

Old Grand Lodge at York

The Mother Grand Lodge of English Freemasons 1705

The Mother Grand Lodge was renamed in 1725 Grand
Lodge of All England

The General Assembly or Grand Lodge at York, continued regularly to meet as heretofore. In 1705, under the direction of Sir George Tempest Bathurst then Grand Master, several Craft Lodges met, and many worthy brethren were initiated in York and its neighbourhood. Sir George being succeeded by the Right Hon. Robert Benson, Lord Mayor of York, a number of meetings of the Fraternity was held at different times in that city, and the

grand feast during his Grand Mastership is said to have been very brilliant.

Sir William Robinson Bathurst succeeded Mr. Benson in the office of Grand Master, and the fraternity seem to have considerably increased in the North under his auspices. He was succeeded by Sir Walter Hawkesworth Bathurst who governed the Society with great credit. At the expiration of his Grand Mastership, Sir George Tempest was elected a second time Grand Master; and from the time of his election in 1714 to 1725, the Grand Lodge continued regularly to assemble at York under the direction of Charles Fairfax Esq. Sir Walter Hawkesworth Bathurst, Edward Bell esq. Charles Bathurst Esq. Edward Thomson Esq. M. P. John Johnson M. D. and John Marsden esq. all of whom, in rotation, during the above period, regularly filled the office of Grand Master in the North of England.

From this account, which is authenticated by the books of the Old Grand Lodge at York, it appears, that the revival of masonry in the South of England did not interfere with the proceedings of the Fraternity in the North. For a series of years the most perfect harmony subsisted between the two Grand Lodges, and private lodges flourished in both parts of the kingdom under their separate jurisdiction. The only distinction, which the Premier Grand Lodge in the North appears to have retained after the revival of masonry in the South, is in the title, which they claim, viz. The Grand Lodge of all England; while the new organization in the South passes only under the denomination of The Grand Lodge of England.

The latter, on account of its situation, being encouraged by some of the principal nobility, soon acquired

consequence and reputation; while the former, restricted to fewer, though not less respectable, members, seemed gradually to decline. Till within these few years, however, the authority of the Grand Lodge at York was never challenged; on the contrary, every mason in the kingdom held it in the highest veneration, and considered himself bound by the charges, which originally sprung from that assembly. To be ranked as descendants of the original York masons, was the glory and boast of the brethren in almost every country where masonry was established; and, from the prevalence and universality of the idea, that in the city of York masonry was first established by charter, the masons of England have received tribute from the first states in Europe.

It is much to be regretted, that any separate interests should have destroyed the social intercourse of masons; but it is no less remarkable than true, that the brethren in the North and those in the South are now in a manner unknown to each other. Notwithstanding the pitch of eminence and splendour at which the new "Grand Lodge in London" as arrived, neither the lodges of Scotland nor Ireland court its correspondence. This unfortunate circumstance has been attributed to the introduction of some modern innovations among the lodges in the South. As to the coolness, which has subsisted between the Premier Grand Lodge at York and the new organization at London, another reason is assigned. A few brethren at York having, on some trivial occasion, seceded from their ancient lodge, they applied to London for a warrant of constitution; and without any inquiry into the merits of the case, their application was honoured. Instead of being recommended to the Mother Lodge to be restored to favour, these brethren were encouraged in their revolt;

and permitted, under the banner of a "Grand Lodge at London", to open a new lodge in the city of York itself. This illegal extension of power justly offended the Mother Grand Lodge at York, and occasioned a breach, which time, and a proper attention to the rules of the Order, only can repair.

RW Bro. Drake a learned Antiquarian and Historian of York, in a speech delivered at a meeting held in 1726, calls Brotherly Love, Relieve and Truth, the three great characteristics of the Association. And declares that the first Grand Lodge ever held in England was first held at York. "This is sufficient to make us dispute the superiority with the (new) Lodges at London: but as nought of that kind ought to be amongst so amicable a fraternity, we are content that they (London) enjoy the title of Grand Master of England; but the Totius Angliae (All England) we claim as our undoubted right."

YORK CONSTITUTIONS

The York Constitutions are the Constitutions adopted by the General Assembly of Freemasons that was held at York. The original Charter at York was kept in the archives of the Old Lodge at York City and destroyed in the War of the Roses. Copies were made from memory and preserved in the British Museum with many other old Masonic Manuscripts. The General Assembly at York, did frame a body of laws or Constitutions.

In the year 926 A.D., there was held a General Assembly of Masons at York, England, called by King Athelstan's son Prince Edwin, wherein the great traditions of symbolic and operative masonry were constituted, revived, or organized, and a new code of laws for the governing of the Craft instituted.

"Soone after the Decease of St. Albones, there came Diverse Warrs into England out of diverse Nations, so that the good rule of Masons was dishired (disturbed) and put down vntill the tyme of King Adilston. In his tyme there was a worthy King in England, that brought this Land into good rest, and he builded many grat workes and buildings, therefore he loved well Masons, for he had a Sonne called Edwin, the which loved Masons much more then his ffather did, and he was soe practized in geometry, that he delighted much to come and talke with Masons and to learne of them the Craft. And after, for the loue he had to Masons and to the Craft, he was made Mason at Windsor, and he gott of the King, his ffather, a Charter and Comission once every yeare to have Assembly within the realms where they would within England, and to correct within themselves ffaults & trespasses that weere done as touching the Craft, and he held them an Assembly at Yorke and there he made Masons and gave them Charges, and taught them the Manners and Comands the same to be kept ever afterwards. And tooke them the charter and Comission to keep their Assembly, and Ordained that it should be renewed from King to King, and when the Assembly were gathered together he made a Cry, that all old Masons or young, that had any Writeings or Vnderstanding of the charges and manners that weere

made before their Lands, wheresoever they were made
Masons, that they should shew them forth, there were
found some in ffrench, some in greek, some in Hebrew,
and some in English, and some in other languages, and
when they read and over seen well the intent of them was
vnderstood to be all one. And then he caused a Booke be
made thereof how this worthy Craft of Masonrie was first
founded, and he himselfe comanded, and also then
caused, that it should be read in any tyme when it should
happen any Mason or Masons to be made to give him or
them their Charges, and from that time vntill this day
Manners of Masons have been kepte in this manner and
omen, as well as Men might governe it, and ffarthermore
at diverse Assemblyes have been put and Ordained
diverse Charges by the best advice of Masters and
ffellows."

THE LANSDOWNE MANUSCRIPT 1560

It is asserted in Masonic histories that, up to 1561, York
was paramount in Masonic Government, and the existing
remnants of the old Guild system teaches that the Trent
was the division line.

The Old York Grand Lodge was in existence evidently
during the seventeenth century and much earlier. The
annual Assembly was held in the City of York by the
Freemasons for centuries, and is so acknowledged
virtually by all the manuscripts from the fourteenth
century. A list of Master Masons of the York Minster,
during its erection, is preserved, of the fourteenth century;
legend and actual history agree in the fact that York was
the home of the Mason-Craft until modern times—the
Charter of Prince Edwin being one of the Earliest
Traditions

The Regular Grand Lodge of England is the representative of the Ancient York Grand Lodge the Mother Grand Lodge of Freemasonry.



YORK

York, the county seat of Yorkshire, is one of the oldest cities in England, and one of the most famous cities in the world, next after London itself.

Speculative Freemasonry's Mother City, it is also the great Masonic city. The Britons had a town on its site before the Roman occupation; the Romans themselves established a barracks there, and later organized the town and its environs as a colonial or municipality. It was for years the home of King Athelstan. When its Paulinus was made Archbishop in 627 A.D., it became the seat of an

Archbishopric which ever since has ranked second in importance only after Canterbury.

Alcuin of York was selected by Charlemagne as the teacher of himself and his sons (about 800 A.D.) because the cloister school of which Alcuin was head was so renowned, and because York itself was the Oxford of that day, and scarcely less known on the Continent than in England itself. The War of the Roses, "England a most terrible war," was fought between Yorkists and Lancastrians. It also had for some two centuries a primacy in the fine arts, and more Gothic architecture was crowded into its limits than in any other centre; its Minster is one of the sublimest structures ever built anywhere, or for any purpose. Its fame as a Masonic city rests on many foundations:

1. A Bishop of York attended the Council of Arles in 314 A.D., and the Council Records indicate that he was given precedence over the Bishop of London; such a Bishop must have had a Bishop's church, or cathedral, and it is likely therefore that York began to be a centre of architecture and of its sister arts and attendant skilled crafts as early as the Fourth Century.
2. Had Athelstan's name never been mentioned in the Old Charges he would have a large place in Masonic history because he was a King of Operative Freemasonry as well as King of England. York was Athelstan's home. He built or rebuilt many structures there, and it is probable that the city already had its guildhall, and very probably what later would be called a City Company of Masons. Also, he built and rebuilt much in London, and was so interested in the work personally that rules and regulations for craftsmen bulked large in his laws and edicts. Also, he was a city

builder, a role to which even kings are seldom admitted, for while Exeter had been a Welsh City before him, he moved the Welsh out and in their place built a new city according to a plan of his own. When the Old Charges attribute to Athelstan a great interest in Freemasonry and a great love for Freemasons they do not exaggerate- indeed, they fall short of the whole truth because apparently the author of the Old Charges knew nothing of Athelstan's work outside of York.

3. In one version of the Old Charges it is stated that at an Assembly of Freemasons in York in 926 A.D., Athelstan gave the Craft a Royal Charter, a document which carried in itself a higher authority than one issued by either the Church or any lord of lesser degree or any city; the other versions of the Old Charges say that Athelstan had been titular head of the Fraternity of Freemasons, but had made over his title and prerogatives to a son, Prince Edwin. Historians question this tradition because, first, it is unsupported by contemporary records; second, because no trace of a son of Athelstan named Prince Edwin has ever been found; third, no trace of the Charter itself, either in a copy or in quotation, has been discovered, although it is reasonable to think that the Freemasons would have preserved many copies of a document so important to themselves.

Gould questioned the tradition because he did not believe that General Assemblies of the Craft had ever been held, but his argument is dubious because if the Craft had not held assemblies a number of kings would not have issued edicts to prohibit them (see in this Volume, under Wycliff it is dubious in the case of Athelstan also because Gould apparently did not know what was insane by an

'assembly."

It is possible to reinterpret the whole problem of the Assembly at York and of the Royal Charter said to have been granted there, and to do so without stretching the evidence. Athelstan himself (and not through an agent) was a direct employer of Freemasons at York, at London, at Exeter, and doubtless elsewhere; that which was a written contract at the time may have come to be thought of as a charter afterwards. Also, as stated above, Athelstan himself drew up rules and regulations for the Freemasons, and incorporated them in his written laws- in so doing, and also while acting as an employer, both his own laws and contracts would specifically approve, at least by implication, the Freemasons' own rules and regulations. If these reasoning's be sound, the tradition of a Charter granted by Athelstan becomes true in substance if not true in form and for the Freemasons had the same point.

4. The first permanent Lodges were established about 1350 A.D. According to both civil and ecclesiastical law at the time such a body had to have a charter; it also had "to make returns," that is, to report their rules and regulations and their membership to the civil authorities. It is reasonable to believe that the Old Charges were written partly for each of these purposes.

If it be objected that the Old Charges are not a charter, but only the claim that Athelstan had already granted them a Royal Charter long before, the fact only proves that the Freemasons themselves in 1350 A.D. relieved literally in the "York tradition" but what idling this connection far more important (Gould and Mackey both overlooked that importance), the civil authorities

themselves believed it, and permitted the permanent Lodges to continue to work under the Old Charges. Had those civil authorities disbelieved it, they would have rejected the Old Charges and compelled the Lodges to seek civil charters.

Belief in the York tradition, and for whatever it may be worth, rests not on a modern theory about a supposed event a thousand years ago, but on a belief held by both Freemasons and civil authorities in the Fourteenth Century. The latter were four centuries removed from Athelstan, but that was not then as wide a gap in time as it would be now (when change is at least fifty times as rapid) because in the Middle Ages written official documents were preserved with great care; and this is especially true of York, as readers of Sir Francis Drake have discovered.

5. The Fabric Rolls of York Minster published in by the Surtee's Society (Durham 1859) we learn that in 1509 there were two Craft Lodges at York in existence, and the Historian Kugler says in his "Handbuch der Kunstgeschichte", that in the 12th and 13th century near York a school of Architecture was in existence.

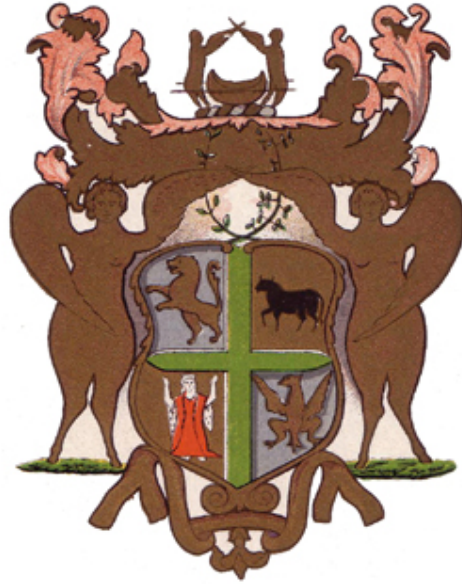
6. There was a Old Grand Lodge in York, no doubt of a predominantly Speculative membership, before the Grand Lodge was erected in London in 1723; how old it was there is no way of discovering, but it is on record as early as 1705 A.D. According to its own Minutes it was sometimes called a Grand Lodge, and sometimes a General Lodge —by this later term it was probably meant that it had set up daughter Lodges. In 1725 A.D. the Old Grand Lodge of York Grand Lodge of All England."

7. When a group of London Lodges set up in 1751 A.D. that Grand Lodge which everywhere was to become famous as the Ancient Grand Lodge, its appeal to English Masons who already had two Grand Lodges was based on its claim to recover and to preserve "the Ancient Customs;" these customs it attributed to the York Grand Lodge.

Both R. F. Gould and Wm. J. Hughan stigmatized this use of "York" as an "Americanism. " How could it have been when it originated in York itself, in the London Grand Lodge of 1751, A.D., and came to the American Colonies via Canada? Moreover it is only in popular and uncritical usage that "York Rite" is employed in America; the doctrine that Freemasonry originated in York has has been officially adopted.

The great work on York is the one entitled Eboracum, a thick tome of amazing erudition, written by the above-mentioned Bro. and Dr. Sir Francis Drake. It is a huge volume in fine print, almost suffocatingly packed with facts.

Any beginning Masonic researcher could look far for a better specialty it is a mine for Masonic essayists: in it countless old customs and symbols preserved in Freemasonry appear in the form of records or minutes made at the time of their use.



YORK LEGEND

The Masons Guild of York is said to date from A.D. 79 in the time of Agricola and they built a Roman temple at that time, and a Carpenters Guild which dated from A.D. 626, which build a church of wood on the model of the Tabernacle of Moses.

In the year 765 a renowned teacher of the liberal arts and sciences in York called Alcuin was commissioned by the Archbishop of York to oversee the building of a new church in that city along with another priest, Eanbald. He was, by this commission recognised as a Chief Master of building work such as those under Hiram Abif were expected to undertake. For anyone who is interested you should know that there is a poem written by this scholar architect that describes his task.

In the years that followed Alcuin was finally persuaded to move to Aachen in northern France to serve the Holy Roman Emperor, Carolus Magnus, as not only the head

of a new courtly school there but also to advise the Emperor on the building of his new Chapel, hence the other name of the place, Aix-la-Chapelle. What you should know is that in one of his letters to the Emperor Alcuin describes this new place of worship as being another "Temple of Solomon". Moreover, in an allegorical passage referring to the chief members of the court of Charlemagne, Alcuin is referred to by the name of either Flaccus or Mannon Graecus.

The City of York, in the North of England, is celebrated for its traditional connection with Freemasonry in the Kingdom. No topic in the history of Freemasonry has so much engaged the attention of modern Masonic Scholars, or given occasion to more discussion, than the alleged facts of the existence of Freemasonry in the tenth century at the City of York as a prominent point, of the calling of a Congregation of the Craft there in the year 926, of the organization of a General Assembly and the adoption of a Constitution.

During the whole of the eighteenth and the greater part of the nineteenth century, the Fraternity in general have accepted all of these statements as genuine portions of authentic history.

More recently, the discovery of many old manuscripts directed the labours of such Scholars as Hughan, Woodford, Lyon, and others, to the critical examination of the early history of Freemasonry, and that of York has particularly engaged their attention.

One must read both the tradition and the history. In pursuance of this plan, we propose to commence with the legends of York Freemasonry, as found in the old manuscript Constitutions, and then proceed to a review of

what has been the result of recent investigations.

The legend which connects the origin of English Freemasonry at York in 926 is sometimes called the York Legend, sometimes the Athelstane Legend, because the General Assembly, said to have been held there, occurred during the reign of that king; and sometimes the Edunn Legend, because that Prince is supposed to have been at the head of the Craft, and to have convoked them together to form a Constitution. The earliest extant of the old manuscript Constitution's is the Ancient poem commonly known as the Halliwell or Regius Manuscript and the date of which is conjectured, on good grounds, to be about the year 1390. In that work we find the following version of the legend:

Thys craft com ynto Englonde as y yow say
Yn tyme of good kynge Adelstonus' day
He made tho bothe halle and eke bowre
And hye templus of gret honowre
To sportyn him yn bothe day and nygth,
An to worsehepe hys God with alle hys mygth.
Thys goode lorde loved thys craft ful wel
And purposud to strengthyn hyt every del,
For dyvers defawtys that yn the erayft he fonde
He sende aboute ynto the londe
After alle the masonus of the crafte
To come to hym ful evene strayfte
For to amende these defautys alle
By good eonsel gef hyt mytgth fallen

A semblé thenne he cowthe let make
Of dyvers lordis yn here state
Dukys, erlys, and barnes also,

Knygthys, sqwyers and mony mo
And the grete burges of that syté,
They were ther alle yn here degré
These were there uehon algate
To ordeyne for these masonus astate
Ther they sowgton bv here wytte
How they myghthyn governe hytte:
Fyftene artyeulus they there sowgton,
And fyftene poylltys there they wrogton.

For the benefit of those who are not familiar with this archaic style, the passage is translated into modern English.

“This craft came into England, as I tell you, in the time of good king Athelstan's reign; he made then both hall, and also bower and lofty temples of great honour, to take his recreation in both day and night and to worship his God with all his might. This good lord loved this craft full well, and purposed to strengthen it in every part on account of various defects that he discovered in the craft. He sent about into all the land, after all the masons of the craft, to come straight to him, to amend all these defects by good counsel, if it might so happen. He then permitted an assembly to be made of divers lords in their rank, dukes, earls, and barons, also knights, squires, and many more, and the great burgesses of that city, they were all there in their degree; these were there, each one in every way to make laws for the estate of these masons. There they sought by their wisdom how they might govern it; there they found out fifteen articles, and there they made fifteen points.”

The next document in which we find this legend recited is that known as the Cooke Manuscript, whose date is

placed at 1490. The details are here much more full than those contained in the Halliwell Manuscript. The passage referring to the legend is as follows:

And after that was a worthy kyng in Englonde, that was callyd Athelstone, and his yongest son lovyd well the seiens of Gemetry, and he wust well that hand craft had the praetyke of the seiens of Gemetry so well as masons; wherefore he drew him to eonsell and lernyd [the] practyke of that sciens to his speculatyf. For of speculatyfe he was a master, and he lovyd well masonry and masons. And he bicome a mason hymselfe. And he gaf hem [gave them] charges and names as it is now usyd in Englonde and in other countries. And he ordeyned that they sehulde have resonabull pay. And purehesed [obtained] a fre patent of the kyng that they sehulde make a ssembly when thei sawe resonably tyme a [to] eum togedir to her [their] eonsell of the whiche charges, manors & semble as is write and taught in the boke of our charges wherefor I leve hit at this tyme.

This much is contained in the manuscript from lines 611 to 642. Subsequently, in lines 688-719, which appear to have been taken from what is above called the Boke of Charges, the legend is repeated in these words: In this manner was the forsayde art begunne in the land of Egypt bi the forsayd maister Euglat (Euelid), & so, it went fro lond to londe and fro kyngdome to kyngdome. After that, many yeris, in the tyme of Kyng Atdhelstone, whiche was sum tyme kyng of Englande, bi his counsell and other gret lordys of the land bi comin (common) assent for grete defaut y-fennde (found) among masons thei ordeyned a certayne reule amongys hem (them). on (one) tyme of the yere or in iii yere, as nede were to the kyng and gret lordys of the londe and all the eomente (community), fro

provynce to provynce and fro countre to countre congregations scholde be made by maisters, of all maimers masons and felaus in the forsayd art. And so at such congregations they that be made masters schold be examined of the articulls after written, & be ransacked (thoroughly examined) whether thei be abull and kunnyng (able and skilful) to the profyte of the lordys hem to serve (to serve theru), and to the honor of the forsayd art.

Seventy years later, in 1560, the Lansdowne Manuscript was written, and in it we find the legend still further developed, and Prince Edwin for the first time introduced by name. That manuscript reads thus: Soon after the Decease of St. Albones, there came Diverse Wars into England out of Diverse Nations, so that the good rule of Masons was dishired (disturbed) and put down lantil the tonne of King Adilston. In his time there was a worthy King in England, that brought this Land into good rest, and he built many great works and buildings therefore he loved well Masons, for he had a son called Edwin, the which Loved Masons much more than his Father did, and he was so practiced in Geometry, that he delighted much to come and talk with Masons and to learn of them the Craft. And after, for the love he had to Masons and to the Craft, he was made Mason at Windsor, and he got of the King, his Fathers a Charter and commission once every year to have Assembly, within the Realm where they would within England, and to correct within themselves Faults it Trespasses that were done ads touching the Craft, and he held them an Assembly, and there he made Masons and gave them Charges, and taught them the Manners and Commands the same to be kept ever afterwards. And tootle them the Charter and commission to keep their

Assembly and Ordained that it should be renewed from King to King, and when the Assembly were gathered together he made a cry, that 311 old Masons or Young, that had any Writings or Understanding of the charges and manners that were made before their Kings, wheresoever they were made Masons, that they should shew them forth, there were found some in French, some in Greek, some in Hebrew, and some in English, and some in other Languages, and when they were read and over seen well the intent of them was understood to be alone, and then he caused a Book to be made thereof how this worthy Craft of Masonic was first founded, and he himself commanded, and also then caused. that it should be read at any time when it should happen any Mason or Masons to be made to give him or them their Charges, and from that, until this Day, Manners of Masons have been kept in this manner and found, as well as Men might Govern it, and Furthermore at diverse Assemblies have been put and Ordained diverse Charges by the best advice of Masters and Fellows.

All the subsequent manuscripts contain the legend substantially as it is in the Lansdowne; and most of them appear to be mere copies of it, or, most probably of some original one of which both they and it are copies.

In 1723 Anderson published the first edition of the Book of Constitutions, in which the history of the Fraternity of Freemasons is, he says, "collected from their general records and their faithful traditions of many ages." He gives the legend taken, as he says, from "a certain record of freemasons written in the reign of King Edward IV," which manuscript, Bro. Preston asserts, "is said to have been in the possession of the famous Elias Ashmole."

As the old manuscripts were generally inaccessible to the Fraternity, and, indeed, until comparatively recently but few of them have been discovered, it is to the publication of the legend by Anderson, and subsequently by Bro. Preston, that we are to attribute its general adoption by the Craft for more than a century and a half.

The form of the legend, as given by Anderson in his first edition, varies slightly from that in his second. In the former, he places the date of the occurrence at 930; in his second, at 926: in the fourth, he styles the Congregation at York a General Lodge; in his second, a Grand Lodge. Now, as the modern and universally accepted form of the legend agrees in both respects with the latter statement, and not with the former, it must be concluded that the second edition, and the subsequent ones by Entick and Noorthouck, who only repeat Anderson, furnished the form of the legend as now popular.

In the second edition of the Constitutions (page 63), published in 1738, Anderson gives the legend in the following words:

In all the Old Constitutions it is written to this purpose, viz.:

That though the Ancient records of the Brotherhood in England were most of them destroyed or lost in the war with the Danes, who burnt the Monasteries where the Records were kept- yet King Athelstan (the Grandson of King Alfred), the first anointed King of England who translated the Holy Bible into the Saxon language when he had brought the land into rest and peace, built many great works, and encouraged many Masons from France and elsewhere, whom he appointed overseers thereof: they brought with them the Charges and Regulations of the foreign Lodges, and prevailed with the King to

increase the wages.

That Prince Edwin, the King's Brother, being taught Geometry and Masonry, for the love he had to the said Craft, and to the honourable principles whereon it is grounded, purchased a Free Charter of King Athelstan his Brother, for the Free Masons having among themselves a Connection or a power and freedom to regulate themselves to amend what might happen amiss and to hold an yearly Communication in a General Assembly.

That accordingly Prince Edwin summoned all the Free and Accepted Masons in the Realm, to meet him in the Congregation at York, who came and formed the Grand Lodge under him as their Grand Master, AD. 926.

That they brought with them many old Writings and Records of the Craft, some in Greek, some in Latin some in French, and other languages; and from the contents thereof, they framed the Constitutions of the English Lodges, and made a Law for themselves, to preserve and observe the same in all Time coming, etc., etc., etc.

Preston accepted the legend, and gave it in his second edition (page 198) in the following words:

Edward died in 924, and was succeeded by Athelstane his son, who appointed his brother Edwin patron of the Masons. This prince procured a Charter from Athelstane empowering them to meet annually in communication at York. In this city, the first Grand Lodge of England was formed in 926 at which Edwin presided as Grand Master. Here many did writings were produced in Greek, Latin, and other languages, from which it is said the Constitutions of the English Lodge have been extracted. Such is the York Legend, as it has been accepted by the Craft, contained in all the old manuscripts from at least the

end of the fourteenth century to the present day; officially sanctioned by Anderson, the historiographer of the Grand Lodge in 1723, and repeated by Bro. Preston, by Oliver, and by almost all succeeding Masonic writers.

Was there an Assembly of Freemasons held in or about the year 926, at York, under the patronage or by the permission of King Athelstan?

There is nothing in the personal character or the political conduct of Athelstan that forbids such a possibility or even probability. He was liberal in his ideal, like his grandfather the great Alfred; he was a promoter of civilization; he patronized learning, built many churches and monasteries, encouraged the translation of the Scriptures, and gave charters to many operative companies. In his reign, the faith-giklan, free gilds or sodalities, were incorporated by law. There is, therefore, nothing improbable in supposing that he extended his protection to the Operative Masons.

The uninterrupted existence for several centuries of a tradition that such an Assembly was held, requires that those who deny it should furnish some more Satisfactory reason for their opinion than has yet been produced.

Incredulity," says Voltaire, "is the foundation of history."

But it must be confessed that, while an excess of credulity often mistakes fable for reality, an obstinacy of incredulity as frequently leads to the rejection of truth as fiction.

The Reverend Moodford, in an essay on the connection of forts with, the History of Freemasonry in England, inserted in Hughan's Unpublished Records of the Craft, has critically discussed this subject, and comes to this conclusion: "I see no reason, therefore, to reject so old a tradition, that under Athelstan the Operative Masons obtained his patronage, and met in General Assembly."

To that verdict Doctor Mackey subscribed.

Was Edwin, the brother of Athelstan, the person who convoked that Assembly?

This question has already been discussed in the article Edwin, where the suggestion is made that the Edwin alluded to in the legend was not the son or brother of Athelstan, but Edwin, King of Northumbria Francis Drake, in his speech before the Grand Lodge of York in 1726, was, Doctor Mackey believed, the first who publicly advanced this opinion; but he does so in a way that shows that the view must have been generally accepted by his auditors, and not advanced by him as something new. He says: "You know we can boast that the first Grand Lodge ever held in England was held in this city, where Edwin, the first Christian King of Northumbria, about the six hundredth year after Christ, and who laid the foundation of our Cathedral, sat as Grand Master."

Edwin, who was born in 586, ascended the throne in 617, and died in 633. He was pre-eminent, among the Anglo-Saxon Kings who were his contemporaries, for military genius and statesmanship. So inflexible was his administration of justice, that it was said that in his reign a woman or child might carry everywhere a purse of gold without danger of robbery—high commendation in those days of almost unbridled rapine.

The chief event of the reign of Edwin was the introduction of Christianity into the kingdom of Northumbria. Previous to his reign, the northern metropolis of the Church had been placed at York, and the King patronized Paulinus the Bishop, giving him a house and other possessions in that city. The only objection to this theory is its date, which is three hundred years before the reign of Athelstan and the supposed meeting at York in 926.

Are the Constitutions which were adopted by that General Assembly now extant?

It is not to be doubted, that if a General Assembly was held, it must have adopted Constitutions or regulations for the government of the Craft. Such would mainly be the object of the meeting. But there is no sufficient evidence that the Regulations now called the York Constitutions or the Gothic Constitutions, are those that were adopted in 926. It is more probable that the original document and all genuine copies of it are lost, and that it formed the type from which all the more modern manuscript Constitutions have been formed. There is the strongest internal evidence that all the manuscripts, from the Halliwell to the PapltJorth, have a common original, from which they were copied with more or less accuracy, or on which they were framed with more or less modification. And this original Doctor Mackey supposed to be the Constitutions which must have been adopted at the General Assembly at York.

The theory, then, which Doctor Mackey in preparing this article concluded may safely be advanced on this subject, and which in his judgment must be maintained until there are better reasons than we now have to reject it, is, that about the year 926 a General Assembly of Freemasons was held at York, under the patronage of Edwin, brother of Athelstan, at which Assembly a code of laws was adopted, which became the basis on which all subsequent Masonic Constitutions were framed.



YORK MANUSCRIPTS

Originally there were six manuscripts of the Old Constitutions bearing this title, because they were deposited in the Archives of the Grand Lodge of All England, whose seat was at the City of York. But the manuscript No. 3 became missing, although it is mentioned in the inventory made at York in 1779. Nos. 2, 4, and 5 came into possession of the York Lodge. Brother Hughan discovered Nos. 2 and 6 in the Archives of the "Grand Lodge of England", at London. The dates of these manuscripts, which do not correspond with the number of their titles, are as follows: No. 1 has the date of 1600; No. 2, 1704; No. 3, 1630; No. 4, 1693; No. 5, is undated, but is supposed to be about 1670, and No. 6 also is undated, but is considered to be about 1680.

Of these manuscripts all but No. 3 have been published by the late Brother W. J. Hughan in his Ancient York Masonic Rolls, 1894. Brother Hughan deems No. 4 of

some importance because it contains the following sentence:

"The one of the elders taking the Booke, and that See or shee that is to be made mason shall lay their hands thereon, and the charge shall bee given." This, he thought, affords some presumption that women were admitted as members of the old Masonic Gilds, although he admits that we possess no other evidence confirmatory or this theory.

The truth is, that the sentence was a translation of the same clause written in other Old constitutions in Latin. In the York Manuscript, No. 1, the sentence is thus: "Tunc unus ex senioribus teneat librum et ille vel illi," etc., that is, "he or they." The writer of No. 4 copied, most probably, from No. 1, and his translation of "hee or sheen from "ille vel illi," instead of "he or they," was either the result of ignorance in mistaking illi, they, for illa, she, or of carelessness in writing shee for they.

It is evident that the charges thus to be sworn to, and which immediately follow, were of such a nature as made most of them physically impossible for women to perform; nor are females alluded to in any other of the manuscripts. All Freemasons there are Fellows, and are so to be addressed. There are two other York Manuscripts of the Operative Masons, which have been published in the Fabric Rolls of York Minster, an invaluable work, edited by the Rev. James Raine, and issued under the patronage and at the expense of the Surtees Society.

Yorkshire is notably rich in the old Charges, as besides those which formerly belonged to the York Grand Lodge, and are in possession of a modern Lodge there, there are others in private hands, and in the "West Yorkshire,

Masonic Library." It is stated in a Manifesto of the Lodge of Antiquity (1778) that there was one old MS. in the hands of Mr. Wilson, of Broomhead, near Sheffield, written in the reign of Henry VIII., which is now missing, and there appears to have been one dated 1560. The Lodge of Hope, Bradford, has a copy of circa 1680. It forms no part of our plan to give an account of these old MSS., but students of them are greatly indebted to the late Brother Thomas W. Tew, P.G.M. of the West Riding, who had eight of these, in possession of his Provincial Library, printed and distributed at his sole cost. Amongst them are the "Thomes W. Tew MS." circa 1680; the "Waistell MS.," circa 1693; and the "Clapham MS.," circa 1700. The Rolls in possession of the Lodge at York have also been printed by subscription; one of these, dated 1704, is headed with the same Anagram on "Masonrie" as that of 1600, but addressed by Robert Preston to Daniel Moul. It also appears in a Newcastle Roll, addressed by Richard Stead to his friend Joseph Claughton.

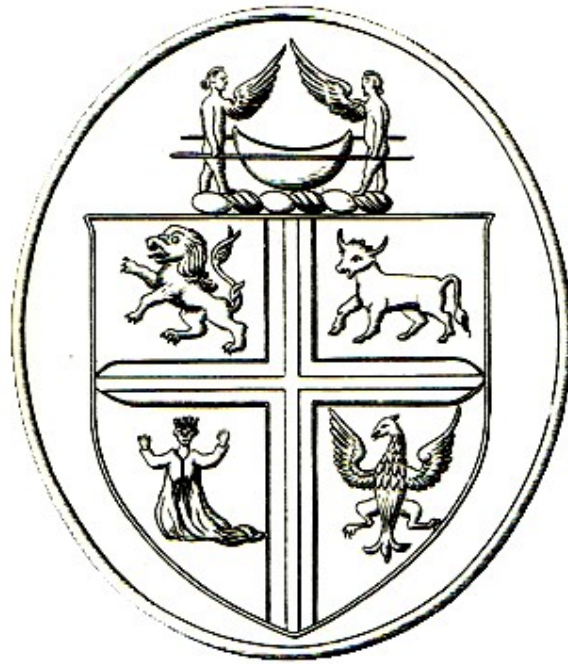
There are other documents at York, but none older than the reign of Anne, 1702-14. It seems that George Benson was President in 1705, and that he was followed by other gentlemen at each annual election. We learn also from an old copy of the Charges which has passed into the possession of the Grand Lodge of Canada, that a "Private Lodge" was held at Scarborough, Yorkshire, 10th July, 1705, with Wm. Thompson, Esq., as President, when six members were received whose names will be found in the facsimiles executed for the West Yorkshire Masons. Last century the Grand Lodge of All England at York had minutes from the year 1704, but they are not now to be found, they have, however, at the York Lodge some later

parchment Rolls, which to some extent take the place of minutes. The probability is that such information as we have prior to 1726 belongs to the Operative Guild.

On the 19th March, 1712, we read that several members were "sworne and admitted into the honourable Society and fraternity of free Masons by George Bowes, Esq., Deputy President." In 1713 the Ancient Lodge held a meeting at Bradford, "when 18 gentlemen of the first families were made Free-Masons." Meetings were held each succeeding year at York, those on St. John the Baptist's Day, in June, being termed a "General Lodge on St. John's Day," whilst the others are designated "Private Lodges." This was four years before any movement was made in London, and the meetings at Scarborough and at Bradford are in agreement with the ancient Constitutions which state that the Masons were to hold an Assembly "in what place they would"; and it seems very apparent that where the term "General Lodge" is used, as distinct from a "Private Lodge," it is the tradition of the ancient Assembly continued.

Again in 1716 it is minuted on this parchment roll as follows: "At St. John's Lodge in Christmas, 1716. At the house of Mr. James Boreham, situate Stone-gate in York, being a general Lodge held then by the Honoble. Society and Company of Free-Masons in the City of York, John Turner, Esqre., was sworne and admitted into the Said Honoble. Society and Fraternity of Free-Masons." "Charles Fairfax, Esqre., Dep. President." Lists of the Grand Masters are found in any Modern Masonic Cyclopaedia, but Brother Whitehead recently discovered in an old Armorial MS. that the name of Sir Wm. Milner, Bart., 1728, has been omitted, "being the 798th

Successor from Edwin the Great," apparently claiming an annual election of Grand Masters from the year 930.



ENGLISH FREEMASONRY AT YORK

Other evidences of the existence of the Grand Lodge at York have been given, dating back to the seventeenth century, notably the York MS. Of A.D. 1693, which contains " the names of the Lodge;" six in all, including the warden. A still earlier relic is a mahogany flat rule or gauge, with the following names and year incised:

William + Baron of Yorke 1663

John Drake John + Baron

(We are inclined to think that the John Drake mentioned was collated to the Prebendal Stall of Donnington in the Cathedral Church of York in October 1663, and if so, Francis Drake, the historian, was a descendant).

The existence of so many copies of the "Old Charges," as found a home in the archives of the Premier Grand Lodge of York. Their cumulative value is great, and will be hereafter considered. The names also, which appear on York MS. 4, at once carry us back to the existence of a lodge in 1693.

Which points to the vigorous vitality of York Masonry in 1705, and inferentially, to its continuance from a more remote period. At that date, as we learn from the minute-book (now missing) of the Old Grand Lodge at York, "Sir George Tempest, Barronet," was the President (G.M.), a position he again filled in 1706 and 1713. Among the subsequent Presidents were the Lord Mayor of York, afterwards Lord Bingley (1707), the following Baronets, Sir William Robinson (1708-10), Sir Walter Hawksworth (1711-12, 1720-23), and other persons of distinction.

The "Scarborough" MS. furnishes the remaining evidence, which attests the active condition of English Freemasonry at Yorkshire in 1705. This must have radiated to some extent at least, and an example is afforded by the proceedings at Bradford in 1713. These, we shall presently cite, but the position of York as a local and independent centre of the transitional Masonry, which interposed between the reigns of the purely operative and the purely speculative Societies. We learn at all events, from the roll referred to, that at an Assembly of Masons held at Scarborough "in the County of York," on the 10th of July 1705, "before" William Thompson, President (G.M.), and other Free Masons, six persons, whose names are subscribed, were "admitted into the fraternity."

Such Assemblies were frequently held in the county, and on the occasion of the York Lodge, meeting at Bradford in 1713, no less than eighteen gentlemen of the first families in that neighbourhood were made Masons. A further supposition presents itself, and it is, that we have here an example of the custom of granting written licences to enter Masons at a distance from the lodge, such as we find traces of in the Kilwinning, the Dunblane, and the Haughfoot minutes." If so, we may suppose that the precedent set by the Lodge of Kilwinning in 1677, when the Masons from the Canongate of Edinburgh applied to it for a roving commission or "travelling warrant," was duly followed, and that the Scarborough brethren were empowered to admit qualified persons "in name and behalf" of the Grand Lodge of York?

The York minutes inform us that three Private lodges were held in 1712 and the following Year, two General lodges in 1713-14, and a St John's Lodge at Christmas, 1716. We find the proceedings of three meetings described as those of the Honourable Society and Fraternity of Freemasons, whilst on two later occasions, Fraternity gives place to Company, and in the minutes of 1716, these terms axe evidently used as words of indifferent application.

The Deputy Presidents appears to have been persons of gentle birth and Esquires. It is worthy of note, that Charles Fairfax, who occupied the chair, June 24, 1714, is styled Worshipful in the minutes.

The earliest of the Grand Lodge of York minutes-now extant-are contained in a roll of parchment, endorsed 1712 to 1730, and for the following extracts we are

indebted to William James Hughan. The entire contents of this roll were copied for Hughan, by the late Mr William Cowling of York.

"March the 19th, 1712. - At a private Lodge, held at the house of James Boreham, situate in Stonegate, in the City of York, Mr Thomas Shipton, Mr Caleb Greenbury, Mr Jno. Norrison, Mr Jno. Russell, Jno. Whitehead, and Francis Norrison were all of them severally sworne and admitted into the honourable Society and fraternity of Free-Masons.

Geo. Bowes, Esq., Dep.- President.

Jno. Wilcock also Thos. Shipton. Caleb Greenbury. admitted at the Jno. Norrison. John Russell same Lodge. Fran. Norrison. John Whitehead. John Wilcock."

"June the 24th, 1713. - At a General Lodge on St John's Day, at the house of James Borehm, situate in Stonegate, in the City of York, Mr John Langwith was admitted and sworn into the honourable Society and fraternity of Freemasons.

Sir Walter Hawksworth, Knt. and Bart., President.

Jno. Langwith".

August the 7th, 1713. - At a private Lodge held there at the house of James Boreham, situate in Stonegate, in the City of York, Robert Fairfax, Esq., and Tobias Jenkins, Esq., were admitted and sworn into the honourable Society and fraternity of Freemasons, as also the

Reverend Mr Robert Barker was then admitted and sworn as before.

Geo. Bowes, Esq., Dep.-President.

Robert Fairfax. T. Jenkyns. Robt. Barber”.

"December the 18th, 1713. - At a private Lodge held there at the house of Mr James Boreham, in Stonegate, in the City of York, Mr Thos. Hardwick, Mr Godfrey Giles, and Mr Tho. Challoner was admitted and sworn into the honourable Society and Company of Freemasons before the Worshipful Sir Walter Hawksworth, Knt. and Bare., President.

Tho. Hardwicke.

Godfrey Giles.

His

Thomas T Challoner."

Mark

"1714. - At a General Lodge held there on the 24th June at Mr James Boreham, situate in Stonegate, in York, John Taylor, of Langton in the Woulds, was admitted and sworn into the honourable Society and Company of Freemasons in the City of York, before the Worshipful Charles Fairfax, Esq. John Taylor."

"At St John's Lodge in Christmas, 1716. - At the house of Mr James Boreham, situate [in] Stonegate, in York, being a General Lodge, held there by the honoble Society and Company of Free Masons, in the City of York, John Turner, Esq., was sworne and admitted into the said Honourable Society and Fraternity of Free Masons.

Charles Fairfax, Esq., Dep.-President.

John Turner."

"At St John's Lodge in Christmas, 172L-At Mr Robert Chippendal's, in the Shambles, York, Robt. Fairfax, Esq., then Dep.-President, the said Robert Chippendal was admitted and sworn into the honourable Society of Free Masons.

Rob. Fairfax, Esq., D.P.

Robt. Chippendal."

"January the 10th, 1722-3. - At a private Lodge, held at the house of Mrs Hall, in Thursday Market, in the City of York, the following persons were admitted and sworne into ye honourable Society of Free Masons:

Henry Legh. Richd. Marsh. Edward Paper.

At the same time the following persons wen acknowledged as Brethren of this ancient Society -

Edmd. Winwood. G. Rhodes. Josh. Hebson. John Vauner. Francis Hildyard, junr."

"February the 4th, 1722-3. - At a private Lodge, held at Mr Boreham's, in Stonegate, York, the following persons were admitted and sworn into the Ancient and Honourable Society of Free Masons.-

John Lockwood. Mattw. Hall.

At the same time and place, the two persons whose names are underwritten were, upon their examinations, received as Masons, and as such were accordingly introduced and admitted into

this Lodge.

Geo. Reynoldson. Barnaby Bawtry."

"November 4th, 1723. - At a private Lodge, held at Mr Wm. Stephenson's, in Petergate, York, the following persons were admitted and sworn into the Antient Society of Free Masons: -

John Taylor. Jno. Colling".

"Feb. 5th, 1723-4.-At a private Lodge at Mr James Borcham's, in Stonegate, York, the underwritten persons were admitted and sworn into the Antient Society of Free Masons:

Wm. Tireman. Charles Pick. Will. Musgrave. John Jenkinson. John Sudell."

"June 15, 1724. - At a private Lodge, held in Davy Hall, in the City of York, the under written persons were admitted and sworn into the Antient Society of Free Masons. Daniel Harvey. Ralph Grayme."

"June 22, 1724. - At a private Lodge, held at Mr Geo. Gibson's, in the City of York, were admitted and sworn into the Society of Free Masons the persons underwritten, viz.: Robert Armorer. William Jackson. Geo. Gibson."

"Dec. 28, 1724. - At a private Lodge, held at Mr Jno. Colling's, in Petergate, the following persons were admitted and sworn. into ye Society of Free Masons.

Wm. Wright. Ric. Denton. Jno. Marsden. Ste. Bulkley"

“July 21, 1725. - At a private Lodge at Mr Jno. Colling's, in Petergate, York, the following persons were admitted and sworn into the Society of Free and Accepted Masons.

Luke Lowther. Chas. Hutton”

"At an adjournment of a Lodge of Free Masons from Mr Jno. Colling, in Petergate, to Mr Luke Lowther's, in Stonegate, the following Persons were admitted and sworn into the Society of free and Accepted Masons - Ed. Bell, Esq., Master.

Chas. Bathurst. John Johnson. John Elsworth. Lewis Wood”

“Augt. 10, 1725. - At a private Lodge, held this day at the Star Inn in Stonegate, the underwritten Persons were admitted and sworne into the Antient Society of Free Masons, viz.

Jo. Bilton.

The Worshipful Mr Wm. Scourfield, Mr.

Mr Marsden, Warden

Mr Reynoldson, Warden

“Augt. 12, 1725. - At a private Lodge, held at the Starr, in Stonegate, the underwritten Person was sworn and admitted a member of the Antient Society of Free Masons, viz..

John Wilmer.

The Worshipful Philip Huddy, Mr

Mr Marsden, Warden

Mr Reynoldson, Warden

“Sept. 6, 1725. - At a private Lodge, held at the Starr Inn, in Stonegate, the underwritten Persons were sworn and admitted into the Antient Society of Free Masons.

William Pawson.

The Worsp. Wm. Scourfield, Mr. Edmond Aylward.

Jonathan Perritt, Warden Jon. Pawson.

Mr Marsden, Warden Francis Drake.

Malby Beckwith."

(Francis Drake was the Author of "Eboracum; or, History and Antiquities of the City and Cathedral Church of York, 1736." As Junior Grand Warden he delivered a speech at a meeting of the Grand Lodge of York, December 27, 1726, which will be noticed hereafter.)

"A new Lodge being call'd at the same time and Place, the following Person was admitted and sworn into this Antient and Honourable Society.

The Worshipful Mr Scourfield, Mr Henry Pawson.

Mr Jonathan Perritt, Warden

Mr Marsden, Warden

"Oct. 6, 1725. - At a private Lodge, held at Mr James Boreham's, the underwritten Person[s] was [were] admitted and sworn into the Antient Society of Free Masons.

Antho. Hall.

Philemon Marsh."

"Nov. 3, 1725. - At a private Lodge, held at Mr Hutton's, at the Bl. Swan in Coney Street, in York, the following Person was admitted and sworn into the Antient Society of Free Masons.

John Smith".

"Dec. 1st, 17215.-At a private Lodge, held at Mr Geo. Gibson's, in the City of York, the following Persons were

admitted and sworn into the Antient Society of Free
Masons before
The Worshipful E. Bell, Esq., Mt.

Mr Etty, Warden Will. Sotheran. John Iveson. Jos. Lodge."
Mr Perritt, Warden

"Dec. 8, 1725. - At a private Lodge at Mr Lowther's, being
the Starr, in Stonegate, the following Persons were
admitted and sworn into the Antient Society of Free
Masons.

Christof Coulton. Thos. Metcalfe. Francis Lowther.
George Coates. William Day".

"Dec. 24, 1725. - At a private Lodge, held at Mr Lowther's,
at ye Starr in Stonegate, the following Persons were
admitted and sworn into the Antient Society of Free-
Masons.

Matt. St Quintin. Tim. Thompson. Frans. Thompson.
William Hendrick. Tho. Bean."

"Dec. 27, 1725. - At a Lodge, held at Mr Philemon
Marsh's, in Petergate, the following gentlemen were
sworn and admitted into the Antient Society of
Freemasons. Leod Smith was also sworn and admitted at
the same time.

Chas. Howard.
Richd. Thompson".

"The same day the under mentioned Person was
received, admitted, and acknowledged as a member of
this Antient and Honourable Society.

John Hann.

Isaac T Scott."

"This day Dec. 27, 1725, Being the Festival of St John the Evangelist, the Society went in Procession to Merchant's Hall, where, after the Grand Feast was over, they unanimously chose the Wors . Charles Bathurst, Esqre., their Grand Master, Mr Johnson his Deputy, Mr Pawson and Mr Drake, Wardens, Mr Scourfield, Treasurer, and John Russell, Clerk for the ensuing year."

"Dec. 31, 1725.- At a private Lodge held at Mr Luke Lowther's, at the Starr in Stonegate, the underwritten Gentleman was sworn and admitted into the Antient Society of Free Masons." [Name omitted.]

Jan. 5, 1725-6.-At a private Lodge held at Mr John Colling's at ye White Swan in Petergate, the underwritten persons were sworn and admitted into the Antient Society of Free Masons. Thomas Preston. Martin Crofts."

"Feb. 4, 1725-6.-At a private Lodge at the Star in Stonegate, Sr William Milner, Bark, was sworn and admitted into the Society of Free Masons. WM. Milner."

" Mar. 2, 1725-6.-At a private Lodge at the White Swan in Petergate, the under named Gentleman was sworn and admitted into the Society of Free Masons. John Lewis,"

"Apr. 2, 1726.- At a private Lodge at ye Starr in Stonegate, the following Gentlemen were sworn and admitted into the Antient Society of Free Masons.

Robert Kaye.
W. Wombell.
Wm. Kitchinman.
Cyril Arthington."

"Apr. 4, 1726.-At a private Lodge at the Star in Stonegate,
the following Gentleman
was sworn and admitted into ye Antient Society of Free
Masons.
J. Kaye."

"May 4, 1726.-At a private Lodge at Mr James Boreham's,
the underwritten Persons were sworn and admitted into
the Society of Free and Accepted Masons.
Charles Guarles.
Richd. Atkinson.
Samuel Ascough."

May 16, 1726.-At a private Lodge at Mr Lowther's at ye
Star in Stonegate, the undermentioned Gentleman was
sworn and admitted into the Antient Society of Free
Masons. Gregory Rhodes."

"June 24, 1726.-At a 'General Lodge held at Mr
Boreham's in Stonegate, the undermentioned Gentlemen
were sworn and admitted into the Antient Society of Free
Masons. John Cossley.
William Johnstone.

At the same time the following persons were sworn and
admitted into the Honourable Society, vizt., William
Marshall.
Matt \ Cellar.
His mark.
Benjamin Campsall.

William Muschamp.

Wm. Robinson.

Matthew Groul.

John Bradley.

John Hawman."

"July 6, 1726. -Whereas it has been certified to me that Mr William Scourfield has presumed to call a Lodge and make masons without the consent of the Grand Master or Deputy, and in opposition to the 8th article of the Constitutions, I do, with the consent of the Grand Master and the approbation of the whole Lodge, declare him to be disqualified from being a member of this Society, and he is for ever banished from the same.

"Such members as were assisting in constituting and forming Mr Scourfield's Schismatical Lodge on the 24th of the last month, whose names are John Carpenter, William Musgrave, Thomas Allanson, and Thomas Preston, are by the same authority liable to the same sentence, yet upon their acknowledging their Error in being deluded, and making such submission as shall be judged Requisite by the Grand Master and Lodge at the next monthly Meeting, shall be received into the favour of the Brotherhood, otherwise to be banished, and Mr Scourfield and their names to be erased out of the Roll and Articles.

"If any other Brother or Brothers shall hereafter separate from us, or be aiding and assisting in forming any Lodge under the said Mr Scouffield or any other Person without due Licence for the same, He or they so offending shall be disowned as members of this Lodge, and for ever Excluded from the same." The York authorities were evidently determined to put down with a strong hand all

irregularities on the part of Schismatics. Wm. Scourfield, referred to above, was, in all probability, the Grand Treasurer elected at the Festival of 1725. The records were silent as to the name of the presiding officer.

" July 6, 1726.-At a private Lodge held at Mr Geo. Gibson's, the underwritten Persons were sworn and admitted into the Antient and Honourable Society of Free Masons, vizt.,
Henry Tireman.
Will. Thompson."

"Augt. 13, 1726.-At a private Lodge at Mr Lowther's at the Star in Stonegate, the underwritten Gentlemen were sworn and admitted into the Antient Society of Free Masons, vizt.,
Bellingham Graham.
Nic. Roberts!"

"Dec. 13, 1726. - At a private Lodge at the Star in Stonegate, the Right Honourable Arthur Ld. Viscount Irwin was sworn and admitted into the Antient Society of Free Masons.
A. Irwin"

"Dec. 15, 1726. - At a private Lodge at the Star in Stonegate, the under named Persons were sworn and admitted into the Antient Society of Free Masons.
Jno. Motley.
Wm. Davile.
Thomas Snowsell."

"Dec. 22, 1726.-At a private Lodge at the Star in Stonegate, the under named Persons were sworn and

admitted into the Antient Society of Free Masons.

Richard Woodhouse.

Robert Tilburn."

"June 24, 1729.-At St John's Lodge held at ye Starr in Stonegate, the following Gentlemen were sworn and admitted into the Antient Society of Freemasons, vizt., Basil Forcer.

John Lamb."

"The same day Edward Thompson, Junior of Marston, Esqr., was chosen Grand Master Mr John Wilmer, Deputy Grand Master, Mr Geo. Rhodes and Mr Geo. Reynoldson, Grand Wardens, for ye year ensuing, and afterwards the Grand Master was pleased to order the following appointment, viz., I do appoint Dr Johnson, Mr Drake, Mr Marsden, Mr Denton, Mr Brigham, Mr R. Marsh, and Mr Eddy to assist in regulating the state of the Lodge, and redressing from time to time any inconveniences that may arise.

Edward Thompson, Gr. Mr."

"May 4, 1730. - At a private Lodge at Mr Colling's, being the Sign of ye White Swan in Petergate, York, it was ordered by the Dep. Master then present - That if from thenceforth any of the officers of ye Lodge should be absent from ye Company at ye Monthly Lodges, they shall forfeit the sum of one shilling for each omission. John Wilmer, Deputy Grand Master"

It is a well known fact that there are no records prior to 1717 of the "Four Old Lodges" and one is led to believe that these so called "Four Old Lodges" do not antedate those of the new "Grand Lodge" they brought into

existence, as fortunately happens in the case of the Old York Grand Lodge which blossomed into the Grand Lodge of all England, held at York.

The Old York Grand Lodge of 1705-12 and 1725, is the same as the one alluded to in the Minster Archives of the fourteenth century.

It is remarkable to see that there are detailed records of the Old Grand Lodge at York (Even when many have been burned and many others MSS are now "missing"), when no records can be found of the obscure activities of the "Four Old London Lodges".

A speech delivered by Francis Drake, F.R.S., Junior Grand Warden," at the celebration of the Festival of St John the Evangelist in 1726.

Drake's states that "The first Grand Lodge ever held in England, was held at York". (1)

(1) - A Speech delivered to the Worshipful and Ancient Society of Free and Accepted Masons at a Grand Lodge, held at Merchants' Hall, in the City of York, on St John's Day, December 27, 1726. The Right Worshipful Charles Bathurst, Esq., Grand Master" (1st edit., Thomas Gent, York, 1727, circa. Reprinted, London, 1729 and 1734; also by Hughan, Masonic Sketches, 1871).

The "Old Charges" explicitly refer to Prince Edwin temp. Athelstan, as being the medium of procuring for the Masons the privilege of holding their Assemblies once a year, where they would, one of which was held at York.

Hargrove states that " In searching the Archives of Masonry, we find the first Lodge was

instituted in this city (York) at a very early period; indeed, even prior to any other recorded in England. It was termed "The Most Ancient Grand Lodge of all England, and was instituted at York by King Edwin in 926, as appears by the following curious extract from the ancient records of the Fraternity". Hughan informs that the extract he had sent him (and which he inserted in his "Old Charges," in reference to York) from Hargrove's History, 1818, p. 476, is deficient in the following line, " and gave them the charter and commission to meet annually in communicaytion." This clause is peculiar to the MS. noted by Hargrove, which so far has escaped detection.

The first writer who treated the subject of Masonry in York at any length was Findel, (History of Freemasonry, pp. 83, 158-170). Many of the articles dealing with York, and its unrivalled Archives, in the late Freemasons Magazine, represent work, which in other hands would have assumed the proportion of volumes.

Among those members of the Craft, to whose researches we are chiefly indebted for the MSS of York and its Freemasons, which lie scattered throughout the more ephemeral literature of the Craft, are some to whom we may be allowed to allude. The name of the late E. W. Shaw was familiar to a past generation of Masonic readers, not less so that of the Rev. A. F. A. Woodford, whose former labours, indeed, have been eclipsed by later ones. Mr T. B. Whytehead and Mr Joseph Todd may be next referred to, both diligent explorers of Masonic Antiquities, and to whose local knowledge, visitors at the old shrine of Yorkshire Masonry are so much indebted.

Evidently it was the custom to style the ordinary meetings of the York Brethren "Private Lodges," those held on the Festival Days in June and December being entitled "General", or "St John's " Lodges. It appears that brethren who temporarily presided, in the absence of the Presidents and Grand Masters, were described as Masters, but I do not consider they were the actual Masters of the Lodge, not only because there were three Brethren so entitled, who occupied the chair at the meetings held on July 21, August 10 and 12, September 6, and December 1, 1725, but because the Rulers at that period were named Presidents. The regular monthly meetings were apparently distinct from the "Private Lodges" the latter being additional to the ordinary assemblies, and it may well be, were convened exclusively for "makings." The numerous gatherings of the Lodge indicate that the interest of the members was well sustained, at least for a time.

The Old Rules of the Grand Lodge at York, 1725, as transcribed from the original, written on parchment, were as follows:

"Articles agreed to be kept and observed by the Antient Society of Freemasons in the City of York, and to be subscribed by every Member thereof at their Admittance into the said Society.

Imprimis. - That every first Wednesday in the month a Lodge shall be held at the house of a Brother according as their turn shall fall out.

2.-All Subscribers to these Articles not appearing at the monthly Lodge, shall forfeit Sixpence each time.

3. -If any Brother appear at a Lodge that is not a Subscriber to these Articles, he shall pay over and above his club [i.e., subscription] the sum of one Shilling.

4.-The Bowl shall be filled at the monthly Lodges with Punch once, Ale, Bread, Cheese, and Tobacco in common, but if any more shall be called for by any Brother, either for eating or drinking, that Brother so calling shall pay for it himself besides his club.

5.-The Master or Deputy shall be obliged to call for a Bill exactly at ten o'clock, if they meet in the evening, and discharge it.

6.-None to be admitted to the making of a Brother but such as have subscribed to these Articles.

7.-Timely notice shall be given to all the Subscribers when a Brother or Brothers are to be made.

8.-Any Brother or Brothers presuming to call a Lodge with a design to make a Mason or Masons, without the Master or Deputy, or one of them deputed, for every such offence shall forfeit the sum of Five Pounds.

9.-Any Brother that shall interrupt the Examination of a Brother shall forfeit one Shilling.

10.-Clerk's Salary for keeping the Books and Accounts shall be one Shilling, to be paid him by each Brother at his admittance, and at each of the two Grand days he shall receive such gratuity as the Company [i.e., those present] shall think proper.

11.-A Steward to be chose for keeping the Stock at the Grand Lodge, at Christmas, and the Accounts to be passed three days after each Lodge.

12.-If any disputes arise, the Master shall silence them by a knock of the Mallet, any Brother that shall presume to disobey shall immediately be obliged to leave the Company, or forfeit five Shillings.

13.-An Hour shall be set apart to talk Masonry.

14.-No person shall be admitted into the Lodge but after having been strictly examined.

15.-No more persons shall be admitted as Brothers of this Society that shall keep a Public House.

16.-That these Articles, shall at Lodges be laid upon the Table, to be perused by the Members, and also when any new Brothers are made, the Clerk shall publicly read them.

17.-Every new Brother at his admittance shall pay the Wait[er]s as their Salary, the sum of two Shillings, the money to be lodged in the Steward's hands, and paid to them at each of the Grand days.

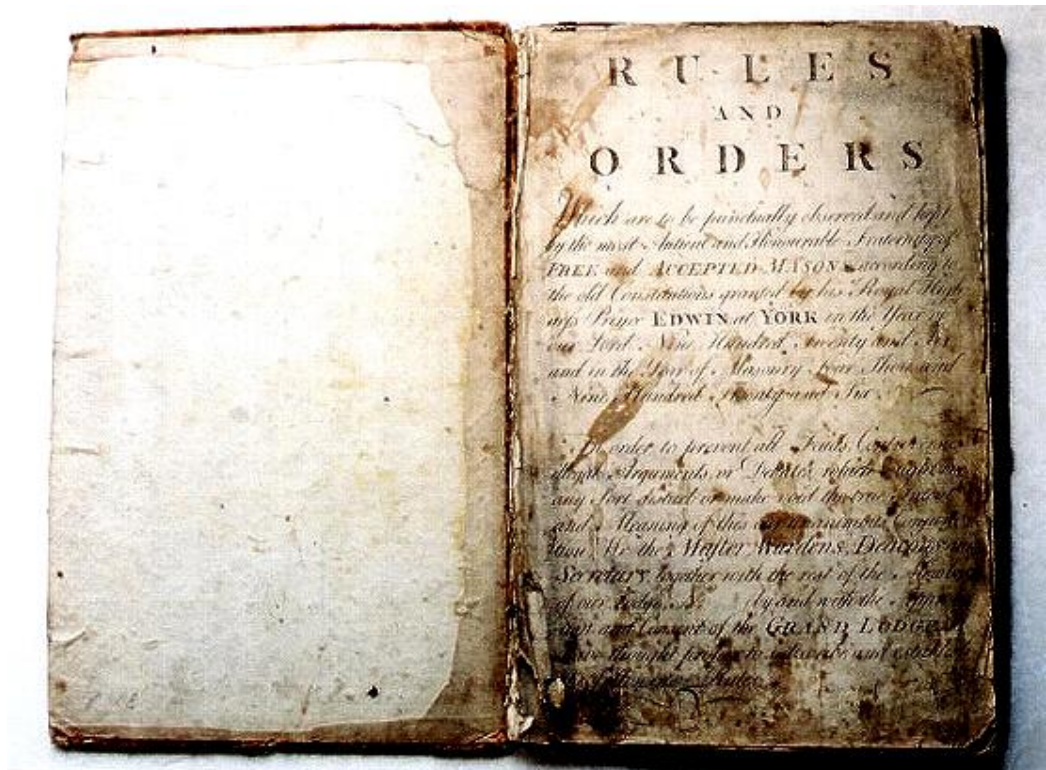
18.-The Bidder of the Society shall receive of each new Brother at his admittance the sum of one Shilling as his Salary [see Rule 71.

19.-No Money shall be expended out of the Stock after the hour of ten, as in the fifth Article."

These Laws were signed by "Ed. Bell, Master," and 87 Members, and though not unusual in character for the

period, they are worthy of reproduction as the earliest regulations known, of the Old Grand Lodge at York.

It is much to be regretted that the " narrow folio manuscript Book, beginning 7th March 1705-6, containing sundry Accounts and Minutes relative to the Grand Lodge," (A Schedule of the Regalia, Records, etc., dated September 15, 1779, will be found in Hughan's " Masonic Sketches," p. 20, et seq.) is still missing, all the efforts of those most interested in the discovery having so far proved abortive. With that valuable document before us, it would doubtless be easy to obtain clues to several puzzles which at present confront us. Its contents were well known in 1778, as the following letter proves, which was sent by the then Grand Secretary (York) to Mr B. Bradley, of London 2 (J. W. of the " Lodge of Antiquity"), in order to satisfy him and Mr William Preston (P. M. of the same old lodge, and author of the famous Illustrations of Masonry of the existence of the ancient Grand Lodge at York before the year 1717.



“Sir,-In compliance with your request to be satisfied of the existence of a Grand Lodge at York previous to the establishment of that at London I have inspected an Original Minute Book of this Grand Lodge beginning at 1705 and ending in 1734 from which I have extracted the names of the Grand Masters during that period as follows:

1705 Sir George Tempest Barronet.

1707 The Right Honourable Robert Benson Lord Mayor of York.

1708 Sir William Robinson Bart.

1711 Sir Walter Hawksworth Bart.

1713 Sir George Tempest Bart.

1714 Charles Fairfax Esqr.

1720 Sir Walter Hawkesworth Bart.

1725 Edward Bell Esqr.

1726 Charles Bathurst Esq.
1729 Edward Thompson Esq. M.P.
1733 John Johnson Esq. M.D.
1734 John Marsden Esqr.

It is observable that during the above period the Grand Lodge was not holden twice together at the same house and there is an Instance of its being holden once in 1713 out of York, viz., at Bradford in Yorkshire when 18 Gentlemen of the first families in that Neighbourhood were made Masons.

In short the superior antiquity of the Grand Lodge of York to all other Lodges in the Kingdom will not admit a Doubt an the Books which treat on the subject agree that it was founded so early as the year 926, and that in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth it was so numerous that mistaking the purport Of their Meeting she was at the trouble of sending an armed Force to dislodge the Brethren, it appears by the Lodge Books since that Time that this Lodge has been regularly continued and particularly by the Book above extracted that it was in being early in the present Century previous to the Era of the Aggrandized Lodge of London- and that it now exists even the Compilers of the Masons Almanack published under the sanction of that Lodge cannot but acknowledge tho they accompany such their acknowledgement with an invidious and unmasonic Prophecy that it will be soon totally annihilated-an event which we trust that no man nor sett of men who are mean enough to wish, shall ever live to see.

“I have intimated to this Lodge what passed between us of your Intention to apply for a Constitution under it and have the satisfaction to inform you that it met with universal

Aprobation - You will therefore be pleased to furnish me with a petition to be presented for the purpose specifying the Names of the Brethren to be appointed to the several Offices, and I make no Doubt that the Matter will be speedily accomplished.

"My best Respects attends Brother Preston whom I expect you will make acquainted with the purport of this and hope it will be agreeable to him-1 am with true Regard

Your most faithful Brother and Obedient Servant
JACOB BUSSEY, G.S.

"To Mr. Benjam. Bradley, No. 3 elements Lane Lombard Street London.

"York, 29th August 1778."

Presuming that the year in each case means the period of service, and that the election or installation took place on the celebration of the (immediately) preceding Festival of St John the Evangelist, that would really take the Register back to December 1704; when Sir George Tempest, Bart., was chosen to be the President. succeeded in 1707 by the Right Hon. Robert Benson, Lord Mayor of York (afterwards Baron Bingley); after whom came Sir William Robinson, Bart., for 1708 (M.P. for York, 1713); followed by other local prominent figures, down to the year 1734. Mr Whytehead observes most truly, that" a large proportion of the Masons at York were Lord Mayors, Aldermen, and Sheriffs and even down to our own day it has been the same." Admiral Robert Fairfax, the Deputy President at Christmas 1721, was Lord Mayor in 1715 and M.P. in 1713; and other instances might be cited of the

distinguished social position of these early rulers of the Yorkshire Fraternity.

Dr Bell, of Hull, in his " Stream of English Freemasonry," informs that the tenure of office of the successive Presidents lasted from the years opposite their own names, until the dates placed by the same authority against those of their successors.

For 1713 the same writer gives Sir Walter Hawkesworth instead of Sir George Tempest as the President. Dr Bell bestows the title of President on Charles Bathurst for the year 1724, and "Edmund Bell or William Scourfield " Esquires for 1725. Charles Bathurst was not initiated until July 21, 1725, unless, indeed, the office was held by his father, as Mr Whytehead suggests was possible; if so, the elder Bathurst died during his year of office, and was succeeded by his son on December 27, 1725. So far as can now be known, " George Bowes, Esq.," who was Deputy President on March 19, 1712, and August 7, 1713, was as much entitled to be described as President as either of the three gentlemen already mentioned. Mr Whytehead has succeeded in tracing another Grand Master "of the Grand Lodge of all England at York," thus proving the incomplete character of the list of Masonic dignitaries supplied by the Grand Secretary of 1778. The discovery made by this excellent authority he thus relates: In an old copy of "Debrett" a statement that the first baronet of the Milner (1) family was Grand Master of Freemasons in England. We knew that he had been 'made' at York, as also that he had not been Grand Master of either of the Southern Bodies; and after some enquiry, and the kind assistance of Mr Clements Markham and of Bro. Sir F. G. Milner, I have ascertained that the first

baronet was Grand Master at York in 1728-9. In a MS. work in four volumes in the Leeds Library, entitled, 'A Collection of Coats of Arms and Descents of the Several Families of the West Riding, from MSS. of John Hopkinson; corrected by T. Wilson, of Leeds,' is the following entry, under the name of Sir W. Milner: 'On St John Baptist Day, 1728, at York, he was elected Grand Master of the Freemasons in England, being the 798 successor from Edwin the Great.' This is an interesting addition to the list of the York Grand Masters."

1 - Sir W. Milner was initiated on February 4, 1725-6, the present baronet, Sir F. G. Milner, M. P. for York, being 'his great-great-great-grandson " (according to Mr Whytehead), the latter having been installed as W.M. of the "Eboracum Lodge," No. 1611, York, on November 10, 1884, and curiously enough the interesting discovery came just in time to furnish the materials for one of the most attractive features of the toast-list at the subsequent banquet designed by the successful investigator.

It will be remembered that the next Grand Master, "Edward Thompson, Junior, of Marston, Esq.," was elected and installed at a ' St John's Lodge," held on June 24, 1729.

The Lodge was held at Bradford by the York Brethren, when some eighteen gentlemen were made Masons. No mention is made of the Lodge held at Scarborough in 1705, under the presidency of William Thompson, Esq., though that it assembled under the banner of the old Lodge at York.

Preston bases his account of the York Grand Lodge on the letter of its Grand Secretary. "From this account," says Bro. Preston, "which is authenticated by the Books of the Grand Lodge at York, it appears that the Revival of Masonry in the South of England did not interfere with the proceedings of the fraternity in the North; nor did that event taking place alienate any allegiance that might be due to the General Assembly or Grand Lodge there, which seems to have been considered at that time, and long after, as the Mother Lodge of the whole Kingdom. For a series of years the most perfect harmony subsisted between the two Grand Lodges, and private Lodges flourished in both parts of the Kingdom under their separate jurisdiction. The only mark of superiority which the Grand Lodge in the North appears to have retained after the revival of Masonry in the South, is in the title which was adopted, viz., The Grand Lodge of all England, TOTIUS ANGLIA; while the organization in the South passed only under the denomination and self styled 'The Grand Lodge of England.'"

Preston was adherent of the Mother Northern Grand Lodge during the period of his separation from the Grand Lodge at London and assuredly. Preston declares that "To be ranked as descendants of the original York Masons was the glory and boast of the Brethren in almost every country where Masonry was established; and from the prevalence and universality of the idea that York was the place where Masonry was first established by Charter, the Masons of England have received tribute from the first States in Europe."

According to Bro Preston's, the breach which occurred between the two Grand Lodges-London and York it arose

out "of a few Brethren at York having, on some trivial occasion, seceded from their ancient Lodge, [and] applied to London for a Warrant of Constitution. Without any inquiry into the merits of the case, their application was honoured. Instead of being recommended to the Mother Lodge, to be restored to favour, these Brethren were encouraged to revolt; and in open defiance of an established authority, permitted, under the banner of the "Grand Lodge" at London, to open a new Lodge in the city of York itself. This illegal extension of power, and violent encroachment on the privileges of antient Masonry, gave the highest offence to the Grand Lodge at York, and occasioned a breach, which time, and a proper attention to the Rules of the Order, only can repair." His second version of the "breach" is said to be due to the encroachment of the Earl of Crawford on the "Jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Masons in the City of York, by constituting two Lodges within their district, and by granting without their consent, three Deputations, one for Lancashire, a second for Durham, and a third for Northumberland. This circumstance the Grand Lodge at York at that time highly resented. All friendly intercourse was dropt." Yet another supposed cause of unpleasantness was found in the granting of a Patent to the Provincial Grand Master of Yorkshire, by the Marquis of Carnarvon, in 1738, which it seems so troubled the minds of the York Brothers that since that circumstance, all correspondence between the two Grand Lodges has ceased."

The "Book of Constitutions," 1738, of the London organization contains the following reference to the Old York Grand.

"All these foreign Lodges are under the Patronage of our Grand Master of England.

But the old Lodge at YORK City, and the Lodges Of SCOTLAND, IRELAND, FRANCE, and ITALY, affecting Independency, are under their own Grand Masters, tho' they have the same Constitutions Charges, Regulations, &c., for Substance, with their Brethren of England."

Dr Fifield Dassigny in 1744, especially the note, " I am informed in that city is held an Assembly of Master Masons, under the title of Royal Arch Masons".

That the first Assembly of English Freemasonry flourished at York many years anterior to the inauguration of the "Assembly" of Masons at London, cannot be doubted.

"A Charge delivered to the most antient and honourable Society of Free and Accepted Masons, in a Lodge held at the Punch-Bowl, in Stonegate, York, upon Friday the 18th of January 1762, by Bro. Frodsham, at his demission of the chair."

On the opening day at the "Punch Bowl" there were eight members present, and the same number of visitors. Great zeal was manifested by the petitioners and the brethren generally, several meetings being held from 1761 to 1763; but I do not think they met as a lodge after January 1764. Malby Beckwith, the new Master, who was placed in the chair on January 18, 1762, was duly addressed by the retiring W.M. Bro. Frodsham, and by request of the members the charge was printed and published, going through more than one edition.⁴ Mr Whytehead tells us that "as Bro. Seth Agar, the W.M. (from Jan. 3, 1763), soon afterwards became Grand Master of all England.

The following is a full account of the revival, which is given by Hughan from the actual records.

"The Antient and independent Constitution of Free and Accepted Masons Belonging to the City of York, was this Seventeenth day of March, in the year of our Lord 1761, Revived by six of the surviving members of the Fraternity by the Grand Lodge being opened, and held at the House of Mr Henry Howard, in Lendall, in the said City, by them and others hereinafter named. When and where it was further agreed on, that it should be continued and held there only the Second and Last Monday in every month.

Present

Grand Master, Brother Francis Drake, Esq., F.R.S.

Deputy G.M., George Reynoldson.

Grand Wardens, George Coates and Thomas Mason.

Together with Brothers Christopher Coulton and Martin Crofts.

Visiting Brethren.

Tasker, Leng, Swetnam, Malby Beckwith, Frodsham, Fitzmaurice, Granger, Crisp, Oram, Burton, and Howard.

Minutes of the Transactions and Opening of the Grand Lodge of All England:

Brother John Tasker was by the Grand Master, and the rest of the Brethren, unanimously appointed Grand Secretary and Treasurer. He having first petitioned to become a member, and being approved and accepted nem. con.

"Brother Henry Howard also petitioned to be admitted a member, who was accordingly balloted for and approved nem. con.

"Mr Charles Chaloner, Mr Seth Agar, George Palmes, Esq., Mr Ambrose Beckwith, and Mr William Siddall, petitioned to be made Brethren the first opportunity, who being severally balloted for, were all approved nem. con.

"This Lodge was closed till Monday, the 23rd day of this instant March, unless in case of Emergency."

Several of the visitors mentioned were members of the Lodge assembling at the Punch Bowl, and the fact of their being present in such a capacity is sufficient proof that the Mother Grand Lodge of English Freemasonry at York and the London organisation Lodges were on terms of amity, especially emphasised by the friendly action of the Premier Grand Lodge at York later on, about which a few words have presently to be said.

A noticeable feature of this record is that the Grand Master, Deputy, and Wardens occupied their positions as if holding them of inherent right, the only Brother elected to office being the Grand Secretary, who was also the Grand Treasurer. We think, therefore, that Francis Drake and his principal officers must have acted in their several capacities prior to the dormancy of 1740-50.

The five candidates proposed on March 17 were initiated on May 11, 1761; mention is also made of a Brother being raised to the degree of a master mason on May 23, and apprentices were duly passed as Fellow Crafts.

The "volume of the Sacred Law," which it is believed was used at the meetings, is in the safe-keeping of the Eboracum Lodge No. 1611, and is inscribed "This Bible belongs to the Free Mason's Lodge at Mr Howard's at York, 1761. "

The fees for the three degrees and membership amounted to £2, 16s., which sum, excused the brother from any further expense during Lodge hours for that Quarter, supper and drink out of and Glasses broke in the Lodge only excepted" The quarterage was fixed at six shillings and sixpence, "except as above" Candidates were only eligible for initiation on a unanimous ballot, but joining members, "regularly made masons in another Lodge," were elected if there were not more than two adverse votes; the fee for the latter election being half a guinea. Careful provisions were laid down for the guidance of the officers in the event of brethren seeking admission who were unable to prove their "regularity" It was ordered on July 15, 1777, that when a Constitution is granted to any place, the Brother who petitioned for such shall pay the fees charged thereon upon delivery; " and on Nov. 20, 1778, the members resolved "that the Grand Master of All England be on all occasions as such styled and addressed by the Title of Most Worshipful, and the Masters of an Lodges under the Constitution of this Grand Lodge by the Title of Right Worshipfu" The secretary's salary was fixed at ten guineas per annum, from Dec. 27, 1779, and the Treasurer was required, to execute his Bond in the Penal sum of one hundred pounds" The fee for certificates was fixed at six shillings each, " always paid on delivery!" Unless in cases of emergency two degrees were not allowed to be conferred in one evening,

and separate Ballot shall be made to each degree distinct".

We now approach an important innovation on the part of the York Grand Lodge, no less than the granting of warrants for subordinate lodges. The meetings of the Old Grand lodge at York, held out of that city, appear to have led to the creation of separate lodges, such as Bradford in 1713 and elsewhere. On this point it is impossible to speak with precision; it cannot be positively affirmed they did not.

Charters were granted for subordinate lodges by the Grand Lodge of All England, until after 1761. Prior to that date, indeed, it is quite possible that frequent meetings were held by the Premier Grand Lodge at York, in neighbouring towns.

There is no proof that the Grand Lodge of All England sided actively with either of the two new "Grand Lodges," formed respectively in 1723 and 1753. Passively, indeed, its sympathies would appear to have been with the older organisation, and though it ultimately struck up an alliance with the Lodge of Antiquity, in so doing a blow was aimed at the pretensions of both the new organizations claiming jurisdiction in the south.

The Premier Grand Lodge at York stated in 1773 – "It is not customary for this Lodge to prefix a number to the Constitutions granted by it".

From 1762 to 1768, The Turks Head Lodge under the constitution of the Premier Grand Lodge of All England at York met at the Turks Head in the market square. There were other subordinate lodges in this district. One at

Hovingham (warranted in 1773). Another at Snainton (warranted in 1778), which met at the New Inn, now known as the "Coachman". In 1779 the jewels of the Turks Head Lodge, originally the property of the "Scarsborg" Lodge, consisting of Gold Compasses, Silver Square and Level were freely given to the Grand Lodge of York by a Bro. Steel, who claimed to be the last survivor of eighty brethren. York Lodge No. 236, where the compasses are still used today at the installation of a new master, allowed Bro. Steel one shilling and six pence per week to assist him in his declining years. The Turks Head used as its Warrant the 1693 Masonic Roll and on cessation of the Lodges activities, the Tyler took this roll to Wetherby where it was used as a Warrant to found the Alfred Lodge No.434 in 1781. This lodge was erased in 1797.



**GRAND LODGE OF ALL ENGLAND LODGES FROM
1762**

1. French Lodge, "Punch Bowl," York, June 10, 1762
2. Three Tuns, Scarborough, Aug. 19, 1762
3. Royal Oak, Ripon, July 31, 1769
4. Crown, Knaresborough, Oct. 30, 1769
5. Duke of Devonshire, Macclesfield, Sept. 24, 1770.
6. Hovingham, North Yorks May 29, 1773.
7. New Inn, Snainton, near Malton, Dec. 14, 1778.
9. Druidical Lodge, Rotherham, Dec. 22, 1778.
10. Fortitude, at the Sun, Hollingwood, Lane, Nov. 27, 1790. Deputation for a Grand Lodge.
8. Grand Lodge of England, South of the River Trent, March 29, 1779.
- No. 1, Lodge of Perfect Observance, London, Aug. 9, 1779.
- No. 2, Lodge of Perseverance and Triumph, London, Nov. 15, 1779.

The Talbot Lodge at Halifax was established in 1738.

In addition to these, we should add that in the Records and elsewhere, mention is made of petitions being presented to the Premier Grand Lodge at York for the holding of lodges.

I. Petition addressed to the "Grand Master of All England at York," and signed by Abraham Sampson, about the year 1771. He declared that he had been taken to task by the "Grand Lodge in London " for getting a Warrant for Macclesfield. The new Lodge was to be held at the "Black Bull, otherwise the Rising Sun, Pettycoat Lane, White Chapel," the first Master and Wardens being nominated.

II. A letter was read at the Grand Lodge held September 27, 1779, " Requiring the mode of applying for a Constitution," the petitioner being "Bro. William Powell," of Hull. Mr J. Coultman Smith 2 declared that the charter of the present " Humber Lodge," No. 57, of that town, was derived from the Premier Grand Lodge at York.

III. There was much correspondence about certain Masonic jewels, between the Grand Secretary at York and a Bro. W. Hutton Steel, of Scarborough, and others, extending from 1772 to 1781. The jewels were said to have been used by a lodge whose "Constitution was obtained from York," probably No. 2 as above. Bro. Steel presented them on Dec. 26, 1779, and declared that "No meeting of a Lodge since 1735 " had been held, and that he was the "Last Survivor of four score brethren."

IV. A petition was received for a Lodge to be held at the "Brush Makers Arms, Smithy Door," at the house of John Woodmans, Manchester, dated December 23, 1787; but as the records of that period are missing, we cannot say what answer was given to the petitioners, but it is very likely that a charter was granted.

We are indebted to Mr Whytehead for the following interesting extract from the records, which establishes the

fact that the year 1762 witnessed the first Lodge being placed on the roll of the Premier Grand Lodge at York.

Constitutions or Warrants granted by this Right Worshipful Grand Lodge to Brethren enabling them to hold Lodges at the places and in the houses particularly mentioned in such constitutions or warrants.

No. 1. Anno Secundo Brother Drake G.M. On the 10th day of June 1762 a constitution or warrant was granted unto the following Brethren, French Prisoners of War on their Parole (Viz.) Du Fresne, Le Pettier, Julian Vilfort, Pierre Le Villaine, Louis Brusle, and Francis Le Grand, Thereby enabling them and others to open and continue to hold a Lodge at the sign of the Punch Bowl in Stonegate in the City of York and to make New Brethren as from time to time occasion might require, Prohibiting nevertheless them and their successors from making anyone a Brother who shall be a subject of Great Britain or Ireland, which said Lodge was accordingly opened and held on the said 10th day of June and to be continued regularly on the second Thursday in every month or oftener if occasion shall require."

Of the second Lodge but little account has been preserved in the surviving archives of the, Premier Grand Lodge at York.

Of the third on the hat there is no doubt, it having been duly "sealed and signed;" neither is there any as to the fourth, the minute of October 30, 1769, reading as follows: The three last-mentioned Brethren petitioned for a Constitution to open and hold a Lodge at the sign of the Crown in Knaresbrough, which was unanimously agreed

to, and the following were appointed officers for the opening of the same.

There is an allusion to the Inniskilling Dragoons in 1770, when the brethren of the Lodge held in that regiment took part, with other visitors, in the Great Procession on the celebration of the Festival of St John the Evangelist. It was arranged on December 17, Mr Whytehead informs me, that, the Brethren of the Inniskilling Regiment who carry the Colours and act as Tylers, as also all the Brethren in the said Regiment who are private soldiers to have tickets gratis." The hospitality thus exhibited to the members of a regimental Lodge by the brethren at York, has been again and again exercised of late years by the " York " and " Eboracura " Lodges, no warmer reception being ever given to military Lodges then in the city of York.

Hughan declares he saw a minute-book, or extracts therefrom, in the York archives, being records of a Lodge opened at Scarborough, " on Thursday the 19th August 1762 by virtue of a Warrant from the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons at York, Bro. Thos. Balderston, Rt. Worpl. M. ; Thos. Hart. S. W. ; John Walsham, J. W. ; Mattw. Fowler, 8. ; " hence we are inclined to believe that the second on the roll is the Lodge referred to. Mr Joseph Todd has kindly transcribed the few minutes thus preserved, which begin March 25, 1762 (before the warrant was received), and end August 80, 1768.

Not many records remain of Nos. 6 and 7, but the ninth of the series, according to Hughan, was called "No. 109" at

Rotherham, the members evidently considering that the addition of one hundred to its number would increase its importance. Some of its records have found their way to York, ranging from December 22, 1778, to March 26, 1779. There is no account of the Lodge at Hollingwood among the York documents, the only notice of its origin being the original charter in the archives of the Masonic Museum and Library in London which has been transcribed and published by Hughan (Masonic Sketches, Pt. 2, Appendix Q p. 41. The warrant was signed by Messrs Kilby and Blanchard, Grand Master and Grand Secretary respectively). A volume of minutes of the York Grand Lodge, 1780-92, is evidently still missing, which Hargrove saw in Blanchard's hands so late as 1819.

Hughan, in his "History of Freemasonry at York," and Whytehead, ably continuing the same subject, "As Told by an Old Newspaper File," have furnished most interesting sketches of the proceedings of the York Grand Lodge from 1761, as well as of those assembling under other Constitutions. In the York Courant for December 20, 1763, is an advertisement by authority of Mr J. S. Morritt, the Grand Master, the two Grand Wardens being Messrs Brooks and Atkinson, the latter Brother having been the Builder of the Bridge over the Foss at York. He and his brother were initiated in 1761, "without paying the usual fees of the Lodge, as being working masons," indicating (Whytehead suggests) the fact that the Old York Masons Assembly recognised its operative origin. Several of the festivals were held at the "Punch Bowl," an inn being much frequented by the York masons, The Lodges favoured processions to church prior to the celebration of

the festivals, many of the advertisements for which have been carefully reproduced by Whytehead.

In the Courant for June 10, 1770, is an announcement on behalf of the Lodge at the Crown," Knaresborough, for June 26, "A regular Procession to Church to hear Divine Service and a Sermon to be preached by a Brother suitable to the occasion," being the chief attractions offered by the Rev. Charles Kedar, the Master, and Messrs Bateson and Clark, Wardens. In similar terms, another procession was advertised for December 27, 1770, to St John's Church, Micklegate, York, the notice being issued by order of Grand Master Palmes. The sermon was preached by Bro. the Rev. W. Dade, Rector of Barmston, in the East Riding,' the congregation including more than a hundred brethren. It was usual to have both a summer and winter festival in York; so the zeal of the Fraternity was kept alive, so far as processions and festive gatherings could promote the interests of the Society.

St John's Day, 1777, witnessed the Grand Lodge being, held at "York Tavern," to attend divine service, at St Helen's suitable discourse being delivered by the Rev. Brother John Parker. The Rev. J. Parker, vicar of St Helen's, was "made" in 1776, without any fee being charged, and became Chaplain to the Grand Lodge, being also the annual preacher at the holding of the festivals.

The last meeting advertised in the Courant by the York Grand Lodge was dated June 18, 1782; but undoubtedly there were many assemblies of the brethren held after that year, even so late as the next decade. Hargrove states, As a further proof of the importance of this Grand

Lodge, we find it recorded that "On the 24th June 1783, the Grand Master, with all the officers, attended in the great room of the Mansion House, where a Lodge in the third degree was opened, and brother Wm. Siddall, esquire, at that time the Right Hon. the Lord Mayor and Grand Master elect, was installed, according to an Ancient usage and custom, The Most Worshipful Grand Master Mason of all England, and was thus saluted, homaged, and acknowledged.

There is abundant evidence to prove that the Grand Lodge was in existence even so late as August 23, 1792, which is the date "of a rough minute recording the election of Bro. Wolley as Grand Master, Bro. Geo. Kitson, Grand Treasurer, Bro. Thomas Richardson, S.G.W., and Bro. Williams, J.G.W." There is also a list still extant, in Blanchard's handwriting, containing an entry of October 1, 1790, when a brother was raised to the Third Degree; and the grant of a warrant in that year by the Premier Grand Lodge at York, which does not savour of extinction. We need not add other evidences of the activity of the Grand Lodge, as the foregoing are amply sufficient. Even the Constitutions of 1784, published by the authority of the "Grand Lodge of England", thus refers to the Mother Grand Lodge at York. " Some brethren at York continued to act under their original constitution, notwithstanding the revival of the Grand Lodge of England; but the irregular Masons in London never received any patronage from them The ancient York Masons were confined to one Lodge, which is still extant, but consists of very few members, and will probably be soon altogether annihilated." (Constitutions, 1784, p. 240; Freemasons Calendar, 1783, p. 23.) Here, doubtless, the wish was

father to the thought, but the prediction of John Noorthouck was soon fulfilled, though it must not be overlooked that he acknowledges the antiquity of the Grand Lodge at York, at a period, moreover, when the secession of the Lodge of Antiquity from the London organization, in which movement, though a member of No. 1 Noorthouck was not a participant-had greatly embittered the relations between the two earliest of the English Grand Lodges. That a warrant or deputation for the constitution of the Grand Lodge of England South of the River Trent, under the wing of the Lodge of Antiquity, was issued by the authority of the Premier Grand Lodge at York.

The York Lodge has an engraved portrait of Grand Master Wolley, and Mr Whytehead presented one to the Masonic Museum in London. Wolley afterwards changed his name to Copley.

During the Grand Mastership of the Duke of Beaufort, and the Secretaryship of Thomas French, he had become a useful assistant in arranging the General Regulations of the Society, and reviving the foreign and country correspondence. Having been appointed to the office of Deputy Grand Secretary, under James Heseltine, he compiled for the benefit of the charity, the History of Remarkable Occurrences, inserted in the first two publications of the "Freemasons' Calendar," and also prepared for the press an appendix to the "Book of Constitutions," from 1767, published in 1776.

In March 2, 1763 - Bro. Robt. Lochhead petitioned for Dispensation to make Masons at the sign of the White Hart, In the Strand-And a dispensation was granted to him

to continue in force for the space of 80 days " Minutes of the Grand Lodge of England "According to the Old Institutions - i.e., of the Schismatics or Ancients

RW Bro. William Preston Joins the Mother Grand Lodge at York

The Rev. M. H. Eccles, rector of Bow, having been re-elected chaplain to the Lodge of Antiquity, engaged to preach an anniversary sermon on December 27, 1777, particulars of which were advertised in the Gazetteer for December 24. The brethren proceeded to church informally, clothing as masons in the vestry. On returning they walked to the Lodge room' without having divested themselves of their Masonic clothing. John Noorthouck a member, took exception to the latter action of the Lodge, but Preston claimed that "the proceedings of the Brethren on St John's Day were perfectly conformable to the principles of the Institution and the laws of the Society" W. Bro. Preston cited the law respecting processions, but contended that it was not calculated to debar the members of any private lodge from offering up their adoration to the Deity in a public place of worship in the character of masons, under the direction of their master" Noorthouck and Bottomley failed to obtain the consent of the members to a resolution terming the procession an "unguarded transaction," but on Preston moving" that the Lodge of Antiquity disapproves of any general processions of a masonic nature contrary to the authority of the Grand Lodge," it was passed unanimously. A memorial was presented to the Grand Lodge by the minority, signed by the two mentioned, and two others, four in all. A reply to this protest was also signed in open lodge on January 27, 1778, by all but six (including

Preston), and by six others subsequently who were not at the meeting, making a total of seventeen. The R.W.M. (John Wilson) and Preston waited on the Grand Secretary in the interim, imploring him to do his utmost to obtain an amicable settlement.' The "Committee of Charity," on January 30, 1778, sided with the minority, and as Preston justified the proceedings of the Lodge, on the ground of its possessing certain "inherent privileges by virtue of its original constitution, that other lodges of a more modern date were not possessed of," resolved that the Lodge of Antiquity possessed no other privilege than its rank according to seniority.

On January 29, 1779, the Master of No. 1 being called upon by the Committee of Charity to state whether their order, respecting the restoration of Brothers Bottomley, Noorthouck, and Brearly, had been complied with. " Bro. Wm. Rigge, the Master, stated that on the evening of the last Quarterly Communication, viz., Nov. 4, last, it was resolved not to comply with the order of the Grand Lodge, and that the Lodge should withdraw itself from the authority of the London organization, and immediately join the Premier Grand Lodge at York, after which the health of the MW Bro. James Siddell was drank as Grand Master of Masons, the said Bro. Wm. Rigge and Brother Le Caan only dissenting. And that it was further resolved to notify such proceedings to the Grand Secretary, and that a manifesto should be published to the world.

RW Bro. Preston issued the State of Facts, but the subsequent proceedings, at the Committee of Charity, are given from the actual minutes of that body.

Minutes, Committee of Charity, January 30, 1778.

Grand Lodge Minutes, February 4, 1778.

Made October 30, 1778. At this meeting "a Pamphlet lately published by Bro. Wm. Preston under the title, of a State, of Facts, was cited as containing many severe, inflammatory, and false Reflections upon the Proceedings of the "Grand Lodge" at London in general, and upon the Conduct of Mr. Heseltine, the "Grand Secretary" (London), in particular.

It was further stated that a minority-who were desirous of continuing their allegiance to the Grand Lodge-opposed the violent proceedings of the majority, and informed the latter, that they had no right to take away the books and furniture of the lodge, which were the joint property of all the members, "notwithstanding which the factious junto, in defiance of every rule of justice, honour, or common honesty, in the deadeat hour of the night, by force took away all the furniture, Jewels, and Books belonging to the Lodge, and had since assembled under a pretended and ridiculous authority called by them the Grand Lodge of York Masons, of which one James Siddell, a tradesman in York, calls himself Grand Master." (this is the typical mouth wording used since time immemorial by the self constituted London organization).

It was also reported that the "Manifesto" alluded to had been published and dispersed, also that the members who remained true to their allegiance had elected the said Wm. Rigge their Master, and had restored Brothers Noorthouck, Bottomley, and Brearly to their rank and status in the Lodge. The following resolution was then passed by the Committee of Charity:

After which John Wilson, William Preston-described as a 'Journeyman Printer" - and nine others, were expelled from the Society, and their names ordered to be " transmitted to all regular Lodges, with an Injunction not to receive or admit them as members or otherwise; nor to countenance, acknowledge, or admit into their Lodges, any Person or Persons, assuming or calling themselves by the name of York Masons, or by any other Denomination than that of Free and Accepted Masons, under the Authority of, or in Alliance and Friendship with, the Grand Lodge of England, of which his Grace the Duke of Manchester is at present Grand Master."

These proceedings-confirmed by Grand Lodge, February 3, 1779-evoked a further pamphlet from the seceders, dated March 24 in the same year, and issued from the Queen's Arms Tavern, St Paul's, under the hand of J. Sealy, Secretary, wherein they protest against " the very disrespectful and injurious manner in which the names of several brethren are mentioned," and " the false, mean, and scandalous designations annexed to them" (copy of this pamphlet, folio is to be found in the archives of the Lodge of Antiquity.)

These Brethren resorted to the Deputation from the Grand Lodge of all England to the R. W. Lodge of Antiquity, constituting the latter a Grand Lodge of England south of the River Trent, dated March 29, 1779," 4 and were soon actively engaged under their new constitution.

Mr John Wilson, late Master of No. 1, was the first Grand Master, and Mr John Sealy the Grand Secretary, the inaugural proceedings taking place on June 24, 1779 -

Preston having the office of Grand Orator conferred upon him on November 3. On April 19, 1780, Mr Benjamin

Bradley was installed as the second Grand Master, Preston being appointed his D.G.M., and Messrs Donaldson and Sealy were elected Grand Treasurer and Secretary respectively. The only two lodges formed under the auspices of the Premier Grand Lodge at York were numbered one and two, the junior being the first to be constituted. The ceremony took place at the "Queen's Head Tavern," Holborn, on August 9, 1779. The lodge was named "Perseverance and Triumph," and had Preston for its first Master. On November 15, 1779, the "Lodge of Perfect Observance" was constituted at the "Mitre Tavern," Fleet Street - P. Lambert de Lintot being R.W.M. Mr B. H. Latrobe was Grand Secretary in 1789, and in a report to the "Grand Lodge of all England held at York," mentioned that "at the last Q.C., 29 Dec. 1789, the decayed state of the two Lodges was taken into consideration," and a deputation was appointed to make due inquiries. This was followed by a favourable result, which led that official to remark that, "upon the whole, the prospect before us seems to be less gloomy than that we have had for some time past."

As the "Lodge of Antiquity" preserved a dual existence, the private lodge and the Grand Lodge (offshoot of the Premier York Grand Lodge) being kept quite distinct there were, three subordinate lodges on the roll of the Grand Lodge of England south of the Trent.

A memorial from Preston respecting his expulsion was laid before Grand Lodge on April 8, 1789, but it was not even allowed to be read. At the ensuing Grand Feast,

however, in the May following, wiser councils prevailed, and mainly through the mediation of William Birch, afterwards Master of the Lodge of Antiquity. Preston and those expelled with him in 1779, all "expressing their desire of promoting conciliatory measures with the Grand Lodge, and signifying their concern that through misrepresentation they should have incurred the displeasure of Grand Lodge-their wish to be restored to the privileges of the Society, to the laws of which they were ready to conform, the London organization, being "satisfied with their apology," ordered that they should be restored to their privileges in the Society. It has been said that Bro. Preston came out of this dispute the victor.

In 1787 Preston was instrumental in forming-or, to use the Masonic equivalent, "reviving the Grand Chapter of Harodim. But it is upon his "Illustrations of Masonry" that his fame chiefly rests. Of this twelve editions were published in the lifetime of the author.

Bro. Preston died, on April 1, 1818, aged seventy-six, and was buried in St Paul's Cathedral. Among the bequests in his will were £500 consols to the Fund of Benevolence, and £300 consols as an endowment to ensure the annual delivery of the Prestonian lecture.

The following List of Grand Masters and Grand Secretaries from 1761, though not complete, is fuller than any before published.

GRAND MASTERS & GRAND SECRETARIES

1761-2. Francis Drake, -----

F.R.S, John Tasker.

1763. John S. Morrill. ----- Do.

1764-6. John Palmes. ----- Do.
1767. Seth Agar. ----- David
Lambert.
1768- 70. George Palmes. -----
Thomas Williamson.
1771-2. Sir T. Gascoigne, -----
But. Thomas Johnson.
1773. Charles Chaloner. -----
Nicholas Nickson.
1774 Henry Stapilton. ----- Do.
1775. Do. ----- Joseph
Atkinson.
1776-8. William Siddall. -----
Jacob Bussey.
1779. Do. ----- John Browne.
1780. Francis Smyth, Jun. -----
Do.
1782. Robert Sinclair. ----- Do.
1783-4. William Siddall. -----
William Blanchard.
1790. Thomas Kilby. ----- Do.
1792. Edward Wolley. ----- Do.

Edward Wolley was afterwards called Copley, of Potto
Hall, near Stokesley.

"By the Solemn Act of Union between the two "Grand
Lodges of Free-Masons of England", in December 1813, it
was 'declared and pronounced 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."

The Premier Grand Lodge at York went further; that until quite recently the earliest allusion to Royal Arch Masonry at York was to be found in the "Treasurer's Book of the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons" commencing April 29, 1768; but the fortunate discovery of Messrs Whytehead and Todd in 1879 now enables us to trace the degree back to February 7, 1762. Passing over the mention of the Royal Arch by the "Atholl" Masons in 1752, the next in order of priority is the precious little volume at York... Its chief value consists in being the earliest records of a Chapter, including a Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons, known." Full particulars of this valuable minute book will be found in Mr Whytehead's article, entitled "The Royal Arch at York." Hughan, who has carefully examined the volume, does not consider that it could have been the first record of the Royal Arch at York, though it is the earliest preserved. The meetings are described as those of a "Lodge " - not a "Chapter "-up to April 29, 1768; and the association, though evidently an offshoot of Lodge No. 259 at the "Punch Bowl," the chief officer "P.H.") in 1762 being Frodsham, who was the first Master of that Lodge, it gradually obtained the support of the York Grand Lodge, and ultimately developed into a Grand Chapter for that degree. The special value of the volume is its record of the warrants granted to Royal Arch Chapters in the neighbourhood of York, the first of which was petitioned for on December 28, 1769, being the date of the earliest issued by the "Grand Chapter in London" Moderns), which was granted on February 7, 1770. The book ends on January 6, 1776.

Four Royal Arch warrants at least were granted, and probably more.

1. Ripon, Agreed to February 7, 1770.
2. "Crown" Inn, Knaresborough, April 1770.
3. Inniskilling Regiment of Dragoons, " October 1770.
4. "Druidical" Chapter, Rotherham, February 25, 1780.

These Chapters appear to have been held under the protecting wings of Craft Lodges, as in the custom now-three out of the four preserving a connection with the Premier York Grand Lodge. The degree was conferred at York on brethren hailing from Hull, Leeds, and other towns, which suggests that a knowledge of Royal Arch Masonry even at that period was far from being confined to the schismatics of London. The officers of the " Grand Lodge of all England " were elected " Masters of this Royal Arch Chapter whenever such Presiding Officers shall be members hereof. In case of default, they shall be succeeded by the senior members of the Royal Arch Chapter (May 2, 1779)." The only copy of a York charter (R. A.) known and was issued on July 6, 1780, to members of the ' Druidical Lodge of Ancient York Masons at Rotherham," under the seal of the Mother Grand Lodge of all England.

A unique meeting of the Royal Arch degree took place on May 27, 1778, in York Cathedral, and is thus described: The Royal Arch Brethren whose names are undermentioned assembled in the Ancient Lodge, now a sacred Recess within the Cathedral Church of York, and then and there opened a Chapter of Free and Accepted Masons in the Most Sublime Degree of Royal Arch. The Chapter was held, and then closed in usual form, being adjourned to the first Sunday in June, except in case of

Emergency." This Assembly has supplied the text or basis for the tradition that the Premier Grand Lodge in olden time was in the habit of holding its august assemblies in the crypt of the venerated Minster at York.

On June 2, 1780, the Grand Chapter resolved that "the Masonic Government, Anciently established by the Royal Edwin, and now existing at York under the title of The Grand Lodge of All England, comprehending in its nature all the different Orders or Degrees of Masonry, very justly claims the subordination of all other Lodges or Chapters of Free and Accepted Masons in this Realm." The degrees were five in number, viz.: the first three, the Royal Arch, and that of Knight Templar. The Grand Lodge, on June 20, 1780, assumed their protection, and its minute-book was utilised in part for the preservation of the records of the Royal Arch and Knight Templar Degrees. Hughan considers that the draft of a certificate preserved at York for the five degrees of January 26, 1779, to November 29, 1779, "is the oldest dated reference that we know of Knight Templar in England."

Of the Encampments warranted by the Grand Lodge of all England for the "Fifth Degree," i.e., the Knight Templar, I know but of two, viz.:

K. T. Encampment, Rotherham, July 6, 1780

Do., No. 15, Manchester, October 10, 1786

What ultimately became of the first mentioned is unknown, but the second seems to have joined the Grand Encampment held in London, under Thomas Dunkerley, Grand Master, the charter bearing date May 20, 1795.

The dissimilarity of approach to grounds for membership between the Premier Grand Lodge at York and the new organization at London was not simply a matter of spiritual emphasis. What it is important to recognise, however, is to underline the spiritual aspects of the Premier Grand Lodge at York it must not be imagined that these led only to private and individual consequences. The members of the Premier Grand Lodge at York were not just Masons but significant members of the local community. What they believed and practised was bound to have an effect on their daily surroundings. Even we, in our present rituals, are constantly reminded that we are to act and behave towards others "as men and as Masons."

Since what we are talking about here, however, is somewhat unknown to any present-day audience it will, perhaps, be useful if we first sketch in the background to this Grand Assembly which does not fit into our usual understanding of the early English Craft. Conditioned as we like many others for much of our Masonic careers regard the events of 1723 in London as the starting point for all Freemasonry, it is a revelation to discover that what a Dr. Plot had said about the spread of Freemasonry across England in the 17th century was apparently based on fact. In Chester, York in Chichester and Staffordshire, to name but a few places, there was clearly an ancestry of Freemasonry that was associated with both working and non-working masons during the previous century. In York we have definite evidence of a Masons's Guild lodge in 1663 and persons connected with that Grand Assembly are linked by family with the Lodge whose continuous Minute books are known to have existed from at least 1705. What is more the Lodge that then emerges is also

no longer a Lodge associated only with the stonemasons' trade though members of that trade continue as members of it.

When, in fact, we read the first extant minutes of the Grand Lodge at York two things immediately strike us as odd. The first is that this Lodge is headed not by a Master but by a President who is a non-regular attendee, and this President is provided with a Deputy whose task is to rule over the Lodge in his absence. The other feature is that already, after 1705, this Grand Lodge is acting as more than merely a private lodge. It possesses its own collection of Old Charges and claims the right to authorize men, albeit gentlemen, to form themselves into attached extensions of the York Lodge in the towns of Bradford and Scarborough. In effect this Assembly at York is acting as did the previous operative Grand Lodge North of the River Trent, which exercised authority over units of working stonemasons in that area. Its features such as these, which illustrate the Lodge's claim to be also a Grand Lodge even before its overt proclamation of such a status at a later date. What is also clear is that this Grand Lodge does not derive its existence from any other body than itself. It is *sui generis* and *sui juris*. It is also going to persist for most of the 18th century. With that brief background let us begin to address the main theme of my paper, the ritual form and spirit of this Grand Lodge of All England, and the natural starting place has to do with the 2 principal days of its regular meeting. During its lifetime, and prominently marked with special decoration in the Minutes, are the arrangements made for the two Saints Days of St. John the Evangelist and St. John the Baptist. These two traditional holy days of the Masons' Craft are

chosen, to the precise dates, as those on which either the Installing or Re-Installing of the President of the Grand Lodge should take place or as a day of special commemoration and festival.

Not only are the days marked with worship in the church in Coney Street, where a sermon was to be preached by the Grand Chaplain, but a solemn procession was formed of the members in their Lodge regalia with their banners, the President walking behind, flanked by the clergy present. They all processed later to a larger guildhall where a banquet was provided with representatives of York's daughter lodges also being requested to be in attendance for these sacred days. It is also worth remarking that ladies and non-masons also came to the banquet.

It might be contended that there is nothing really unusual in what has just been said for many other lodges in 18th century England are known to have followed such a practice. Yet it is the Grand Lodge of All England that maintains the double festival. The inference of this is that in York an earlier form of Masonic Guild usage was considered to be essential. It was one that ensured allegiance to the Craft's ancient and saintly patrons.

This observation leads us on to another. Because the York Grand Lodge was the product of development from a Guild Lodge but no longer had a parent Guild since the working masons had created another York Company for their trade in 1671, it had to recreate a basis for its authority and activity as a lodge of Masons. The way to do this was to take over the Old Charges that had hitherto served as the ground for holding a trade company and

apply them 'symbolically' to their new situation.

That is why, when the request for each new lodge elsewhere in the North was addressed to York, the first requirement was for the Assembly to be willing to abide by, and swear the allegiance of its members on, a copy of the Old Charges. We even know that when any such lodge ceased to work their copy of the Old Charges was returned to York.

This is significant because of what we know happened in London in 1722. George Payne, the then Deputy Grand Master of the London organization, produced the Old Charges in the copy called the Cooke MS. that had been used in his native city of Chester in the 17th century. He charged Dr. Anderson to take careful notice of such a document and those like it because on such documents and their contents any new Constitutions ought to be based. They were, he implied, essential if we were to be true descendants of Ancient Masonry.

What we find in York right up to the end of the 1790s is that it was the York Charges, of which we still have 5 extant original copies, that were used in the ritual of this Grand Lodge. Yet their use was distinctive as I will now explain. When there was a 17th century Guild Lodge in York attached to the Masons' Company every person who was admitted to the Lodge had to belong to one of two categories.

Either they were working stonemasons who were Freeman of their Trade or they were Freemen of some other Trade who were 'accepted' as members of the Freemasons' lodge. When they were admitted to the Freemasonry of a Lodge they were acknowledged as

those who had already passed through the 'apprenticeship' of their Trade and so they were at once made Fellows. If they were not of the stonemasons' trade they would first be asked to assent to the Craft Old Charges, which the working masons would have done already in their Guild Court. Both they and the working mason members would then have to take another solemn obligation regarding the secrets of Freemasonry to which initiation would introduce them. This obligation was taken on the Bible open at the first chapter of St. John's Gospel, another pointer to one of the Craft's patron Saints. Initiation was first effected by exchanging a word, grip and token, robbing the candidate in a symbolic apron. The ceremony then continued by conveying the history and esoteric meanings of the items used to illustrate Masonic principles by question and answer, the R.W.M. addressing the Lodge members in turn.

When the Trade Company and its attached Lodge were separated before the end of the 17th century certain new practices began to be required. As the lodge was no longer attached to a recognised Trade Guild it could not insist that all its applicants for initiation were of the same civic status as before. The astonishing thing is that in the case of the Grand Lodge of All England at York this status of Freeman in some trade was still the norm throughout its whole existence, save for one new category. That was the inclusion of the gentry or of the lesser nobility. The result was clearly demonstrated in the address of 1725 by Dr. Francis Drake when he alluded to three types of members in the Grand Lodge. The first were the working stonemasons, the second were the other trades or professions and the third were the gentlemen.

Because there were now those seeking entry to Freemasonry who had not been apprenticed in any trade a form of admittance to that status had to be introduced. Non-Freemen and the gentry were now made apprentices symbolically but initially, up to 1770, this was not done on a separate evening. Such candidates for Masonry were made an apprentice and a Fellow on the same occasion. What is more, even when there was pressure at last to make someone an apprentice on a separate evening the lodge was still opened in the Fellow grade. For York there was never a separate opening or closing in an Apprentice degree. The old Masons of York were maintaining their ancient usage. When you joined Freemasonry you were a Fellow and I must add that the Scottish term 'fellowcraft' never entered the York working. Conservatism also revealed itself in the fact that if men could apply to join Freemasonry in the Grand Lodge at York this did not automatically entitle them to membership of the Lodge. What happened at their initiation was that they became Freemasons. Another vote on another evening decided whether they were fit and proper persons to be admitted as full members of the Lodge. The old distinction between men being made 'Masons' and being 'accepted' into a specific Lodge was retained.

As the 18th century progressed the extent of the information that was to be imparted steadily grew. It became so extended that two things happened. A new degree of Master Mason was formed but on a different day, with a separate vote for admission and with the use of new lectures expanding older material. After 1760 this was developed further and instead of their mention in the catechisms separate degrees of Royal Arch and Knights

Templar were introduced but again with strict rules for their conferral. These latter steps were only available for those who had passed through the Craft chair. Again the lectures or catechisms which formed the main core of the ceremonies became so complex that a special jewel was donated to this Grand Lodge for the Past Master who gave the best rendition of these lectures each year.

We note that the spiritual ethos of this Premier Grand Lodge was clearly conservative in tone even if that was not the political outlook of its several members. What we know from a careful examination of its membership lists is that so orthodox was its Christian orientation that Anglicans felt quite at home there but Non-Jurors and Catholics were also quite happy to be numbered in its ranks. When we look at the names of Vavasour, Stapleton, Fairfax, Gascoigne and Tempest we are in the presence of local gentry whose family roots straddle the Reformation era as well as determining their social and political viewpoints. In the content of the ceremonies as also in the acknowledged antiquity of the institution they and the brethren they met there shared a common respect for Tradition. That is why, despite the growing influence of the new organization at London as the century developed, the York brethren insisted on retaining a format and substance of work, which was truly Ancient.

Nothing so defines the Grand Lodge of All England at York as the lectures or catechisms to which it so zealously conformed. When, bending to some influence from the age, it was felt more useful to categorize the teaching contained in what York regarded as the whole Craft system in a series of 5 degrees known as the York Rite it was still by using the catechetical method that it worked.

Here are three passages from what we know were the Lectures' contents after 1760. Such extracts will best convey the spirit of what is a somewhat better known 18th century Masonic institution.

1st Degree:

"Q. What are the ornaments of the Lodge?

A. The mosaic pavement, the blazing star and the indented or tassellated border?

Q. Why the blazing star or glory?

A. Because it refers to that grand luminary the sun which enlightens the earth is also the emblem of prudence, which is the first and most exalted object that demands our attention though we apply this emblem to a still more religious import. It may be said to represent that star which led the wise men from the East to Bethlehem, proclaiming to mankind the nativity of the Son of God and here conducting our spiritual progress to the author of our Redemption."

2nd Degree:

"Q. Please inform me how the names of the 2 great Pillars originated?

A. After Noah had built the pillar or altar of sacrifice upon his coming out of the Ark, and received the blessing of God on the spot he called it 'Jakin' which signifies 'Established' in commemoration of the rainbow which God established in the Heavens, and 3 times declared It to be so established... Some years after this the noble and godly Boaz erected 2 famous pillars on his own estate in the land of Bethlehem, the one he called J. after the name of the famous pillar and the other he called by his own name, being that of the great grandfather of K.S.

Q. What enriched them? The network, which from the connection of its meshes denotes unity and furthermore alludes to a saying of our Saviour's to Simon Peter and Andrew, his brother, 'Leave your nets and follow me and I will henceforth make you fishers of men'."

3rd Degree:

"Q. What was the Grand Secret that the noble Prince Adoniram, nephew to King Solomon and brother-in-law to Hiram Abi, communicated to the perfect Master Masons at Jerusalem?

A. The Grand Word that Moses engraved on the triple triangular plate of gold in Hebrew characters on the sacred mount. From this Grand and Sacred Word proceed the nine names by which the Almighty was pleased to distinguish himself and everyone of those names has a reference to the 9 attributes which serve as the distinguishing characteristic of Free and Accepted Masons (and finally reverting to an older, verse form of presentation):

Q. Who laid the foundation stones of Faith? (The names of first, Abraham on Mount Moriah, and second, Jacob asleep at Bashan, are mentioned and then this section closes with the third & fourth:)

"On the Jebusite's threshing floor
David erected an altar pure,
Calling upon the Lord Most High
That he to him would show mercy

Q. Since you have explained me Three
Pray tell me when the fourth may be?

A. Christ the Lord for lo, t'is said

Before the Jews from Egypt's land were led
A Saviour unto them was promised
That who believed in him should happy be
Both in this world and in eternity,
Then brethren, all pray celebrate his name,
He is our Saviour and Zion's Mighty King."

Do you now wonder why the old Grand Lodge of All
England at York Masons never really thought the Mystery
Plays had finished? They were still being played here.



SEALS OF THE FIRST ENGLISH MASONS AT YORK

The seal affixed to the York Constitutions and Certificates, as described by the Grand Secretary on December 14, 1767, was "Three Regal Crowns, with this Circumscription: "Sigillum Edwini Northum. Regis." Being the "Old Seal of Prince Edwin's Arms," of silver, mentioned in the inventory of Jan. 1, 1776, as "An iron screw press, with a Seal of Prince Edwin's Arms let into

the fall," and also in the "Schedule of the Regalia and Records, etc.," of September 15, 1779. In the latter inventory is named „A Seal and Counter Seal, the first bearing the arms of Prince Edwin, and the other the arms of Masonry” The seal-in-chief of the latter is of brass, and bears the legend : " + Sigil: Frat: Ebor: Per. Edwin: Coll : " above the three crowns being the year "A.D. 926." The " Counter Seal " (of copper) contains the arms and crest, as used by the "Atholl " Masons.

The first seal mentioned, is the one referred to by Grand Secretary Lambert in 1767, and that it was set wide later on for the " Seal and Counter Seal " named in the inventory of 1779. Impressions of the latter are attached to the warrant or deputation to ', The Grand Lodge of England South of the River Trent," of March 29, 1779, and are in an oval tin box, opening with movable lids on both sides, happily still preserved by the Lodge of Antiquity. It would therefore be made between the dates of the two inventories-1776-1779.

An engraving of these seals (seal and counter seal) is to be found in Hargrove's "History of York," and likewise in Hughan's latest work. The seal preserved of the Grand Chapter at York is apparently the one mentioned in the records, March 3, 1780- "Ordered that a Seal be provided for the use of the Grand Chapter, not exceeding half a Guinea." It was paid for on April 7. The design is of an unusual kind, being a rainbow resting on clouds at each end; below is a triangle, and then a crescent, and the legend, " Grand Royal Arch. Chapter York." It has been reproduced by Hughan for the first time, who, however, is not correct in treating the seal of the "Arms of Masonry" as the counter seal of the Grand Chapter, a it is distinctly

stated in the inventory of 1779 to be that of the Grand Lodge.

The three coronets on an azure field, were the arms borne by the Grand Lodge of all England, Prince Edwin's arms- and are therefore the same as those given on the York Seals.

REGARDING THE OLD MARK LODGE

In the Mark Register, commenced in 1852, a number of Brethren have been carried forward from a previous Register (now missing). Among the names is Bro. R. M. Scholefield, from whom we know that he was a Mark Mason previous to 1813.

A Record of the Hope Lodge informs us that Bro. R. M. Scholefield was deputed by the Lodge to attend the formation of the United Grand Lodge Of England, in 1813, in order to ascertain the position of the Hope Mark Lodge under the new Regulations.

According to the arrangements then made, the Lodge of Hope was entitled to practice the Mark Degree under the old Constitution derived from the Grand Lodge of York, which recognised the Mark Degree, and which was confirmed by the Union.

Ever since the Lodge of Hope practised the Mark Degree under its Banner.

Remarks on the Old Ritual of the Old York Mark Lodge
The Ritual of the Old York Mark Lodge, previous to the enrolment of the Lodge under the Banner of Grand Mark Lodge of England, was different from the present Ritual.

The position of the Mark Degree was then between the Second and Third Degrees. According to the old Minutes the proceedings were as follows:

The Lodge was opened in the First and afterwards in the Second Degree by the Worshipful Master or a Past Master and the Craft officers, the Lodge was then proclaimed open in the Mark Degree, and the Mark Officers took their respective stations.

The Mark Lodge was presided over by the King, representing King Nebuchadnezzar, his principal officers were:

Tatmai, Governor of this side of the River.

Shetham Bornai, Governor of the other side of the River. A bridge over which the Candidate had to pass represented the River.

The other officers were: Two Sojourners. Scribe. Guard within and without.

Every Past Master of a Craft Lodge, who was a member of the Mark Lodge, was also considered a Past Master in the Mark Lodge, and qualified to be elected as King or to the offices of Tatmai or Shetham Bornai.

The first part of the ceremony of promotion perpetuated the return of the tribe of Judah from Babylonian captivity, "to receive the promise of a Mark Mason of rebuilding the Temple and the Holy City" ..

This portion of the ceremony was given by the King and his Governors.

The second part of the ceremony, though slightly different, is practically the same -in substance as our present ceremony.

This part was given by a Past Master.

The Brethren wore ordinary Craft clothing, the only distinguishing badge was a jewel representing the old Jewish half-shekel, worn on a white ribbon " attached to the fifth buttonhole of the garment called a Waistcoat."

After the Mark business was concluded the Mark Lodge was proclaimed closed, and the Craft officers resumed their stations.

The Lodge was then closed in the Second and afterwards in the First Degree.



THE WORKING TOOLS OF AN OLD YORK MASTER

By W. Bro. W. L. Wilmshurst

In certain Lodges in Yorkshire and elsewhere, where the impressive "Old York working" three other Working Tools are known besides those allotted to the Three Degrees. They formerly belonged to the Past Master's Degree or Degree of Installed Master and were presented and explained to a new Master of a Lodge on his installation, Brethren below that rank remaining ignorant of them.

After the union of the two rival Grand Lodges in 1813 the Constitutions provided that only the three Degrees of Apprenticeship, Fellowcraft, and Master Mason (plus the Royal Arch) were to be recognised. The Degree of Installed Master was therefore unfortunately dropped and the enthronement of a Master of a Lodge now takes place in the Third Degree, though in the presence of a "Board" of Past Masters only, the working of such "Board" being the emasculated remains of the old Degree of Installed Master.

Notwithstanding the abandonment of the latter Degree, many old pre-Union Lodges, jealous of their traditional ritual and unwilling to accept abridged modern standardisations such as the "Emulation" working, stubbornly clung to some valuable pieces of traditional teaching and brought them over into what is now the Installation Ceremony, where they are still worked (not always with the approval of critical but not well-enlightened formalists of to-day). One of these is the three

Working Tools of an Installed Master; tools specially associated with the office of a Brother called to undertake the responsible office of Master of a Lodge and to serve as a Ruler in the Craft.

The first of these tools is a Plumb-line, a cord depending from the fingers, with a plummet at the lower end, to enable the Master to determine the uprightness of a given stone or building. (On the walls of the old Lodge-room at York, where once the Grand Lodge of England met, may still be seen the biblical reference to the use of the Plumb-line in Amos 7, 7-8. Similar references are to be found in Zech. 4, 10; Isaiah 28, 17; whilst Rev. 21, 15-17 is of similar moment).

The second is a Trowel, an implement for spreading mortar, with which (in its moral sense) the Master is to spread the cement of love among his Brethren and bind the living stones of his Lodge into unity.

The third (and most significant) is a Plan, containing secret designs to which an Installed Master must work; it is, as it were, a symbolical blue-print of the Great Architect's plan for building the Temple of a perfected Humanity, a plan of such privacy that it is entrusted only to those qualified to know it and to co-operate in its execution.

Note here that the first of these tools (the Plumb-line) forms a vertical line; the second (the Trowel) involves a lateral horizontal spreading movement; and that these two in combination make a Cross. Of this Cross we will say more presently.

The rich significance and deep propriety of these three supreme Tools needs no emphasis here. It is a thousand pities that this luminous piece of Masonic tradition has passed out of general use and that these tools and their implications are now largely unknown among Masons. For are they not emblems giving completeness and final point to the whole series of Working Tools from the First Degree upwards; adding crowning dignity and beauty to the entire structure of Craft symbolism, and throwing a strong illuminating beam of light upon the purpose of Initiation and upon the goal to which it leads men, first from darkness to light, and then from light to active collaboration with Deity in the creative work of building new heavens and a new earth? Masonry being "a progressive science" must needs involve the use of progressive Working Tools, of which these three are the most advanced.

There is another reason for regretting their disuse. Were they known and their significance taught and appreciated, the knowledge would go far to counteract the utterly false and unworthy notion that installation in the Throne of Wisdom is a personal compliment to the new Master or that the office is due to him by virtue of seniority or routine or popularity, or because he has been an efficient officer or is good at ritual. The prospective occupant of the Chair would learn, on the contrary, that he is placed in it not for his own or his Lodge's glory or to make a great feast for himself and his friends, but to advance the glory of God and the cosmic work of building the world into the divine image.

For consider. By being entrusted with the Plumb-line he is impliedly delegated to be the skilled tester and rectifier of

the souls of those committed to his charge. How shall he be qualified to use it if he himself cannot pass the test of that Tool or be unconscious of his own soul ending as a "silver cord" from the fingers of the Almighty and in direct communion with Him?

As to the Trowel, how shall he be able to use it or hope to spread the cement of love among his Brethren unless his own soul has become a burning centre of love whose radiance subtly welds them into unity, knitting their separated persons into an inseparable group-soul and "making them to be of one mind in an house"?

Lastly, but chief of all-the Plan. How can a man of any imagination or spiritual sensitiveness think of himself being made privy to the secret counsels of the Almighty and permitted to become a co-worker with the Most High and His heavenly hierarchy, without the deepest sense of awe, unworthiness, and self-abasement?

But apart from this general sense the Tools signify much besides. Tools not merely express abstract ideas; they are implements with which some practical work must be done. How, then, does an Installed Master use these tools? What sort of work does he perform with them? Well, here we get to secrets; those "secrets of the Master's Chair" which every new W.M. is sworn to preserve but of the nature of which he is usually completely ignorant. Can any P.M. who reads this say what those secrets are, Save for certain formal ones, pretty certainly he will have to say "no."

They cannot, of course, be discussed here but one hint can be given. It was said above that the vertical Plumb-

line and the horizontal line of motion of the Trowel combine to form a Cross, thus + or the Hebrew Tau-Cross T. The latter form is displayed on every P.M.'s apron; it appears on the badge with which every newly installed Master is invested, and implies that he knows its meaning and is expected to make use of it. Moreover its component lines are exhibited separately in the two columns on the Wardens' pedestals, one of which is always erect and the other horizontal. No column appears on the Master's pedestal. Why? Because he is the synthesis of the Wardens' columns, combining their properties in himself. The Master is a Cross, a living Cross, and therefore wears the sign of the Cross upon his clothing. The profound implications of this must be left to personal reflection.

We refrain here from religious discussion and from reference to Christian associations. We are dealing with the Cross as a philosophical conception long antedating Christianity and taught in the mysteries of both the East and the West through the ages and perpetuated in our system. As Plato and others voicing the ancient secret doctrine taught, the world itself is built upon the principle of the Cross, and is a manifestation resulting from the conflict of two opposed principles (spiritual and material) which have to be resolved into a unity transcending the dualism (just as the W.M. absorbs the functions of his two subordinate Wardens and transcends them). To "take up one's Cross" is deliberately to engage in the work of resolving the crux of life by reducing the spiritual and the non-spiritual elements in oneself into balance and harmony. That is the "Great Work," it is Masonic "labour" in its highest sense; in proportion as one achieves it in

oneself one becomes qualified and able to help in the task of world-building. Moreover, a Master of the secret science employs the sign of the Cross for many purposes; "Per Signum Tau" is an ancient formula used in connection with constructive and beneficent work done by such a man, unknown to his less advanced fellows.

It may be useful to sum up about the Working Tools generally as follows :

1. The use of the Tools is to effect the conquest of one's lower nature and will by the powers of one's higher nature and the spiritual will. One who is not master of himself and of his lower faculties cannot function on loftier levels or understand the nature of cosmic work. "He who is faithful in small things shall become ruler over great things."

2. The understanding and the use of the Tools are progressive and become disclosed more and more as one advances. It is hopeless to understand the more advanced Tools (those of the Third Degree and of an Installed Master) until the use of the First and Second Degree Tools has become the habit of one's life.

3. The First Degree Tools provide a rule for outward objective conduct; the Second Degree Tools a rule for the mental subjective life and include all forms of abstract thought (not necessarily religious), meditation, prayer, and mind-control, leading to perception of supra-mental truth and illumination of the lower mind. The Third Degree Tools are only for those whose consciousness has become "raised" above the life of common reason and every-day events; and these, in turn, open the way to the "secrets of the Master's Chair" and to knowledge of "The

Plan," that Divine Building Scheme at furthering which labour principalities and Powers, Angels and advanced men. Hence the Plan is the supreme Working Tool of our system and the last to be communicated ceremonially, since it is the final all-sufficing revelation to flood the intelligence of the aspiring Mason. When one knows that Plan, knows oneself to be part of it and as called to collaborate with it, and sees everything around one as moving gradually though unconsciously to its fulfillment, one's life-difficulties are at an end, The rest is easy, for, vast as still remains the unfinished work, that work is frictionless and joyous because it is identified and in harmony with the Almighty Will that steers the universe to its consummation.

Let me finish with a story illustrative of the use of the Tools. A man seen loitering and apparently idle in a lonely district was asked what he was doing there. He replied that he was building, a temple at a city many leagues away. "Do you think it necessary" (he said) "for me to be there in person and working physically? Others are doing that who know nothing of me, but who are unconsciously influenced by the directive control of my thought and will." That man was a Master Mason.

Now it will be real and useful Masonic exercise (1) to think out clearly and in detail how that man made use of the Third Degree Working Tools, and (2) to realise that the Great Architect has built and sustains the universe upon the same principle and by like methods. You are unlikely to reach a solution all at once, but careful persistent thought upon such a subject opens out the mind and enables the inward Teacher to reveal things one has hitherto thought impossible and inconceivable.

Treat the story as fanciful and incredible if you will, but reflect that a few years ago any form of telekinesis (action at a distance) was so deemed; yet to-day telegraphy, telephony, "wireless," and telepathy, are commonplace facts. Now if by his merely natural will and surface-wits man has produced these mechanical marvels, what greater miracles must be possible to him when the higher creative potencies dormant in his soul are awakened and he becomes able to wield his spiritual will and faculties, to manipulate cosmic energy and to mould it into building new heavens and a new earth and a new social order. It is certain we are left to do these things for ourselves; we should never appreciate them if they be done for us. But the Power with which to do them will always be provided and available to us.

"Coming events cast their shadows before." "First the natural; afterwards the spiritual." Evolution is being speeded up at the present time. The scientific mechanical inventions of our day are shadow's and advance-omens of greater truths yet to be learned and practised upon a higher level by the still latent supermechanical faculties in us. Is there not an old promise: "Greater things than these shall ye do" . For this reason Masonic "science" and the understanding of spiritual building-principle, and working tools are to-day of momentous value and privilege to Masons individually and, through them, to the world at large.

