constitutions of 1738, with the date altered to 27 December 1663, a more Masonic date, being St. John's Day in Winter. Even assuming that this particular meeting was held as stated in the Roberts print, and that it did consist of accepted masons, it must be pointed out that one such gathering is obviously not proof of an annual assembly of accepted masons.

We must now examine more closely (a) the reasons why Grand Lodge was formed, and (b) the objects it had in view.

**Reasons for forming Grand Lodge.** Since we have no hesitation whatever in regarding the Grand Mastership of Sir Christopher Wren as purely a figment of Anderson's imagination, and have come to the conclusion that Wren took little or no part in freemasonry after his probable acceptance in 1691, the reason given by Anderson and in *Multa Paucis* for the formation of Grand Lodge, namely, Wren's neglect of the few lodges in London, falls to the ground, and we have to seek some other explanation. As Anderson himself does not mention his own connection with Grand Lodge until 29 September 1721, and as he makes no claim to have been present in person at the preliminary meeting of 1716 or at the Annual Assemblies

1 E.M.P., 72.  
2 Ibid., 73.  
3 Ibid., 82. [193]

from 1717 to 1721, the presumption is that he had no firsthand knowledge of the inception and early meetings of Grand Lodge.<sup>(1)</sup> No one who was party to calling the preliminary meeting of 1716, or who attended it, has left any record which has survived, and consequently we can only guess at the motives of the founders, who probably never formulated them very clearly. The most reasonable assumption seems to us to be that the proceedings of 1716 and 1717, which resulted in the formation of Grand Lodge, were the result not of the decline but of the growth in the number of lodges, and of the consequent recognition of the increased need of central authority and control. Without this an expansion in accepted masonry would be apt to bring about confusion, if not chaos, in place of the system which it professed to support and uphold.

**The Objects of Grand Lodge** - The objects, according to Anderson, (2) of the preliminary meeting of 1716 were (a) "to cement under a Grand Master as the center of Union and Harmony"; (b) "to revive [read to establish] the Quarterly Communication of the Officers of Lodges (call'd the Grand Lodge)"; and (c) to hold the Annual Assembly and Feast, at which the Grand Master was to be chosen. In other words, the first object was to establish a center around which the movement could turn. The third object was to have an annual dinner, in connection with which there was to be a meeting to install a Grand Master, two objects likely to meet with general approval among the brethren. The second object, which was very possibly the essence of the whole scheme, was to arrange for quarterly meetings of the Masters and Wardens of the lodges; such a body was to constitute Grand Lodge and was presumably to exercise undefined authority over the private lodges. This attempt at centralization does not appear to have been too welcome among the lodges; in 1717 Grand Master Sayer "commanded the Masters and Wardens of Lodges to meet the Grand Officers every quarter in communication";

1 The possibility that Anderson was not made a mason until after the Duke of Montagu's installation as Grand Master on 24 June 1721 is referred to on p. 160, above.  
2 Constitutions of 1738, 109. [194]

(1) in 1718 George Payne, as Grand Master, "recommended the strict observance of the Quarterly Communication", (2) but there is no record that any meeting was held before 27 December 1720.<sup>(3)</sup>

It is not unlikely that the formation of Grand Lodge, in the minds of at least some of the brethren, had a more important object in view than the holding of an annual dinner and the election of a Grand Master. During his first year as Grand Master (1718-19), George Payne desired the brethren to bring to Grand Lodge any old writings and records concerning masons and masonry, and apparently several old copies of the "Gothic Constitutions" were produced and collated that year.<sup>(4)</sup> At the end of his second term as Grand Master (1720-1), Payne, at a meeting of Grand Lodge, as it would appear from Dr. Stukeley's Diary under the date 24 June 1721, "read over a new set of articles to be observed".<sup>(5)</sup> These were presumably those described in Anderson's Constitutions of 1723 as the General Regulations "compiled first by Mr. George Payne, anno 1720, when he was Grand Master, and approved by Grand Lodge on St. John Baptist's Day anno 1721".<sup>(6)</sup>

Unfortunately, we do not know whether the articles were "new" in the sense that they took the place of previous articles, or whether they were "new" in the sense of not existing before. Nor do we know to what extent they were edited by Anderson before they appeared in print in 1723. According to the Approbation to the Constitutions of 1723, Anderson had been ordered to peruse, correct and digest into a new and better method the History Charges and Regulations of the Ancient Fraternity, and had submitted his draft to the perusal and corrections of the late and present Deputy Grand Masters and other learned brethren. The fact that the General Regulations had been compiled only as recently as 1720, and approved by Grand Lodge as recently as June 1721, does not appear to have worried him; he claims "to have compared them with and reduc'd them to the Ancient Records and immemorial Usages of the Fraternity,

1 Ibid., 110.  
2 Ibid., 110.  
3 Ibid., 111.  
4 Ibid., 110.  
5 *Surtees Soc.*, 1xxiii, 64.  
6 Constitutions of 1723, 58. [195]



and digested them into this new Method, with several proper Explications".(1) What emendations Anderson actually introduced under cover of this grandiloquent declaration it is impossible to say. The only versions of the MS. Constitutions of Masonry which would appear to have any bearing on the Regulations are those belonging to the Roberts family containing the New Articles laying down the conditions on which a person can be accepted as a freemason. According to Vibert there is nothing in Anderson's "History" which suggests that he had before him, when writing it in 1721, any text of the Roberts family containing the New Articles.(2) His History, Charges and Regulations were approved in manuscript by the Quarterly Communication of Grand Lodge on 25 March 1722,(3) whereas the Roberts text did not make its first appearance in print until August 1722.(4) In 1738 Anderson quotes the New Articles in his 'historical' section under the date 27 December 1663,(5) and he probably would have done so in the 1721-22 version of his History had he then been acquainted with them. The presumption, therefore, is that when digesting Payne's General Regulations he had no knowledge of the New Articles dating from the early part of the second half of the seventeenth century. Nevertheless, there can be little doubt that, as claimed in the preamble to the General Regulations, he had "digested" them, because his Regulations were challenged in Grand Lodge on 24 June 1723.

According to the Constitutions of 1738, Anderson produced the new Book of Constitutions in print at the Quarterly Communication held on 17 January 1722/3, and it was again approved (with the addition of the "Antient Manner of Constituting a Lodge").(6) the History, Charges and Regulations having been approved in manuscript on

1 Constitutions of 1723, 58.

2 A.Q.C., xxxvi, 46. Vibert notes two passages in Anderson's Charges which may be derived from a Roberts text. If that is the case, the particular text presumably did not contain the New Articles, which is true of the Rawlinson MS., for example.

3 Constitutions of 1738, 114.

4 E.M.P., 71.

5 Constitutions of 1738, 101.

6 Ibid., 115. [196]

25 March 1722.(1) It was advertised for sale on 28 February 1722/3.(2) At the first subsequent meeting of Grand Lodge on 24 June 1723, the Approbation of 17 January 1722/3, printed at the end of the Constitutions, was read, and it was moved that the General Regulations be confirmed, so far as they are consistent with the Ancient Rules of Masonry. An amendment to omit the words we print in italics was negatived. The original motion, however, was not put; instead, the following resolution was adopted: "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." According to General Regulation XXXIX, the Regulations could only be altered at an Annual Meeting before the dinner, whereas Anderson's regulations, both in their manuscript and in their printed form, had been approved only at Quarterly Communications. Thus it seems likely that the controversy related, not to the content of the Regulations as digested by Anderson, but to the procedure in presenting Grand Lodge with a fait accompli, instead of obtaining its consent first. Grand Lodge, having re-affirmed its authority by the resolution, took no further action in the matter, so presumably no exception was taken to Anderson's actual emendations.(3)

Everything considered, it is not improbable that the drawing up of articles to regulate accepted masonry was one of the objects which at least some of the founders of Grand Lodge had had in mind from the outset. Though, for the reason indicated above, we do not think that the "Additional Orders and Constitutions" of 1663 were generally known to accepted masons before their publication in August 1722, yet some knowledge of the content of the New Articles may have been a tradition amongst accepted masons. Even so, and assuming that the New Articles were generally recognised by accepted masons, they were far too vague in character to provide for all the contingencies likely to arise in a growing society. Furthermore, on account of the condition that no person should be accepted as a freemason unless at least one workman of the trade of freemasonry, in addition to four other freemasons, was present, the "Additional Orders" or New Articles of the Roberts print may easily have been incompatible with the social ideas of some lodges.

1 Ibid., 114.

2 Port Boy of 26-28 February 1722/3, quoted by Vibert in his introduction to the Quaritch reproduction, p. vii.

3 See Minutes of Grand Lodge; Vibert, A.Q.C., xxxvi, 60; and Songhurst, Q.C.A., x, 50, footnote b. It should be noted that whereas all Brethren, including Apprentices, were entitled to attend the Annual Grand Lodge and to vote, attendance at Quarterly Communications was limited to Grand Officers, together with the Masters and Wardens of all private lodges. [197]

To judge by the MS. List of 1723, the early lodges differed very considerably in their social standing. Of the Four Old Lodges, No. 4 (originally meeting at the Rummer and Grapes, and subsequently at the Horn Tavern, Westminster) was undoubtedly the aristocratic lodge in 1723, when the Duke of Richmond was its Master, and the majority of its members were peers, sons of peers, baronets, knights, esquires or army officers. Being located at Westminster, it was probably the most select lodge in 1717, though not as yet patronised by the nobility. According to Anderson, the brethren decided to choose a Grand Master from among themselves in 1717 "till they should have the honour of a noble lord at their head". Further, he noted that during the Grand Mastership of Desaguliers (1719-20), some noblemen were made brothers, but it was not until 1721 that a nobleman, in the person of the Duke of Montagu, was installed as Grand Master. The other three lodges of the Old Four, as also various lodges constituted after 1717, appear to have consisted of less distinguished persons in 1723, and probably had various tradesmen among their members. Of the ten different men who were Grand Wardens during the first six years of Grand Lodge, two are described by Anderson as carpenters, two as stonecutters, one as a mason and one as a blacksmith. These men, however, may well have been no more actively 'operative' in their respective crafts than the various masons, members of the Masons' Company, who belonged to the Lodge of Accepted Masons, meeting at Masons' Hall, London, in 1682. These, we learn from Ashmole's Diary [198] under date 11 March 16 were Thos. Wise, Master of the Company, Thos. Shorthose, Thos. Shadbolt, Nich. Young, John Shorthose, Wm. Hamon, John Thompson and Wm. Stanton. All of these men attained to distinguished rank in the Masons' Company, seven having served the office of Warden before the date of the meeting attended by Ashmole in March 1682; most were large mason contractors in the period of active building after the Great Fire, and one was the chief London stone merchant of his day.(2) It is quite possible that the lodges about 1720 contained a fair sprinkling of 'operative' masons, and not impossible that at least one of the Four Old Lodges in 1717 consisted predominantly of 'operative' masons, though whether such 'operative' masons worked at their trade with their hands

is another matter. Even so, it would probably not have been an operative lodge in the sense that it discharged trade functions like the early Scottish lodges, or the lodges at Alnwick and Swalwell, but a lodge of accepted masons, such as had been the case with the Acception connected with the London Masons' Company in the seventeenth century.

Whether or not we are correct in thinking that no Quarterly Communication was held before December 1720, and that the delay in establishing the scheme was due to the opposition of individual lodges to the new system of centralisation, there can be little or no question that the attitude adopted by the lodges towards a suggested joint charity indicated dislike of centralisation.

#### THE CHARACTER OF GRAND LODGE ORGANISATION

**The General Charity** - Brief reference was made on page 177 above to the practice of charity, as one of the tenets of freemasonry. As pointed out there, not very much is known about the benevolent activities of the craft in pre Grand Lodge days. Most versions of the Old Charges throw little or no light on the subject, apart from the injunction to receive and cherish strange masons, either by setting them to work for at least a fortnight, or by refreshing them with money to the next lodge. The Old Lodge of Dumfries, however, owned two versions of the MS. Constitutions of Masonry which refer specifically to charity.

1 E.M.P., 41.

2 L.M., passim. [199]

Dumfries No. 3 MS. of the late seventeenth century includes among its precepts and charges:(1)

14ly You shall at all times cheerfully distribute your Charity to ye releife of distrest & sicke fellow masons.

This injunction is expanded in Dumfries No. 4 MS. of circa 1710:(2)

14ly That you make it your bussiness to relieve the poor according to your Talent and facultie let not your prudence superceed your charity in thinking in this or the other unworthy or not in need but slip no oportunitie because it is for Gods sake you give it and in obedience to his command.

More concrete reference to charity is made in the Statutes of 1670 of the Lodge of Aberdeen which provide for the maintenance of the Mason Box for support of distressed brethren (more especially those belonging to the lodge) and for the education and training of the children of deceased members. Doubtless the practice of charity had existed at an earlier date, but the presumption is that the systematic organisation of the charitable activities of the lodge was new in 1670, for the Fourth Statute is headed: "Lawes for our Box for the poor never practised heretofore in Aberdeine." (3) The attitude of the Old Lodge of Dumfries and of the Lodge of Aberdeen towards charity, which was very possibly typical of the attitude of other operative lodges, appears to have been adopted at an early date by the accepted masons. We quoted above John Aubrey's statement of 1686 concerning the relief of brethren who fall into decay; also the reference in the Dublin tripods of 1688 to the help given to a reduced brother by the Fraternity of Free Masons in and about Trinity College. In the early days of Grand Lodge, as we learn from General Regulation VII, (4) every candidate was to make a voluntary contribution, in addition to the small allowance stated in the by laws of the particular lodge, for the relief of indigent and decayed brethren.

1 Smith, History of the Old Lodge of Dumfries, 100 1.

2 E.M.C., 53.

3 Miller, 59.

4 Constitutions of 1723, 60. [200]

Further, by General Regulation XIII,(1) the money so collected was to be disbursed by the lodge, until such time as it was agreed by all the lodges to pay the sums collected for charity to Grand Lodge, to establish a common stock.

It was at the Quarterly Communication of 21 November 1724 that the centralised charity scheme was first brought forward by the Earl of Dalkeith [Francis Scott: b. 11 Jan 1695; d. 22 Apr 1751], late Grand Master [1723], who recommended: (2)

That in Order to promote the Charitable Disposition of the Society of ffree Masons and render it more Extensive and beneficiall to the whole Body a Monthly Colleccion be made in Each Lodge according to the [q]uality and Number of the Said Lodge and put into a Joynt Stock.

That a Treasurer be appointed by the Grand Master to whom every Quarter the Said Contributions Shall be paid.

Progress in adopting the scheme was slow. No vote appears to have been taken on the resolutions on 21 November, but the Master and Wardens of each lodge were asked to come to the next Quarterly Communication prepared to record their assent or dissent. On 17 March 1725 a special Committee was appointed to consider and report upon the proposals.(3) At the next meeting on 20 May 1725, it was announced that the report was not ready.(4) At the meeting of 27 November 1725, the fairly lengthy report was read and the Committee thanked for its services.(5) With slight amendments the report was adopted on 28 February 1726.(6) A Committee for the management of the Charity was appointed in June 1727, and at the same time Nathaniel Blackerby was nominated as Treasurer of the Charity.(7) Nothing further appears to have happened until 27 March 1729 when Dr. Desaguliers stated at Grand Lodge that he found the spirit of charity reviving in several

1 Ibid., 62.

2 Q.C.A., x, 59.

3 Ibid., 60.

4 Ibid., 61.

5 Ibid., 64 8.

6 Ibid., 70.

7 Ibid., 74. [201]

lodges and therefore proposed that the report of the Committee on Charity should be read, which was accordingly done.(1) Thereupon Bro. Blackerby reminded the brethren that he had been appointed Treasurer of the Charity in 1727, adding that so far he had not received one shilling from any lodge or any brother, and appealed to the brethren to support the charity. The matter was referred to at the meeting on 11 July 1729,(2) but it was not until 25 November 1729 that the first contributions from lodges were received.(3) A few weeks later at the Annual Assembly held 29 January 1730 Dr. Desaguliers, in recommending the establishment

of a Standing Committee for the charity, referred to the fact that the lodges had at last agreed to set so commendable a work on foot.(4) Two of the first brethren to be relieved by the General Charity after its establishment were Anthony Sayer, Grand Master in 1717, and Joshua Timson, Grand Warden in 1722.(5)

In December 1730 the functions of the Standing Committee for the Charity were extended by Grand Lodge, when it was decided that in future all complaints and informations laid before Grand Lodge were to be referred to that Committee, whose report on such matters was to come before the next Quarterly Communication for decision." Thus the Committee was the prototype not merely of the Board of Benevolence, but also of the Board of General Purposes.

**The Organisation of Grand Lodge** - The character of the organisation established in 1717 was of the simplest kind. Grand Lodge consisted of the Master and Wardens of each regular private lodge, together with the Grand Officers of the year, originally three in number, namely, the Grand Master and the two Grand Wardens. At first Grand Officers were all proposed and elected at the Annual Assembly; that was modified, so far as the Grand Master was concerned, in 1721, when the practice was introduced of the Grand Master proposing his successor at a meeting of Grand Lodge held some time before the Feast. At the same time, it was decided that in future the Grand Master was to appoint both his Wardens and a Deputy Grand Master. In 1723, the minutes show that the officers proposed by the Grand Master Elect were elected by ballot, though not without protest. In subsequent years, the system of appointment was followed. The appointment of a Deputy Grand Master, which commenced in 1721 when the first noble lord was elected Grand Master, raised the number of Grand Officers to four. In November 1724, Past Grand Masters were admitted as members of Grand Lodge; in February 1726 the same privilege was accorded to Past Deputy Grand Masters, and in May 1727 to Past Grand Wardens. There was no secretary to Grand Lodge until June 1723, and he and his immediate successors did not rank as Grand Officers. In the early days Grand Lodge had no funds for general purposes, and the secretarial expenses were apparently met by the Grand Master, though, after the establishment of the General Charity, some of the secretarial expenses were charged to that fund. Grand Lodge had no home of its own before 1775; Quarterly Communications were held in various taverns, more particularly at The Devil, Temple Bar, and at The Crown and Anchor in the Strand.

1 Q.C.A., x, 102.  
2 Ibid., 104.

3 Ibid., 109.  
4 Ibid., 119.

5 Ibid., 123.  
6 Ibid., 138. [202]

The Annual Festival was held in the Hall of one or other of the City Companies.

The foundation stone of Freemasons' Hall, Great Queen Street, was laid on 1 May 1775, and the Hall was in use before the end of the year, though it was not dedicated until 23 May 1776.(1)

1 This paragraph is based on Anderson's Constitutions of 1723 and 1738, the minutes of Grand Lodge (Q.C.A., x, passim) and [Vibert] "Great Queen Street and Freemasons' Hall", Misc. Lat., July 1932. [203]

## CHAPTER X

### THE ORIGINS OF MASONIC CEREMONIES

#### Two Schools of Thought

THERE are in the field two conflicting beliefs regarding eighteenth century Masonic ceremonies: one is that they were the creation of two or three individuals, the other that they evolved gradually out of the usages and practices of operative masons at earlier periods. Murray Lyon was a leading exponent of the former view; he described Dr. Desaguliers as the cofabricator and pioneer of the system of symbolical masonry,(1) the Rev. Dr. James Anderson doubtless being cast for the other leading part. Again, both Begemann and Vibert have questioned Anderson's claim that the manner of constituting a new lodge and of installing a master (as given in his Constitutions of 1723) was "according to the "antient Usages of Masons", which seems to imply that they attribute the invention of the ceremony to Anderson or his contemporaries. This conception of the origin of Masonic ceremonies appears to us to be contrary to the weight of the available evidence, which points to the transition from operative to speculative masonry being a slow growth extending over several generations. Holding the second view, we devote this chapter and the three that follow to problems connected with Masonic ceremonies and their development.

Before entering upon our main task, we wish to refer to one outcome of the idea that Anderson was the cofabricator of Masonic ritual, viz., the commonly held belief that Anderson was responsible for introducing into English masonry the Scottish terms "entered apprentice" and "fellow craft". It is true that the earliest known printed references in England to these terms are to be found in Anderson's Constitutions of 1723.

1 Lyon, 163. [204]

The expression "enter'd prentice" occurs in a footnote on page 34 and in the title of the re printed version of Matthew Birkhead's Song on page 84. It had appeared as "The Free Masons Health" (1) in Read's Weekly journal on 1 December 1722, and, possibly before that date, had been separately issued as an engraved sheet of words and music. The term "fellow craft" occurs in the Charges,(2) the Regulations (3) and the Postscript.(4) We do not doubt that Anderson (whether originally made a mason in Scotland or not) was acquainted from his youth with the Scottish operative terms 'enter'd prentis' and 'fellow of craft', in one or other of their forms, for even if these terms were not generally known in Aberdeen, they would almost certainly be known in his home, his father being a prominent member of the Lodge of Aberdeen. Anderson did not use the older form 'fellow of craft' (plural 'fellows of craft') as it occurs in the Schaw Statutes of 1598, and in minutes of the Lodges of Aitchison's Haven in 1598 (5) and of Edinburgh in 1600 (6) Nor did he use the form 'fellowcraft' (plural 'fellowcrafts') as it occurs in the Statutes of the Lodge of Aberdeen in 1670 (7) and in the records of the Lodge of Melrose in 1690 and 1695.(8) The form used by Anderson in 1723 was 'fellow craft', spelt with a hyphen, the same spelling being used for the plural as for the singular. Actually, neither spelling survived, and already in his Constitutions of 1738 we find the forms 'fellow craft' and 'fellow crafts'. Further, it must be noted that in addition to the term 'fellow craft', Anderson in 1723 also used the terms 'fellow craftsman'(9) and 'fellowcraftsmen',(10) terms which (without the hyphen) occur in the Trinity College, Dublin, MS. of 1711,(11) a catechism which, there is some reason to think, was an accepted mason's aide memoire. The fact that he makes use of two different sets of terms strengthens our belief that he was using expressions current among accepted

masons of his day, and not introducing new Scottish terms. The further fact that in another early Masonic catechism, Sloane MS. 3329 of circa 1700, which is probably of English origin, the form 'fellow craftes' as a plural occurs twice, also points to the expression 'fellow craft' being known and used in England before Anderson's time. Similarly, the term 'entered prentice' appears to have been introduced into English accepted masonry before 1723. In Sloane MS. 3329(1) of circa 1700 we find the expression 'interprintices', and in the Trinity College, Dublin, MS. of 1711 the term 'enterprentices'. In A Mason's Examination,(2) printed in the London Flying Post of 11 13 April 1723, the term 'entered apprentice' is found, within a few weeks of the publication of Anderson's Constitutions, which makes it very unlikely that the expression was first introduced into English masonry by Anderson early in 1723.

1 E.M.P., 36.	5 Wallace James, A.Q.C., xxiv, 34.	357; Vernon, 22.
2 Constitutions of 1723, 51, 52	6 Lyon, 78.	9 Constitutions of 1723, 53.
3 Ibid., 61, 64.	7 Miller, 62.	10 Ibid., 52.
4 Ibid., 71.	8 Begemann, Freimaurerei in Schottland,	11 E.M.C., 63. [205]

## THE FOUNDATIONS OF MASONIC CEREMONIES

The ultimate foundations on which eighteenth century Masonic ceremonies rested would appear to have been two: (i) In the first place, there were the invocation, the legend or 'history' of the craft, and the masons' regulations, as commonly contained in the MS. Constitutions of Masonry. Following gild practice, as we explained on page 84 above, the reading or reciting of a version of the MS. Constitutions to the candidate, and the swearing by him to observe the regulations or charges, probably constituted the whole ceremony of admission among English operative masons in the later Middle Ages. The invocation, the legend, and the regulations of the MS. Constitutions were the prototypes of the Opening Prayer, the Traditional History, and the Charges of later Masonic ritual. The late Bro. E. L. Hawkins in 1913,(3) and the late Bro. R. H. Baxter in 1918 and 1919,(4) drew attention to similarities, not merely in content, but in phrasing, between versions of the MS. Constitutions and modern ritual. In their papers, however, they did not limit themselves to studying those versions of the Old Charges which exhibit the MS. Constitutions in their early and relatively pure forms, but drew special attention to certain features found in some of the later versions of the Old Charges, such as the Buchanan, Harris No. 1, Harleian 1942, and Dumfries No. 3, the texts of which had undergone considerable modifications as the result either of Scottish, or of 'accepted', influence. These hybrid documents rest on more than one foundation and illustrate one way in which materials derived from different sources have been combined. Thus, they help to demonstrate the two fold origin of Masonic working, in which connection they are referred to on page 219 below. (ii) In the second place, there were "the form of giving the Mason Word", and the test questions and answers associated with the Mason Word, the knowledge of which, in the ordinary course, was probably transmitted orally, but which occasionally was set down in writing, doubtless to serve as an aide memoire.

- 1 E.M.C. 39.
- 2 Ibid., 65.
- 3 A.Q.C., xxvi, 6.
- 4 Ibid, xxxi, 33; Manc. Tranr., viii, 65. [206]

Two manuscripts of this character, the **Edinburgh Register House MS. of 1696**,(1) and the **Chetwode Crawley MS. of circa 1700**,(2) have so far been traced. They constitute the **earliest known versions** of the group of documents commonly referred to as **Masonic catechisms**.

The ceremony depicted in the earliest Masonic catechisms is quite different from that suggested in the MS. Constitutions of Masonry. According to "the form of giving the Mason Word", as contained in the **Edinburgh Register House MS. of 1696**, "the person to take the word" had first to take an oath of secrecy, in which he swore not to reveal by word or writing any part of what he should see or hear, or to draw it with the point of a sword, or other instrument, upon the snow or sand. He then went out with the youngest mason, from whom he learnt the manner of making his due guard which was the sign, the postures, and the words of his entry. He then rejoined the company and said the words of his entry, which were as follows: (3)

- 1 E.M.C., 31.
- 2 Ibid., 35.
- 3 To facilitate reading, the punctuation has been modernised, and such sentences as appear to be instructions have been printed in italics. [207]

Here come I the youngest and last entered apprentice As I am sworn by God and St John by the Square and compass, and common judge(1) to attend my masters service at the honourable lodge, from munday in the morning till saturday at night and to keep the Keyes therof, under no less pain then haveing my tongue cut out under my chin and of being buried, within the flood mark where no man shall know, then he makes the sign again with drawing his hand under his chin amongst his throat which denotes that it be cut out in caise he break his word.

He was then apparently given the word by the master. The manuscript adds that "all the signes and words as yet spoken of are only what belong to the entered apprentice", and points out that there are others belonging to a master mason or fellow craft. These were imparted as follows: All entered apprentices were ordered out of the company and none suffered to stay but masters. Then "he who is to be admitted a member of fellowship" knelt and took an oath of secrecy, after which he went out with the youngest master (2) to learn "the postures and signes of fellowship". On returning, he made the master's sign and said the former words of entry, "only leaving out the common judge(1)". The masons then whispered the word among themselves, and finally the master gave him the word and the grip. There is nothing in the manuscript as to the nature of the master's sign, word or grip, though some indications are given regarding the entered apprentice's secrets.

The manuscript shows that a good deal of horseplay was associated with the imparting of the entered apprentice's secrets. Thus the oath was to be administered only "after a great many ceremonies to frighten" the candidate; when outside with the youngest mason, the candidate was to be frightened "with 1000 ridiculous postures and grimaces" before being given the sign, postures and words of entry; after rejoining the company, he was "to make a ridiculous bow . . . putting off his hat after a very foolish manner".

1 ? a gauge or templet of thin board or metal plate used as a guide in cutting stones. Fedge is defined in Jamieson's Scottish Dictionary as a gauge or standard. A templet, described as a jadge, is pictured among the tools in the Mark Book of the Lodge of Aberdeen (Miller, facing p. 42). Quite recently, Bro. F. J. Underwood (A.Q.C., li, 111 14) has put forward a carefully reasoned argument in favor of equating common judge with the Bible.

2 See footnote 3 on p. 102 above. [208]

This horseplay may be compared with the practices common at the admission of freshmen to universities in medieval and later times,(1) or with the tests imposed upon newcomers to the Hanseatic factory at Bergen.(2) Two pieces of evidence can be quoted to show that something of this horseplay was apt to be introduced into accepted or early speculative lodges. One is a passage in A Mason's Examination, the earliest known printed Masonic catechism, published in The Flying Post of 11 13 April 1723: (3)

. . . he swears to reveal no Secrets of the worshipful Fraternity, on Pain of having his Throat cut, and having a double Portion of Hell and Damnation hereafter. Then he is blind folded and the Ceremony of is performed. After which, he is to behold a thousand different Postures and Grimaces, all of which he must exactly imitate, or undergo the Discipline till he does.

The other is one of the by laws of the lodge constituted at The Maid's Head, Norwich, in May 1724, which reads: "6. That no ridiculous trick be played with any person when he is admitted." (4) These by laws are stated to have been "recommended by our Worthy Bro. Dr. Desaguliers" (Grand Master in 1719 20 and Deputy Grand Master in 1722 3, 1723 4 and 1725 6), and may be regarded as reflecting the desire of the recently formed Grand Lodge to maintain dignity in the proceedings.

If any reliance can be placed on an account of the initiation of a musical instrument maker, printed in The Daily Post and copied in The Grub street journal No. 112

1 R. S. Rait, Life in the Mediaeval University, chap. vi.

2 Helen Zimmern, The Hansa Towns, 144 7.

3 E.M.C., 66.

4 Daynes, A.Q.C., xxxvii, 38 [209]

of 24 February 1731/32,(1) horseplay of a very unsavoury character was being practised as late as 1732 "at the Lodge near Tower Hill". The comment in the journal runs: "These ceremonies are, I believe, as significant as those of the Original Free Masons, and much more diverting." When the account was reprinted in the Memoirs of the Society of Grub street, 1737, the comment ran: "These ceremonies I take to be full as significant, as those of the wealthier free masons; and they were, no doubt, much more diverting." The suggestion that in those days there was one standard of conducting ceremonies for the well to do, and another for tradesmen, seems to us to be by no means improbable. A similar differentiation is implied in The Free Masons; In Hudibrastick Poem, 1722: (2)

THUS now my Muse has faithful shown  
The History of Masons down,  
Their Secrets set in truest Light,  
And Penance, to the Reader's Sight.  
But here I must, at last, confess,  
This is not with all Men the Case;  
For we have Lords, and Dukes, and such,  
Who do not undergo as much.

In addition to indicating how the Mason Word was imparted, the Edinburgh Register House MS. gives a number of test questions and answers, relating partly to the conditions of admittance, and partly to matters with which nobody could be acquainted without previous instruction. As the manuscript provides answers to all the questions, and states that they have to be answered exactly, it is obvious that the necessary instructions regarding all the questions must have been given to the candidate on some occasion or other. It is, therefore, not unlikely that the test questions were asked by the Master and answered by one or more of the members present, for the instruction [210] of the candidate, either at his ceremony of admission, or at other times when the lodge met.

1 E.M.P., 289.

2 The passage we quote consists of the opening lines of the last stanza of the poem (2nd ed., 1723, p. 23). The stanza is omitted from our reprint in E.M.P., 83 90, for reasons which we explain in our introductory note to the poem.

As the questions and answers are the earliest known of their class, we quote them in full: (1)

Q. 1 : Are you a mason?

Ans: Yes.

Q. 2: How shall I know it?

Ans: You shall know it in time and place convenient. Remark the fors[ai]d answer is only to be made when there is company present who are not masons. But if there be no such company by, you should answer by signes, tokens and other points of my entrie.

Q. 3: What is the first point?

Ans: Tell me the first point ile tell you the second. The first is to heill(2) and conceall; second, under no less pain, which is then cutting of your throat. For you must make that sign when you say that.

Q. 4: Where was you entered?

Ans: At the honourable lodge.

Q. 5 : What makes a true and perfect lodge?

Ains: Seven masters, five entered apprentices, A dayes journey from a burroughs town, without bark of dog or crow of cock.(3)

Q. 6: Does no less make a true and perfect lodge?

Ans: Yes, five masons and three entered apprentices, &c.

Q. 7: Does no less?

Ans: The more the merrier, the fewer the better cheer.

Q. 8: What is the name of your lodge?

Ans: Kilwinning.

1 To facilitate reading, the various abbreviations used in the MS. for "question" and "answer" have been made uniform, the punctuation has been modernised, and such sentences as appear to be instructions have been printed in italics. In certain cases the writer joins two words together, e.g. aweel; we print such formations as separate words.

2 Heill, hele, heal: to hide, conceal, to keep secret (O.E.D.).

3 Cf. Laws and Statutes of the Lodge of Aberdeen, z67o, rule iii, "that no lodge be holden within a dwelling house wher ther is people living in it but in the open fieldes except it be ill weather, and then Let ther be a house chosen that no person shall heir nor sie ws"; and rule v, "that all entering prentises be entered in our antient outfeild Lodge in the mearnes in the parish of negg at the scounces at the poynt of the ness" (Miller, 59, 63) [211]

Q. 9: How stands your lodge?

Ans: east and west as the temple of jerusalem.

Q. 10: where wes the first lodge?

Ans: in the porch of Solomon's Temple.

Q. 11: Are there any lights in your lodge?

Ans: yes, three the north east, s w, and eastern passage. The one denotes the master mason, the other the warden. The third the setter croft.

Q. 12: Are there any jewells in your lodge?

Ans: Yes three Perpend (1) Esler [ashlar], a Square pavement, and a broad oval.(2)

Q. 13: where shall I find the key of your lodge?

Yes [? = Ans:] Three foot and an half from the lodge door under a perpend esler and a green divot. But under the lap of my liver where all my secrets of my heart lie.

Q. 14: Which is the key of your lodge?

Ans: a weel hung tongue.

Q. 15: where lies the key?

Ans: In the bone box. After the masons have examined you by all or some of these Questions and that you have answered them exactly and mad the signes, they will acknowledge you, but not a master mason or fellow croft, but only as as [? an] apprentice, soe they will say I see you have been in the Kitchine, but I know not if you have been in the hall. Ans: I have been in the hall as weel as in the kitchine.

Q. 1: Are you a fellow craft?

Ans: Yes.

Q. 2: How many points of the fellowship are ther?

Ans: fyve, viz., foot to foot, Knee to Kn[ee], Heart to Heart, Hand to Hand, and ear to ear. Then make the sign of fellowship and shake hand and you will be acknowledged a true mason. The words are in the i of the Kings Ch 7, v, 21, and in 2 chr: ch 3 verse last.

1 Perpend, parpen: a stone which passes through a wall from side to side, having two smooth vertical faces (O.E.D.).

2 Broad oval. ? broached ornel.

Broached. - worked with a chisel (O.E.D.).

Onnel: urnall, urnell; a kind of soft white building stone (O.E.D.). [212]

The fact that in 1696 there were two different ceremonies, if they may be so described, one applying to entered apprentices, and one to fellow crafts or masters, is borne out by the Chetwode Crawley MS. of circa 1700,(1) and is rather implied by the surviving fragment of a minute of the Haughfoot Lodge, dated 22 December 1702.(2) We are disposed to think, however, that the entered apprentices and the fellow crafts had distinct sets of secrets at a considerably earlier date. The minutes of the Aitchison's Haven Lodge show that, as early as 1598,(3) when a new entered apprentice was admitted, he chose two entered apprentices as his intenders and instructors, and when a new fellow craft was admitted, he chose two fellow crafts as his intenders and instructors. If these intenders corresponded to the "youngest mason" and the "youngest master" (4) of the Edinburgh Register House and Chetwode Crawley MSS., who taught the candidates the signs and postures, then it may well be that there were two sets of secrets in 1598, and that it was these which the intenders imparted to the newly admitted entered apprentices and fellow crafts respectively. It may even be that entered apprentices and fellow crafts had distinct sets of secrets of a rudimentary kind from the time when the Mason Word as an institution was first established, probably in the second half of the sixteenth century.

Quite apart from the question whether the secrets of the Mason Word were imparted to candidates in one, or in two instalments, we are clearly concerned with two entirely different types of ceremony. The one, depicted in the MS. Constitutions, consisting mainly in reading or reciting the Old Charges, very possibly dates from the second half of the fourteenth century. The other, depicted in the MS. Catechisms, consisting mainly in imparting the Mason Word, is hardly likely to be older than the second half of the sixteenth century, though local passwords may have been used at an earlier date. The MS. Constitutions were undoubtedly of English origin; the two oldest versions,

- 1 E.M.C., 35.
- 2 E.M.C., 7.
- 3 Wallace James, A.Q.C., xxiv, 34.
- 4 See footnote 3 on p. 102 above. [213]

the Regius and the Cooke MSS., which are not far removed from the common original on which all versions are based, are both written in the dialect spoken in the south west Midland area of England, i.e., in Gloucestershire and West Oxfordshire, in the later part of the fourteenth century.(1) The historical section of the MS. Constitutions, in so far as it relates to Britain, is concerned solely with England. Even the versions which are closely associated with Scottish lodges contain no reference to the development of masonry in Scotland, and some of them, e.g., the Kilwinning, the Aberdeen, and the Melrose No. 2 MSS., contain the charge that the mason is to be a "true Liedgeman to the King of England", so that they were copies of English originals. On the other hand, the early MS. Catechisms appear to be either of Scottish origin, or from sources with marked Scottish characteristics. This is suggested both by the documents themselves, with their references to "entered apprentices" and to "fellow crafts", and by the fact that the Mason Word, as an operative institution, undoubtedly existed in Scotland in the seventeenth century, and very possibly as early as the second half of the sixteenth century, whereas there is no evidence that it was ever in use among operative masons in England, except very possibly in the extreme North.

#### CONTINUITY OF MASONIC WORKING

We have previously stated that in our opinion accepted masonry formed the link connecting operative and speculative masonry. In this section we have to consider how the accepted masons obtained their knowledge of operative working. There is very little information available about the customs of English operative masons in the sixteenth century; the only positive reference to masons' customs with which we are acquainted, viz., the reference in the Sandgate Castle building account to the jurat at Folkestone visiting the controller at Sandgate concerning the "use and custome of ffre masons and hard hewars", relates to August 1539.(2) Both Gould (3) and Vibert (4) were of opinion that after the Reformation the builders' traditions died out, or at least that operative masons lost their secrets.

- 1 Two MSS., 62 3.
- 2 B.M. Harl. MS. 1647, fo. 109.
- 3 A.Q.C., iii, 11.
- 4 Freemasonry before the Era of Grand Lodger, 5 6. [214]

Though we hold that they were quite mistaken regarding this particular point which is based on a misconception of the importance of the Church as an employer of masons in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, we doubt if much or any purely Masonic organisation carrying on the old practices remained among English operative masons in the later part of the sixteenth century. Apart from four sixteenth century versions of the Old Charges,(1) and the existence in certain towns of trade companies in which the masons were generally associated with various building and miscellaneous trades, there would appear to be little evidence of the existence of freemasonry in England in the reign of Elizabeth. In Chapter VII we examined such evidence as is available relating to accepted masonry in England in the seventeenth century. In view, however, of the many gaps in the evidence, and certain considerations to be mentioned in the next paragraph, we cannot claim to have traced a definite continuity between English operative masonry of 1539, and English accepted masonry of 1723, when Anderson published his Constitutions for the guidance and instruction of the brethren associated with the newly established Grand Lodge. In any event, such continuity as can be found in English masonry during the period 1539 1723 is in no way comparable with that which can be shown, on the basis of copious Scottish lodge records, to have existed between Scottish operative masonry of circa 1600 and the speculative masonry of the present day. The best example of such continuity is provided by the **Lodge of Edinburgh, which possesses an unbroken set of minute books extending from 1599 to the present day.**

The other considerations to which we refer in the previous paragraph are as follows: (i) The fact that in London in the seventeenth century certain members of the Masons' Company, who are known to have been masons by trade, joined the so called 'Acception', i.e., became accepted masons (just as operative masons may become freemasons at the present time), strongly suggests that the rites and usages of seventeenth century accepted masons differed from such rites and usages, if any, as were practised by contemporary English operative masons.

1 The Grand Lodge No.1 MS. Of 1583; the Lansdowne MS. of circa 1600; the Levander York MS. Original of 1560, from which the Levander York MS. was copied circa 1740; the so called Melrose No. 1 MS. of 1581, from which Melrose No. 2 MS. was copied in 1674. [215]

(ii) The early minutes of the only two English operative lodges of the pre 1730 period which have survived, viz., those of the Alnwick Lodge, dating from 1703,(1) and of the Swalwell Lodge, dating from 1725,(2) show that there were no non operative or gentleman masons associated with those lodges prior to 1730. (iii) There are three elements in speculative masonry, viz.: (a) certain expressions, (b) certain esoteric matter, and (c) certain legendary matter, all of which have their prototypes in Scottish operative masonry of the sixteenth or seventeenth century, but no known prototypes in English operative masonry.

(a) The expressions we have in mind are 'entered apprentice', 'fellow craft', and 'cowan'; the first two were referred to on page 204 above, and the last on page 28, and there is no need for us to repeat here our previous remarks.

(b) A careful study of early Masonic catechisms strongly suggests that the nucleus of the present First and Third Degree ceremonies can be traced back to the somewhat crude usages and phrases associated before the end of the seventeenth century with the imparting of the Mason Word in Scotland, a subject which we discussed in some detail in Chapter V above, and to which we refer further in the last section of this chapter.

(c) The two pillars referred to in the Cooke MS. of circa 1410 and in all later versions of the Old Charges were, as indicated by us in Chapter IV, traditionally explained as those on which the seven liberal arts, including geometry or masonry, were carved, to keep them from perishing by flood or fire, and not the two pillars set up in the porch of the Temple, as described in 1 Kings vii. 21.

Solomon's pillars, it is believed, came into masonry, not through the English MS. Constitutions of Masonry, but through the Scottish ceremonies associated with the Mason Word, as indicated by Rev. Robert Kirk, Minister of Aberfoyle, who wrote in 1691 that the Mason Word

1 A.Q.C., xiv, 4.

2 Masonic Mag., iii, 72 6, 348 9.

2 E.M.C., passim. [216]

is like a Rabbinical Tradition, in way of comment on Jachin and Boaz, the two Pillars erected in Solomon's Temple (I Kings, vii., 21), with an Addition of some secret Signe delyvered from Hand to Hand by which they know and become familiar one with another.(1)

1 The Secret Commonwealth of Elves, Faunr and Fairier, 3rd ed., 1933,108 [217]

The Masonic tradition that the pillars set up by Solomon were made hollow, the better to serve as archives of masonry, doubtless represents an attempt to harmonise the two different pillar legends.

## **TWO FOLD ORIGIN OF EXISTING WORKING**

To suggest that all accepted masonry was immediately derived from Scotland, is not to deny the English origin of the MS. Constitutions of Masonry, or the possibility that accepted masons obtained from English sources the copies of the MS. Constitutions which played a part in their ceremonies in the later seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. On the other hand, it has to be recognised that, important though the MS. Constitutions probably were in early accepted masonry, and in shaping the Book of Constitutions as we know it today, their ritualistic importance has steadily declined. Be that as it may, both types of operative ceremony, the one depicted in the MS Constitutions, and the one depicted in the MS. Catechisms, have undoubtedly contributed to the development of present day working, and justify us in saying that the existing working has not a single, but a twofold origin.

At what date and in what manner the two types of ceremony became in some way combined is uncertain. If we are correct in our estimate of the antiquity of the two types of ceremony, that depicted in the MS. Constitutions, consisting mainly of reading or reciting the Old Charges, had probably been practised in England for a century or more before even the most rudimentary formalities associated with the imparting of the Mason Word had been adopted in Scotland. It is not until the second half of the seventeenth century, however, that we find any evidence of the two types of ceremony being combined. In the operative Lodge of Aberdeen in 1670 the entered apprentice, in addition to receiving the Mason Word at his entry, had read to him the "Mason Charter", (1) which was the version of the Old Charges now described as the Aberdeen MS. As the lodges at Aitchison's Haven, Kilwinning, Melrose, Stirling and Dumfries all possessed one or more versions of the MS. Constitutions dating from the second half of the seventeenth century,(2) it is likely that the Aberdeen practice was fairly general in Scotland at that period. The practice was possibly older, but it may be noted that whereas the minutes of Aitchison's Haven Lodge date from 1598, when there is reason to think that the secrets of the Mason Word were being imparted to entered apprentices and to fellow crafts, the Aitchison's Haven MS. was not engrossed in the minute book until 1666. There is, however, some ground for thinking that the lodge possessed a version of the Old Charges as early as December 1646.(3) In relation to the Old Lodge of Dumfries, two points may be noted. First, the version of the MS. Constitutions known as the Dumfries No.3 MS., of the late seventeenth century, provides for the appointment of a tutor to instruct the candidate in the secrets which must never be committed to writing. Second, the document known as Dumfries No. 4 MS., of circa 1710, consists of several elements including (a) a 'sundry' version of the MS. Constitutions, (b) a set of questions and answers, partly along the lines of other Masonic catechisms, partly of a scriptural type, and (c) a stranger's salutation, similar to that incorporated in other catechisms.

1 "A discourse hade before A Meeting of Meassones Commonly caled the Measson Charter" (Miller, 66). In a statement appended to the List of 49 names entered in the Mark Book, as being members of the lodge in 1670, there occurs the following sentence, which appears with modernised spelling in Miller, p. 21: "We ordain likewise that the Mason Charter be read at the entering of every entered prentice and the whole laws of this Book" [i.e., the Laws and Statutes of the Lodge adopted 27 December 1670 (Miller, 57)].

2 For details, see our Handlist of Masonic Documents.

3 Wallace James, A.Q.C., zsv, 41 2; Hawkins, *ibid.*, 46. [218]

At one time the document was almost certainly used for ritual purposes, for it shows considerable signs of use.(1)

Other available evidence suggestive of a combination of the two types of ceremony is afforded by other seventeenth century versions of the MS. Constitutions which contain special references to Masonic secrets, namely, Harris No. 1, Buchanan, Grand Lodge No. 2, Harleian 1942, Harleian 2054, and Drinkwater No. 2.(2) None of these bears a definite date, but they are all assigned by Bro. Poole to the second half of the seventeenth century, with the exception of the last, which he dates as circa 1700. As all these manuscripts were probably used by accepted masons in England, the evidence seems to point to operative and nonoperative members of Scottish lodges, and to accepted masons in England, using a combined type of ceremony in the second half of the seventeenth century. That accepted masons in the later part of the seventeenth century both used a version of the MS. Constitutions and imparted to candidates at least some of the esoteric knowledge associated with the Mason Word, is suggested by Dr. Robert Plot's reference to a large parchment volume which they had amongst them, containing the History and Rules of the Craft of Masonry, and his statement that their admission chiefly consisted in the communication of certain secret signs.(3) Nothing shows more clearly the twofold origin of Masonic ceremonies at the end of the seventeenth century than the oath set out in the Masonic catechism Sloane MS. 3329,(4) of circa 1700, by which the candidate swore to keep secret "the mason word and every thing therein contained" and truly to observe "the Charges in ye Constitucion". As late as 1723, if reliance can be placed on the earliest of the so called "exposures" or printed catechisms of masonry, A Mason's

1 No. 3 is printed in Smith, Old Lodge of Dumfries, 85 104; No. 4 in E.M.C., 44 62.

2 We drew attention to these, and two early eighteenth century versions of the Old Charges, Carmich and Roherts, on p. 82 above.

3 See extract from Plot's Natural History of Staffordshire, E.M.P., 31 4.



4 E.M.C., 42 3. [219]

Examination,(1) the whole or part of a version of the MS. Constitutions was read to the candidate before any secrets were revealed to him. The fact that the 'historical' section of Anderson's Constitutions of 1723 is headed by the instruction "To be read at the Admission of a New Brother . . ." would appear to confirm the statement in 'A Mason's Examination', unless it be that the author of the catechism was basing himself upon Anderson, whose Constitutions had been published a few weeks previously. That the signs and words of an accepted mason were derived from the Mason Word of the Scottish operatives is strongly suggested by the fact that when Dr. Desaguliers, the prominent member of the newly formed Grand Lodge in London, desired to visit the operative Lodge of Edinburgh in 1721, he was found "duly qualified in all points of masonry" and received as a brother.(2)

How and when the MS. Constitutions reached Scotland from England, and how and when the Mason Word reached England from Scotland, are largely matters for surmise. Although the relations between the two countries were not very close from the time of the Scottish Wars of Independence in the fourteenth century until the union of the two Crowns in 1603, the cultural and social break between the two countries was not so great as is sometimes suggested.

As Dr. Coulton has remarked,(3) all through the Middle Ages there was less difference between Yorkshire or Northumberland on the one hand and Lothian or Fife on the other, than between any one of them and Kent. Consequently, it is not impossible that one or both of the transferences took place before 1603, though the surviving evidence suggests a rather later date.

The transference may have come about in more than one way. Masons from one country may have worked in the other, and usages prevailing south of the Tweed may have become known to masons north of the Tweed and vice versa. Further, it is possible that the counties of Northumberland and Durham (Sunderland being a port by which many Scots entered England) may have served as neutral ground on which Masonic practices prevailing in Scotland on the one hand, and in Southern England on the other, intermingled and blended.

1 E.M. C., 65.

2 Lyon, 161.

3 Scottish Abbeys and Social Life, 33 4. [220]

When the records of the old operative lodge at Swalwell, County Durham, commence in the early eighteenth century, they bear very distinct traces of Scottish influence. The "Orders" of the lodge date from circa 1730; the first entry in the minute book relates to 29 September 1725, and may be quoted in full:(1)

Then Matthew Armstrong and Arthur Douglas, Masons, appeared in the Lodge of Freemasons, and agreed to have their names registered as "Enterprentices," to be accepted next quarterly meeting, paying one shilling each for that rank, and 7s. 6d. when they take their freedom.

The use of the term "Enterprentice" in the minutes of an English operative lodge points to very strong Scottish influence; the minute very possibly indicates that two Lowland Scots or borderers (to judge by their names), described as masons by trade, though presumably only entered apprentices in their own lodges, joined the lodge at Swalwell with the rank of entered apprentice, on payment of one shilling, it being provided that they should pay 7s. 6d. when they took their freedom, i.e., became fellows, the following quarter. If this interpretation is correct, it follows that the lodge at Swalwell was very closely linked with Scottish masonry. That this probably was so is strongly suggested by the fact that members of the lodge appear to have possessed at least some knowledge of the Mason Word as an operative institution. So much is clear from Clause No. 8 of the "Penal Orders" of the lodge:(2) "If any be found not faithfully to keep and maintain the 3 fraternal signs, and all points of fellowship, and principal matters relating [to] the secret Craft, each offence penalty 10 10 00." The lodge, like the older Scottish lodges, gradually turned from an operative into a speculative lodge; in 1735 it accepted a "deputation" or constitution from Grand Lodge. It continued to meet at Swalwell until 1844, when it removed to Gateshead where in 1935 it celebrated its bicentenary as the Lodge of Industry, No. 48.

1 Masonic Mag., iii, 73.

2 Ibid., 85. [221]

The lodge at Alnwick, whose Orders are dated 29 September 1701, and whose minutes relate to the years 1703 to 1757, remained operative in character until 1748, when it was apparently reorganised as a speculative lodge, though it was never linked up with Grand Lodge.(1) Its records, however, show no marked traces of Scottish influence. It maybe, nevertheless, that other northern lodges, of which no records have survived, acted, somewhat like the lodge at Swalwell, as connecting links between English and Scottish masonry in the later seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

There is no evidence to show that the Mason Word was ever used among English operative masons, except possibly in the North, nor does there seem to have been any need for it, or any machinery to administer it, in the seventeenth century. It seems more likely that English accepted masons obtained a knowledge of the Mason Word, not from English operative masons, but either from English travellers in Scotland, who were entered as "gentleman masons" in Scottish operative lodges, or from Scottish masons, travelling or working in England, who made "gentleman masons" at a distance from their lodges, with or without the previous or subsequent approval of these lodges. In the well known case of Robert Murray, quartermaster general of the Scottish army, who was made a mason at Newcastle on 20 May 1641 by members of the Lodge of Edinburgh, the fact was subsequently reported to the lodge and recorded in the minute book.(2) In a later case, where a member of the Lodge of Edinburgh entered several gentlemen in Ayrshire in 1679, without licence or commission, disciplinary action was taken against the offender.(3) Traces of the custom of granting written licences to enter masons at a distance from the lodge are found in the minutes of the lodges of Kilwinning,(4) Dunblane(5) and Haughfoot (6) With such dispensations or without, it seems not unlikely that Englishmen were made "gentleman masons" in England by operative or nonoperative members of Scottish lodges.

1 Rylands, "The Alnwick Lodge Minutes", A.Q.C., xiv, 4.

2 Lyon, 103.

3 Ibid., 106.

4 Ibid., 107.

5 Ibid., 109.

6 Ibid., 109. [222]

## EVIDENCE OF THE SCOTTISH ORIGIN OF MASONIC SECRETS

In view of the relative newness of our theory that presentday speculative masonry owes a great deal to seventeenthcentury Scottish operative masonry,(1) we propose briefly to emphasise here the strong preponderance of Scottish evidence relating to the imparting of the Mason Word, and all that is implied thereby.

At the outset we must remind the reader when comparing the amount of Scottish and English evidence available, that in former, as in present, times England had a far larger population than Scotland. Thus, other things being equal, there should be far more surviving documentary evidence in England than in Scotland. We had occasion on page 4 of our Scottish Mason to draw attention to the scarcity of records in Scotland in comparison with England, and to the consequent difficulty of dealing in detail with the early development of Scottish masonry. When, however, we come to the Mason Word the position is entirely reversed; instead of finding one Scottish record for every half a dozen English, we find actually far more Scottish evidence than English. If allowance be made for the difference in population, there is an overwhelming preponderance of Scottish evidence.

The evidence which we have in mind is of a fourfold character:

- (i) The early Masonic catechisms have a strong Scottish 'flavour'.
- (ii) Various entries in lodge records in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries refer to the Mason Word; these records, without exception, relate to Scottish lodges.
- (iii) References to the Mason Word occur in nonMasonic literature of the seventeenth century.

1 The views we put forward in this chapter are not new; they were voiced by Douglas Knoop in 1938 in his Prestonian Lecture (The Mason Word), in 1939 in our "Prolegomena to the Mason Word" (A.Q.C., lii, 139), and in 1940, in our Short History of Freemasonry to 1730 [223]

Of eight such references known to us, six, viz., those of Henry Adamson in *The Muses Threnodie*, 1638;(1) of John Lamont in the *Chronicle of Fife*, 1649;(2) of a report of the proceedings of the presbytery of Kelso, 1652;(3) of Robert Kirk in *The Secret Commonwealth*, 1691;(4) of Alexander Telfair in a tract of 1696;(5) and of a letter from Scotland written in 1697,(6) are of undoubted Scottish origin. One, a remark of Dr. Edward Stillingfleet, the well known seventeenth century antiquary, sometime Bishop of Worcester, made at his own dinner table in London in 1689,(7) must be regarded as of immediate English origin, though the speaker apparently had Scottish associations, to judge by the fact that the Rev. Robt. Kirk, Minister of Aberfoyle, was his guest on the occasion when the remark was made. Thus Dr. Stillingfleet may well have acquired his knowledge of the Mason Word from Scotland. The last reference, that of Andrew Marvell in *The Rehearsal Transposed*, 1672,(8) would appear to be unquestionably of English origin. The probability is that Marvell was referring to the customs of English accepted masons of his own day, rather than to those of operative masons, about whose practices he would almost certainly know nothing.

(iv) The last class of evidence relates to the setting or background in which the Mason Word existed. We discussed this in detail in Chapter V, but may summarise our conclusions here. We feel that it is a mistake to consider the Mason Word in vacuo, without reference to the conditions which called it into being and made its establishment and subsequent maintenance possible. The purpose of the Mason Word was to distinguish masons who were members of their trade organisation from others who were not. The need for some secret method of recognition arose from two conditions peculiar to Scotland, viz., the possibility of employment open to 'cowans', and the existence of an industrial grade, without exact parallel in England, that of the entered apprentice. In order to establish and maintain the Mason Word as an institution, local organisations capable of cooperating with each other, and some supervisory authority with a wide jurisdiction, would be required. In Scotland the local or 'territorial' lodges, such as the Lodge of Edinburgh and the Lodge of Aberdeen, as distinct from temporary or semi permanent lodges or workshops associated with particular building operations, served as the necessary local organisations. The King's Principal Master of Work and Warden General, in conjunction with the Masters of the various lodges, constituted the central authority which controlled and supervised the various local lodges. So far as we are aware, there was no corresponding machinery in England.

1 E.M.P., 30.

2 Diary of John Lamont (*Chronicle of Fife*) 1649 72, Edinburgh, 1810, p. 9.

3 Scott, ii, 132.

4 3rd ed., 1933, 108.

5 E.M.P., 34.

6 Printed in *Hist. MSS. Com., Portland MSS.*, ii, 56.

7 R. Kirk, "London in 1689 90", printed in *Trans. Lond. and Middx. Arch. Soc.*, 1933, 139.

8 E.M.P., 30. [224]

All the evidence relating to Masonic secrets, which we have reviewed in this chapter, is predominantly Scottish. We have therefore to ask ourselves, if it is chance, an unfortunate coincidence, that there is such a relative paucity of references to the Mason Word in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries in England, or if it is rather that little or nothing was known about the Mason Word in England at that period. We can see no reason why English references should have been lost whilst Scottish references have been preserved and we feel compelled to conclude that the Mason Word as an operative institution did not exist in England as it did in Scotland. Thus, in our opinion, everything in English accepted or speculative masonry that is derived directly or indirectly from the Mason Word, and all that it implied, is necessarily of Scottish origin. We are disposed to think that this was recognised more clearly two centuries ago than in recent years. It very possibly explains why, when new degrees were established in the eighteenth century, there was a tendency to claim for them a Scottish origin. Further it may account for the following passage which occurs in the London periodical, *The Free Mason* No. 5 of 11 December 1733: (1) "On the Sun set of Masonry to the Southern and Western Parts of the Globe, the antient Masons of Scotland, Stars of the North, preserv'd its Light and return'd it to Mankind." Thus in 1733, before the establishment of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, we had the interesting suggestion that modern or speculative masonry is descended from ancient or operative masonry through a Scottish line of transmission. [226]

1 *Ibid.*, 311. [225]

## CHAPTER XI

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF CRAFT WORKING Two Lines of Approach

THERE are two entirely different ways of approaching the problem of the development of craft working during the period of some fifty years between 1686, when Dr. Robert Plot wrote his well known account of accepted masonry,(1) and 1735, when Martin Clare analysed the motifs of the freemasonry of his day.(2) The first way is to trace the evolution of the early manuscript and printed Masonic catechisms,(3) on the assumption that they in some measure reflect the character of the ceremonies practised by accepted masons in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, an assumption which we feel should be accepted only with considerable reservations. The second way is to follow, from documents less suspect in character than the printed catechisms,(4) some of the principal changes in accepted masonry during the period. That is our main purpose in this chapter, but by way of introduction we give a brief account of the evolution of the early Masonic catechisms.

1 E.M.P., 31; p. 145 above.

2 Ibid., 327; p. 7 above.

3 E.M.C., passim.

4 The authenticity of the printed catechisms is discussed in E.M.C., 9 18. [227]

#### EVOLUTION OF THE EARLY CATECHISMS

The early catechisms can be divided into four groups:

1. **The Edinburgh Register House MS. of 1696 and the Chetwode Crawley MS. of circa 1700** not improbably represent Scottish operative working in the later decades of the seventeenth century. Four features of these catechisms which tend to disappear in those belonging to later groups are (i) the words of entry [found only in A Mason's Confession of 1727]; (ii) allusions to horseplay [found only in A Mason's Examination of 1723]; (iii) reference to the Mason Word [found only in Sloane MS. 3329 of circa 1700 and in A Mason's Confession of 1727]; and (iv) the distinction between those who have been in the kitchen and those who have been in the hall [found only in A Mason's Examination of 1723 and in The Mystery of Free Masonry of 1730].

2. **A Mason's Confession of 1727** professedly represents Scottish operative working in the third decade of the eighteenth century. It is a good deal fuller than the Edinburgh Register House MS., but whether the new matter is due to the writer's imagination, or to his desire to give a reasonably complete account of the ceremony, or to genuine development of the working between 1696 and 1727, it is impossible to say.

3. The main body of the early catechisms supposedly or professedly exhibits the ceremonies of accepted or of speculative masons during the first three decades of the eighteenth century. By no means all the catechisms tell the same story, but that does not necessarily detract from their possible correctness, for it would be very surprising if all lodges at that period followed a uniform system of working. This group of catechisms contains various questions and answers not found in those of the first group, e.g., (i) certain questions relating to architecture, and (ii) certain symbolical questions and answers concerning the height of the lodge, the number of pillars in the lodge, and the colour of the master's habit. This new interest in architecture and in symbolism suggests the growing influence of accepted or of speculative masons.

4. **Prichard's Masonry Dissected of 1730** claims to give an impartial account of the regular proceedings in initiating new members in the three degrees of masonry. The changes which can first definitely be traced in this catechism are of considerable importance. (i) New matter is introduced, more particularly the Hiramic Legend, and an explanation of the Letter G; yet it would be a mistake to think that Prichard invented either of these developments. A reference to the Letter G occurs in an advertisement of 1726 concerning Antediluvian Masonry;(1) also the rather archaic doggerel verse in which it is handled in Masonry Dissected suggests some measure of antiquity. The earlier existence of the Hiramic Legend is suggested by the same advertisement of 1726, which refers to "the whole history of the widow's son killed by the blow of a beetle". Further, Anderson's long footnote on Hiram on pages 11 and 12 of the Constitutions of 1723 makes it not impossible that masons were acquainted with a version of the story as early as that year. (ii) The working is divided into three degrees. The subject of the number of degrees raises large questions, to which we devote the next chapter. (iii) The earlier catechisms either give a description or narrative of the ceremony (or form of giving the Mason Word) together with test questions and answers, or omit any description of the ceremony and content themselves with test questions and answers from which very little if any idea of the nature of the ceremony can be deduced. Prichard's Masonry Dissected, on the other hand, omits the independent descriptive section, but introduces what is more or less an account of the ceremonies into the questions and answers. Although these are a good deal fuller than in any previous catechism, they still retain the form of questions addressed to someone who has already been admitted, and answers rehearsing what happened at a ceremony of admission. The account they give of the ceremonies may be more or less correct, so far as it goes, but we are of opinion that in any case it is not a complete account of the ceremonies. Like the other early catechisms, it contains, for example, no reference to a prayer, or to a charge to newly admitted brethren, both of which, there is reason to believe, formed part of the ceremonies. The nature of the rites of accepted or of early speculative masons, based on such independent evidence as is available, is discussed in the following sections of this chapter.

1 E.M.P., 193. [228]

#### CONDITIONS IN ENGLAND, SCOTLAND AND IRELAND

It has been usual to treat the history of masonry in England, Scotland and Ireland as a separate development in each country; but we are convinced that these developments cannot be rightly or fully understood in isolation. It is, indeed, convenient and desirable to have distinct accounts of the rise and extension of local and central [229] Masonic organisation in each country, but it is necessary to guard against the error of thinking that in the later seventeenth and earlier eighteenth centuries, when accepted masonry was evolving from operative institutions, an entirely independent process was in operation in each of the three kingdoms. Had that been the case, we should have had not one but three systems of speculative masonry. It is necessary, therefore, to

consider as a whole the evolution of Masonic working in that period, and to co ordinate the ascertained facts regardless of whether they relate in the first instance to England, Scotland or Ireland.

The main object of this and the following sections is to consider the first steps by which the somewhat confused history of the building industry, the trade regulations, and the moral precepts of the MS. Constitutions of Masonry, together with the rather crude usages and phrases associated with the imparting of the Mason Word, were so modified and elaborated as ultimately to justify the claim of freemasonry to be a peculiar system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols. In order to form an opinion as to when and where the fundamental changes in Masonic practices which ultimately transformed the whole character of Masonic ceremonies were introduced, the Masonic conditions prevailing in England, Scotland and Ireland in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries must be briefly examined. **We may commence with Scotland, since it is from that country that accepted masonry apparently obtained the main foundations on which the speculative superstructure was ultimately erected.**

**Scotland** - In Scotland in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, non operative or gentleman masons joined the old established operative lodges, which regulated the masons' local affairs, in so far as they were not governed by trade incorporations. The authority of each particular lodge, apart from any limitations imposed by the existence of a local incorporation of the building trades, was subject in some cases to the supervision of a more important neighbouring lodge, and in all cases to the central control exercised by the royal official known as the Warden General and Principal Master of Work. Although the non [230] operative members might outnumber the operative members, as was the case in the Lodge of Aberdeen in 1670, nevertheless they would not appear to have been in a position materially to transform the character of the practices associated with the imparting of the Mason Word, which was an operative institution widespread in Scotland. It may be that in the course of years the Mason Word was modified, and that additions were made to it, though whether as the result of non operative influence it is impossible to say, but such modifications and accretions, so far as one can tell, left the character of the practices fundamentally unchanged. That these old established practices had been adopted by English accepted masons, and had been subject to little change as late as 1721, is strongly suggested by the fact that when Dr. Desaguliers, the former English Grand Master, desired to visit the operative Lodge of Edinburgh in 1721, he was found "duly qualified in all points of masonry", and received as a brother.(1)

In the years immediately following 1721 big changes were made in accepted masonry in England, but these modifications were probably not introduced into Scotland until after the formation of the Grand Lodge of Scotland in 1736. This perhaps explains why Scotland did not adopt the ceremony of installing the Master of the Lodge, that ceremony having been dropped by lodges under the Grand Lodge of England before 1736, as we suggest on page 249 below. It formed part of the working of the Grand Lodge of the Antients, established in 1751, but did not become the general practice in England until after the union of the two Grand Lodges in 1813.(2)

1 Lyon, 1601-1.

**2 In October 1809 the Lodge of Promulgation was constituted** by the Grand Lodge of the Moderns "for the purpose of Promulgating the Ancient Land Marks of the Society". In October 1810 the Lodge of Promulgation resolved "that it appears to this Lodge that the ceremony of Installation of Masters of Lodges is one of the two [? true] Landmarks of the Craft and ought to be observed". **After the Union of the two Grand Lodges in 1813, the Lodge of Reconciliation was constituted** to agree upon the ceremonies and to rehearse them for the benefit of the Craft. The activities of the lodge, however, barely touched upon the Installation Ceremony, and it was not until December 1827 that Grand Lodge constituted a Board of Installed Masters to agree upon the Installation Ceremony and to rehearse it for the benefit of Masters and Past Masters. See W. B. Hextall, "The Special Lodge of Promulgation, 1809 11", A.Q.C., xxiii (1910), 37 folg.; W. Wonnacott, "The Lodge of Reconciliation, 1813 16", A.Q.C., xxiii (1910), 215 folg.; H. Sadler, Notes on the Ceremony of Installation (1889). [231]

It was not adopted in Scotland until the 1870s.(1)

In the light of the available evidence it seems practically certain that the transformation of operative into speculative working did not originate in Scotland, and it is probably true to say that Scottish influence counted for little or nothing in the development.

**England** - In England in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, non operative or gentleman masons apparently did not join operative lodges, as in Scotland; in the records of the old operative lodges at Swalwell and Alnwick there is no evidence of the admission of nonoperative members before 1732 and 1748 respectively. On the other hand, some working masons were members of lodges of accepted masons in London, at Chester and at York; and according to the New Articles of those versions of the MS. Constitutions of Masonry which belong to the Roberts family, at least one workman of the trade of freemasonry was to be present when a freemason was accepted.(2)

There is evidence to show that some men who were masons by trade were also accepted masons; but it may be presumed that the ceremony by which they were admitted as accepted masons was different from any which may have been used upon their admission to an English operative lodge. There is, however, no evidence at all to suggest that societies of accepted masons were in any respect subject to control by any organisation of operative masons. In so far as any control existed, it was exercised by accepted masons, both before and after 1717, in which year Grand Lodge was established. It follows that accepted masons in England, being freer from operative control than were nonoperative masons in Scotland, had greater power to introduce innovations and elaboration of the traditional working.

1 Lyon, 203 2 See, e.g., the Roberts print, E.M.P., 82. According to The Mystery of Free Masonry, 1730, one of the seven masons that make a just and perfect lodge must be a working mason (E.M.C., 104) [232]

Further, since the essential condition of freedom from operative control may be presumed to have existed before 1717, it follows that the innovations might as easily have been introduced into English accepted masonry in 1707, or in 1697, as in 1727.

**Ireland** - A consideration of Irish conditions in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries adds to the existing uncertainty regarding the date or dates of the fundamental changes in masonry a further uncertainty regarding the place or places where such changes originated. The facts known about freemasonry in Ireland before 1730 are unfortunately very few; most of what is known is due to the researches of Chetwode Crawley (1) in the 1890s, supplemented by the more recent investigations of Bros. Lepper and

Crossle.(2) Irish operative masons do not appear to have associated in "territorial" operative lodges as Scottish masons did, but from time to time English masons worked in Ireland and may have introduced a knowledge of their customs and practices amongst Irish stone workers, from whom, in due course, Irish gentleman masons may have obtained their knowledge of the craft. Bro. Lepper certainly stresses the fact that for some years before 1688, when a lodge of accepted masons can first be traced at Trinity College, Dublin, a good many building operations had been in progress at the College. If non operative or accepted masons in Ireland had belonged to lodges of operative masons, as in Scotland, it would be reasonable to assume that they had obtained their knowledge of masonry from Irish operative masons, but in fact they do not appear to have belonged to lodges of operative masons. The meagre evidence available points to non operative or accepted masons in Ireland meeting in lodges of accepted masons, as in England. The Lodge of Freemasons at Trinity College, Dublin, referred to in the tripos of 1688, and the lodge held at Doneraile House in 1712 (whose working the Hon. Elizabeth St. Leger is supposed to have overheard) were both, if indeed they existed, lodges of

1 Caem. Hih., and Introductory Chapter to Sadler's Masonic Reprint and Revelations.  
2 History of the Grand Lodge of Ireland. [233]

accepted masons on the English model.(1) It seems to us, therefore, more likely, in view of the close literary, intellectual and social connections between Dublin and England at that period, that the adopted or accepted masonry which Dr. Robert Plot, writing in 1686, stated was more or less spread over the nation, had reached Ireland in a manner similar to that in which it had reached various parts of England. In that case, it was under even less effective central control than any which may have existed in England prior to 1717, and afforded, consequently, even greater opportunities for the introduction of fundamental changes in the working.

We now approach the central problem of this and the following chapter, namely, an examination of what changes were introduced into Masonic working between 1686 and 1735, in so far as those changes can be traced, together with the two closely associated problems of when and where such changes were made.

#### THE NATURE OF THE CHANGES

**1. The History and the Charges** - According to the old operative practice, as explained on pages 84-86 above, the legend or 'history' of the building industry, together with the charges or regulation governing the masons' trade, as contained in the MS. Constitutions of Masonry, was read to the candidate, who had to swear on the Bible to keep the charges. Into this practice three modifications were introduced. (i) The 'history' of masonry was edited and largely revised by Anderson for his Constitutions of 1723 where it was laid down that this new version of the 'history' was "to be read at the admission of a New Brother", presumably in place of the old version. (ii) The charges were "digested" by Anderson for his Constitutions of 1723, the Charges General and Singular of the MS. Constitutions being replaced by "The Charges of a Free Mason", which were "to be read at the making of New Brethren", presumably instead of the Charges General and Singular. (iii) The old instruction in the MS. Constitutions of Masonry regarding the administration to the candidate of the oath to observe the charges was omitted from the Constitutions of 1723.

1 For Trinity College Lodge, see p. 152 above; for Doneraile House Lodge, see Lepper and Crossle, 39. [234]

How long the reading of the whole, or portions, of the Old Charges continued to form part of the ceremony of admitting entered apprentices is uncertain. According to Anderson's Constitutions of 1738, the 'history' of Masonry (as further revised and much extended by Anderson) was to be read at the admission of a new brother, but that apparently no longer applied to the Charges. How far these instructions were carried into effect, it is impossible to say. The earliest minute book (1733 56) of the Old King's Arms Lodge, No. 28, records that parts of the Constitutions were read on various occasions between 1733 and 1744,(1) and this was also done at the Old Lodge at Lincoln, No. 73, in 1733 and 1734;(2) but in the latter case certainly, and in the former case probably, the readings took place on nights when there were no candidates. The fact that several versions of the Old Charges were copied or printed after 1723 suggests that the reading of the MS. Constitutions of Masonry in their older forms may have continued well into the eighteenth century.

**2. The Charge to new admitted Brethren** - Within a few years of the publication of Anderson's Constitutions of 1723 a different version of the charges of the MS. Constitutions of Masonry made its appearance; it is first found in print in Smith's Pocket Companion for Free Masons, published in London in December 1734 or quite early in 1735. The Pocket Companion contains what is described as "A Short Charge to be given to new admitted Brethren". This bears no resemblance to the Apprentice Charge contained in certain versions of the MS. Constitutions, a charge of a definitely operative character. It agrees in a good many respects with Anderson's "Charges of a Free Mason", but it also embodies entirely different matter. On this point the reader can easily satisfy himself: "The Charges of a Free Mason" (not to be confused with the Summary of the Antient Charges) are printed near the beginning of the

1 A. Heiron, A.Q.C., xxxix, 134, 135.  
2 W. Dixon, A.Q.C., iv, 104, 105. [235]

present Book of Constitutions very nearly in the form in which they first appeared in Anderson's Constitutions of 1723; the "Short Charge to new admitted Brethren" we reprint here,(1) as it is one of the earliest authoritative specimens of Masonic ritual which we possess:

You are now admitted by the unanimous Consent of our Lodge, a Fellow of our most Antient and Honourable Society; Antient, as having subsisted from times immemorial, and Honourable, as tending in every Particular to render a Man so that will be but conformable to its glorious Precepts. The greatest Monarchs in all Ages, as well of Asia and Africa as of Europe, have been Encouragers of the Royal Art; and many of them have presided as Grand Masters over the Masons in their respective Territories, not thinking it any lessening to their Imperial Dignities to Level themselves with their Brethren in MASONRY, and to act as they did.

The World's great Architect is our Supreme Master, and the unerring Rule he has given us, is that by which we Work.

Religious Disputes are never suffered in the Lodge; for as MASONS, we only pursue the universal Religion or the Religion of Nature. This is the Cement which unites Men of the most different Principles in one sacred Band, and brings together those who were the most distant from one another.

There are three general Heads of Duty which MASONS ought always to inculcate, viz., to God, our Neighbours, and ourselves.

To God, in never mentioning his Name but with that Reverential Awe which becomes a Creature to bear to his Creator, and to look upon him always as the Sum[m]um Bonum which we came into the World to enjoy; and according to that View to regulate all our Pursuits.

To our Neighbors, in acting upon the Square, or doing as we would be done by.

To ourselves, in avoiding all Intemperances and Excesses, whereby we may be rendered incapable of following our Work, or led into Behaviour unbecoming our laudable Profession, and in always keeping within due Bounds, and free from all Pollution.

1 From the London (1734 5) edition of Smith's Pocket Companion, pp. 43 5. [236]

In the State, a MASON is to behave as a peaceable and dutiful Subject, conforming chearfully to the Government under which he lives.

He is to pay a due Deference to his Superiors, and from his Inferiors he is rather to receive Honour with some Reluctance, than to extort it.

He is to be a Man of Benevolence and Charity, not sitting down contented while his Fellow Creatures, but much more his Brethren, are in Want, when it is in his Power (without prejudicing himself or Family) to relieve them.

In the Lodge, he is to behave with all due Decorum, lest the Beauty and Harmony thereof should be disturbed or broke.

He is to be obedient to the Master and presiding Officers, and to apply himself closely to the Business of MASONRY, that he may sooner become a Proficient therein, both for his own Credit and for that of the Lodge.

He is not to neglect his own necessary Avocations for the sake of MASONRY, nor to involve himself in Quarrels with those who through Ignorance may speak evil of, or ridicule it.

He is to be a Lover of the Arts and Sciences, and to take all Opportunities of improving himself therein.

If he recommends a Friend to be made a MASON, he must vouch him to be such as he really believes will conform to the aforesaid Duties, lest by his Misconduct at any time the Lodge should pass under some evil Imputations. Nothing can prove more shocking to all faithful MASONS, than to see any of their Brethren profane or break through the sacred Rules of their Order, and such as can do it they wish had never been admitted.

3. **The Installation Ceremony** - A Postscript to Anderson's Constitutions of 1723 contains the manner of constituting a new lodge, including the installation of the new Master. [237]

So far as we are aware, it is the earliest known reference to the manner of doing these things, and it is possible that this double ceremony, which is described in some detail, represents a considerable elaboration of any previous practice, but we do not believe that it was entirely new in 1722, a point to which we refer in some detail on pages 254-55 below. As it is the only official account we possess of a Masonic ceremony as practised in the year 1722, we print it in full,(1) with italics and capitals as in the original.

A New Lodge, for avoiding many Irregularities, should be solemnly constituted by the Grand Master, with his Deputy and Wardens; or in the Grand Master's Absence, the Deputy shall act for his Worship, and shall chuse some Master of a Lodge to assist him; or in case the Deputy is absent, the Grand Master shall call forth some Master of a Lodge to act as Deputy pro tempore.

The Candidates, or the new Master and Wardens, being yet among the Fellow Craft, the GRAND MASTER shall ask his Deputy if he has examin'd them, and finds the Candidate Master well skill'd in the noble Science and the royal Art, and duly instructed in our Mysteries, Esc.

And the Deputy, answering in the affirmative, he shall (by the Grand Master's Order) take the Candidate from among his Fellows, and present him to the Grand Master; saying, Right Worshipful GRAND MASTER, the Brethren here desire to be form'd into a new Lodge; and I present this my worthy Brother to be their Master, whom I know to be of good Morals and great Skill, true and trusty, and a Lover of the whole Fraternity, wheresoever dispers'd over the Face of the Earth.

Then the GRAND MASTER, placing the Candidate on his left Hand, having ask'd and obtain'd the unanimous Consent of all the Brethren, shall say; I constitute and form these good Brethren into a new Lodge, and appoint you the Master of it, not doubting of your Capacity and Care to preserve the Cement of the LODGE &c. with some other Expressions that are proper and usual on that Occasion, but not proper to be written.

1 From Anderson's Constitutions of 1723, pp. 71 2. [238]

Upon this the Deputy shall rehearse the Charges of a Master, and the GRAND MASTER Shall ask the Candidate, saying, Do you submit to these Charges, as Masters have done in all ages? And the CANDIDATE signifying his cordial Submission thereunto, the Grand Master shall, by certain significant Ceremonies and ancient Usages, install him, and present him with the Constitutions, the Lodge Book, and the Instruments of his Office, not all together, but one after another; and after each of them, the Grand Master, or his Deputy, shall rehearse the short and pithy Charge that is suitable to the thing presented.

After this, the Members of this new Lodge, bowing all together to the Grand Master, shall return his Worship Thanks, and immediately do their Homage to their new Master, and signify their Promise of Subjection and Obedience to him by the usual Congratulation.

The Deputy and the Grand Wardens, and any other Brethren present, that are not Members of this new Lodge, shall next congratulate the new Master; and he shall return his becoming Acknowledgements to the GRAND MASTER first, and to the rest in their Order.

Then the Grand Master desires the new Master to enter immediately upon the Exercise of his Office, in chusing his Wardens: And the NEW MASTER calling forth two Fellow Craft, presents them to the Grand Master for his Approbation, and to the new Lodge for their Consent. And that being granted,

The senior or junior GRAND WARDEN, or some Brother for him, shall rehearse the Charges of Wardens; and the Candidates being solemnly ask'd by the new Master, shall signify their Submission thereunto.

Upon which the NEW MASTER, presenting them with the Instruments of their Office, shall, in due Form, install them in their proper Places; and the Brethren of that new Lodge shall signify their Obedience to the new Wardens by the usual Congratulation.

This account of the installation ceremony contains the first allusion known to us to "the Charges of a Master" (possibly the prototype either of the summary of the Antient Charges [239] read by the Secretary to the Master Elect prior to his installation, or of what is now called the Address to the Master), to the "Charges of Wardens" (possibly the prototype of what is now called the Address to the Wardens), and to "the short and pithy charge that is suitable to the thing presented", which was to accompany the presentation of each of the instruments of office (the forerunner, possibly, of the practice of moralising upon the working tools on occasions when they are presented to candidates). It is not impossible that this practice had been introduced by accepted masons at an earlier date, as the use of tools by freemasons is referred to by Randle Holme III in a well known passage in his *Accademie of Armory*, published in 1688.<sup>(1)</sup> It must be noted, however, that the explanations given there of the tools, e.g., shovel, hand hammer, chisel, pick and punch, belong to operative masonry. A much earlier reference to freemasons' tools occurs in the London Freemasons' Ordinances of 1509 10,<sup>(2)</sup> where it is provided that the Warden of the Freemasons shall have the power of search "with these ordenauncez that is to say plumme rule compass levell and squyer". As the Ordinances were concerned with the proper length, breadth and thickness of freestone, marblestone and hardstone, the presumption is that the tools were to be used, not figuratively, but operatively to test the stones in question. From Thomas Deloney, *The Gentle Craft*, London, 1597, we learn that the Brotherhood of Shoemakers required its journeymen members to be able to reckon up their tools in rhyme. It is, therefore, always conceivable that the operative masons at the end of the sixteenth century, or even earlier, had a somewhat similar custom, and that the practice was adopted and elaborated by the accepted masons. The fact that the expression used is "the short and pithy charge", and not "a short and pithy charge", seems to imply that the charge referred to was already in existence at the time when Anderson wrote.

**4. Elimination of Horseplay** - The general impression left on the mind of the reader of Anderson's description of the installation ceremony is that of the dignity of the proceedings, something so very different from the ceremonies depicted in the early Masonic catechisms, with their "thousand ridiculous postures and grimaces" to frighten the candidate. The effort to eliminate horseplay and to maintain the dignity of the proceedings was probably one of the changes introduced by the recently formed Grand Lodge.

1 E.M.P., 34.

2 Letter Book M., fo. 168, printed in Williams, A.Q.C., xlv, 142 4. [240]

**5. Drawing the Lodge** - A newspaper advertisement of 1726, quoted by Henry Sadler,<sup>(1)</sup> refers to the "innovations" lately "introduced by the Doctor [probably Desaguliers] and some other of the Moderns", which, to judge by the advertisement, apparently consisted mainly of replacing the old method of drawing the lodge with chalk and charcoal by a system of tape, nails and moveable letters, this in its turn being superseded by the floor cloth and the tracing board. We do not think that the term "Moderns" in the advertisement should be regarded as equivalent to the term "Modern Masons" as now commonly understood by Masonic students. The use of the terms "Modern" and "Antient" to describe the members of the two Grand Lodges which united in 1813 to form the United Grand Lodge of England did not arise until after the establishment of the so called Atholl or Antient Grand Lodge in 1751. In our opinion, the term "the Moderns" in the advertisement probably denotes the same thing as the term "the New Masons" in the Masonic catechism, *A Dialogue between Simon and Philip*,<sup>(2)</sup> of approximately the same date as the advertisement.<sup>(3)</sup> In the contemporary notes to the Dialogue it is explained that "the Lodge ... is commonly made with white tape nail'd to the Floor ... the letters E for East and S for South etc. are made of thin Silver or Tin very thin".

1 E.M.P., 193

2 The original was missing when we printed the catechism in 1943 in E.M.C., 125 fo1g., from the typescript copy made from the original about 1930 by Bro. Fred. T. Cramphorn. We reprinted the document in A.Q.C., lvii, the text in this case being corrected from photographs of the original, discovered in G.L. Library in October 1945.

3 In our commentary on the Dialogue, as communicated to the Q.C. Lodge in 1944, we presumed (i) that "the Desaguliers regulation" referred to the action regarding irregular masons taken by G.L. at the suggestion of Dr. Desaguliers on 28 August 1730 (Q.C.A., x, 128); and (ii) that the terms "Old Mason" and "New Mason" were equivalent to the terms "Antient Mason" and "Modern Mason", as commonly understood by Masonic students, which presumptions caused us to regard circa 1740 as the probable date. The collective effect of the comments on our paper (printed in A.Q.C., lvii) has caused us to abandon our presumptions. The difficulties, to which Bro. Lepper particularly drew attention, raised by these presumptions would be decreased if the expressions in question were given a general meaning, instead of the somewhat technical sense which we attached to them. We agree that "the Desaguliers regulation" might well be understood as the written and unwritten rules and practices followed by G.L. and by the private lodges under it, and that the terms "Old Mason" and "New Mason" probably meant operative mason and accepted mason respectively. Desaguliers was very active in G.L., as its minutes show. References to "the Doctor" in the Letter of Verus Commodus, 1725 (E.M.P., 138) and in the antediluvian masonry advertisement of 1726 mentioned above, show that people outside G.L. regarded him as closely associated with its work. Thus there is no difficulty in taking "the Desaguliers regulation" to mean the Grand Lodge regime in general. If the expressions "Desaguliers regulation", "Old Masons" and "New Masons" be interpreted in the way

now suggested, the version of the Dialogue with its contemporary notes might have been set down in writing about 1725, and not about 1740. The earlier dating would not only get over the difficulty of lack of reference to the changes introduced into Masonry about 1730, but would also be more in keeping with the character of the catechism. The relatively simple test questions and answers, as we pointed out in our paper in A.Q.C., lvii, have more affinity with the earlier than with the later pre 1731 catechisms. [241]

The notes seem to imply that, at the time they were written, "the old masons" made their lodges by the same methods, but with this very important difference: that the form of the "old" lodges was cruciform (alluding possibly to the Christian basis of Masonry), whereas the form of "the new lodges under the Desaguliers regulation" was rectangular (referring possibly to their non sectarian character). It seems likely, everything considered, that the terms "Old Mason" and "New Mason" in the Dialogue meant operative mason and accepted mason respectively. It is probable that the word "new" is used in the same sense in a well known entry in the Dublin tripos of 1688: (1) "From Sir Warren, for being Freemasonized the new way, five shillings."

1 Chetwode Crawley's introductory chapter to Sadler's Masonic Reprints and Revelations, p. xxi. [242]

**6. The Opening Prayer** - An early example of the modification of Masonic ritual is afforded by the Opening Prayer or Prayer of Admission, which has come down to us in four distinct forms, two definitely of operative origin and two probably of accepted or speculative origin.

(i) At Aberdeen a Prayer before the Meeting is embodied in the "Mason Charter" of the Lodge, or so called Aberdeen MS. That document is a version of the Grand Lodge family of the MS. Constitutions of Masonry, and the prayer is what we have described on page 81 above as "an invocation to the Trinity". Such a prayer or invocation to the Trinity occurs in all the Scottish versions of the MS. Constitutions, though mostly with no special heading. In Dumfries No. 4 MS., however, it is described as "A prayer of admittance". (1) We print the prayer as it appears in the Aberdeen MS. of 1670: (2)

A Prayer before the Meeting:

The Might of the father of heaven with the wisdom of the glorious son, and the grace and goodness of the holy ghost thes three persones in one god head, be with ws in our begininge and give us grace to governe our selves that wee may live in that bless which shall never have an ending: Amen:

As very similarly worded invocations to the Trinity occur in those versions of the MS. Constitutions which belong to the Lodges of Aitchison's Haven, Dumfries, Kilwinning, Melrose and Stirling, we are probably justified in assuming that such an invocation to the Trinity was commonly used in Scottish lodges, and that it was the prototype of later versions of the Opening Prayer. It is quite possible, however, that in some lodges this set form of prayer was either supplemented or replaced by extempore prayers.

(ii) A minute of the Lodge of Edinburgh of 27 December 1708 (3) shows that the Lodge was opened with prayer, but whether extempore or according to a fixed form is not known. In view of the close association of the lodge and

1 E.M.C., 46.

2 Miller, 66.

3 Lyon, 141. [243]

the Incorporation of Masons in Edinburgh, it is quite likely that the lodge used the opening and closing prayers of the Incorporation, of which versions bearing the date 1669 have survived, and are printed here: (1)

A Prayer to be said at the Conveening

O Lord, we most humblie beseech thee to be present with us in mercy, and to bless our meeting and haill exercise which wee now have in hand. O Lord, enlighten our understandings, and direct our hearts and myndes so with thy good Spirit, that wee may frame all our purposes and conclusions to the glory of thy name and the welfare of our Brethren; and therefore, O Lord, let no partiall respect, neither of ffeed nor favour, draw us out of the right way. But grant that we may ever so frame all our purposes and conclusions as they may tend to the glory of thy name and the welfare of our Brethren. Grant these things, O Lord, unto us, and what else thou sees more necessarie for us, and that only for the love of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, our alone Lord and Saviour: To whom, with thee, O Father, and the blessed Spirit of Grace, wee render all praise, honour, and glorie, for ever and ever. Amen.

A Prayer to be said before Dismissing

O Lord, wee most humbly acknowledge thy goodnesse in meeting with us together at this tyme, to conferr upon a present condition of this world. O Lord, make us also study heaven and heavenly myndedness, that we may get our souls for a prey. And, Lord, be with us and accompany us the rest of this day, now and for ever, Amen.

(iii) In **Pennell's Constitutions, published in Dublin in 1730**, there appears "A Prayer to be said at the opening of a Lodge, or making of a Brother" (2) which is not in Anderson's Constitutions of 1723, although in other respects that book was closely followed by Pennell:

1 Lyon, 142.

2 Pennell's Constitutions, 52 (Caem. Hib., 1). [244]

A Prayer to be said at the opening of a Lodge, or making of a Brother

**Most Holy and Glorious Lord God, thou great Architect of Heaven and Earth, who art the Giver of all good Gifts and Graces; and hast promis'd that where two or three are gathered together in thy Name, thou wilt be in the Midst of them; in thy Name we assemble and meet together, most humbly beseeching thee to bless us in all our Undertakings, to give**



us thy Holy Spirit, to enlighten our Minds with Wisdom and Understanding, that we may know, and serve thee aright, that all our Doings may tend to thy Glory, and the Salvation of our Souls.

And we beseech thee, O Lord God, to bless this our present undertaking and grant that this, our new (To be added when any Man is made.) Brother, may dedicate his Life to thy Service, and be a true and faithful Brother among us endue him with divine Wisdom that he may, with the Secrets of Masonry, be able to unfold the Mysteries of Godliness and Christianity.

This we humbly beg in the Name and for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

As Pennell's Constitutions was the Book of Constitutions of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Ireland, it is reasonable to assume that this version of the Opening Prayer was used by accepted masons in that country, and probably owed its origin to accepted masons, either Irish or English, a problem discussed on page 257 below. It will be noted that the Pennell prayer, like the Aberdeen and Edinburgh versions, is definitely Trinitarian in character.

(iv) There have survived from about the same period three undated variants of a prayer of admission, two in manuscript and one in print, (1) none of which contains a specific reference to the Trinity, and none of which bears a date. The experts at the Bodleian say that it is not possible to date the prayers closely: "the date circa 1730 would fit the script and type; but they might equally well be a good deal later." The wording of the prayers shows that they were to be used not at the opening of a lodge but at the admission of a new brother. This is clearly stated in the heading of the first variant which we print here: [246]

1 Bodl. Rawl. MS. C. 136, pp. 3, 4, 5. This volume, lettered, when it was rebound about 1850, "Collections relating to Freemasonry", was calendared in 1898 by Chetwode Crawley in A.Q.C., xi. It is a collection of very miscellaneous items of Masonic interest, such as lodge summonses, lodge by laws, lists of members of lodges, a list of lodges, a version of the Old Charges, newspaper cuttings, broadsides and pamphlets. Some of the printed items are inserted between the pages; the other items are either written in the album or pasted in. The first Prayer is written on page 3, the second on page 4 and the top of page 5; the printed Prayer, which appears to have been cut out of a book or pamphlet, is pasted on to the lower part of page 5. The dated items range from 1724 to 1746, but mostly relate to the 1730s. They are not arranged in chronological order, so that no deduction regarding the date of the prayers can be made from the fact that they are entered at the beginning of the album, which was presumably compiled after all, or most, of the collection had been made. On the death of Dr. Richard Rawlinson in 1755, the volume formed one of his great collection of books and manuscripts which passed by bequest to the Bodleian, but the album was certainly not compiled by him, but by a Bro. Thomas Towle, who like Rawlinson was a member, about 1732, of the Lodge at the Bricklayers' Arms in the Barbican (Q.C.A., x, 180 1). Towle, who was a glazier by trade (A.Q.C., xi, 25), was known to Rawlinson as a modest collector; in sending Towle an extract of Masonic interest in January 1738/9 he writes (in a letter preserved in the album, fo. 175) "as you preserve all relating to the Subject of Masonry". Further, the version of the Old Charges in the album is headed "copied from an old MS. in the possession of Dr. Rawlinson", so that Rawlinson may well have contributed other items to the collection, but how it ultimately came into his possession is unknown. Towle was a very humble prototype of the great Masonic collector bibliophiles of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, such as the late Bro. E. T. Carson of Cincinnati (whose collection is now in the Library of the G.L. of Massachusetts), the late Bro. George Taylor of Worcester (whose collection forms the nucleus of the Library of the Prov. G.L. of Worcestershire), the late Bro. J. T. Thorp of Leicester (most of whose books now adorn the Library of the Freemasons' Hall, Leicester), Bro. Wallace Heaton of London (the cream of whose collection now reposes in the Library of Grand Lodge), and Bro. N. B. Spencer of Auckland, N.Z., who was still adding to his collection as recently as November 1945, when he acquired various items at the sale in London of the Wallace Heaton Collection. We have reprinted several items from Towle's collection in our E.M.C. and E.M.P. [245]

A Prayer Supposed to have been Used at the Introduction of a new Member into the Society of Free Masons, found among the Papers of a Brother deceas'd.

O Most Glorious God, who art the Chief Architect of the Universe, Grant unto us thy Servants, who have already Enter'd our selves into this most Noble and Antient Fraternity, that we may be solid and Thoughtful, and always have a Remembrance of those Sacred Things we have taken upon us, and Endeavour to instruct and inform each other in secrecy, that nothing may be unlawfully or illegally obtain'd, and that this thy Servant who is now going to be a Mason, may be a worthy member, Grant O God that he and all of us may live as men Considering the Great End for which we were Created, and do thou give us Wisdom to contrive and Guide us in all our doings, strength to Support [us] in all Difficulties, and beauty to adorn those Heavenly mansions where thine Honour dwells, grant O Lord that we may agree together in Brotherly love and Charity towards one another, and in all our dealings do justice to all men, Love Mercy and walk Humbly with thee our God, so that at last we may be made members of an Heavenly Jerusalem: now unto the King Eternal Immortal, Invisible, the only Wise God be render'd and asscrib'd all Honour, Glory, Might, Majesty, and Dominion, Thanksgiving and Praise world without end. Amen.

The second variant, written at the back of the first, is simply headed "Another". The third, or printed, variant is headed "A Prayer to be used at the Admission of every new Brother". To this printed heading is added in manuscript by William Dudley. (1) The last part of the heading of the first manuscript variant, "found among the papers of a Brother deceas'd", forcibly reminds us of the somewhat similar phrases which occur in the covering letter to A

1 Very possibly the "Mr William Dudley" who, according to the MS. List of Lodges, 1731 2, was a member of the lodge at the "Three Kings in Spittle Fields removed to the Sash and Cocoe Tree in Upper Moore: ffields", of which "Mr Richard Rawlinson" was also a member (Q.C.A. x, 164). [247]

Mason's Examination, 1723;(1) in the preface to The Grand Mystery of Free Masons Discover'd, 1724;(2) and in the introductory letter to The Mystery of Free Masonry, 1730.(3) In view, however, of the unimpeachable Masonic antecedents of the other three forms of prayer quoted above, and of the undoubted Masonic associations of Rawlinson and Towle, we are loath to regard the Rawlinson form of prayer with the suspicion we accord to printed catechisms claiming to be a compilation from the papers of a deceased brother. Consequently, we are disposed to regard it as an authentic Masonic prayer, dating possibly from the second quarter of the eighteenth century.

1 "... which ... was left in Writing by a Fellow Mason lately deceas'd" (E.M.C., 66).

2 "This Piece having been found in the Custody of a Free Mason, who died suddenly" (ibid., 70)

3 "... the Death of a Brother, who ... had seem'd to have committed to writing the Form and Manner of his Admission . . . has given us a light into the mysterious Part of Entrance" (ibid., 103) [248]

7. **The Trigradal System** - Another matter in which Pennell did not follow Anderson raises an even more interesting point, namely, the introduction of the trigradal system. We defer consideration of this problem to the next chapter, but may note here the possibility that a change had been introduced between the publication of Anderson's Constitutions early in 1723 and of Pennell's Constitutions of 1730, and the further possibility that the change originated in Ireland, two matters to which we refer more fully below.

#### THE PLACE OF THE CHANGES

Having endeavoured to show that England and Ireland offered greater opportunities for a fundamental transformation of operative into speculative masonry than did Scotland, we have now to examine more closely the available information about what we may call the Masonic atmosphere of those countries. It may be possible thereby to decide what kind of changes, if any, might be expected to have been made in either country. For this analysis we rely largely on the pioneer work of Henry Sadler, (1) and Chetwode Crawley.(2)

1 Masonic Facts and Fictions, passim.

2 Caem. Hib., especially i, 18. [249]

In England accepted or speculative masonry from 1717 onwards appears to have developed as a relatively wellto do, if not aristocratic institution, attaching apparently in many cases more weight to sociability and to the banquet than to the working of ceremonies. The stress laid on the Annual Feast in the General Regulations of Grand Lodge, as printed in Anderson's Constitutions of 1723, and the allegation of Lawrence Dermott in the second edition of Ahiman Rezon (1764) that "about the year 1717 some joyous companions who had passed the degree of a craft (though very rusty) resolved to form a Lodge for themselves", may perhaps be regarded as indications of these tendencies. It must not be overlooked, however, that Dermott wrote some forty years after the occurrence of events in London which had taken place before he was born in Ireland; further, it must be remembered that as the great protagonist of the so called "Antient" Grand Lodge established in 1751, he was admittedly hostile to the premier or so called "Modern" Grand Lodge established in 1717. If this summing up is correct, private lodges under the premier Grand Lodge were probably in some cases little more than convivial societies in the early days after 1717. Two indications of their neglect of the ceremonies are afforded by the previously mentioned difficulty of finding sufficient members to perform the ceremony when Dr. William Stukeley was the candidate in 1721, and by the undoubted fact that lodges under the premier Grand Lodge ceased from an early date to work the ceremony of installing the Master, if they ever had worked it. We feel, however, that it is not safe to generalise too much from the somewhat scanty evidence available. Just as some of the early lodges apparently indulged in horseplay whilst others did not, as suggested on page 209 above, so some may have indulged in the intemperance and excess against which they were warned in the charge to new admitted Brethren, whilst others pursued the study of architecture and geometry, as indicated on pages 137-38 above. Two of the changes enumerated above, namely, the attempt to suppress horseplay and the substitution of the use of tape and nails for the old practice of drawing the lodge with chalk and charcoal, would seem to agree with what is known of the development of freemasonry under the premier Grand Lodge. The presence of an aristocratic and well to do element would tend to develop a certain formality and dignity in the proceedings; the use of chalk and charcoal to draw the lodge and its subsequent removal by the youngest entered apprentice with mop and pail would not be suitable any more when the floor of the lodge room was no longer bare stone, but covered with carpet, as was probably the case with the more well to do lodges.

In Ireland, in the early eighteenth century, freemasonry was apparently a less aristocratic institution than in England, more importance being attached to the work and to the universality of the craft, and less to refreshment(1) and to the social standing of the members. Possibly it would be true to say that there was a greater intellectual interest in masonry in Ireland than under the premier Grand Lodge in England. It is certainly noteworthy that of the two supposed or actual replies to the first and second editions of The Grand Mystery of Free Masons Discover'd, London, 1724 and 1725,(2) the one by way of skit (A Letter from the Grand Mistress of the Female FreeMasons, Dublin, 1724 (3), and the other by way of defence (The Free Masons Vindication, ? 1725 (4), the first certainly, and the second probably, emanated from Ireland. All the available evidence in the eighteenth century points to Irish masons, and to masons in England belonging to lodges under the Grand Lodge of the Antients, with its close association with Irish masonry, being firm upholders of old established Masonic practices and strong opponents of changes and innovations in the ritual.

1 If any reliance can be placed upon a statement in d Letter from the Grand Mistress of the Female Free Masons, Dublin, 1724, that one evening the Brethren of the lodge at Omagh in Ulster got so drunk that they could not complete an initiation ceremony, then masonry in Ireland was not entirely free from intemperance and excess (E.M.C., 181).

2 Ibid., 70. The second, or 1725, edition had a slightly different title: The Grand Mystery of the Free Masons Discover'd (reprinted in Gould, iii, 475)

3 E.M.C., 179. Whether this really was a reply to The Grand Mystery we discuss on p. 316 below.

4 E.M.C., 134 [250]

In the light of what we have called the Masonic atmosphere in England and Ireland in the early eighteenth century, we have to ask ourselves where the various changes, which can be traced in the evolution of operative into speculative masonry, originated. Of the seven changes reviewed above, three, so far as one can tell, would appear to be definitely associated with the premier Grand Lodge in London, namely, the revision of the 'History' and Charges, as printed in Anderson's Constitutions of 1723; the substitution of tape and nails for the old method of drawing the lodge with chalk and charcoal, and the endeavour to enhance the dignity of the proceedings by the elimination of horseplay. It may be noted that none of these changes had to do directly with ritual, in the working of which the premier Grand Lodge and its subordinate lodges were apparently somewhat slack, and to the preservation of which unaltered the Irish craft attached such great importance. The other four changes or elaborations very definitely concerned ritual. Nevertheless, they were undoubtedly accepted by the Grand Lodge of Ireland, and in three of the four cases there are even some grounds for thinking that they may possibly have originated there.

The fact that "A Prayer to be said at the opening of a Lodge, or making of a Brother", reprinted on page 245 above, was first printed, so far as is known, in **John Pennell's Constitutions of 1730**, certainly suggests that it originated in Ireland. The charge to new admitted Brethren, so far as we are aware, was first printed in Smith's London edition of *A Pocket Companion for Free-Masons*,<sup>(1)</sup> which was published either in December 1734, or quite early in 1735.

1 On the problems raised by this book, see Cecil Adams, "The Freemasons' Pocket Companions of the Eighteenth Century", *A.Q.C.*, xlv (1932), 166-72; Lionel Vibert, "Smith's Pocket Companion of 1735", *Misc. Lat.*, xi (1926-7), 81-4, 97-104; Chetwode Crawley, "The Pocket Companion, 1734-5," *Caem. Hib.*, ii (1896), 7-21 [251]

The Irish edition of the following May, however, contains an Approbation by the Grand Lodge of Ireland which immediately follows the charge in question, and has by some been considered as applying to it more especially. On the other hand, Smith may have secured the approbation as a counterblast to the resolution passed by the Grand Lodge of England on 24 February 1734/5, discountenancing the purchase of his book on the ground that it pirated a considerable part of Anderson's *Constitutions of 1723*.<sup>(1)</sup> In that case it has no special bearing on the origin of the charge.

Internal evidence seems to point to "W. Smith" being an Irish mason resident in England, a conclusion which would fit in with Anderson's cautious or suspicious phrase, "said to be a Mason".<sup>(2)</sup> The paragraphs on Irish building, added by him to the summary of Anderson's 'History' of Masonry, suggest that Smith was either an Irishman or an Englishman with Irish connections<sup>(3)</sup>.

1 *Q.C.A.*, x, 244.

2 *Ibid.*

3 Our colleague, Douglas Hamer, offers the following note. The discussion concerning William Smith has usually involved the theory that he was either an Irishman or an Englishman: he may, however, have been an Irishman living in London, or an Englishman who had spent many years in Ireland and had become 'pro Irish'. The latter might be either an English merchant or an English official, and but for the destruction of the Four Courts in Dublin early in the 1920s, with the loss of the great collection of Irish historical documents, it might have been possible to find a merchant or an official of that name.

There is, however, other evidence. In 1732 the following work was published in London: *B Description of the City of Dublin ... By a Citizen of LONDON, who liv'd twenty Years in Ireland ... and has travelled most Parts of the Kingdom, and is lately returned from DUBLIN.* London, Printed, and Sold by the Author, 1732. Our colleague suggests that the anonymous writer was the William Smith who three years later published the *Pocket Companion* (London, 1734-5; Dublin, 1735). The latter had evident Irish associations, and a knowledge of new buildings in Ireland: the author of the *Description* also was interested in new buildings in the Irish capital. He mentions the churches, the Cathedral of St. Patrick, the Collegiate Church of Christ, the new buildings in the city and suburbs, the new Parliament House, Trinity College, the Custom House, the Hospitals, the Four Courts, the King's Inns, the mayoral palace, and the Tholsel. His aim is not Masonic, but to present Dublin as a metropolis as civilised as London. It is interesting that he, like Smith, should describe the Tholsel as 'stately'. Though the list of buildings is not identical with Smith's, here is a man who satisfies the condition of the *Pocket Companion*, that a man with a first hand knowledge of Ireland, and especially of Dublin, is required. Such a condition is also satisfied by the association of William Smith with an Irish printer working in London in 1735, and by the probable, though not proven, identification of the author of the *Pocket Companion* with the William Smith who belonged to a London lodge which contained a number of Irishmen. If William Smith was the same as the author of the *Description of Dublin*, and had been a freemason in Dublin before his return to London, then three further conditions are satisfied: (a) that he was acquainted at first hand with the 'Ladies' Stanza' as sung in Ireland, (b) that, as an Irish freemason, and perhaps Master of a Dublin lodge, he had some 'right' to approach Grand Lodge of Ireland for an Approbation for the Dublin edition of the *Pocket Companion*, and (c) that he knew just how to modify his London edition of the *Pocket Companion* to suit Irish freemasonry, and that he knew that a special Irish edition would be accepted by Irish freemasons. He also recognised the divergences between English and Irish Masonic practices and theories, and seems to have remained faithful to the latter. [252] was, a man well acquainted with Dublin. The admonition against innovations contained in his preface: "I ... must here beg leave to exhort the Brotherhood that avoiding all innovations they adhere strictly to the antient Practices of the Order . . .", seems to indicate that he was one of those masons, the forerunners of the Brethren, mainly Irish, who formed the Grand Lodge of the Antients in 1751, who disapproved of the changes introduced by the premier Grand Lodge about 1730 as a protection against irregular masons. The fact that the *Pocket Companion* was first published in London, and that it was based on Anderson's *Constitutions of 1723*, and not on Pennell's *Constitutions of 1730*, seems to point to the editor being resident in England, if not to London. To recognise that "W. Smith" was probably an Irish mason resident in England, is not the same thing as suggesting that the charge is of Irish origin, still less as admitting that Smith was possibly the writer of the charge. In our opinion it probably took form gradually, as indicated on page 256 below; in any case, in view of Smith's admonition directed against innovations, it would seem highly unlikely that he was himself responsible for introducing an innovation by formulating the charge.

The earliest known certain reference to three distinct [253] grades of mason, each with its own secrets, is found in the Trinity College, Dublin, MS. of 1711,<sup>(1)</sup> a document forming part of the collected papers of Sir Thomas Molyneux (1661-1733), a famous Dublin doctor and scientist, and in the opinion (2) of Dr. J. Gilbert Smyly, Librarian of Trinity College, Dublin, possibly written by Molyneux. Thus, until rebutting evidence can be produced, there would appear to be a prima facie case for attributing the development of the trigradal system to Irish masons. The remaining innovation, as compared with operative practice the ceremony of constituting a new lodge and of installing the master of a lodge was first described in Anderson's *Constitutions of 1723*, so that it is not unreasonable to attribute the origin of the new ceremony to masons associated with the premier Grand Lodge, if not to Anderson himself.

1 *E.M.C.*, 63.

2 In a letter of 23 November 1937 to Douglas Knoop. [254]

<http://www.libraryireland.com/biography/SirThomasMolyneux.php>

**Sir Thomas Molyneux**, Bart., State Physician, younger brother of William, was born in Cook-street, Dublin, 14 Apr 1661. He was educated in Trinity College, and took out his degree of Bachelor of Medicine, and afterwards visited London, Oxford,

Cambridge, and the Continental schools, to extend his knowledge. An interesting correspondence between him and his brother William, containing an account of his travels, is to be found in the *University Magazine*, vol. xviii. At Leyden he became acquainted with Locke and many persons of note. During the War of 1689-'91 he resided in Chester with his brother. They returned immediately after the battle of the Boyne. Thenceforward for some time Dr. Molyneux resided in the house with his father, and engaged in practice. His progress must have been rapid, for in 1693 he was enabled to purchase an estate worth £100 per annum, and in 1711 he founded the Molyneux Blind Asylum in Peter-street, Dublin, at a cost of £2,310 for the house and £2,341 for furniture.

In 1715 he was appointed State Physician, afterwards Surgeon-General to the army; and in 1730 a baronetcy was conferred upon him by Lord Carteret. He died in 1733, aged 72. He was a Fellow of the Royal Society in London, and a constant contributor to the proceedings of the Dublin Philosophical Society, being especially interested in antiquarian and zoological enquiries relating to Ireland. "He was allowed by all the learned world who knew him, to be a man of uncommon skill and ability in his profession.... It was not without good cause that John Locke chose him as his friend and adviser." The present Baronet is the 7th. An interesting reference to his fine statue by Roubiliac, standing in Armagh Cathedral, will be found in *Notes and Queries*, 3rd Series.

Sources: 54. Burke, Sir Bernard: Peerage and Baronetage.  
116. Dublin University Magazine (18). Dublin, 1833-'77.

He married twice, first to Margaret, a relation of the first Earl of Wicklow, with issue of a son and daughter. The son must have died as a child. He married in 1694 Catherine Howard, daughter of Ralph Howard, at that time Regius Professor of Physic at Trinity College. They had four sons and eight daughters, of whom Daniel and Capel both succeeded to the baronetcy.

**William Molyneux**, brother of Thomas above, patriot and philosopher, was born 17 Apr 1656, in New-row, Dublin. [His father, Samuel Molyneux, was a master gunner, and an officer in the Irish Exchequer. He had distinguished himself in the War of 1641-'52, and although offered the recordership of Dublin, clung with fondness to his own profession, making experiments in gunnery and the construction of cannon, at private butts of his own.] William entered Trinity College in April 1671, and having taken out his bachelor's degree, proceeded to London and entered at the Middle Temple in 1675.

While diligently studying law, his attention was also turned towards scientific pursuits. He returned to Dublin in 1678, and soon afterwards married Lucy Domville, daughter of the Irish Attorney-General. In 1683 was formed the Dublin Philosophical Association, the forerunner of the Royal Dublin Society and the Royal Irish Academy. Sir William Petty was president, and Molyneux acted as secretary. Its first meetings were held in a house on Cork-hill. He now became acquainted with some of the leading personages of the time, and through the Duke of Ormond's influence, was in 1684 appointed Engineer and Surveyor of the King's Buildings and Works. Next year he was elected a fellow of the Royal Society.

Sent by the Government to survey fortresses on the coast of Flanders, he passed on to Holland and France, and in Paris became acquainted with Borelli, the famous mathematician. In 1686, soon after his return, he published an account of the telescope dial invented by himself. The following year he had the pleasure of reading advanced sheets of Newton's *Principia*, sent him by Halley. During the War of 1689-91 he resided at Chester, where he lost his wife. He there occupied himself in the composition of a work on dioptrics. On his return he was appointed one of the Commissioners of Forfeited Estates, with a salary of £500. But the task was suited neither to his tastes nor his feelings; he was indifferent about money, and soon resigned a laborious and highly invidious and unpopular office.

About this time he speaks of his well-selected library of 1,000 volumes, and of being visited by the Duke of Wurtemberg, General De Ginkell, and Scravamoer. Both in 1692 and 1695 he was elected member for the University of Dublin, which had conferred upon him the degree of LL.D. The laws passed for the destruction of Irish trade and commerce induced Molyneux to write the work that has since rendered his name conspicuous in Irish history: *The Case of Ireland, being bound by Acts of Parliament made in England, Stated*, published, with a dedication to the King, early in 1698. It maintained that Ireland and England were separate and independent kingdoms under the same sovereign — that Ireland was annexed, not conquered — "If the religion, lives, liberties, fortunes, and estates of the clergy, nobility, and gentry of Ireland may be disposed of without their privacy or consent, what benefit have they of any laws, liberties, or privileges granted unto them by the crown of England? I am loth to give their condition an hard name; but I have no other notion of slavery but being bound by a law to which I do not consent... We have heard great outcries, and deservedly, on breaking the Edict of Nantes, and other stipulations; how far the breaking our constitution, which has been of five hundred years' standing, exceeds that, I leave the world to judge."

The work created a great sensation, was stigmatized as seditious and libellous by the English Parliament, and ordered to be burned by the common hangman. Shortly after its publication, he went to England to visit his friend and correspondent, John Locke. The fatigues of the journey brought on a severe attack of illness, and he died on the 11th October 1698, soon after reaching home, aged 42. He was buried in St. Audoen's Church, Dublin. Some interesting notes regarding his monument will be found in *Notes and Queries*, 3rd and 4th Series.

Locke, writing to his brother, said: "I have lost in your brother not only an ingenious and learned acquaintance, that all the world esteemed, but an intimate and sincere friend, whom I truly loved, and by whom I was truly loved." The highest tribute ever paid to his patriotism and genius was by Grattan, in his great speech in the Irish Parliament, on 16th April 1782. Harris's *Ware* enumerates fifteen works, 4 chiefly philosophical, from his pen. The most important, besides his *Case of Ireland*, were *Six Metaphysical Meditations* (Lond. and Dub. 1680), *Sciothericum Telesopicum* (Dub. 1686), and *Dioptrica Nova* (Lond. 1692). [His son Samuel, born in 1689, was secretary to George II. when Prince of Wales, and was afterwards Lord of the Admiralty and a member of the Privy-Council. He died childless in 1727.

Sources: 110. Dublin, History of the City: John T. Gilbert. 3 vols. Dublin, 1854-'9.  
196. Irishmen, Lives of Illustrious and Distinguished, Rev. James Wills, D.D. 6 vols. or 12 parts. Dublin, 1840-'7.

245. Moore, Thomas, *Memoirs: Henry R. Montgomery*. London, 1865.  
 Moore, Thomas, see Nos. 132, 307.  
 339. Ware, Sir James, *Works: Walter Harris*. 2 vols. Dublin, 1764.

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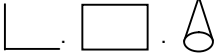
The Trinity College, Dublin, MS., 1711  
 Ref. E.M.C., page 69-70

This short catechism, which is in the Trinity College, Dublin, Library [T.C.D. MS. I, 4,18], is contained in one of the volumes of collected papers of **Sir Thomas Molyneux (1661-1733)**, a famous Dublin doctor and scientist. It is written on one side of a single folio sheet, about 11 ¾" x 7 ½", and was originally folded into four, about 3" x 7 ½"; across the top of the folded document was endorsed 'Free Masonry Feb : 1711.' To judge from the photostat made in 1937, the endorsement is in a different hand from the body of the text, the 'M,' the 's,' and the 'y' of 'Masonry' in the endorsement differing considerably from the same letters in the body of the text. The MS. Has been put away in a place of safety, and our observation, based on the Photostat, cannot at present be checked by reference to the original. Nor can it be ascertained, by comparison with other documents, whether whether the body of the text, or the endorsement, was written by Sir Thomas himself. If either was, we surmise that it was the endorsement. The catechism is the earliest known MS. To recognize three classes of mason, each with its own secrets [but makes no attempt to divide the working into three]. It was printed in *Trans. Lodge of Research No. CC, Dublin, 1924*. Our transcript is made from a Photostat.



Under no less a penalty

Question. W <sup>i</sup> manner of man are you?	Answer. I am a mason.
Q. How shal I know that?	A. By y <sup>e</sup> signs, tokens, & point of my entry.
Q. Where were you entred?	A. In a full & perfect lodge.
Q. W <sup>i</sup> makes a full, & perfect lodge?	A. three masters, 3 fellow craftsmen, & 3 enterprentices.
Q. How stands y <sup>r</sup> lodge?	A. East, & west like y <sup>e</sup> temple of Jerusalem.
Q. Where sits y <sup>e</sup> master?	A. In a chair of bone in y <sup>e</sup> middle of a four square pavement.
Q. W <sup>i</sup> sits he there for?	A. To observe the suns rising to see to set his men to work.
Q. How high is y <sup>r</sup> lodge?	A. As high as y <sup>e</sup> stars inches, & feet innumerable.
Q. Where do you keep the key of y <sup>e</sup> lodge?	A. In a box of bone within a foot, & ½ of y <sup>e</sup> lodge door.
Q. How far is it from y <sup>e</sup> cable to ye anchor?	A. As far as from y <sup>e</sup> tongue to y <sup>e</sup> heart.
Q. Which way blows y <sup>e</sup> wind?	A. East & west & out of y <sup>e</sup> south.

The common sign is with your right hand rub y<sup>r</sup> mouth then cross y<sup>r</sup> throat & lay on ye left brea[st.] The Masters sign is back bone, the word matchpin. The fellow craftsman's signis knuckles, & sinues ye word Jachquin [poss. Jackquin]. The Enterprentice's sign is sinues, the word Boaz or its hollow. Squeese the Master by y<sup>e</sup> back bone, put your knee between his, & say Matchpin. Squeese the fellow craftsman in knuckles, & sinues & say Jachquin [poss. Jackquin] [.] squeese the enterprentice in sinues, & say boaz, or its hollow. To know in y<sup>e</sup> dark if there be a mason in Company, Say y<sup>e</sup> day was made for seeing, & ye night for hearing. If you are amongst the fraternity, & they drink to you, turn y<sup>e</sup> top of the glass down and if after two or three times so doing, if you say y<sup>e</sup> squire is lean, or throw a tobacco stopper to one of them & say change me yt groat, & they will pay your club. To Send for a brother the signes are these  . if you say y<sup>e</sup> lodge in untiled,

that is as much as to say there is some one in y<sup>e</sup> Company you suspect for a brother. To bring a man from a scaffold, or any other place, hold y<sup>r</sup> heels together, and y<sup>r</sup> toes open, & look up, then with y<sup>r</sup> hand, or Cane make a right angle. this as all other Motions must be done very carelessly.

[*Endorsement*] Free Masonry Feb: 1711.

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Thus we are left with the somewhat surprising tentative conclusion that Irish masons, who abhorred innovations, were possibly responsible for three important changes in ritual and that English masons associated with the premier Grand Lodge, who apparently strove after the curtailment and simplification of Masonic ceremonies, were possibly responsible for the construction of a new and elaborate ceremony. These tentative conclusions appear quite incompatible with the estimates formed by Henry Sadler and Chetwode Crawley of the character of English and Irish masonry in the eighteenth century, and it becomes necessary to examine, as a single problem, when and where the changes were first made.

THE DATES AND PLACES OF THE CHANGES

The Installation Ceremony Anderson states in his Constitutions of 1723 that the "Manner of Constituting a New Lodge", including the installation of the Master, is "according to the ancient usages of masons", a statement which has been received with considerable doubt.

Vibert, for example, describes it as "the inevitable Andersonian tag, which is here even more inappropriate than usual".(1) In justice to Anderson, it must be remembered that the Lodge of Kilwinning had undoubtedly constituted daughter lodges in the last quarter of the seventeenth century,(2) so that it is always possible that there existed "ancient usages" associated with such proceedings. It is, however, to the ceremony of installing the master of a lodge that we wish to refer more particularly, since new masters must have been more frequent than new lodges. If Anderson and his friends, such as Dr. Desaguliers and George Payne, had been

responsible for constructing the ceremony, it would seem unlikely that they would allow it promptly to be dropped out of use by the subordinate lodges under the premier Grand Lodge. But it would seem even more unlikely that Lawrence Dermott and the Grand Lodge of the Antients, who prided themselves on their adherence to old established usages, would have been so enthusiastic about a ceremony invented by those whom they scornfully designated as the Moderns. They doubtless adopted it because it was approved by the Grand Lodge of Ireland, which, having been established within a couple of years of the publication of Anderson's Constitutions of 1723, would hardly have been misled by Anderson's claim for the "ancient usages", unless there were some grounds for believing that the ceremony had existed before Anderson's time. Anderson's expression, "according to the ancient usages of masons", need not necessarily imply "derived from the operatives"; the practice might have originated amongst seventeenth century accepted masons and yet not unfairly be described as "according to ancient usages".

**The Charge to new admitted Brethren** - The fairly close relationship between this charge, as printed in the Pocket Companion, and Anderson's "Charges of a Free Mason", has already been mentioned. If this charge was based on Anderson, it could not have been prepared until after 1723, and in that case Irish masons must have accepted it, notwithstanding its very recent origin. There is, however, nothing definitely to show that this charge was based on Anderson; it seems to us equally probable that Anderson had the charge, or the prototype out of which the charge developed, before him, when he was preparing his "Charges of a Free Mason". In support of this view, attention may be drawn to the fact that the charge to new admitted Brethren begins, "You are now admitted by the unanimous consent of our Lodge, a Fellow of our Antient and Honourable Society", a statement which would doubtless be true of a seventeenth century lodge of accepted masons, who, so far as one can tell, would appear to have admitted candidates as fellows straightaway, but which would not correspond with the practice implied by Anderson or Pennell, according to which candidates on their first admission were received as [entered] apprentices.

1 A.Q.C., xxxvi, 62.

2 E.g., Lodge Canongate Kilwinning was constituted by a resolution of the Lodge of Kilwinning dated 20 December 1677 (Lyon, 108). [255]

Among the versions of the MS. Constitutions of Masonry used by accepted masons were almost certainly some belonging to the Roberts family, such as Grand Lodge No. 2 MS., Harleian MS. 1942 (both of the second half of the seventeenth century) and the Roberts MS. Original,<sup>(1)</sup> embodying as they do the New Articles or Additional Orders and an oath of secrecy, applying exclusively to accepted or speculative masons, as mentioned on page 82 above. These particular versions also contain an Apprentice Charge of a very definitely operative character, intended for a young handicraft apprentice. Inasmuch as a version of the MS. Constitutions was read to non operative or accepted masons on their admission, the obvious thing to do would appear to be either to omit the Apprentice Charge (found in only about 20 per cent of the surviving versions of the MS. Constitutions), or to address to the candidate for accepted masonry some observations of a more appropriate character, based on such of the Charges General and Singular as seemed most applicable. We venture to suggest that the "Charge to new admitted Brethren" may owe its origin to the gradual crystallising of what were originally extempore remarks addressed to candidates for accepted masonry, in place of the operative Apprentice Charge.

1 The document from which the version printed in The Post Man in August 1722, and the pamphlet printed by Roberts later in the same year, were copied (E.M.P., 71). [256]

**The Opening Prayer and Prayer of Admittance** - Although the Pennell form of opening prayer and prayer of admittance has not been traced earlier than 1730, it does not necessarily follow that it had only recently been composed when printed by John Pennell in his Constitutions. It may well have existed when Anderson was preparing his Constitutions, but as a Scottish divine he may have been unwilling to print a set form of prayer. In view of its definitely trinitarian character, it would seem probable that this prayer was composed at a time when Masonry still had a trinitarian basis. Once Anderson's first charge, "Concerning God and Religion", which replaced Christianity by deism, had appeared in 1723, and Pennell's revision of that charge, which made Masonry entirely non sectarian, had been prepared, it is difficult to understand how the Pennell form of opening prayer could have been written as part of the ritual. As deist influence had probably made itself felt in English freemasonry before the end of the seventeenth century, as explained in Chapter VIII above, we think it quite possible that the craft owes the Pennell form of prayer to an accepted mason, or to accepted masons, of the late seventeenth century, a period when, according to Dr. Robert Plot, the custom of admitting men to the Society of Freemasonry was spread more or less over the nation.

The date of the composition of the Rawlinson form of prayer is also uncertain. Though the copies preserved in the Bodleian among the Rawlinson MSS. were probably not written or printed until the 1730s or even later, the original might have taken shape at any time after the publication in 1723 of Anderson's first charge "Concerning God and Religion". Theoretically it might have been composed at an earlier date, if deist influence had already made itself sufficiently felt before the end of the seventeenth century, as suggested above. However that may be, we are disposed to regard the form of prayer preserved among the Rawlinson MSS. as definitely of later origin than the [257] trinitarian form of prayer printed in Pennell's Constitutions of 1730.

**The Trigradal System** - This problem, in its various aspects, we discuss in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE TRIGRADAL SYSTEM Operative Practice in Scotland

THE fact that, according to the Edinburgh Register House MS., there were in Scotland in 1696 two different ceremonies, if they may be so described, the one applying to entered apprentices and the other to fellow crafts or master masons, was pointed out on pages 210 12 above; so also were our grounds for thinking that entered apprentices and fellow crafts had distinct sets of secrets as early as 1598. With the evidence now available, this all seems perfectly obvious, but it was not at all so fifty or sixty years ago. Masonic students in the 1880s and 1890s were divided into two schools, the one, represented by Murray Lyon and Hughan, supporting a one degree theory, and the other, represented by Speth and Gould, supporting a two degree theory.<sup>(1)</sup> Not even Speth's school, however, appears to have contemplated the possibility, referred to on page 280 below, that in addition to the esoteric knowledge

imparted to (i) entered apprentices and (ii) fellow crafts or master masons, there were other secrets among Scottish operative masons which were communicated either to masters of lodges or to "masters" who were members of the incorporation associated with their trade.

Modification of Operative Ceremonies for Non operatives. Scottish lodge records of the seventeenth century contain numerous examples of non operative members, as was mentioned on page 144 above. From the Laws and Statutes of the Lodge of Aberdeen, 1670,(2) we learn that the admission fees were higher for a "gentleman mason" than for a "handicraft apprentice", but there is nothing to suggest a difference in the ceremonies of admission. The first clause of the fifth Statute provided that, among other payments, a "gentleman mason" had to pay for a dinner when he was admitted an entered apprentice, and for another dinner when he received his fellowship.

1 Any reader who wishes to study this bygone battle of the degrees should read Hughan's paper, "The Three Degrees of Freemasonry" (A.Q.C., x [1897, 127]), which, notwithstanding its title, upholds the one degree theory, and Speth's rejoinder, "The Two Degrees Theory" (A.Q.C., xi [1898, 47]).

2 Miller, 57 65. [259]

Clearly, therefore, he was not admitted to both grades on the same occasion, though probably he would not have to wait three years before he became a fellow, as a "handicraft apprentice" might, according to the second clause of the same Statute. In 1716 the Lodge of Dunblane resolved that non operatives should no longer (as had undoubtedly happened in 1699 and 1700 (1) be entered and passed on the same occasion.(2) In 1727 we find two instances of non operative entered apprentices, who had been admitted elsewhere, being received as fellow crafts in the Lodge of Edinburgh,(3) but the usual arrangement at Edinburgh in the seventeenth century was undoubtedly for a non operative to be admitted as entered apprentice and fellow craft on one and the same occasion.(4) This was also the case in the 1670s at Kilwinning (5) and Aitchison's Haven, (6) in 1687 at Dumfries,(7) and in 1702 at Haughfoot.(8) Thus the practice of telescoping the two operative ceremonies into one for the benefit of non operatives appears to have been fairly general in Scotland in the seventeenth century.

To judge by the early printed catechisms of masonry, this Scottish practice was frequently followed in England, so far as accepted masons were concerned. The only printed catechism before Prichard's *Masonry Dissected* to suggest more than one ceremony is *The Mystery of FreeMasonry*, 1730:

1 Begemann, *Freimaurerei in Schottland*, 475. During the summer of 1912, Begemann, as he explains in the Preface to this volume, visited Scotland and was given facilities for examining many lodge records.

2 *Ibid.*, 476.

5 *Ibid.*, 209.

8 *Ibid.*, 548. [260]

3 *Ibid.*, 300.

6 *Ibid.*, 327, 329.

4 *Ibid.*, 271.

7 *Ibid.*, 534.

Q. How old are you?

A. Under 5, or under 7, which you will.

N.B. When you are first made a Mason, you are only entered Apprentice; and till you are made a Master, or, as they call it, pass'd the Master's Part, you are only an enter'd Apprentice, and consequently must answer under 7 ; for if you say above, they will expect the Master's Word and Signs.

Note, There is not one Mason in an Hundred that will be at the Expence to pass the Master's Part, except it be for Interest.(1)

1 E.M.C., 105. [261]

The practice of telescoping, however, was apparently by no means universal. The manuscript catechisms of masonry, as distinct from most of the early printed versions, suggest either two, or three, ceremonies. The Edinburgh Register House MS. and the Chetwode Crawley MS., with their previously mentioned two ceremonies, may be left aside as definitely operative. Sloane MS. 3329 of circa 1700 defines a just and perfect lodge as consisting of two "interprentices", two "fellow crafts" and two masters, but does not appear to contemplate more than two sets of secrets. This we also leave aside, as it appears to be a collection of notes on the Mason Word, rather than a mason's aide memoire. Dumfries No. 4 MS. of circa 1710, having apparently belonged throughout its existence to a Scottish operative lodge, would appear to throw no light on English accepted masonry. There remains the Trinity College, Dublin, MS. of 1711, very possibly of non operative or accepted origin, and the Graham MS. of 1726 with a definitely accepted or speculative character. Both these manuscripts suggest three ceremonies.

#### THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE TRIGRADAL SYSTEM

In those cases in the early eighteenth century where the esoteric knowledge imparted to accepted masons, instead of being telescoped into one ceremony, was divided between either two or three ceremonies, the surviving indications suggest that the division was not always the same. The working envisaged in the Graham MS. with its threefold scheme of (i) entering, (ii) passing and (iii) raising or conforming candidates by three several lodges,(1) appears to have followed fairly closely what was possibly Scottish operative practice in its fullest development, namely, (i) the admission of an entered apprentice, (ii) the admission of a fellow craft or master mason, and (iii) the admission of a "master" (a problem discussed in the next chapter). The printed catechism, *The Whole Institutions of Free Masons Opened*, published in Dublin in 1725, with which the Graham MS. has considerable affinity, appears to contemplate three sets of secrets, which very possibly correspond with those of the Graham.

Your first word is Jachin and Boaz is the answer to it, and grip at the forefinger Joint. Your 2d word is Magboe and Boe is the answer to it, and Grip at the Wrist. Your 3d Word is Gibboram, Esimberel is the Answer and Grip at the Elbow, and Grip at the Rein of the Back.(2)

A similar close correspondence to what was possibly Scottish operative practice in its fullest development appears to have been observed by Grand Lodge in 1723: Anderson's Constitutions of that year apparently recognised three categories of masons, each, so far as one can tell, with its own esoteric knowledge, namely, (i) apprentices, (ii) fellow crafts, and (iii) the master of the lodge.(3)

1 E.M.C., 84 5.

2 Ibid., 82.

3 The passage from Anderson's Fourth Charge relating to entered apprentices and fellow crafts is quoted on page 266 below; the reference to "certain significant ceremonies and ancient usages" by which the master of a lodge was installed occurs in the Postscript to the Constitutions, which contains the "Manner of Constituting a New Lodge", and is reprinted on page 238 above. [262]

On the other hand, the Trinity College, Dublin, MS. of 1711, with its secrets divided between (i) entered apprentices, (ii) fellow craftsmen, and (iii) masters, and Prichard's Masonry Dissected of 1730, which describes (i) the Entered Prentice Degree, (ii) the "Fellow Craft's Degree", and (iii) the Master's Degree, differ from the Graham MS. and Anderson's Constitutions, in that the esoteric knowledge shared between their three classes, corresponds to that imparted to two classes in Scotland, namely, (i) the entered apprentice, and (ii) the fellow craft or master mason. As the Trinity College, Dublin, MS. of 1711 is the earliest document known to us to divide the mason's esoteric knowledge into three, we quote the passage in full:

... The Masters sign is back bone, the word matchpin. The fellow craftsman's sign is knuckles, & sinues ye word Jachquin. The Enterprentice's sign is sinues, the word Boaz or its hollow. Squeeze the Master by ye back bone, put your knee between his, & say Matchpin. Squeeze the fellow craftsman in knuckles, & sinues & say Jachquin . Squees the enterprentice in sinues, & say boaz, or its hollow.(1)

1 E.M.C., 64. [263]

The Trinity College, Dublin, MS. appears to have been a mason's aide memoire, and the passage quoted gives the impression of being an attempt to set down in writing information which had previously been transmitted orally, possibly through a long chain of accepted masons. If that impression is correct, the division of the esoteric knowledge into three may be considerably older than 1711, though it must be emphasised that such division does not necessarily imply three ceremonies: there is no reason why three sets of secrets should not have been communicated to an accepted mason on his admission, just as gentleman masons in Scotland were admitted entered apprentice and fellow craft on one and the same occasion.

It still remains to be considered whether this threefold division of the masons' esoteric knowledge, introduced by accepted masons in place of the twofold division practised by operative masons in Scotland, originated in Ireland at some date prior to 1711, or whether it had taken its rise among accepted masons in England at a still earlier date. It may have been transmitted from England to Ireland, either at the first introduction of accepted masonry into Dublin prior to 1688, or, assuming that it had died out about that time, at its re introduction before 1711. There is no definite evidence, but unless the Irish accepted masons of circa 1700 were very different in their attitude towards Masonic customs from their successors of circa 1725, it seems to us very unlikely that they originated the threefold division of the esoteric knowledge. We are inclined, therefore, to think that it was introduced into Ireland from England. To judge by Plot, the 1680s were an active period in accepted masonry, whereas no such indications exist regarding the first decade of the eighteenth century. The chances, therefore, would seem to be in favour of the threefold division of Masonic secrets having originated among English accepted masons in the late seventeenth, rather than in the early eighteenth century.

Another early reference to what would appear to be the trigradal system in masonry occurs in 14 Mason's Examination of 1723, in the form of doggerel verse, which may well be older. In the stanza which we reprint here a distinction appears to be made between (i) an entered mason, (ii) a fellow, and (iii) a master mason:

An enter'd Mason I have been,  
Boaz and Jachin I have seen;  
A Fellow I was sworn most rare,  
And know the Astler, Diamond, and Square:  
I know the Master's Part full well,  
As honest Maughbin will you tell.(l)

The recently discovered Wilkinson MS., representing a working of circa 1727, portrays only one ceremony but implies the existence of three grades. Its last question runs When you are Asked how Old you are:

When an Apprentice under Seven; fellow Craft under 14; When a Master, three times Seven.(2)

1 E.M.C., 66 7.

2 Knoop, Jones and Hamer, The Wilkiwon Manuscript, p. 35. [264]

The earliest reference known to us to three ceremonies, as distinct from three sets of secrets, occurs in the Fundamental Constitution and Orders of the Philo Musicae et Architecturae Societas Apollini (mentioned in another connection on page 187 above), from which we learn that certain persons were (i) made masons, (ii) passed fellow crafts, and (iii) passed masters in London in the early months of 1725.(1)

A passage in Francis Drake's Speech to the Grand Lodge of All England at York on 27 December 1726,(2) referring to the great antiquity of the art of building or masonry, is commonly quoted in support of the existence of the three degrees of entered prentice, fellow craft, and master mason in 1726, but we are not convinced that the passage in question, with its peculiar punctuation "that three Parts in four of the whole Earth might then be divided into E P F C & M M" necessarily bears this interpretation. The expression "Masters and Fellow Craft" occurs in General Regulation XIII of Anderson's Constitutions of 1723, as mentioned in Chapter IX, where we suggested provisionally, without stating our reasons, that the terms "Masters" and "Fellow Craft" in that Regulation were alternative or convertible terms, and not as at present names of two distinct degrees. It may be that in December 1726 Drake used the expression "F C & M M" to represent two categories of mason. In that event, his remark is important not so



much because it proves the existence of the trigradal system in 1726, as because it shows the early adoption of that system by a lodge not under the jurisdiction of the premier Grand Lodge in London, a problem to which we refer again on page 270 below. Our reasons for thinking that the expression "Masters and Fellow Craft" in Regulation XIII refers to one and not to two categories of mason is given in some detail towards the end of this chapter.

1 In a few cases, e.g., those of Charles Cotton and Papillon Ball, it is possible to trace the several dates on which a candidate received each of his three steps (Q.C.A., ix, 7, 8, 41).  
2 E.M.P., 203. [265]

In the previous chapter we quoted an opening prayer, printed in Pennell's Constitutions of 1730, but not found in Anderson's Constitutions of 1723, which in most respects Pennell followed closely. We have now to draw attention to another matter in which Pennell did not follow Anderson, namely, a point relating to the introduction of the trigradal system. The difference in the wording of the first paragraph of the Fourth Charge of a Free Mason, which is headed "Of Masters, Wardens, Fellows and Apprentices", is very suggestive. We print the relevant passages from Anderson and Pennell side by side:

#### ANDERSON'S CONSTITUTIONS OF 1723

. . . that no Master should take an Apprentice, unless he has sufficient Employment for him, and unless he be a perfect Youth, having no Maim or Defect in his Body, that may render him incapable of learning the Art, of serving his Master's Lord, and of being made a Brother, and then a Fellow Craft in due time, even after he has served such a Term of Years as the Custom of the Country directs; and that he should be descended of honest Parents; that so, when otherwise qualify'd, he may arrive to the Honour of being the WARDEN, and then the Master of the Lodge:

#### PENNELLS CONSTITUTIONS OF 1730

... And no Mater should take an Apprentice unless he has sufficient Employment for him, and unless he be a perfect Youth, having no Maim or Defect in his Body, that may render him incapable of learning the Art, of serving his Lord, of being made a Brother, and a Fellow Craft, and in due time a Master;  
  
and when qualify'd  
he may arrive to the Honor of being Warden, then  
Master of a Lodge ...

But for the comma, Pennell's phrase, "made a Brother, and a Fellow Craft," might imply that "a Brother" and "a Fellow Craft" were one and the same thing. That possible interpretation, however, is eliminated by the succeeding paragraph of the charge which reads: "No Brother can be a Master, Warden or Deacon of a Lodge, until he has pass'd the Part of a Fellow Craft": which clearly shows that Pennell regarded "a Brother" and "a Fellow Craft" as two distinct categories. It follows, therefore, that Pennell had three degrees in mind, namely, those of (i) Brother [i.e., Entered Apprentice], (ii) "Fellow Craft", and (iii) Master, whilst Anderson refers only to the two degrees of Scottish operative practice, viz., (i) Brother [i.e., Entered Apprentice], and (ii) "Fellow Craft". This suggests that a change had been introduced between the publication of Anderson's Constitutions of 1723 and Pennell's edition of 1730. There is nothing to show what esoteric knowledge was communicated to candidates in any [266] particular ceremony. A few weeks later, in October 1730, there was published Prichard's *Masonry Dissected*,<sup>(1)</sup> in which the working was divided into three degrees.

The trigradal system of the Trinity College, Dublin, MS. and of Prichard's *Masonry Dissected* was obtained (a) by treating fellow crafts and master masons as two distinct classes; (b) by dividing among accepted entered apprentices and accepted fellow crafts the esoteric knowledge imparted to Scottish operative entered apprentices; and (c) by giving to accepted master masons the esoteric knowledge imparted to Scottish operative fellow crafts. By this device, three classes of accepted mason were established. These corresponded, though only very superficially, to the three classes of mason recognised in the MS. Constitutions of Masonry, or Old Charges, namely, apprentices, fellows, and masters. The "Apprentice" of the Old Charges corresponded to the "handicraft apprentice" in Scotland, who at the end of his period of servitude was admitted an "entered apprentice", a category unknown in English operative masonry. The "master" of the Old Charges was either the master mason who organised the building operations on behalf of the Crown, the Church, or other employer (described in the documents as the "lord"), where the direct labour system was used, or the mason contractor who erected a building for a proprietor. He corresponded more or less to the "master" in Scotland, that is, the master tradesman, member of an Incorporation of Masons, and not to the master mason or fellow craft of a lodge. The fellow craft, or "fellow of the craft" to give him his full description as it appears in the Schaw Statutes of 1598, was a member of the Fellowship or Craft of Masons; and in the words of the Edinburgh Register House MS., the person "admitted a member of fellowship" was made acquainted with "the five points of the fellowship". So far as we can tell, the "fellow" of the Old Charges was also a full member of the masons' fraternity.

1 The first edition of Prichard was advertised for sale on 20 October 1730 (E.M.C., 107); Pennell's Constitutions, according to Chetwode Crawley (Caem. Hib., i, 5), was published at some date between the beginning of June and the end of August 1730. [267]

Similarly, in the seventeenth century, the highest rank to which an accepted mason could attain was apparently that of "fellow". Referring to the lodge held at Masons' Hall, London, on 11 March 1682, Elias Ashmole wrote in his Diary: "I was the Senior Fellow among them (it being 35 years since I was admitted). There were present besides my self the Fellows after named . . ." (1) It would seem that, in some cases at least, the same was true in 1723, for according to Anderson's Constitutions of that year, the offices of master and warden were filled from "among the fellow craft".<sup>(2)</sup> According to Anderson's Constitutions of 1738, the new master, in choosing his wardens, called forth "two Fellow Crafts (Master Masons)",<sup>(3)</sup> which suggests that even as late as 1738 no very clear distinction between fellow craft and master mason was as yet recognised by Grand Lodge.

1 E.M.P., 41.

2 Constitutions of 1723, 71.

3 Constitution of 1738, 151. [268]

The trigradal system pictured in the Trinity College, Dublin, MS. and in Prichard's *Masonry Dissected* undoubtedly reduced the status of the fellow craft or fellow by giving him merely a part of the esoteric knowledge which originally belonged to an entered apprentice, and by restricting to the master mason the esoteric knowledge originally given in Scotland to the fellow craft. To this extent it was a departure from early operative practice, a departure which became firmly established and has continued in Masonry

ever since. The division of the original entered apprentice ceremony among entered apprentices and fellow crafts has apparently not been the same in the workings of all Masonic jurisdictions. This suggests that the final division in this country was not made until after accepted masonry had spread from Great Britain to Ireland and other parts. Thus, what at the outset was an innovation, has become in course of time a landmark. On the other hand, the innovation apparently introduced by some accepted masons in some localities, of telescoping into one the two Scottish operative ceremonies of entered apprentice and fellow craft or master mason, plus any ceremony associated with admitting a "master", was given up when the new trigradal system was firmly established. So far as we can tell, that system was introduced only slowly. In various lodges after 1730 two degrees appear to have been given on one occasion; in some cases the new first and second degrees were conferred together;(1) in others the new second and third degrees.(2) In practice, therefore, if not in theory, a system of two ceremonies prevailed in some lodges long after the trigradal system had been introduced elsewhere.

#### REASONS FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE TRIGRADAL SYSTEM

It seems beyond question that the three accepted or speculative degrees of (i) entered apprentice, (ii) fellow craft, and (iii) master mason were made out of the two operative degrees of (i) entered apprentice, and (ii) fellow craft or master mason, by some such process as we have described; but **the date of the division is uncertain. The reason why three ceremonies were established in place of two is unknown.** We are disposed to think that the change was gradual, developing out of the earlier division of Masonic secrets into three sets. In any case, there is very little evidence of the adoption of the trigradal system before 1730 and even after that date the process was slow. Reference, however, must be made to a theory enunciated by Lionel Vibert in his Prestonian Lecture for 1925,(3) in which he suggested that the prototype of the present second degree was established by private lodges between 1723 and 1725, technically to enable them to give their members the rank of fellow craft. This, he suggested, would qualify them for the Chair, and would make it possible to circumvent General Regulation XIII, approved or re approved by Grand Lodge in 1723, and repealed in November 1725, that apprentices must be admitted "masters and fellow craft" only in Grand Lodge.

1 E.g., at the Dundee Lodge, No. 9, at Wapping, as early as 1748 and as late as 1848 (Heiron, A.Q.C., xxxix, 119). In the minutes (1732 5) of the Old Lodge at Lincoln, No. 73, only two degrees, Apprentice and Master, are met with (Dixon, A.Q.C., iv, 98).

2 E.g., at the Dundee Lodge in 1765 (Heiron, op. cit., 130), and in Lodge No. 111 in 1737 (Songhurst, A.Q.C., xxxix, 141).

3 The Development of the Trigradal System. [269]

This theory, however, met with little acceptance when placed before the Quatuor Coronati Lodge in 1926.(1) It assumes that the change was deliberately introduced by private lodges under the premier Grand Lodge. The possibility that three degrees were recognised by the York Grand Lodge in 1726 and the probability that three degrees existed in Ireland in 1730, to judge by passages in Drake's speech and Pennell's Constitutions referred to above, makes us unwilling to accept the view that it was an innovation promoted by the 'regular' lodges in London. These themselves constituted Grand Lodge and would have had no difficulty in repealing, before November 1725, the restriction imposed by Regulation XIII had it proved irksome. Other possibilities are that the creation of three degrees out of the material previously associated with two was due either (i) to a desire to have three classes of speculative mason to correspond with the three classes of operative mason mentioned in the Old Charges, even though the correspondence was only very superficial, or (ii) to failure to recognise the equivalence of the terms "master" and "fellow craft" in Regulation XIII of 1723: "Apprentices must be admitted Masters and Fellow Craft only here [in Grand Lodge], unless by a Dispensation."

1 "The Second Degree: A Theory", A.Q.C., xxxix, 208 530 [270]

The interpretation of this clause now calls for consideration. There would seem to be three possibilities:

(i) That the expression "Master" in the Regulation is equivalent to "Master Mason", and that "Master Mason" and "Fellow Craft" were convertible terms, as was undoubtedly the case in Scottish operative practice, as can clearly be seen from the Edinburgh Register House and Chetwode Crawley MSS.

(ii) That the expression "Master" in the Regulation was equivalent to "Master Mason", and that "Master Mason" represented a grade distinct from and higher than that of "Fellow Craft", as would appear undoubtedly to have been the case in Pennell's Fourth Charge printed on page 266 above.

(iii) That the expression "Master" in the Regulation is equivalent to "Master of the Lodge". Thus in the Edinburgh Register House MS. and in the Chetwode Crawley MS. the term "Master" is sometimes used in the sense of "Master of the Lodge" and sometimes in the sense of "Master Mason" [= Fellow Craft].

In several of the General Regulations of 1723 (e.g., VII, X and XII), Anderson undoubtedly uses the term "Master" to denote "Master of a Lodge", though in each case the expression used is "Master of a particular lodge", or "Master and Wardens". On the other hand, in the Postscript containing the "Manner of Constituting a New Lodge", the expressions "Master" and "New Master" occur more than once by themselves, but from the context it is clear that the "Master of the New Lodge" is to be understood. Whilst it is conceivable that in Regulation XIII the expression "Masters and Fellow Craft" means "Masters of particular lodges and Fellow Craft", we think it very unlikely. In the very next paragraph of the same Regulation there occurs the expression "The Master or the Wardens of each particular lodge", and we feel that had the expression "Masters and Fellow Craft" been intended to relate to Masters of Lodges, the expression "Masters of particular lodges" would have been used.

In attempting to decide between the three above mentioned interpretations, we feel that the resolution of Grand Lodge of 27 November 1725 repealing the Regulation should be read in conjunction with the original regulation:

A Motion being made that Such part of the 13th Article of the Gen. Regulations relating to the Making of Mare only at a Quarterly Communication, may be repealed, And that the Mare of Each Lodge with the Consent of his Wardens, And the Majority of the Brethren being Mar. may make Mar. at their Discretion. Agreed, Nem. Con.(1)

1 Q.C.A., x, 64. [271]

As the term "Mare" in the motion is clearly distinguished from "the May of Each Lodge", we are satisfied that Old Regulation XIII did not relate to "Masters of a Lodge". Further, as there is no mention of "Fellow Craft" in the Motion, it seems reasonable to assume that the term "Fellow Craft" was embraced in the term "Master", the two terms being convertible, as suggested in our first interpretation. Any doubt that the grade of "Fellow Craft" was included in the repeal is set at rest by the form in which the amended Regulation, made according to Anderson on 22 November 1725, appears in the Constitutions of 1738: "The Master of a Lodge with his Wardens and a competent Number of the Lodge assembled in due Form, can make Masters and Fellows at Discretion." In holding that "Master" and "Fellow Craft" were convertible terms in Regulation XIII of 1723, we reach the same conclusion as Vibert, though we agree with some of his critics that the expression "Masters or Fellow Craft" would have been less ambiguous than the expression "Masters and Fellow Craft", which is actually used. Anderson's composition, however, was never characterised by clarity of style, so that it is hardly surprising that he should use a somewhat ambiguous expression.

However uncertain the cause or causes leading to the establishment of the trigradal system, there can be little doubt that its adoption received a great stimulus from the rapid sale of successive editions of Prichard's *Masonry Dissected*, first published in October 1730.<sup>(1)</sup>

1 According to Thorp, *Bibliography of Masonic Catechisms and Exposures*, some 30 numbered editions of the pamphlet printed in England, and 8 printed in Scotland, have been traced. Of these, 7 English editions had appeared by 1737, and 20 English and 8 Scottish editions by 1762. [272]

#### CHANGES IN MASONIC WORKING

The arguments brought forward in this and the previous chapter may be summed up by saying that when the English and Irish evidence relating to masonry in the early eighteenth century is coordinated, the balance of probability appears to favour the view that various important changes in Masonic working, which can be definitely traced only in the third decade of the eighteenth century, had actually originated at an earlier period, very possibly in the 1680s, or even somewhat earlier. In support of this tentative conclusion, attention may be drawn to the fact that as early as the 1680s the operative masons' practice of relieving brethren in distress had apparently been adopted by accepted masons in England and Ireland, as Aubrey's statement of 1686 and the reference in the Dublin tripods of 1688 indicate. The only reference to charity contained in the MS. Constitutions of Masonry, other than in certain late seventeenth or eighteenth century Scottish versions, is the charge to receive and cherish strange masons, either by setting them to work for at least a fortnight, or by refreshing them with money to the next lodge. On the other hand, the statutes of the Lodge of Aberdeen in 1670 contained rules relating to the Mason Box. If relief had been adopted as one of the grand principles of accepted masonry by 1686, as would almost appear to have been the case, it would seem not unlikely that some kind of address on charity had been introduced into the ceremony of acceptance by that date to supplement any reference to charity which might be contained in lodge by laws. If this surmise is correct, yet another change had been introduced into Masonic working by circa 1680. That considerable modifications of the operative working had probably been introduced by accepted masons by 1686 is also suggested by Aubrey's statement that "the manner of their Adoption is very formal", a statement which would not apply very aptly to the somewhat crude customs and phrases associated in Scotland in the seventeenth century with the imparting of the Mason Word. Thus taking everything into account, there would seem fairly good grounds for thinking that some of the important changes introduced by accepted masons into the old operative ceremonies were already in existence in the last decades of the seventeenth century, thirty years or more before the date commonly accepted. [273]

### CHAPTER XIII

#### THE ROYAL ARCH

##### Declaration of the Act of Union of 1813

BY the Act of Union of 1813 between the premier Grand Lodge (or that of the "Moderns"), established in 1717, and the Atholl Grand Lodge (or that of the "Antients"), established in 1751, it was declared "**that pure Antient Masonry consists of three degrees and no more, viz., those of the Entered Apprentice, the Fellow Craft, and the Master Mason, including the Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch**".<sup>(1)</sup> This declaration, which bears so closely on the origin of Masonic degrees in general, and of the Royal Arch in particular, was treated by most Masonic historians of the nineteenth century, at least so far as the Royal Arch was concerned, not as a statement of an historical fact, but as a mythical claim, not to be taken seriously. They maintained that the Royal Arch originated in the 1740s,<sup>(2)</sup> which would place it outside the scope of this book. A new and more analytical approach to the problem has been made by twentieth century Masonic students, and we feel that it is necessary to examine the problem here.

1 The passage, quoted from the Preliminary Declaration of the General Laws and Regulations of the 1940 edition of the Book of Constitutions, is part of the second article of the Articles of Union which are printed in full in Hughan, *Memorials of the Masonic Union*, 27. [a digital copy of which is in the archives of the OMDHS, or which may be read in full at [http://books.google.com/books?id=qU0BAAAQAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=qbs\\_ge\\_summary\\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=qU0BAAAQAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=qbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false)]

2 Findel, *History of Freemasonry*, 184; Hughan, *Origin of the English Rite* (2nd ed.), 79, 80; Gould, *History of Freemasonry*, ii, 457-8; Sadler, *Masonic Facts and Fictions*, 165. [274]

In order to make clear the nature of the problem with which we are concerned, attention may first be drawn to the implications of the Declaration. If by "pure Antient Masonry" was meant a system of masonry in which the three distinct degrees of entered apprentice, fellow craft, and master mason can be shown to have existed, even in their most rudimentary forms, it would probably not be safe to fix a date earlier than 1723 or 1725 for the origin of "pure Antient Masonry". In that case, the premier Grand Lodge and its subordinate lodges, during the first six or eight years of its existence, did not practise pure Antient Masonry. If, on the other hand, by "pure Antient Masonry" was meant the system of masonry practised by the premier Grand Lodge at its foundation in 1717, and by its subordinate lodges at that time, then it is highly probable that it did not consist of three distinct degrees. The only way to reconcile the two statements

(i) that the three degrees of entered apprentice, fellow craft, and master mason are all part of pure Antient Masonry, and

(ii) that Grand Lodge and its subordinate lodges have practised pure Antient Masonry from the foundation of Grand Lodge in 1717, is apparently to ignore the first, second, and third degree ceremonies as they exist today, and to think instead of the esoteric knowledge and legends out of which these three ceremonies were built up. The probability is that much of the esoteric knowledge now imparted in the three ceremonies was communicated to accepted masons in 1717, as also at an earlier date, either in one ceremony or in two. Once that is recognised, the claim of the Royal Arch to be part of pure Antient Masonry must be examined in a new light. It is necessary not to look for a ceremony such as is now worked, or even to trace the use of the name "Royal Arch" in 1717, but to consider whether the principal esoteric knowledge now associated with the Supreme Order existed in Masonry at the time of the foundation of Grand Lodge. If that can be shown to have been the case, the Royal Arch can claim to be part of pure Antient Masonry with as much justification as the degrees of entered apprentice, fellow craft and master mason.

#### RELATIVE AGE OF ESOTERIC KNOWLEDGE AND OF LEGENDS

In referring to such parts of the craft degrees and of the Royal Arch as may have existed in 1717, we have laid stress on the esoteric knowledge associated with these ceremonies. [275]

We have done so quite deliberately, knowing that thereby we run counter to views expressed by various Masonic students, who attach great weight to the legends. Thus Chetwode Crawley states in one place (1) that "we cannot conceive of the [Third] Degree without its legend"; and in another, (2) that "the Royal Arch ... is not a separate entity, but the completing part of a Masonic legend". In the light of the available evidence, we feel obliged to conclude that the five points of fellowship and the esoteric knowledge now associated with the third degree are older than the third degree legend. In Scotland in 1696, according to the Edinburgh Register House MS., before a candidate could be admitted to the fellowship, all apprentices had to retire, doubtless because the candidate, after being instructed outside by the youngest master, had to re enter the company, make the master's sign and advance and put himself into the "posture" to receive the word, which was given him by the Master, together with the grip. In 1598, the Schaw Statutes, which were to be observed by all master masons in Scotland, provided that two entered apprentices, in addition to six masters or fellows, should be present at the admission of a fellow, which implies that the admission at the end of the sixteenth century must have been different from what it was at the end of the seventeenth, since the master's sign could not be made, nor the posture assumed, in the presence of two entered apprentices, though a word might have been communicated in a whisper. The presumption, therefore, is that there was no "posture" in 1598, and if, as seems likely, the posture implied the "five points of fellowship", then it follows that the "five points", together with the story explaining them, were probably not associated with the Mason Word in 1598.

1 A.Q.C., X, 141.

2 Caem. Hib., i, 13. [276]

The practices connected with the communication of the Mason Word probably changed quite as much during the seventeenth century as Masonic ceremonies did during the eighteenth. As a possible explanation of seventeenth century development, we would suggest, though only tentatively, that the five points of fellowship may have originated in practices connected with witchcraft or some other superstition, of which there was then no lack in Scotland.(1) In the second half of the century, to judge by the dates of most of the surviving Scottish versions of the MS. Constitutions of Masonry, the Scottish lodges adopted the Old Charges and caused them to be read to the entered apprentices at their admission. It is not inconceivable that, in order to provide the fellow crafts with some kind of corresponding 'history', and perhaps to supply an explanation of the "five points" for the benefit of the increasing number of non operative masons, a story was elaborated. This was possibly done, in part at least, by the utilisation of existing traditions. The Noah story, with its distinctly necromantic flavor, may have been formulated first and the Hiram story, further removed from witchcraft, but, in its oldest known form, very similar in its motifs to the Noah story, perhaps followed later. In each case a very minor character in the legendary history of the MS. Constitutions of Masonry was made the principal figure of the story.

We summarised the Noah and the Hiram stories on pages 89-90 above. It is not impossible, however, that there existed a third story, as yet undiscovered, associating freemasonry with the Tower of Babel. In support of this suggestion it may be noted (i) that the Tower of Babel figures prominently in all versions of the MS. Constitutions of Masonry; (ii) that a Scottish letter of 1697 states that masons believe the Mason Word to be as old as Babel, where they could not understand one another, and communicated by signs; (2) (iii) that The Free Masons:

If Hist'ry be no ancient Fable,  
Free Masons came from Tower of Babel;

1 For instance in 1623 Patrick Ruthven, believing himself to have been bewitched, was treated by Isobel Haldane: "scho com in to the bed and strachit hir self above him, hir heid to his heid, hir handis ower him, and so furth, mumbling sum wordis; he knew nocht quhat they war" (Pitcairn, Criminal Trials in Scotland, vol. ii, p. 537).

2 Hist. MSS. Com., Portland MSS., ii, 56. [277]

An Hudibrastick Poem of 1722/23 definitely associates freemasonry with the Tower of Babel: a subject to which it devotes some thirty verses; (1) (iv) that in the Briscoe pamphlet of 1724 the origin of masons' signs is attributed to events at the Tower of Babe.(2) Finally, there is a so called exposure of 1754 by Alexander Slade, The Free Mason Examined (3) which Thorp held to be a parody (4) and Vibert an elaborate skit, (5) but which, as Songhurst suggested, may more or less correctly represent a Masonic working based on a legend associating freemasonry with the Tower of Babel.(6) As Bro. Lepper has pointed out quite recently, a lucky discovery may still enrich us with such a legend.(7)

There can, in our opinion, be no doubt that the survey of the history of building from the earliest times to the traditional establishment of the masons' craft in England, commonly referred to as the craft legend, was first set down in writing in the fourteenth century. That, however, does not necessarily imply a belief in the antiquity of the particular legends associated with the Third Degree and the Royal Arch, such as J. E. S. Tuckett apparently had when he wrote:

That before 1717 Freemasonry possessed a Store of Legend, Tradition, and Symbolism of wide extent. That from 1717 the Grand Lodge, selecting a portion only of this Store, gradually evolved a Rite consisting of E.A., F.C., M.M., and R.A.(8)

1 E.M.P., 86 7.  
2 Ibid., 124.  
3 Leics. Reprint, X.  
4 A.Q.C., xx (1908), 95.

5 Rare Books of Freemasonry, 27.  
6 A.Q.C., xx (1908), 108.  
7 A.Q.C., li (1938), 237.  
8 A.Q.C., xxxii, 5. The italics are in the original. [278]

In general, we do not agree with the part assigned by Tuckett to Grand Lodge in the evolution of the craft and Royal Arch ceremonies, and in particular we wish to emphasise here that if the surviving versions of the MS. Constitutions of Masonry and of the manuscript catechisms of masonry, written before 1717, are accepted as the repositories of such legends and traditions of masonry as existed in 1717 (and there is no other source of information so far as we are aware), then by no process of selection could the legends now associated with the third degree and the Royal Arch have been evolved, because no trace of either legend can be found in any catechism or any version of the Old Charges which had made its appearance by 1717.(1) Further, that part of Tuckett's statement which relates to symbolism must also, in our opinion, be regarded with caution, as there is little trace of symbolism in any Masonic catechism, or in any version of the Old Charges, written before 1717 except Dumfries MS. No. 4 (c. 1710). His statement might encourage attempts to read into early freemasonry ideas which only became associated with the craft at a much later date.(2) In the course of this chapter, we shall give our reasons for suggesting that the esoteric knowledge associated with the Royal Arch is considerably older than the Royal Arch legend.

1 The earliest references in the MS. Constitutions to Hiram Abif, as well as to the building of the Second Temple, occur in those versions which belong to the Spencer family, dating from about 1725 or 1726. Neither of these earliest references, however, has any bearing on the central features of the Third Degree and Royal Arch legends.  
2 Cf. Speth, A.Q.C., vii, 173, 174; Dring, *ibid.*, xxiv, 237; and p. 10 above. [279]

#### POSSIBLE ORIGIN OF THE ROYAL ARCH

One solution of the problem of the origin of the Royal Arch would be that the Royal Arch was originated by nonoperative or by accepted masons before 1717, possibly in the seventeenth century. Against this it may be urged (a) that non operative masons in Scotland, being part and parcel of the operative lodges, took part in whatever ceremonies were practised by the operative members; and (b) that accepted masons in England appear at that time to have modelled their ceremonies upon Scottish operative practice. The accepted masons may have begun to modify or elaborate operative ceremonies before the end of the seventeenth century, but there is not the slightest evidence to suggest that they constructed entirely new ceremonies at that period or during the first two or three decades of the eighteenth century. The fabrication of new degrees, which took place more particularly on the Continent, did not begin until about 1740. We are disposed to think that by pure Antient Masonry was meant something which, in any case in a rudimentary form, was derived from the operative masons, but we do not press this interpretation, since it is impossible to be sure what the brethren in 1813 did mean by the expression. But it is along those lines that we endeavour to seek a solution.

Assuming that some of the esoteric knowledge associated with the Royal Arch was imparted to certain Scottish operative masons before 1717, we have to consider whether there was any category of mason, other than (i) the entered apprentice, and (ii) the fellow craft, or master mason, which was likely to have secret methods of recognition. One possibility is that the masons who were serving, or had served, as masters of lodges constituted such a category. Another category, possibly, consisted of those fellow crafts or master masons who were also burgesses or freemen of a burgh by virtue of their membership of an incorporation of masons.(1) These men were doubtless recognised by the municipal authorities as masters, in the sense of master tradesmen or mason contractors. It is probably they who are referred to in the Schaw Statutes of 1599, which stated that "no masters but [of] the Lodge of Edinburgh" were convened. The Deacon and Masters of the Lodge of Edinburgh, who controlled the lodge in the seventeenth century, were all members of the Incorporation of Masons and Wrights. It was against the authority of these masters of the lodge that the journeymen or fellow crafts rebelled in the early eighteenth century when they formed the Lodge of Journeymen Masons.(2) It was this Lodge which went to law in 1715 to secure the right to give the Mason Word.

1 S.M., 50 2.  
2 Seggie and Turnbull, *Annals of the Lodge of Journeymen Masons*, No. 8, Chapter I. [280]

If any section of the masons, apart from entered apprentices and fellow crafts or master masons, possessed esoteric knowledge, it would seem most likely to have been either (i) the masters or other presiding officers of lodges, or (ii) the master tradesmen or master masons of the various incorporations of masons. Just as entered apprentices and fellow crafts only required the Mason Word to prove themselves when working, or seeking work, outside their own areas, so 'masters' (whether presiding officers of lodges or master tradesmen), supposing they did possess special esoteric knowledge, would only require it to prove themselves outside their own areas, where as masters of lodges they might be attending Masonic conferences, or as master tradesmen they might be seeking or executing contracts. In the latter case, presumably, freeman masons of the burghs were assuming a standing and capacity to work outside the area in which they ordinarily claimed a monopoly. That master tradesmen who were members of an incorporation or "privileged company" established by seal of cause, and their servants, had the right to reside and work in the bounds of any other company, privileged or unprivileged, was laid down in the so called Falkland Statutes of 1636.(1) Thereby, perhaps, an old established custom was recognised.

1 S.M., 56,68 9. [281]

The legend communicated to fellow crafts or master masons to explain the origin of the five points of fellowship had a much closer bearing on the esoteric knowledge imparted to them, than was the case with the 'history' communicated to entered apprentices. Further, the legend has come down to us in at least two forms, very different in externals. All this suggests that the story communicated to fellow crafts or master masons did not represent an existing fully developed legend, but was especially constructed for the purpose, partly perhaps by the use of existing traditions. Both the Noah and the Hiram stories, by indicating that the secrets of a fellow craft or master mason were substituted secrets seem to imply the existence of another set of secrets which, by contrast, may be described, as the real secrets, though probably there is no question of one being more genuine than the other: one belonged to fellow crafts or master masons, the other, it may be supposed, to masters of lodges or to the master tradesmen who were members of an Incorporation of Masons. Both possibly existed long before the explanatory stories were constructed. Had

there not been some further esoteric knowledge, which in the first instance was not imparted to fellow crafts or master masons, it is difficult to understand why the specially constructed stories should not have been complete in themselves, instead of hinting at further knowledge to come. It therefore seems to us that the particular form given to the stories was to show the existence of some further esoteric knowledge, possibly dating from about the same period as the Mason Word, to which the candidate might ultimately attain.

As to the nature of this further esoteric knowledge which may have been imparted to 'masters', we are obliged to rely on such indications as can be gathered from early eighteenth century evidence. This seems to point to two different things, namely, to the Word, or the Primitive Word as it is designated in one place, and possibly to the Rule of Three.

The two earliest references to the Word with which we are acquainted both belong to 1725. One is contained in, a skit on masonry, embodied in a letter of "Verus Commodus", concerning the Society of Freemasons,(1) in which he states that the Doctor [probably Desaguliers] pretends to have found out a mysterious hocus pocus word, which belongs to the anathema pronounced against Ananias and Sapphira in Acts V. The other occurs in a Masonic catechism, *The Whole Institutions of Free Masons Opened*,(2) of which we print the relevant paragraph:

Yet for all this I want the primitive Word, I answer it was God in six Terminations, to wit I am, and Johova is the answer to it, and Grip at the Rein of the Back, or else Excellent and Excellent, Excellency is the Answer to it, and Grip as aforesaid, or else Tapus (3) Majester, and Majester Tapus is the answer to it, and Grip as aforesaid, for proof read the first of the first of St. John.

1 E.M.P., 138 9.

2 E.M.C., 82.

3 Possibly the word Tapus is connected with the devil Gaap or Tap, reputed to be invoked by necromancers (Reginald Scot, *Discoverie of Witchcraft*, 1586, ed. Montague Summers, 222). [282]

The seal on the "Deputation to Constitute" granted by Lord Montague, Grand Master in 1732, to St: John the Baptist Lodge at Exeter bears the motto in Greek: "In the beginning was the Word." (1) The same motto occurs on the contemporary "deputations" granted to lodges at Bath and Bury.(2) The fact that the Greek for "beginning" is *apxe* (*arche*) makes it even possible that the motto was intended to contain a pun, "in the Arch was the Word". An undated endorsement in a relatively modern handwriting on Grand Lodge No. 1 MS. of 1583, commences: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" [St. John i. 1]. The idea of a Demogorgon, so dread that his name was not to be mentioned, occurs in sixteenth and seventeenth century literature both in Scotland and England, as can be illustrated from the writings of Sir David Lindsay (1490-1555),(3) Spenser (1552-99),(4) Milton (1608-74),(5) and Dryden (1631-1700).(6) Thus, although no specific reference in masonry to the Word has been traced before 1725, it is not unlikely that the idea is much older, and that it may conceivably go back to the seventeenth century, or even the sixteenth.

The earliest reference with which we are acquainted to the Rule of Three occurs in 1723, in the Masonic catechism, *A Mason's Examination*:

If a Master Mason you would be,  
Observe you well the Rule of Three;(7)

An advertisement of 1726 concerning antediluvian masonry, first quoted by Sadler, refers to "the necessity there is for a Master to well understand the Rule of Three".(8) The account in the Graham MS. of 1726 is fuller; it explains how Bezaleel agreed to instruct the two brothers of King Alboin in the theoretical and practical part of masonry, conditionally on their not disclosing it "**without another to themselves to make a tribble voice**",(9) and how, after his death,

1 A. Hope, A.Q.C., xxxi, 50

2 Hughan, *English Rite*, 3rd ed. 1925, 115.

3 Sir David Lindsay, *Works*, ed. D. Hamer, 1, 266 (*The Monarche*, 1. 2253), and III, 331, where the matter is fully discussed.

4 Spenser, *Faerie Queen*, I, xxxvii, 7 9, refers to Gorgon as the deity whose name may not be used.

5 Milton, *Paradise Lost*, 11, 959.

6 Dryden's rendering of *The Flower and the Leaf*, in *Poems*, Oxford ed., 333.

7 E.M.C., 67.

8 E.M.P., 194.

9 E.M.C., 87 [283]

the secrets of masonry were lost, because they were known to none "**save these two princes and they were so sworn at their entering not to discover it without another to make a tribble voice**".(1)

In addition to the Word and the Rule of Three, which suggest the rudiments of the esoteric knowledge now associated with the Royal Arch, there are also in the Masonic catechisms of the 1720s slight indications of the esoteric knowledge nowadays imparted to installed masters. How many, if any, of the secrets supposedly communicated to 'masters' date from the sixteenth or seventeenth century, there is no evidence to show.

#### THE ROYAL ARCH AND A TRIGRADAL SYSTEM

**Telescoping of Esoteric Knowledge** - During the third decade of the eighteenth century, and possibly earlier, all the esoteric knowledge imparted to operative masons in Scotland was, in some cases, apparently telescoped into one ceremony for the benefit of accepted masons in England. At that time a primitive form of the esoteric knowledge now associated with the Royal Arch may have been blended with a primitive form of the esoteric knowledge now associated with the third degree. The distinctions which apparently existed in Scotland between the master masons of a lodge [= fellow crafts], the master of a lodge, and the 'masters' who were members of an incorporation of masons, was probably not appreciated in England, and thus esoteric knowledge properly belonging to a 'master' may quite well have been imparted to master masons, even after the all inclusive one ceremony system had

been abolished. A further ground for confusion may have arisen from the fact that the expression "master mason" was sometimes used, both in Scotland and in England, to denote the master of a lodge. This, for example, was the case at the Lodge of Scoon and Perth in 1658,(2) and at the Lodge of Hamilton Kilwinning in the 1730s.(3)

1 E.M.C., 88.

2 Crawford Smith, Lodge of Scoon and Perth No. 3, 47.

3 Begemarm, Freimaurerei in Schottland, 466, 467 [284]

It occurs also in Edinburgh Register House MS. of 1696 (1) and the Chetwode Crawley MS. of circa 1700.(2) Anderson, describing in the Constitutions of 1738 the preliminary meeting of Grand Lodge in 1716, states that the Brethren put into the Chair "the oldest Master Mason (now the Master of a Lodge)".(3)

Possible confirmation of the suggestion that esoteric knowledge properly belonging to a 'master' was imparted to master masons may be found in two documents. One, a document of very doubtful authenticity and date, is the so called Rite Ancien de Bouillon,(4) professing to be a third degree ritual of 1740, in which some of the esoteric knowledge now associated with the Royal Arch is mixed up with the esoteric knowledge now associated with the third degree. The other is a plan of a lodge for the reception of a master [mason] printed in a French Masonic catechism of 1745,(5) which suggests a combination of the Third Degree and the Royal Arch. In this connection, however, it must be pointed out that in Ireland, where in the eighteenth century and even later the Royal Arch and the Knight Templar degrees were conferred by craft lodges,(6) more than one floorcloth has survived containing symbols associated with the craft, the Royal Arch and the Knight Templar degrees,(7) but there is no reason to think that the various ceremonies were not entirely distinct.

1 E.M.C., 33.

2 Ibid., 36.

3 Constitutions of 1738, 109.

4 Printed in Leics. Reprints, ix, edited by J. T. Thorp. For a much less favourable opinion of the document than that taken by Thorp, see Songhurst, A.Q.C., xxx, 41.

5 L'Ordre des Francs MaFons Trahi.

6 In our Short History, p. 123, we enumerate the Mark in addition to the Royal Arch and Knight Templar degrees, having inadvertently overlooked Bro. J. Heron Lepper's remarks on the subject in A.Q.C., xxxviii (1925), 84. Bro. Lepper adds that the Grand Lodge of Ireland never recognised the Arch as an official part of its ceremonies, but that, apparently, is not to be interpreted as meaning that craft lodges did not work the Royal Arch ceremony. In another place (Lepper and Crossle, 252) he states specifically that in the 1780s there was hardly a craft lodge in Ireland which did not come to a knowledge of the degrees of Royal Arch and High Knight Templar, and appoint special nights for working them.

7 See photographic reproductions of floorcloths in Lepper and Crossle, between pp. 248-9. [285]

So far as we are aware, there is no evidence that the legend now associated with the third degree, and the legend now associated with the Royal Arch, were ever combined in one ceremony. Although there is no conclusive evidence that in England a rudimentary third degree and a rudimentary Royal Arch were for a time combined in one ceremony, we think that this may have occurred. When the two sets of esoteric knowledge, in so far as they ever had been combined, were finally severed, that was done not by mutilating the ceremony of admitting a master mason, but by restoring the position, in the matter of esoteric knowledge, to that which had existed under the original plan of masonry. In origin, the Royal Arch was not the completion of the third degree.

**The Royal Arch Legend** - It is not known when the Royal Arch legend was first joined to the esoteric knowledge of the Royal Arch. We have already stated our reasons for thinking that the esoteric knowledge of the master mason or third degree is considerably older than the explanatory legend, of which two forms, the Noah story and the Hiram story, have been traced, and of which, we surmise, a third form, a Tower of Babel story, existed at one period. Indications of the existence of the esoteric knowledge of the Royal Arch can be traced as early as 1725, and it may have existed among certain Scottish operative masons of the seventeenth century. It may well be that this esoteric knowledge is older than the explanatory legend in either of its two forms, the present Irish one relating to the repair of the Temple under Josiah, and the English one relating to the rebuilding of the Temple under Zerubbabel. The earliest evidence known to us suggestive of a Royal Arch legend is the beginning of the third stanza of a song by Laurence Dermott, printed in Ahiman Rezon in 1756:

Our Temple now rebuilding,  
You see Grand Columns rise;  
and the toast to be honoured at the end of the song:  
To the Memory of P. H. Z. L. and J. A.(1)

1 We take the letters to stand for "Prophet Haggai, Zerubbabeland, Joshua". [286]

An earlier and more definite reference to Royal Arch masonry, as distinct from the legends, is contained in **Fifield Dassigny's Serious and Impartial Enquiry**, published in Dublin in 1744.(1) He refers there to a man claiming to be a Master of the Royal Arch, who introduced into Dublin a false system "which he asserted he had brought with him from the city of York". A few months later he was exposed by a Brother "who had some small space before attained that excellent part of Masonry in London". There is no indication of the content either of the supposed false system, derived from York, or of the supposed true system, derived from London. On the strength of the fact that Francis Drake, Junior Grand Warden of the York Grand Lodge, in his speech of 27 December 1726, mentions the repair of the Temple by Josiah (2) (as well as the rebuilding of the Temple by Zerubbabel), whereas contemporary Masonic writers do not, one Masonic student has suggested that the false system introduced from York was that based on Josiah, and the true system, derived from London, was that based on Zerubbabel.(3) Be that as it may, there can be little doubt that the Antients in England followed the Zerubbabel legend,(4) as suggested by the toast at the end of Dermott's song, and presumably, therefore, it was that legend, if any, which was at that period followed in Ireland, where Dermott had been made an Arch Mason in 1746. Had the Josiah legend existed in Irish masonry in 1751, when the Grand Lodge of the Antients was established in London, it would doubtless have been adopted by that lodge, of which Laurence Dermott was the leading spirit. In

that case, it would almost certainly have been adopted by the united Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of England, when established in 1817, if the Antients in the Arch at all resembled the Antients in the Craft in the matter of pertinacity. We have argued elsewhere 6 that it is very unlikely that the Zerubbabel legend existed in Irish masonry in 1751, as that would imply that at a later date Irish masons changed over from one legend to the other, a thing entirely contrary to the ultra conservatism which characterised the Irish in their Masonic practices; accordingly we concluded that no Royal Arch legend had been adopted by 1751. The conclusion maybe sound, but the argument by which we reached it apparently is not, since the Irish do appear to have changed their Royal Arch legend during the nineteenth century.

1 This rare pamphlet is reprinted in Hughan's Memorial of the Masonic Union, Leicester, 1913. The passage we quote is from p. 127 of the reprint. [Dassigny's 'Serious and Impartial Enquiry' may be read in full at [http://books.google.com/books?id=qU0BAAAQAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs\\_ge\\_summary\\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=qU0BAAAQAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false) ]

2 E.M.P., 203.

3 Misc. Lat., xi, 50-1.

4 Bro. Lepper shares this view (ibid., 87).

5 Knoop, Pure Antient Masonry, 61; A Short History of Freemasonry, 128. [287]

W. Redfern Kelly, a prominent Irish Royal Arch Mason of the last generation, states quite definitely (1) that the rebuilding legend was the original one in Ireland, and that it was practised at the time of Dermott and Dassigny (2) (though he quotes no authority for this part of his statement). He further states that the Zerubbabel legend was followed in 1829 at the time when the Grand Chapter of Ireland was constituted. His explanation of how the Irish came to change their Royal Arch legend during the nineteenth century may best be given in his own words:

... owing to the established Irish practice of conferring the then separate degrees of "Excellent" and "Super Excellent" as a requisite qualification for admission to the Royal Arch Degree involving the necessary "working of the Veils", etc., innovations crept in and difficulties arose. In some parts of the country the legend and epoch of the rebuilding of the Temple, and in others the repairing of the Temple, were recognised and worked; confusion naturally resulted, and eventually a Ritual Committee was appointed in 1856, which only completed its labours in 1863; and finally, in November, 1864, Grand Chapter definitely decided to adopt a "New Ritual" embodying the legend and epoch of the repairing of the Temple; and designated its Principal Officers J.H.S., instead of, as everywhere else throughout the world where the degree is practised, Z.H.J.(3)

1 "The Advent of Royal Arch Masonry", A.Q.C., xxx, 7 55.

2 Ibid., 46.

3 Ibid., 45 6. [288]

That the 1840s were a period of flux in Irish Royal Arch masonry is confirmed by a comment of Bro. J. Heron Lepper that shortly before 1848 two chapters in Munster were admonished for having preferred Z. to J. as hero of the drama. (1)

**Masters' Lodges** - Failure to recognise the difference which apparently existed in Scotland between a master mason, a master of a lodge, and the 'masters' who were members of an incorporation of masons, probably led, not only to the continuance for a time of the innovation of telescoping esoteric knowledge but also to variations in the use of the expression "Masters' Lodges".(2) In the early years after 1725, when the Regulation that apprentices must be admitted "Masters and Fellow Craft" only in Grand Lodge had been repealed, it is quite possible that Masters' Lodges conferred the third degree on members of ordinary lodges which were either unable or unwilling to work the degree; but it is very difficult to believe that the Masters' Lodges established as late as the end of the eighteenth century were formed for the special purpose of conferring the third degree.

In addition to Masters' Lodges, there existed a Scots Masons' Lodge in London in 1733; further, there are records of brethren being made Scots master masons at the Bear Lodge at Bath in 1735(3) and at the Lodge of Antiquity in London in 1740.(4) In Scotland, as we have endeavoured to show, 'masters', as distinct from master masons of a lodge, possibly had esoteric knowledge of their own, which would appear to have been the prototype of that now associated with the Royal Arch, and perhaps of that now associated with Installed Masters.

1 Misc. Lat., xi, 87.

2 Our main authority for this section is John Lane, "Masters' Lodges", A.Q.C., i.

3 Somerset Masters' Transactions, 1917, p. 305.

4 Rylands, Lodge of Antiquity, i, 105. [289]

That there was a close connection between the Royal Arch and installed masters is shown by the fact that if a candidate for the Royal Arch in the eighteenth century was not an installed master, the usual procedure was for him to go through the ceremony of Passing the Chair under the aegis of the chapter.(1) It therefore seems not impossible that the work done in a Scots Masons' Lodge, and the degree of Scots master mason conferred on masons at Bath and in London, were the Royal Arch in a rudimentary form.

In connection with the masters' lodges traced by John Lane between 1733 and 1813, attention may be drawn to two further points. (i) These masters' lodges, like early Royal Arch Chapters, frequently met on Sundays, whereas ordinary lodges did not. (ii) These masters' lodges were all connected with ordinary lodges on the register of the Grand Lodge of the "Moderns", which did not officially recognise the existence of the Royal Arch, whereas no Masters' Lodges have been traced in connection with the Grand Lodge of the "Antients", which permitted its subordinate lodges to confer the Royal Arch under their craft warrants. These points, taken by themselves, prove nothing, but taken in conjunction with the other information available, they do suggest that, in some cases at least, masters' lodges were concerned with working a ceremony other than the third degree, very possibly some rudimentary form of the Royal Arch, which was perhaps the same as the ceremony described elsewhere as making Scots master masons.

1 According to Dassigny (loc. cit.) the Royal Arch is "an organis'd body of men who have passed the chair". This does not necessarily mean that they had all been installed masters of their craft lodges; it may allude to the conferment of the degree of Passing the Chair. [290]



## EARLY REFERENCES TO AN ARCH

Casual references to an "Arch" can be traced in Masonic literature from 1723 onwards. Thus at the end of the 'historical' section of *The Constitutions of the Free Masons*, London, 1723, Anderson refers to the Royal Art being duly cultivated and the cement of the Brotherhood preserved, "so that the whole Body resembles a well built Arch". John Pennell, in *The Constitutions of the Free Masons*, Dublin, 1730, remodels Anderson's last paragraph and concludes: "Let the cement of the Brotherhood be so well preserved, that the whole Body may remain as a well built Arch."

Two of the early printed catechisms have questions relating to an arch, the one: (1) "Whence is an Arch derived? From Architecture"; the other: (2) "Whence comes the Pattern of an Arch? From the Rainbow." In this connection, it may be noted that the arms of the Grand Chapter of All England at York contained a rainbow, but the arms were not adopted until the second half of the eighteenth century. (3) The earliest mention of "Royal Arch" appears to be in a newspaper account of a Masonic procession at Youghall, on St. John's Day in Winter, 1743, (4) when the master was preceded by "the Royal Arch carried by two excellent masons". Which, if any, of these references relate to, or imply the existence of, a Masonic ceremony is problematical. It may well be that the word 'arch' was used merely in a symbolical sense. Various Masonic writers, including Gould,(5) hold that the word 'arch', in connection with the Royal Arch, had originally nothing whatever to do with the noun 'arch' (= a curved structure or vault), but was the adjectival prefix 'arch' (= chief, pre eminent, as in archangel, archbishop, archduke). The fact that the word 'arch' in eighteenth century masonry was not infrequently used in association with the words 'excellent' and 'superexcellent' seems to support this interpretation. Against this interpretation it can fairly be urged that all the early references quoted above relate to the noun 'arch', which was perhaps introduced into Masonry because the arch was regarded as the supreme achievement in architecture, and because its erection was the work of the most skilled craftsmen.

1 *The Grand Mystery of Free Masons Discover'd*, 1724. (E.M.C., 73).

2 *A Mason's Examination*, 1723 (E.M.C., 68).

3 Hughan, *Origin of the English Rite* (3rd ed. 1925), 124, 125.

4 Faulkner's *Dublin Journal*, 10 14. January 1743/4; the paragraph is reprinted in full in *Caem. Hib.*, i.

5 *History*, ii, 4.58. [291]

A possible early reference to the Royal Arch ceremony is contained in a letter of 1 January 1734/5, written by Mick Broughton to the Duke of Richmond (Grand Master, 1724 25), in which he jokes about "super excellent", and refers to three masons being "made chapters" in a lodge in the Library at Ditton, when Dr. Desaguliers (Grand Master, 1719 20) was visiting the Duke of Montagu (Grand Master, 1721 22).(1) The first definite reference to the Royal Arch as a degree appears to be that in Dr. Dassigny's *Serious and Impartial Enquiry* of 1744, mentioned on page 287 above. In the bylaws of Lodge Stirling Kilwinning, adopted in 1745, a fee of 5s. is fixed for conferring the degree of "Excellent and Superexcellent", which was very possibly the Royal Arch in essentials, though not in name; and there is some reason for thinking that these essentials had been imparted to some brethren of Ancient Lodge Stirling Kilwinning at an earlier date.(2)

## THE ROYAL ARCH AND THE GRAND LODGE OF THE ANTIENTS

Reference must finally be made to one other method of approaching the question of the origin of the Royal Arch, a method first adopted by W. J. Songhurst in 1919.(3) It consists of a threefold proposition. (i) The first proposition, that the Royal Arch was known to and worked by the Antients in 1756, and inferentially from their establishment in 1751, is a conclusion about which we feel there can be no question. (ii) The second proposition, that the Antients derived their work from the Grand Lodge of Ireland, founded in or before 1725, was proved by the researches of Henry Sadler,(4) in regard to the relationship, and of Chetwode Crawley,(5) in regard to the date. (iii) The third proposition, that the Grand Lodge of Ireland derived its working from the premier Grand Lodge in London, we are inclined to put somewhat differently. In view of previously mentioned facts that the earliest reference to a Lodge of Freemasons in Ireland relates to Trinity College, Dublin, in 1688, and that the manuscript catechism of masonry known as the Trinity College, Dublin, MS. bears the date 1711 in an endorsement, we should prefer to say that Irish masonry derived its working from English accepted masonry at some date prior to the establishment of the premier Grand Lodge in 1717, and possibly also directly from Scottish operative masonry during the second half of the seventeenth century.

1 Wonnacott, "Charles, Second Duke of Richmond", A.Q.C., xxx, 190.

2 J. W. Saunders, *ibid.*, liii, 40 2.

3 *ibid.*, xxxii, 34 5

4 *Masonic Facts and Fictions*, 120 folg.

5 *Caem. Hib.*, ii, 9 folg. [292]

It is not impossible that some of the differences between English and Scottish Masonic practice on the one hand and Irish Masonic practice on the other are accounted for by the survival in Ireland of ancient Scottish or English usages, adopted long before 1725.(1)

From this threefold proposition it seems to follow that the premier Grand Lodge of 1717, or English accepted masons before 1717, or Scottish operative masons in the seventeenth century, possessed some esoteric knowledge (now associated with the Royal Arch) which was either not transmitted to English craft lodges constituted under the premier Grand Lodge, or if transmitted, was subsequently lost by these lodges generally. That certain esoteric knowledge might have been in the possession of the English craft in 1717 and subsequently lost is illustrated by the fact that whereas, according to Anderson's *Constitutions* of 1723, the master of a new lodge was installed "by certain significant ceremonies and ancient usages", it was the exception in the early nineteenth century for a master of a lodge under the premier Grand Lodge to be regularly installed. This, however, was not so under the Antients, and the ceremony was adopted from them by the United Grand Lodge in 1813.(2) What was undoubtedly true of an installation ceremony may equally have been true of a rudimentary Royal Arch ceremony.

1 Cf. J. Heron Lepper, A.Q.C., xxxvii, 28.

2 For a fuller account of what happened, see footnote 2 on p. 231 above. [293]

## CHAPTER XIV

### EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY Masonic Trends

HAVING discussed in Chapters VIII and IX the development of Masonic organisation, and, in the four following chapters, the origin and evolution of Masonic ceremonies, we are mainly concerned in this chapter with the aims and external characteristics of freemasonry in the early eighteenth century, and with the public estimation in which it was held during that period.

We examine the problem under five heads. First, we draw attention to the growing prominence of freemasonry; second, we note the increasing publicity associated with that new prominence; third, we consider some of the consequences of that publicity; fourth, we give a brief account of the spread of freemasonry from this country to places abroad; finally, we consider at what date speculative masonry may best be regarded as beginning.

#### GROWING PROMINENCE OF FREEMASONRY

The selection and installation on 24 June 1721 of the first noble Grand Master in the person of John, Duke of Montagu, undoubtedly brought the Fraternity into prominence. The meeting of Grand Lodge, which took place at the Stationers' Hall, was reported in The Post Boy of 24 27 June 1721, where it is stated that "several Noblemen and Gentlemen" were present, the total attendance being given as between two and three hundred.(1) The event is also recorded by the Rev. Dr. Wm. Stukeley in his diary, under date of 24 June 1721,(2) where he states that amongst others at the dinner were the "Duke of Montague, Ld Herbert, Ld Stanhope, and Sir And. Fountain".

1 Robbins, 68.

2 Surtees Soc., 1xxiii, 64. [294]

From this time forward, newspapers of the day frequently report new admissions into the Fraternity, or contain advertisements relating to forthcoming Masonic events or to new Masonic publications. (1) Although Dr. Wm. Stratford, Canon of Christ Church, Oxford, writing to Lord Harley in April 1722, says ". . . perhaps the noble person who laid the first stone is a freemason. That has been an honour much courted of late by quality ", (2) it is very unlikely that the majority of new members were "noblemen and gentlemen". To judge by the MS. Lists of Lodges and Members for 1723 24 and 1725 28 contained in the first Minute Book of Grand Lodge, (3) the "quality" was mostly to be found in a few lodges, more especially in that held at the Horn Tavern in Westminster.

A passage from Stukeley's diary referring to the meeting of Grand Lodge at Stationers' Hall on 24 June 1721 has already been quoted. An earlier entry in the diary, under the date of 6 January 1720/21, states "I was made a free mason". Referring to this event, he wrote at a much later date in his Commonplace Book, that "immediately after that it [= freemasonry] took a run and ran itself out of breath thro' **the folly\* of its members**". (4) It is difficult to be sure to what, exactly, he was alluding, but the limited statistical information available suggests that there occurred after 1723 something in the nature of a mushroom growth, followed by a rapid decline, of Masonry. There are also indications that some unsuitable candidates were being admitted to the craft.

[\* Note: For an interesting perspective of 'Folly,' consult the book, Hell-Fire Duke – The Life of the Duke of Wharton, by Mark Blackett-Ord, The Kensal Press. 1982. 252 pages. Philip Wharton (1698-1731), Duke of Wharton, was the founder of the London 'Hell-Fire Club' which lasted from 1719 to 1721 and was the Grand Master of the Premier Grand Lodge of England in 1722.]

1 Most of these paragraphs and advertisements relating to the years 1721-25 are reprinted in A. F. Robbins, "The Earliest Years of English Organized Freemasonry", A.Q.C., xxii, 67 83.

2 Hist. MSS. Com., Portland MSS., vii, 322.

3 Q.C.A., x, 3 47.

4 Surtees Soc., lxxiii, 122. [295]

**Numerical strength of Freemasonry, 1717-35** - All the information available relates to 'regular' lodges, i.e., lodges under the aegis of the premier Grand Lodge. At this early period there were doubtless, even in London, other lodges which did not immediately recognise the jurisdiction of the newly constituted Grand Lodge, and it is likely that some of the increase in the number of lodges was the result of existing 'non regular' lodges accepting constitutions from Grand Lodge, in the way in which the old operative lodge at Swalwell did in 1735. Apart from the fact that the masters and wardens of twenty lodges signed, in December 1722, the Approbation printed at the end of Anderson's Constitutions of 1723, all our knowledge for the years before 1724 is derived from the number of lodges represented at meetings of Grand Lodge, as recorded in Anderson's Constitutions of 1738:

Date	No. of Lodges	Date	No. of Lodges
June 1717 . . . . .	04	Jan. 1723 . . . . .	25
June 1721 . . . . .	12	April 1723 . . . . .	30
Sept. 1721 . . . . .	16	Nov. 1723 . . . . .	30
March 1722 . . . . .	24	Feb. 1724 . . . . .	26
Dec. 1722 . . . . .	20	April 1724 . . . . .	31

Commencing in 1723-24, there are available various lists of lodges, which we indicate against the figures in the following table:

Date	No. of Lodges	Source of Information (1)
1723 24 . . . . .	52 . . . . .	G.L. MS. List
1725 . . . . .	63 . . . . .	Pine's Engraved List (1st ed.)
1725 . . . . .	70 . . . . .	Pine's Engraved List (2nd ed.)
1725 28 . . . . .	77 . . . . .	G.L. MS. List
late 1728 . . . . .	54 . . . . .	Pine's 1729 Engraved List

Oct. 1730 . . . . .	67 . . . . .	Prichard's Masonry Dissected
1731 32 . . . . .	102 . . . . .	G.L. MS. List
1733 . . . . .	115 . . . . .	Rawlinson's MS. List
1735 . . . . .	126 . . . . .	Picard's Engraving

The figures suggest that there occurred a rapid expansion in the number of lodges after 1723, followed by a decline, the low water mark being reached about the end of 1728.

1 The nine Lists are printed in full in the Appendix to Lane, Handy Book to the Lists of Lodges. [296]

A detailed comparison of the various lists of lodges shows that while new lodges were being constituted, others were lapsing. Thus the net gain of 25 between the MS. List of 1723 24 (52) and that of 1725 28 (77) was brought about by the formation or recognition of 33 new lodges and the disappearance of 8 lodges; the net gain of 25 between the MS. List of 1725 28 (77) and that of 1730 32 (102) was brought about by the formation or recognition of 57 new lodges, the reinstatement of 3 old lodges, and the disappearance of 35 lodges. Although 77 lodges appear in the MS. List of 1725 28, some of them had probably lapsed before the last lodges on the list were constituted in April 1728. Thus there was probably little or no net growth in the number of lodges between the later part of 1725 and the beginning of 1728, after which an excess of lapses caused the number to decline from perhaps 65 or 70 to 54 towards the end of 1728. After that date, according to John Lane, the statistician of freemasonry, the number of new lodges for several years exceeded the number erased. His investigations show that the number of lodges on the register of Grand Lodge was as follows: (1)

at the end of	at the end of
1728 ... 57	1732 ... 108
1729 ... 61	1733 ... 126
1730 ... 76	1734 ... 127
1731 ... 83	1735 ... 138

The net growth of 81 between the end of 1728 and the end of 1735 was accounted for by the constitution of 84 new lodges and the erasure of three.

Although the foundations on which new lodges were erected in the 1720s and 1730s were doubtless not always very sound, as a consequence of which many of them collapsed very quickly, a circumstance to which Stukeley was probably referring in his statement, nevertheless much good work was done in those early days. This is shown by the fact that of the 52 lodges in the MS. List of 1723 24, ten survive to the present day; of the 33 lodges which appear for the first time in the MS. List of 1725 28, three survive to the present day; of the 57 lodges which appear for the first time in the MS. List of 1730 32, five survive to the present day.

One other piece of statistical information concerning the extent of freemasonry in 1726 may be mentioned. According to A Full Vindication of the Ancient and Honourable Society of Free and Accepted Masons, 1726 (a reply to The FreeMasons Accusation and Defence of the same year), "there are 40000 Masons in London".(2) Even allowing generously for freemasons who did not belong to 'regular' lodges, the statement would seem to us to be a gross exaggeration.

1 Lane, op. cit., 157.

2 E.M.P., 179 [297]

**Suitability of Candidates** - The most outspoken attack on the unsuitability of some candidates for freemasonry would appear to be that made in The Plain Dealer of 14 September 1724 by an anonymous writer who claimed to be a freemason:

... What Reflections, what Reproach, have we brought upon Ourselves, and upon our ANCIENT ORDER, by making so many Proselytes, in so cheap and prostituted a Manner? It afflicts me sensibly, when I see so many idle, vain, and empty Coxcombs introduc'd into our Lodges, and made privy to our Secrets. I have often enter'd my Protest against this Abuse, in private Society; and must use the Freedom to offer this Memorial, in the publick Character I bear. 'Tis my Opinion, that the late Prostitution of our Order is next to betraying of it. The weak Heads of Vintners, Drawers, Wigmakers, Weavers, &c. admitted into our Fraternity, have not only brought Contempt upon the Institution, but do very much endanger it.(1)

In a letter of "Verus Commodus" concerning the Society of Free Masons, published in 1725, reference is made to "ignorant, crack brain'd Disciples" of Freemasonry, "such as Ale house keepers, Botchers, Corn cutters, &C."(2) The "gentleman in the country", whose letters to his son are printed in The Free Masons Accusation and Defence, 1726, writes "so cheap is this Mystery here, that any Man may be made a Mason for a Dozen of Beer".(3)

1 E.M.P., 132.

2 Ibid., 137.

3 Ibid., 165. [298]

As these various criticisms are contained in what are open or veiled attacks upon the craft, one might feel justified in ignoring them, but for the solemn warning given in 1728 by a fairly prominent mason, the architect Edward Oakley, at the time he was Master of a London lodge:

I must now, in the strictest Manner, charge you to be careful, and diligently to enquire into the Character of such Persons who shall interceed to be admitted of this Honourable Fraternity: I therefore, according to my Duty, forwarn you to admit, or even to recommend to be initiated Masons, such as are Wine Bibbers or Drunkards, witty Punsters on sacred Religion or Politicks, TaleBearers, Babblers, or Lyars, litigious, quarrelsome, irreligious, or prophane Persons, lew'd Songsters, Persons illiterate and of mean Capacities; and especially beware of such who desire Admittance with a selfish View of Gain to themselves ...

Such Persons whom you honour with the most antient and truly valuable Badge and Dignity of a Free and Accepted Mason, their Character and Behaviour ought to be such, as shall not be liable to bring any Reflection on the Craft.

Their Qualifications to be by studying Architecture, working in the Craft, or Building Trades, ingenious Sculptors, Painters, or well skill'd in Arithmetick or Geometry, or otherwise qualified by real Merits, such as may redound to the Encouragement, Promotion, and Honour of sound Masonry.

Those of the Brotherhood, whose Genius is not adapted to Building, I hope will be industrious to improve in, or at least to love and encourage some Part of the seven Liberal Sciences ... (1)

1 The speech made its first appearance in print in Cole's Constitutions of 1728 9. It is reprinted in E.M.P., 210 14. The passages we quote are on pp. 211 12. [299]

A similar warning was given a few years later in one of the Lectures in W. Smith, The Book M (pp. 16 17) [which may read in full at <http://content.lib.utah.edu/cdm4/document.php?CISOROOT=/MLRB&CISOPTR=5258>]:

... be cautious of whom you receive. Many may be, and are desirous of being admitted, but let us consider their Motives; Is it out of temporal Interest? Is it out of Curiosity to know our Secrets? Is it because they are Men of Fortune, that think for Money they may obtain every Thing without any other Merit? Let these for ever be kept out, and only let the good Men and true, the Lovers of Art and Vertue be admitted. . . .

Had some unsuitable candidates not been admitted to the craft, we feel that neither Oakley nor the writer of a lecture in The Book M would have admonished the brethren as they did. We think it not unlikely that Stukeley also may have had in mind a lowering of the qualifications for membership of the craft, when he referred to "the folly of its members".

#### FREEMASONRY AND PUBLICITY

In the 1720s freemasonry engaged in at least three forms of publicity. First, there were numerous newspaper paragraphs announcing that Lord X. or Mr. Y. had been made a freemason. Originally the information must have been supplied to a particular paper by some member of the craft, or by the candidate himself, whereupon it was doubtless copied by other journals.

Second, in connection with the Grand Feast, there was a public procession of the brethren in Masonic clothing through the City, on the first occasion in 1721 on foot, and on later occasions in coaches. The original procession on foot was from the King's Arms Tavern, St. Paul's Churchyard, where Grand Lodge met in the morning, to the Stationers' Hall, where the Assembly and Feast were held later in the day. Subsequently the practice grew up of the Grand Master and his officers and other distinguished brethren escorting the Grand Master Elect in coaches from his mansion in the West End to the particular hall in the City where the Annual Assembly was to be held. The procession on the occasion of the installation of the Duke of Norfolk as Grand Master on 29 January 1729/30 has been described by Anderson in his Constitutions of 1738 (pp, 124 5) in some detail:

Kingston Grand Master with his Deputy and Wardens, attended the Grand Master Elect in the Morning, at his Grace's House in St. James's Square; where he was met by a vast Number of Brothers duly clothed, and from thence they went to the [Merchant Taylor's] Hall Eastward in the following Procession of March, viz.

Brother Johnson to clear the Way.

Six of the Stewards clothed proper with their Badges and White Rods, Two in each Chariot. [300]

Brothers without Distinction duly clothed, in Gentlemen's Coaches.

The noble and eminent Brethren duly clothed, in their own Chariots.

Former Grand Officers not noble, clothed proper, in Gentlemen's Coaches.

Former noble Grand Masters clothed proper, in their own Chariots.

The Secretary alone with his Badge and Bag, clothed, in a Chariot.

The Two Grand Wardens clothed proper with their Badges, in one Chariot.

The D.G. Master alone clothed proper with his Badge in a Chariot.

Kingston Grand Master clothed proper with his Badge, in one Coach.

Norfolk G.M. Elect clothed only as Mason

The Duke of Norfolk's Coach of State empty.

These carriage parades of Grand Lodge undoubtedly lent themselves to the ridicule of the humorists, but it was not apparently until the 1740 that mock processions were organised by opponents. Probably these burlesques led Grand Lodge in 1747 to decide to discontinue the procession to the Grand Feast.(1)

The Grand Lodge of England was not the only Masonic body to organise public processions. In The Dublin Weekly Journal of 26 June 1725 (2) there is an account of a meeting of the Grand Lodge of Ireland in Dublin on St. John's Day in Summer, which began with a carriage procession of about one hundred gentlemen, in "their aprons, white gloves and other parts of the distinguishing dress" of the Order, from the Yellow Lion, where they met to clothe themselves, to the Kings Inns, where the Assembly was held. If in the matter of processions the Irish masons copied their English brethren, it is by no means certain that they did not initiate the third form of publicity, namely, official visits to the theatre, at which the general public as well as masons were present. At these festivities Masonic songs were commonly incorporated in the play, or sung between the acts, the brethren joining in the chorus. Further, a prologue and an epilogue, often especially written for the occasion, were usually spoken by an actor or actress. The earliest surviving record of a Masonic visit to the theatre is contained in the above mentioned issue of The Dublin Weekly journal.

1 Chetwode Crawley, "Mock Masonry in the Eighteenth Century", A.Q.C., xviii, 129 46.  
2 E.M.P., 151 2. [301]

After the meeting of Grand Lodge and the subsequent dinner, they all went to the Play, with their Aprons, &c. the private Brothers sat in the Pit, but the Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master, and Grand Wardens, in the Governments Box, at the Conclusion of the Play, Mr. Griffith the Player, who is a Brother, sung the Free Mason's Apprentices Song the Grand Master and the whole Brotherhood joining in the Chorus.

Whether this unnamed play was bespoken by the Fraternity is not known, though a few years later the bespeaking of plays by the freemasons was not unusual. The earliest reference of this kind which we have traced is contained in the minutes of Grand Lodge for 27 December 1728: (1)

The Grand Master [Lord Kingston] proposed going to the Old Play House on next munday Night [30 December] and desired as many of the Brethren, (as could conveniently go) to accompany him; That he had bespoke a Play and had ordered a new Prologue and Epilogue to be made, which was to be spoken that Night on the Stage in Honour of Masonry.

The prologue, spoken by Wm. Mills, and the epilogue, spoken by Mrs. Thurmond, were printed in Cole's Constitutions of 1728 29 and 1731, (2) from which we learn that the play was the Second Part of King Henry IV, into which the Prentice's Song was introduced, the brethren joining in the chorus.

1 Q.C.A., x, 96.

2 Reprinted in E.M.P., 208 9. [302]

On 12 February 1729/30, a similar visit was made to the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane; the Prentice's and the Master's Songs were incorporated in the play, and a new prologue and epilogue were written for the occasion by Nathaniel Blackerby, Deputy Grand Master.(1) Other prologues and epilogues of the period have survived;(2) the prologues are generally in praise of masonry, the epilogues defences of masons against the charge of being womanhaters. By way of sample, we quote a few lines from those spoken at Drury Lane on 30 December 1728:

#### PROLOGUE, SPOKEN BY MR. WILLIAM MILLS

You've seen me oft in Gold and Ermine drest,  
And wearing short liv'd Honours on my Breast,  
But now the Honourable Badge  
I wear, Gives an indelible high Character.  
And thus by our Grand Master I am sent,  
To tell you what by Masonry is meant.  
If all the social Virtues of the Mind,

If an extensive Love to all Mankind,  
If hospitable Welcome to a Guest,  
And speedy Charity to the Distrest,  
If due Regard to Liberty and Laws,  
Zeal for our King, and [for] our Country's Cause;  
If these are Principles deserving Fame,  
Let Masons then enjoy the Praise they claim.

#### EPILOGUE, SPOKEN BY A MASON'S WIFE

Ye marry'd Ladies, 'tis a happy Life,  
Believe me, that of a Free Mason's Wife.

Tho' they conceal the Secrets of their Friends,  
In Love and Truth they make us full Amends.

Of the songs sung on the occasions of Masonic bespeaks probably the oldest, and certainly the most famous, is The Enter'd 'Prentices Song. Both the words and the music are ascribed by Anderson, in the Constitutions of 1723, to the recently deceased Matthew Birkhead, who, as Master of Lodge V, had signed the "Approbation" to this edition of the Constitutions. Birkhead was a low comedy actor, dancer, and singer at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, from about 1705 to shortly before his death on 30 Dec 1722. Doubt, without evidence to support it, has frequently been expressed by Masonic commentators about the validity of the ascription.

1 Ibid., 229 32.

2 Ibid., 285, 290, 291, 324, 325 [303]

Nevertheless, the contemporary ascription to Birkhead of the words of some six other songs is not lightly to be disregarded, even though we have not yet found any other song the music of which is ascribed to him. Dr. W. H. Grattan Flood asserted (1) that the music of The Enter'd 'Prentices Song was that of a song, "A Lusty Young Smith", which had appeared in D'Urfey's Wit and Mirth, Vol. II (1699 1700 edn.), and also that it was similar to an "Ancient Munster March and Jig", (2) for which considerable antiquity was claimed, collected by Petrie, and printed in the Petrie Stanford Collection of Irish firs (1903 5 edn.), no. 932.(3)

1 Lepper and Crossle, 137.

2Ibid., 137.

3 George Petrie published Vols. I II of his Collection at Dublin, 1855; Stanford reprinted and completed the publication in 1903 5. The March appears only in Stanford's continuation. [304]

Our colleague, Douglas Hamer, will discuss the history of The Enter'd 'Prentices Song in a future volume. He finds that the air of this Masonic song only resembles that of "A Lusty Young Smith" in the opening two bars and in one bar later, and that it in no way resembles the "Ancient Munster March". What similarity there is between the air of the Masonic song and that of "A Lusty Young Smith" is no greater than is ever found among the songs in any one period of song writing, and there is no reason to discredit the composer, or to accept the fictitious Irish origin found for it by Grattan Flood. Our colleague has also found that The Enter'd 'Prentices Song was never issued as part of The Bottle Companions, a matter to be discussed later, and he suggests that both the words and the music were specially composed for the social occasion which followed the initiation of the first noble Grand Master, the Duke of Montagu, probably in the first half of 1721.

The many allusions in the song to "noble", and especially the punning allusion in the line "So Noble a Toast", are unmistakable allusions to the presence in a lodge of a nobleman who had just been initiated, and was now having his health drunk.

Our colleague suggests that, in keeping with the normal practice of the day, the music and words were issued immediately afterwards on engraved sheets, under the title of The Free Mason's Health, and that it was still a fairly recent publication in this form when the words alone were reprinted in Read's Weekly Journal on 1 December 1722. Under the title of The Free Mason's Health the song was re issued as an engraved sheet, and appeared in several song book collections down to 1739. In this form it thus had a distinct history of its own.

Anderson revised the words slightly for the reprint of this song which he included in the appendix of four official Masonic songs - The Master's Song, The Warden's Song, The Fellow Craft's Song, and The Enter'd 'Prentices Song - which he added to the 1723 Constitutions, and it was undoubtedly he who then gave it, to make it uniform with the titles of the three other songs, its most famous title, The Enter'd 'Prentices Song. When Anderson printed the music, on another page, however, he took it, together with the words of the first stanza (which he thus reprinted twice), from a copy of the engraved version of The Free Mason's Health. This is proved by the fact that the version of the words of the first stanza reprinted with the music is identical with that in The Free Mason's Health;

it does not contain the alteration contained in The Enter'd 'Prentices Song version. Anderson's version outlived the other, but it is more than possible that down to about 1730, and perhaps down to about 1735, the engraved version was more frequently sung in the lodges, and at bespeaks, than his: an engraved sheet was more portable than Anderson's quarto. (1) The disappearance of The Free Mason's Health version after 1739 may actually have been due to the publication of the more portable Pocket Companion of 1735, the publication of which so annoyed Anderson, and to Cole's Constitutions of circa 1728-30.

1 Unless single sheet printed editions containing another song on the other side [similar to Faulkner's Dublin edition (c. 1725) of The Enter'd 'Prentices Song and The Fellow Craft's Song] had been issued in London. No copy of such a printed edition, if any was published, has survived, but the possibility that Faulkner pirated a London publication is by no means to be ignored. [305]

Our colleague accepts the ascription of "The Ladies' Stanza" to Springett Penn, even though that evidence is less positive than the ascription of the whole song to Birkhead, but thinks that the social implications are such that it might equally well have been written by Penn in London as in Ireland. He believes, however, that the tentative way in which that stanza appears in the London edition of Smith's Pocket Companion (1734 5) indicates that it was not widely accepted in the London lodges frequented mainly by English masons, though it may have been sung in the London lodges to which a considerable number of Irishmen belonged. The way in which the Dublin edition of that work (1735) prints it in the proper place, without rubric, indicates that it had been fully accepted by Dublin freemasons. The song, however, is not quite as old as has been thought. Grattan Flood discovered a copy of the engraved version in an undated volume of engraved drinking songs in the British Museum, called The Bottle Companions. (1) This volume has been variously dated circa 1710 and circa 1715 but it is now dated 1709. (2) Our colleague examined it this summer (1946), and found that though the volume is labelled on the spine The Bottle Companions it is not integral. It consists of two distinct portions: (a) an undated engraved song book, consisting of a title page, a list of contents page, and thirty four numbered pages of engraved songs, the whole engraved on thick paper, and entitled The Bottle Companions, and (b) a heterogeneous collection of eight undated engraved drinking songs on various kinds of thin paper, probably issued at various dates between 1710 and 1730, and certainly by different engravers. Our song is one of the eight: it does not appear in The Bottle Companions proper. Both groups were bound up together, to form a single collection of drinking songs of the period 1700-30, about the end of the eighteenth century, and it was then, and then only, that the whole volume was given the title on the spine of The Bottle Companions, (3) and that the titles of the eight songs were entered in pen and ink in the margin of the list of contents page of The Bottle Companions section. The history of The Enter'd 'Prentices Song, in whichever version, thus has nothing whatever to do with The Bottle Companions, or with its date.

1 Press mark, H. 34.

2 B.M. Catalogue of Music to 1800.

3 The spine was repaired about 1925 in imitation of the original: the new label undoubtedly reproduced the original one. [306]

Finally, our colleague suggests that the song was written by Birkhead for the occasion of the initiation of a nobleman into a lodge held at The Theatre Royal, Drury Lane,(1) and that Birkhead was probably the Master of this lodge at the time; also that the nobleman thus initiated was probably the Duke of Montagu, later, perhaps almost immediately afterwards, the first noble Grand Master.

#### SOME CONSEQUENCES OF MASONIC PUBLICITY

**Attacks upon Freemasonry** - Probably the attacks were far more numerous than the relatively few surviving documents would indicate. Thus in the dedicatory epistle to Francis Drake's speech of 27 December 1726, (2) there is mention of "all the Invectives daily bestowed upon us". Morgan's reference, in the Dedication to his Phrrnix [sic] Britannicus, (3) to fifty mercenary wretches nefariously or perjurally attempting to bespatter those who would only answer them with the scorn they deserve, also points to the frequency of the attacks on the craft. The grounds of the attacks, in so far as they can be analysed and separated, appear to fall under four main heads: (i) religion, (ii) morality, (iii) secrecy, and (iv) anti feminism.

1 The connection between certain members of the nobility and the theatre was so strong that the initiation of noblemen (and of some of the wealthy gentlemen) may well have begun in a lodge belonging to, or associated with, one of the theatres, and the introduction of Masonic 'bespeaks' may have had a theatrical rather than a Masonic origin. The rivalry between the Theatre Royal, the Haymarket Theatre, and the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, was strong, and each adopted tactics to make itself popular. The Masonic 'bespeaks' may have been one way of securing popularity for the Theatre Royal. The earliest known Masonic theatrical visit took place in Dublin, but it was not necessarily the first.

2 E.M.P., 198.

3 Ibid., 283. [307]

(i) **Religion** - In the earliest attack which we have traced, the leaflet of 1698 addressed "To all Godly People in the Citie of London", (1) freemasons are described as "the Anti Christ which was to come leading Men from Fear of God". It is possible, as mentioned on page 185 above, that this attack implies that freemasons were anti trinitarian, as having adopted a deistic attitude towards religion. Some thirty years later an anonymous author, writing under the name "Verus Commodus", (2) denounced the craft as anti trinitarian.

(ii) **Morality** - Some of the accusations are veiled, others quite open, and include such immoralities as sodomy and fornication, unspecified indecencies, gluttony and drunkenness. Regarding the two last, the most outspoken attack is contained in Chapter XV of Ebrietatis Encomium: or the Praise of Drunkenness, 1723, (3) in a passage which does not occur in the original French,(4) and which must, consequently, be attributed to the editor translator. According to the title page, the book was by "Boniface Oinophilus"; according to the advertisement of the book in The Evening Post of 18 20 June 1723,(5) the book was "Written by a person of Honour (who is a Free Mason) Author ou Eunuchism Displayed". Both Gould and Edward Armitage attribute the translation to Robert Samber,(6) who, under the pseudonym "Eugenius Philaethes jr.", is credited with the translation of Long Livers. That book is dedicated by the editor translator to the freemasons in a lengthy homily (7) in which, as a freemason of recent standing, he seeks to draw a picture of the aims and ideals that, in his opinion, should characterise the Society. Since, so far as we are aware, it has never been claimed that Samber was the translator of Eunuchism Displayed, it is unlikely that he was the translator of Ebrietatis Encomium if the advertisement of the book can be relied upon.

- 1 E.M.P., 34.
- 2 Ibid., 138.
- 3 Ibid., 108.
- 4 L'Eloge de l'Yvresse by Henri Albert de Sallengre.
- 5 Robbins, 72 3
- 6 Gould, Introduction to the Bain Reprint of Long Livers, pp. ix, x; Armitage, "Robert Samber", A.Q.C., xi, 106.
- 7 E.M.P., 43 [308]

Be that as it may, whether Ebrietatis Encomium was translated by Samber who claims in the dedication to Long Livers to be a freemason, or by a "Person of Honour", who according to the advertisement of the book was a freemason, it would seem that this particular attack on the craft was written by a member of the Fraternity. Nevertheless, an element of doubt must remain, for in Chapter XV the writer of the attack seems to suggest that he attended the General Meeting or Annual Festival of Grand Lodge as an intruder, by passing an examination with the assistance of a catechism. Ebrietatis Encomium implies that gluttony and drunkenness were but venial sins. It has in any case to be borne in mind that conviviality was a very widespread practice in the eighteenth century, and very far from being confined to freemasons. Francis Drake refers in his speech of 27 December 1726 (1) to "the pernicious custom of drinking too deep, which we of our nation too much indulge", and adds, with expressions of regret, "that I have frequently observ'd it in our own most Amicable Brotherhood of Free Masons". That intemperance was not unknown among freemasons at a later date is implied by the admonition addressed to the junior Warden on his investment at installation meetings.

Charges of immorality and indecency are made openly in The Free Masons; an Hudibrastick Poem, 17223, (2) and are hinted at in The Free Masons. Accusation and Defence, 1726. (3) The latter pamphlet is the most subtle of the contemporary attacks on the craft; nominally it consists of three letters by a father against freemasonry and three by a son who wishes to enter the Fraternity defending the craft. It is probable, however, that the attack was merely cast in the form of letters, and that the whole document was written by one person, the rather feeble replies of the supposed would be candidate serving as a foil to the insinuations and innuendoes contained in the critic's letters.

(iii) **Secrecy** - Although secrecy was generally regarded by opponents as sheltering immorality and indecency, occasionally there are suggestions of illegal political activities. This would appear to have been the case at Canterbury in 1732, (4) and at The Hague in 1735.(5)

- 1 E.M.P., 197.
- 2 Ibid., 84.
- 3 Ibid., 157.
- 4 Ibid., 286.
- 5 Ibid., 334. [309]

(iv) **Anti feminism** - The anti feminist argument is developed in The Free Masons Accusation and Defence, where the dismay of the young man's mother, sisters and fiancée at his intended admission into the craft is pictured in lively terms.

**Skits upon Freemasonry** - Of the skits, the most comprehensive is the first part of Peter Farmer's New Model for the Rebuilding masonry on a Stronger Basis than the former, 1730, (1) which, like Prichard's Masonry Dissected, (2) is divided into three degrees. The Generous Free Mason, (3) a tragicomic farcical ballad opera published in 1731 contains an account of a mock initiation ceremony, which may be regarded in the light of a skit. An Answer to the FreeMasons Health, printed in The London journal of 10 July 1725, (4) is a parody on an early variant of The Enter'd 'Prentices Song. Of the advertisements poking fun at freemasonry, the Divertisement printed in Poor Robin's Intelligence for 10 October 1676 (5) is the most curious, and that about Antediluvian Masonry printed in an untraced journal of 1726 (6) the most instructive. The periodical, The Free Mason, No. 2, of 13 November 1733, (7) appears to be a burlesque aimed not only at freemasons, but at masons in a wider sense, and at critics of architecture.

The attacks upon freemasonry not unnaturally called forth replies. Just as the attacks were probably much more numerous than the relatively few surviving documents of this type would suggest, so the same may be true of replies to such attacks.

- 1 E.M.P., 237.
- 2 E.M.C., 108.
- 3 E.M.P., 258.
- 4 Ibid., 154.
- 5 Ibid., 30.
- 6 Ibid., 192.

7 It was a weekly periodical of which fifteen numbers were issued under the title The Free Mason, and nearly 1,000 under the title The Hyp Doctor. It was edited by 'Orator' Henley and financed by Sir Robert Walpole. Why Henley suddenly changed the name of his periodical after No. 155 of The Hyp Doctor, and as suddenly reverted to the original title after No. 15 of The FreeMason, we do not know. The title was perhaps suggested by that of his opponent, The Craftsman. Many of the numbers of The Free Mason have little or no Masonic bearing. Of the fifteen issues, Grand Lodge Library possesses No.1; the Bodleian has Nos. 1, 5, 7, 8, 10 12, 10, 15. We reprint Nos. 1, 3 and 5 in E.M.P. [310]

The Roberts print was a reply to a letter which appeared in The Post Man of 7 10 July 1722. (1) In a subsequent issue of the paper, (2) that letter was referred to as a piece of ribaldry or scurrility, but to judge by contemporary standards, or even by modern standards, the particular attack would appear to have been a very mild affair. A Full Vindication of the flncient and Honourable Society, 1726, (3) was a rejoinder to The FreeMasons lccusation and Defence of the same year. The letter and verses printed in The Universal Spectator of 20 May 1732 (4) were called forth by a proclamation of the Mayor of Canterbury directed against a local meeting of the craft, stigmatised as "an unlawful Assembly". The short pamphlet, lccount of what happened lately at the Hague on the Constitution of a Lodge, 1735, (5) is the reply of the Fraternity (6) to accusations contained in a proclamation of the Dutch Government of the day.

In addition to these four definite rejoinders directed against specific attacks, more than one Masonic song, prologue or epilogue contains words intended to uphold the honour of the craft against aspersions of one kind or another. A popular Masonic song, "Let Malicious People Censure", first printed, so far as we are aware, in Peter Farmer's New Model, 1730, appears in that pamphlet (7) under the heading "A song made by a Mason, occasion'd by a Report that they were guilty of Sodomitical practices". Another well known song "To all who Masonry despise", first traced in a Dublin pamphlet of 1734, (8) and later printed in Smith's Pocket Companion, 1734 5, (9) and subsequently in Anderson's Constitutions of 1738 as The Swordbearer's Song, also rebuts somewhat similar charges:

We have Compassion for those Fools  
Who think our Acts impure;  
We know from Ignorance proceeds  
Such mean Opinion of our Deeds.

1 E.M.P., 68.	4 Ibid., 286.	7 Ibid., 249.
2 Ibid., 72.	5 Ibid., 334.	8 Ibid., 297.
3 Ibid., 176.	6 Ibid., 333.	9 Ibid., 318. [311]

Parts of a Masonic prologue and of a Masonic epilogue spoken at Drury Lane on 30 December 1728 are quoted on page 303 above, the former containing, doubtless for the benefit of critics, an eloquent statement of what is meant by freemasonry; the latter containing a defence of masons from the charge of being women haters.

**Imitators and Rivals of Freemasonry** - Another consequence of the publicity surrounding freemasonry was the establishment of clubs or societies of a convivial type, modelled, at least in externals, upon freemasonry. These imitators were mostly mere rivals, but in at least one case, that of the Gormogons, they appear to have been definitely anti Masonic. The subject of early imitative societies formed the basis of Henry Sadler's inaugural address to the Quatuor Coronati Lodge on 8 November 1910. (1) His information was chiefly culled from contemporary advertisements, to one of which, relating to Antediluvian Masonry and dating from 1726, we referred above. Whether there was a Society of Antediluvian Masons is doubtful; the whole advertisement (2) gives the impression of being a skit written by some well informed person. In the advertisement there are mentioned the Honorary Masons, to whom Sadler found reference in the minutes of Grand Lodge of 28 August 1730, concerning the steps taken at the previous quarterly communication to prevent false brethren, "and such as call themselves Honorary Masons", from being admitted into regular lodges. (3) There is also reference in the advertisement to Apollonian Masons, whom Sadler does not attempt to identify, but whom J. E. S. Tuckett (4) tentatively and, in our opinion, with great probability, equates with the members of the musical Masonic club, "Philo Musicae et Architecturae Societas Apollini".(5)

Two early rival societies were the Khaibarites and the Gormogons. The former was certainly in existence as early as 1726, in which year was published An Ode to the Grand Khaibar.(6) poking fun at the legendary history of masonry,

1 A.Q.C., xxiii, 324.  
2 E.M.P., 192.  
3 Q.C.A., x, 128.  
4 A.Q.C., xxvi, 31.

5 In compliment to this society, the name of the Queen's Head tavern, near Temple Bar, where it met, was in October 1725 changed to "The Apollo" (Q.C.A., ix, 79).

6 E.M.P., 185 [312]

more particularly as contained in Anderson's Master's Song. (1) That is clearly shown in the following stanza from the Ode:

So pleas'd with Dreams the Masons seem, To tell their Tales once more they venture; And find an Author worthy them, From Sense and Genius a Dissenter:	In doggrel Lyrick, worse than Prose, Their Story he again rehearses; But nothing of a Poet shows, Excepting Fiction in his Verses.
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The Society of the Grand Khaibar is described in Prichard's Masonry Dissected, 1730, (2) as "the most free and open Society ... which consists of a select Company of Responsible People, whose chief Discourse is concerning Trade and Business, and promoting mutual Friendship without Compulsion or Restriction". In The Merry Thought of circa 1730 we find a reference to "Grand Keybar", Gormogons and Free Masons as "learned societies", coupled with the Royal Society. (3) **The Gormogons flourished from about 1724 to 1731, an active supporter, if not the actual originator, being the Duke of Wharton**, that brilliant but eccentric and profligate nobleman who was Grand Master of the Freemasons in 1722-23 (4) The Gormogons were not merely rivals of the freemasons but definitely enemies. The main information about this Society is contained in an essay in The Plain Dealer of 14 September 1724 (5) and in a letter of "Verus Commodus" of 1725. (6) The Gormogons are referred to in conjunction with the Freemasons in a poem, "The Moderator between the Free Masons and Gormogons", (7) printed in the third edition of H. Carey's Poems on Several Occasions, 1729, and receive a somewhat unflattering mention in two advertisements in The Daily journal of 28 October 1724 (8) and 19 November 1726. (9)

1 Constitutions of 1723, 75 (E.M.P., 92).	4 Gould, "Duke of Wharton", A.Q.C., viii,	7 Ibid., 229.
2 E.M.C., 109.	114.	8 Ibid., 135.
3 E.M.P., 236.	5 E.M.P., 130.	9 Ibid., 196. [313]
	6 Ibid., 140.	

Two imitators of freemasonry, who were possibly established as early as 1730, but whose heyday was undoubtedly in the second half of the eighteenth century, were the Gregorians (1) and the Bucks. (2)

**The so called 'Exposures'** - Because of the publicity freemasonry had received, public curiosity about it was widespread in the third decade of the eighteenth century. Among other publications which helped to satisfy the public appetite for Masonic titbits were



some Masonic examinations or catechisms professing to disclose the secrets of freemasonry. These so called 'exposures' usually claimed to be either confessions of disgruntled masons, or compilations from the papers of deceased brethren. They were published sometimes as broadsheets, sometimes as pamphlets, and sometimes as newspaper articles. Eight of these documents printed during the period 1722-30 have been traced:

(i) A missing catechism referred to by the editor translator of *Ebrietatis Encomium*, 1723: (3)

An Eyewitness of this [their great friendship to the Vintners] was I myself, at their late general meeting at Stationer's Hall, who having learned some of their Catechism, passed my examination, paid my five shillings, and took my place accordingly.

*Ebrietatis Encomium* was advertised for sale on 18-20 June 1723 as "Just published"; (4) hence the "general meeting" referred to cannot be that held on 24 June 1723 (at the Merchant Taylors' Hall), (5) but must presumably be that held on 24 June 1722 at Stationers' Hall, when the Duke of Wharton was proclaimed Grand Masters. (6) If the "catechism" in question was a printed version, it must have been published before 24 June 1722.

1 W. H. Rylands, *J.A.Q.C.*, xxi, 91.  
2 W. H. Rylands, *ibid.*, iii, 140.  
3 *E.M.P.*, 108.

4 Robbins, 72.  
5 Anderson's *Constitutions of 1738*, 115.  
6 *Ibid.*, 114. [314]

(ii) A catechism without title, printed in *The Flying Post* of 11-13 April 1723, now always known by the heading supplied by Gould when he reprinted it in his *History*, viz., *A Mason's Examination*. (1)

(iii) An anonymous pamphlet, *The Grand Mystery of FreeMasons Discovered*, 1724, (2) of which a second edition, *The Grand Mystery of the Free Masons Discovered*, was published in 1725, and reprinted by Gould in his *History*.

(iv) A missing document, published in *The Post Boy* about 1724 or 1725, referred to in *The Free Masons Accusation and Defence*, 1726, (3) and also in the last stanza of the song, "To all who Masonry despise". (4)

(v) and (vi) *The Whole Institutions of Free Masons Opened*, 1725, (5) and *The Grand Mystery Laid Open*, 1726. (6) These two items are broadsheets, of each of which only a single exemplar would appear to have survived.

(vii) *The Mystery of Free Masonry*, 1730. This appeared both as a broadside and as an article in *The Daily Journal* of 15 August 1730. It was also issued as a broadside under two other titles, *The Mystery and Motives of Freemasonry Discovered*, and as *The Puerile Signs and Wonders of a Free Mason*. (7)

(viii) Samuel Prichard's *Masonry Dissected*, 1730. (8) The first edition of this pamphlet was, advertised on 20 October 1730, the second on 21 October, and the third on 31 October 1730. It was reprinted in *Read's Weekly Journal* of 24 October 1730.

We may now briefly consider the reaction of the craft, so far as it can be traced, to the publication of these eight so called 'exposures'. Regarding the items listed above as (i), (v) and (vi), there is no information available. In the case of items (ii) and (iv) the attitude of the craft was clearly to make light of the supposed disclosures, if we may judge by the following stanza of a song published in *Smith's Pocket Companion of 1734* (9) and in *Anderson's Constitutions of 1738*: (10)

1 *E.M.C.*, 65.  
2 *Ibid.*, 70.  
3 *E.M.P.*, 174.  
4 *Ibid.*, 318.

5 *E.M.C.*, 81.  
6 *Ibid.*, 91.  
7 *Ibid.*, 102.  
8 *Ibid.*, 108.

9 *E.M. P.*, 319.  
10 *Constitutions of 1738*, 212. [315]

Then let us laugh, since we've impos'd  
On those who make a Pother,  
And cry, the Secret is disclos'd  
By some false hearted Brother.  
The mighty Secret gain'd, they boast,  
From Post Boy, or from Flying Port.

Although the particular song has not been traced before 1734, we are convinced that either it must have been composed some ten years earlier, if the secrets gained from *Flying Post* or from *Post Boy* relate to those contained in issues of those papers of April 1723 and circa 1724, or there must have been further disclosures, which up to the present have not been traced in those journals about 1733 or 1734. Topical allusions, when first made, must almost necessarily refer to events of quite recent occurrence, or they would be pointless from the outset. According to *The Free Masons Accusation and Defence*, 1726, "the Free Masons were prodigiously nettled at the Publication of this *Post Boy*; yet . . . they put a Good Face on the Matter, and said there was nothing in it"; nevertheless, they apparently did their best to suppress all copies of the paper containing the disclosure. (1)

The publication of item (iii), *The Grand Mystery of FreeMasons Discover'd*, advertised for sale on 10 January 1723/4, possibly led to the appearance of an anonymous letter on "The Sisterhood of Free Sempstresses", (2) printed in *Read's Weekly Journal* of 25 January 1723/4. Bros. Lepper and Crossle (3) describe it as a travesty which professes to ridicule *The Grand Mystery*, but we have to confess that apart from the date of its publication (and that may be quite fortuitous) we can find nothing to connect it with *The Grand Mystery*. It gives us the impression of being a skit on freemasonry and on women.

In 1724, also, probably in August, there appeared in Dublin *A Letter from the Grand Mistress of the Female FreeMasons*, (4) an anonymous pamphlet described by Chetwode Crawley (5) and by Bros. Lepper and Crossle (6) as a caricature of *The Grand Mystery*. In our opinion, however, the Letter was just an eighteenth century 'tease', and,

1 *E.M.P.*, 174.  
2 *E.M.C.*, 176.  
3 *Hist. of G.L. of Ireland*, 446.

4 *E.M.C.*, 180.  
5 *Introductory Chapter to Sadler, Masonic Reprints*, p. xxx.  
6 *Loc. cit.* [316]

though in part an 'exposure', was in no way connected with, or a caricature of, The Grand Mystery.(1)

It was probably in the following year, 1725, that there was printed, also in Dublin, an anonymous and undated broadsheet, The Free Masons Vindication, being an Answer to a Scandalous Libel, entitled the Grand Mystery of the Free Masons, discover'd.(2) This definite rejoinder to The Grand Mystery was professedly by a freemason; whether the author of A Letter from the Grand Mistress was a freemason is uncertain; "The Sisterhood of Free Sempstresses", whatever its connection, if any, with The Grand Mystery, gives the impression of being the fantasy of a journalist seeking to fill a gap in a newspaper. Even if these documents were all three written by freemasons, they were clearly unofficial publications.

Item (vii), The Mystery of Free Masonry, led Grand Lodge to take action, as is shown by the following extract from the minutes of Grand Lodge, under date of 28 August 1730: (3)

1 E.M.C., 180.

2 Ibid., 134,

3 Q.C.A, x, 128. [317]

Dr. Desaguliers stood up and (taking Notice of a printed Paper lately published and dispersed about the Town, and since inserted in the News Papers, pretending to discover and reveal the Misteries of the Craft of Masonry) recommended several things to the Consideration of the Grand Lodge ...

The Deputy Grand Master seconded the Doctor and proposed several Rules to the Grand Lodge to be observed in their respective Lodges for their Security against all open and Secret Enemies to the Craft.

The publication of item (viii), Prichard's Masonry Dissected, in October 1730, is referred to in the minutes of Grand Lodge of 15 December 1730. The Deputy Grand Master denounced Prichard as an impostor, and the book as a foolish thing not to be regarded, but, in order to prevent lodges being imposed upon by false brethren or impostors, he proposed that no person should be admitted into any lodge unless duly vouched for by a member as a regular mason. (1) On the same day, 15 December 1730, there was announced in The Daily Post the publication "this day" of a reply to Prichard's pamphlet, viz., A Defence of Masonry, occasioned by a Pamphlet called Masonry Dissected. (2) This anonymous pamphlet was reprinted in Anderson's Constitutions of 1738 and in the second edition of Smith's Pocket Companion of the same year, so that it must be regarded as enjoying at least semi official approval. There was also published in 1730 another anonymous reply to Prichard, Viz., The Perjur'd Free Mason Detected. (3)

The reaction of the craft to the publication of the early catechisms, which we have been discussing, as also the fairly close relationship of the printed catechisms to the manuscript catechisms, (4) both suggest that the printed catechisms deserve a good deal more study than Gould would have us believe when he wrote:

Of one and all of these publications, it may be safely affirmed that the only persons who at any time have been deceived by them, were the extremely credulous purchasers upon whom they were palmed off as genuine revelations. (5)

1 Q.C.A., x, 135 6.

4 See E.M.C., 10 13.

2 E.M.C., 160.

5 A.Q.C., iv, 34 [318]

3 Ibid., 137.

## DEVELOPMENT OF FREEMASONRY OUTSIDE ENGLAND

After freemasonry had sprung up in England and Scotland, but before it had reached full maturity, it was transmitted from Great Britain to Ireland, and subsequently from England, Ireland and Scotland to every quarter of the habitable globe. The main features of Masonic evolution in Scotland, which in its early stages cannot be separated from Masonic development in England, have been discussed in previous chapters. The Scottish operative lodges continued to admit non operatives in the early eighteenth century, as in the seventeenth. It was not until 1736 that the Grand Lodge of Scotland was established more or less on the English model, and Scottish operative masonry was rapidly transformed into speculative or symbolical masonry. (1) In Ireland, where a lodge of accepted masons existed at Trinity College, Dublin, as early as 1688, working more or less on English lines, to judge by the Trinity College, Dublin, MS. of 1711, the Grand Lodge of Ireland can first be traced in 1725. Its earliest recorded meeting in June 1725, attended by members of six subordinate lodges, would not appear from the report (2) to have been the first, and the likelihood is that it was established in 1724, or even in 1723. The movement in favour of centralisation was probably stimulated by the publication of Anderson's Constitutions in 1723. Masonic activity in Ireland at this period was not restricted to Dublin; in 1725 the Society of Freemasons at Cork applied to the Corporation for a charter; by 1726 the Grand Lodge of Munster was already in existence, as is shown by its earliest preserved records. Although, in our opinion, as previously indicated, Ireland contributed little or nothing to the genesis of freemasonry, yet the later development of freemasonry, from about 1732 onwards, owes a great deal to that country. In the first place, the conservatism which characterised the Irish in their Masonic practices helped to preserve old customs which might otherwise have been lost. In the second place, the Irish system of ambulatory warrants granted to military lodges played a great part in the spread of freemasonry during the eighteenth century. The Grand Lodge of Ireland favoured this type of warrant much more than other English speaking Grand Lodges, and in many cases these Irish military lodges left behind them the germs of freemasonry in the many parts of the world to which British armies penetrated during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.(3)

1 Begemann, Freimaurei in Schottland, which largely served as a basis for Vibert, "The Early Freemasonry of England and Scotland", A.Q.C., xliii; J. A. Grantham, "Early Freemasonry in Scotland and the Founding of Grand Lodge", Manc. Trans., xxvi; Kippen and Brook, The Founding of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, issued by the Grand Lodge of Scotland in 1936.

2 The Dublin Weekly journal, 26 June 1725 (E.M.P., 151).

3 Caem. Hib.; Begemann, Freimaurei in Irland; and Lepper and Crossle, passim. [319]

There is a tradition, more or less substantiated, that the first lodge in France was founded in Paris by the Earl of Derwentwater in 1725. (1) It was not till 1732, however, that Viscount Montagu (G.M. 1732-33) granted "deputations" for lodges at Valenciennes and in Paris. (2) The latter appears in the MS. List of 1731 2, (3) the former first appears in Picard's engraving of 1735 (4) The minute

book of Grand Lodge shows that lodges were constituted at Madrid in 1728, (5) at Fort William, Bengal, in 1729, (6) and at Gibraltar in the same year .(7) From the same source we learn that a "deputation" appointing a certain **Daniel Cox to be Provincial Grand Master of the Provinces of New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania in America was issued in June 1730.**(8) He attended Grand Lodge in January 1730-31, but there is no evidence to show that he ever constituted a lodge, or that he ever made any return to Grand Lodge, as required by the terms of his appointment. According to Anderson, Lord Lovel (G.M. 1731-32) granted a "deputation" to Lord Chesterfield, ambassador at The Hague, to hold a lodge there to make Francis, Duke of Lorraine, a mason. (9) Before the end of 1736 "deputations" had been granted appointing Provincial Grand Masters in Lower Saxony, Russia, Andalusia, South America, and Gambia in West Africa, and for constituting lodges at Hamburg, the Castle of Aubigny in France,

1 J. E. S. Tuckett, "Early History of Freemasonry in France", A.Q.C., xxxi, and W. E. Moss, "Freemasonry in France in 1725 1735", A.Q.C.

2 Anderson's Constitutions of 1738, 194.

3 Q.C.A., x, 189.

4 Lane, Handy Book to the Lists of Lodges, 186.

5 Q.C.A., x, 83 5.

6 Ibid., x, 97 8.

7 Ibid., x, 98 9.

8 Ibid., x, 123 4.

9 Constitutions of 1738, 194. Lord Chesterfield was doubtless the brother who as Philip, Lord Stanhope, had been made a mason at Grand Lodge on 24 June 1721 (p. 192 above), and who attended the Annual Assembly and Feast at Stationers' Hall the same day (p. 294 above). This lodge at The Hague was presumably an occasional lodge constituted for a particular purpose, and quite distinct from the lodge at The Hague whose establishment was announced in The Daily Advertiser of 16 September 1734 A.Q.C., xxv, 370. It was that lodge, the authority for the constitution of which we have not traced, which incurred the displeasure of the Dutch Government in 1735 (E.M.R., 332). [320]

Lisbon, and Savannah in Georgia, North America. (1)

#### THE TRANSITION OF ACCEPTED INTO SPECULATIVE MASONRY

As Bro. Poole pointed out some twenty years ago, (2) and as we have stressed much more recently, the year 1730, rather than 1716 or 1717, marks the real close of what may be described as the pre Grand Lodge period. Though the year 1717 saw the formation of Grand Lodge by four London and Westminster lodges, yet, so far as one can deduce from the available evidence, the practices of the freemasons were approximately the same in the years immediately following 1717 as they had been in the years immediately before it. At the time, the formation of Grand Lodge was an event of very minor importance in the development of freemasonry, and in no sense constituted a milestone in Masonic history. In retrospect, however, it has become all important in the eyes of those Masonic students, of whom Begemann is one, who interpret freemasonry only as the organisation which has from time to time prevailed among freemasons, in preference to the more modern and wider conception of the subject, which regards freemasonry as comprising both the organisation and the practices which have at various times prevailed in the craft. The fact that the year 1717 saw the beginning of a new, and what ultimately proved to be a very important, form of Masonic Organisation, seems to have led Begemann to accept 1717 as marking an epoch in Masonic history, thereby overlooking the much more important fact, as it seems to us, that the ideas and practices underlying freemasonry underwent no important change, if any, in that particular year. As we see it, accepted masonry underwent gradual changes throughout a period of years stretching from well before 1717 to well after that date. The old accepted masonry of the late seventeenth century slowly evolved into the speculative masonry which prevailed in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

1 Anderson's Constitutions of 1738, 194 5.

2 A.Q.C., xxxvii, 4. [321]

Strictly speaking, no particular year can be picked out as forming a sharp dividing line between the old and the new, but if the Masonic historian, notwithstanding, feels obliged for practical purposes to divide his study into clearly defined periods, then the year 1730, which saw the publication of Prichard's *Masonry Dissected* and the more or less definite establishment of the trigradal system, is a much more fundamental dividing line than the year 1717.

Freemasonry during the third decade of the eighteenth century appears to have been substantially the same as in the pre Grand Lodge period. The various Masonic documents up to and including August 1730 have a strong family resemblance, apart from the legend of the Graham MS. After that date, the picture changes completely. The publication of Prichard's *Masonry Dissected* in October 1730 may be regarded as the last phase in the "battle of the degrees", even though it was probably a good many years before the trigradal system was universally adopted. Before the end of 1730, Grand Lodge was firmly established, the General Charity had begun to function, the two first Provincial Grand Lodges were in existence, and what is deserving of particular notice, the first lodges outside Great Britain and Ireland had been constituted. Thus the earliest speculative phase of freemasonry may be regarded as beginning about 1730, but speculative masonry had many modifications to undergo before it fully answered to the definition : "a peculiar system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols". Though some symbolism had doubtless crept into masonry by that date, it would not appear to have reached its full development for another forty or fifty years. Again, in 1730, the main motif of the explanatory legend communicated to candidates when instructed in the five points of fellowship was still concerned with an act of necromancy, namely, an attempt to obtain a secret from a dead body. This is the motif of both the Noah story and the Hiram story. It was not until later that a new orientation was given to the latter story, and that stress was laid on the unshaken fidelity of Hiram in refusing to betray the secrets of a master mason, and the five points of fellowship [322] were utilised to emphasise the beauty and duty of fellowship.

Just as accepted masonry had gradually evolved out of operative masonry during the century preceding 1730, so speculative masonry slowly transformed itself during the fourth and subsequent decades of the eighteenth century. Once masonry had spread outside Great Britain and Ireland its development became subject to new influences. Thus, commencing in 1737-38, translations of French 'exposures' began to appear, and French influence on the development of Masonic ceremonies began to make itself felt.

These new modifications we do not attempt to follow; with them speculative masonry entered upon a new phase, which we regard as outside the scope of a book on the genesis of freemasonry.

1 Vibert, "Eighteenth Century Catechisms", *Misc. Lat.*, xiv, 4 7, 17 22; S. N. Smith, *A.Q.C.*, lvi, 4 5.

## BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

THE works quoted in our text and footnotes will show readers the primary and secondary authorities on which we rely.

The standard bibliography of freemasonry is August Wolfstieg, *Bibliographie der Freimaurerischen Literatur*, published in 1911-13 in three volumes by the Verein Deutscher Freimaurer. It lists some 43,000 items. A second enlarged edition in four volumes, published in 1923-26, lists some 54,000 items; nevertheless it omits many modern English and American publications.

Mention may be made of five small specialised bibliographical studies. The first three are self explanatory: E. H. Dring, "A Tentative List of English References to, and Works on Freemasonry, published before 1751", *A.Q.C.*, xxv (1912); L. Vibert, *The Rare Books of Freemasonry*, 1923; J. T. Thorp, *Bibliography of Masonic Catechisms and Exposures*, 1929. The short bibliography appended to our *Mediaeval Mason*, 1933, relates exclusively to operative masonry. Our *Handlist of Masonic Documents*, 1942, gives particulars about all versions of the MS. Constitutions of Masonry and certain other documents required in tracing the rise and development of freemasonry. Wherever prints or reprints of manuscript or printed authorities are available, we indicate where they are to be found.

Just as students of constitutional, political or economic history have to rely to a considerable extent upon printed editions of their documents, such, for instance, as those in the great collections of Migne's *Patrologia*, the *Rolls Series*, or the *Early English Texts Society*, so students of Masonic history have usually to depend for their documents on reproductions or reprints. We draw attention here to the principal collections of Masonic prints or reprints used by us in this volume.

(i) The ten volumes of *Quatuor Coronatorum Antigrapha*, the Masonic reprints of the *Quatuor Coronati Lodge*, No. 2076, London, published from 1890 to 1913, which include reproductions of several versions of the MS. Constitutions of Masonry, a facsimile of Anderson's Constitutions of 1738, and the minutes of Grand Lodge from 1723 to 1739, these last transcribed and edited by W. J. Songhurst.

(ii) The fourteen volumes of *Masonic Reprints* issued from 1907 to 1931 by the *Lodge of Research*, No. 2429, Leicester, under the editorship of J. T. Thorp. These mainly consist of rare pamphlets of the second half of the eighteenth century.

(iii) The three volumes of *Caementaria Hibernica*, 1895 1900, edited by W. J. Chetwode Crawley, which include reproductions of Pennell's Constitutions of 1730, and the Dublin edition of Smith's *Pocket Companion* of 1735. In each case the Songs are omitted. [325]

(iv) The "Yorkshire" *Old Charges of Masons*, 1935, published by the *Leeds Installed Masters' Association*, and edited by H. Poole and F. R. Worts. In this volume are printed some twenty versions of the *Old Charges* with Yorkshire associations, including the *William Watson*, the *Tew*, and *York No. 1*.

(v) Three volumes published by the *Manchester University Press* and edited by ourselves in collaboration with our colleague Douglas Hamer.

(a) *The Two Earliest Masonic MSS.*, 1938. We print the *Regius MS.* (B.M. Bib]. Reg. 17 Ar) and the *Cooke MS.* (B.M. Add. M.S. 23198) facing each other, introducing blank spaces in our transcripts where necessary to secure correspondence. Opposite the later portions of the *Regius MS.* we reproduce the parallel portions from *John Mirk's Instructions for Parish Priests*, and the whole of the anonymous poem *Urhanitatis*.

(b) *The Early Masonic Catechisms*, 1943. This volume contains all the known Masonic catechisms written, or relating to the period, before 1731, together with five rejoinders, or possible rejoinders, published between 1724 and 1731.

(c) *Early Masonic Pamphlets*, 1945. We reprint a selection of Masonic pamphlets, broadsides, newspaper articles and advertisements printed during the years 1638 to 1735, together with shorter or longer extracts of Masonic interest from contemporary works of a general character.

(vi) Finally, attention may be drawn to a quarto volume published by Quaritch in 1923, a facsimile reproduction of Anderson's *Constitutions of 1723*, with an introduction by Lionel Vibert.