A Short History of Freemasonry to 1730

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Preface

Henry Hallam, more than 120 years ago, declared that "the curious subject of freemasonry" had been treated "only by panegyrists or calumniators, both equally mendacious"; and though the study of masonic history has in later times been undertaken, on the whole, in a very different spirit, the lucubrations of such writers as Hallam had in mind have continued to add something to the difficulty of a subject already difficult enough on other grounds. The confusion and ill repute in which the history of freemasonry is still to some extent involved are partly the result of two defects. In the first place, writers on the subject rarely defined with any precision the thing of which they undertook to treat; and in the second, they were too much given to polemics. Some of them, chiefly concerned with the erection of ancient and medieval stone buildings, were insufficiently aware of the fact that the history of building is not the same thing as the history of freemasonry. Others, conceiving of freemasonry mainly as a peculiar system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols, explored the ancient history of symbolism without realizing that symbolism became a characteristic of freemasonry only in relatively modern times. Still others, primarily interested in masonic ceremonies, sought to connect freemasonry with one or other of the ancient or medieval societies which practised initiatory rites; but these investigators commonly ignored the fact that the influence, if any, of old rituals could have been exercised upon freemasonry only in and after the third decade of the eighteenth century. Whatever their major interests, masonic writers often felt bound to expose what they regarded as the mistakes of their predecessors or contemporaries, and this commonly both added to the prolixity of their own writings, and helped to pass on old errors to new generations of students, who would otherwise have known little or nothing about them. We shall, in the following pages, attempt to define clearly what we take freemasonry to be as a field of historical inquiry; and in treating of it we shall avoid unnecessary speculation and keep to the securer, if less romantic, pathways of recorded evidence.

So far as that could be done, we have personally examined all the manuscript and printed authorities on which this Short History is based. We felt an obligation to do so, not because we undervalued the excellent critical work of some of our predecessors, but because we wished to preserve independence of judgement, and to approach the history of freemasonry anew, by a re-examination of old sources, such as the *Regius* and *Cooke* MSS., and an examination of recently discovered material, such as the *Graham* and *Edinburgh Register House* MSS.

The information which we have collected has been used from time to time in various papers and articles printed in *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum,* the *Economic History Review, Economic History,* the *R.I.B.A. Journal,* and *Miscellanea Latomorum,* as well as in books which are listed in our Bibliographical Note. These studies fall into three main groups: the first is concerned with medieval operative masonry; the second with the transformation of the building industry in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; and the third with the beginnings of

speculative masonry. Readers well acquainted with our published work of the last twelve years will discover relatively little that is new in this Short History, but they will, we trust, find it convenient to have our main conclusions under one cover. To the ordinary reader, without time or facilities for systematic study, for whom this volume is primarily intended, we present a survey of the facts relating to the growth of freemasonry up to the time when speculative masonry was firmly established, about 1730. With this object in mind, and on account of difficulties of production under present conditions, we have omitted all footnotes and appendices; we have, however, added a Bibliographical Note and an Index.

It will be appreciated that, for the earlier phases of masonic history, the facts tend to be scanty, and their meaning and relation must to some extent be matters of doubt and entail differences of opinion. There is much that is still obscure in connection with the origin and development of the Craft and Royal Arch ceremonies; possibly it will never be fathomed, but new evidence which crops up from time to time helps to throw some light on dark places. The uncertainty lends charm to the study; if all were known, interest in masonic research would cease. We have changed our minds more than once in the course of our investigations, and are conscious that our present views, stated in this volume, are certain to require modification in the future.

We have been able to avail ourselves of various valuable suggestions made by Bros. R. H. Baxter, R. J. Meekren, H. Poole, and W. J. Williams in official or unofficial comments on "Prolegomena to the Mason Word" and "Pure Antient Masonry," when those papers were communicated to the Quatuor Coronati Lodge; we have also to thank Bro. W. Waples for the trouble he has taken to obtain information for us about the Old Lodge at Swalwell; our colleague, Douglas Hamer, for advice and suggestions on various points; our colleague, A. G. Pool, for reading the proofs; and Mr. H. M. McKechnie, Secretary of the Manchester University Press, for his very valuable help in preparing the manuscript for the printer, and in arranging for the production of the book.

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Chapter I

Introductory

Definition. For our present purpose freemasonry may be defined, quite simply, as the organization and practices which, from time to time, prevailed among freemasons, from the earliest date at which such organization is traceable or probable, down to 1730. It is not asserted that the organization was continuous in every place where its existence can be proved; indeed, we can be certain of the contrary; but, on a general view of the subject, it is possible to trace the existence of freemasonry in some place and period in every century since the fourteenth. In so long a tract of time, neither freemasonry as a whole nor its constituents could have remained unaltered; but, as we shall attempt to show, the mutations were not sudden, so as to separate one phase completely from the next. We have, therefore, to do with a continuous, though changing, institution, whose evolution can be observed and, to some extent, explained.

The Medieval Building Industry. We begin with the freemason or mason—the *cementarius, lathomus, lapicida,* or *masoun* of the older records. For the time being we leave on one side the vexed question of the meaning of the adjective *free.* Our present business is to indicate the main features of the industry in which the mason was employed, and the conditions in which those who pursued this calling founded and developed an organization of their own, or had regulation imposed upon them by an external authority. Medieval industries were carried on, as a rule, on a small scale by workers who produced goods for a local market. It was possible to produce for more distant needs and markets, and even for export overseas; and there gradually developed a class of men whose interests were less and less limited to manufacture on their own premises, and extended more and more to organizing the industry of others and to marketing its produce. But it was only at a comparatively late date that such people became dominant; the typical medieval producer, outside agriculture and the building industry, was a craftsman who acquired his material, worked it up with the assistance of an apprentice or journeyman, and disposed of the finished article. Such were the cutlers, paternostermakers and similar workmen of medieval London, York, and Bristol. The mason, however, was, as a

rule, differently situated, and his condition more nearly resembled that of the workman in our modern economic organization.

No one who has seen the huge pillars and masses of Durham or York minsters, the walls of the latter city, or the towers and battlements of Caernarvon or Conway, and has reflected on the conditions necessary for their erection, can fail to understand that the masons who were employed upon them must have differed, in two respects at least, from the ordinary "little master" of contemporary industry. In the first place, the mason, unlike the swordsmith or spurrier, could not easily acquire the material on which he worked, or sell a single and determinate product of his labour. The mason, on such large-scale works, sold his labour only. That is, he was a mere wage-earner, paid according to a time rate, or occasionally a piece rate, agreed upon between him and the agent of his employer, commonly the Crown, an abbot or prior and chapter, or a municipality. In the second place, he did not work in isolation, but formed part of a labour force (which, in some instances, included several hundreds of workmen of various kinds) directed and supervised by one management. Except for the fact that steam or electric power could not be used to work machines, a large building operation resembled a factory, and could not be carried on without regulation and discipline. Working times had to be fixed and observed; a bell summoned the men to work and, at the building of Eton College in the middle of the fifteenth century, men were fined for being late, or for hindering progress by fighting or telling tales. It may be added that, at least from the later part of the thirteenth century onwards, large numbers of men were conscripted for royal works, and that other employers, at times, were also allowed to recruit their labour by impressment. The works for which men were taken could, when completed, be maintained by a relatively small staff, and so could church fabrics. Most of the masons employed upon such buildings were thus, sooner or later, dismissed, and either had to seek other employment for themselves, or were impressed for building work in some other place. The mason was thus different in still a third respect from such craftsmen as weavers; they were relatively immobile, tied to their hovels and looms, but he, with his few tools in a bundle on his back, was often a wanderer, travelling willingly or otherwise from one job to another.

Large building operations were not the only market for the mason's labour; there were, doubtless, many relatively small building and repair jobs which provided other chances of employment. Nor was every medieval mason a mere wage-earner throughout his working career. Some became contractors on a large or small scale, and must be counted as receivers of profit; but these, though by no means uncommon, were probably rare in comparison with the number of masons who, normally at least, gained their living as journeymen. It thus becomes necessary, if the earliest masonic documents are to be understood, to know something of the way in which both wage-earners and contractors worked, and of how they were trained.

Broadly, the mason's trade may be divided into two main operations, the hewing, cutting or shaping of the stone, and the laying or setting of it in position; but each of these may call for more skill or less according to circumstances. At its lowest, the hewing or shaping might be roughly done with an axe or hammer to produce, for example, the "rockies" used in certain types of wall; at its highest, cutting was done very precisely and skilfully with mallet and chisel to produce accurately squared ashlar, tracery, or the recumbent figure on a princely tomb. Similarly, the laying or setting of bricks or ordinary stonework required less nicety than the setting of a rose window. On particular works the operations were specialized. Thus at the building of Caernarvon Castle in the earlier fourteenth century some of the masons were listed as *cubatores,* or layers. On the other hand, it may be presumed that masons in general had some skill in both parts of their art, though a tendency was observed, and condemned, in the fourteenth century for hewers to refuse to set.

It was assumed in the past that medieval masons, like other craftsmen, learned the rudiments of their trade by apprenticeship, acquired greater skill in their years as journeymen, and finally became masters of the craft and teachers of their own apprentices. Recent investigations, however, show that apprenticeship was a relatively late institution among masons; it was provided for in the London Masons' Regulations of 1356, but the earliest instance so far known is as late as 1382, and it was far from universal. Indeed, the taking of apprentices may well have been confined to a minority, and its purpose, in some instances at least, was probably instruction in those parts of the trade which only contractors or masons in supervisory positions would have occasion to use. If this were so, it must be concluded that the great majority of hewers and setters learned their trade in other ways. Fathers taught their sons without formal indentures; some masons took and instructed *famuli,* raising their wages as their proficiency increased; and, as we have suggested elsewhere, many who ended their careers as masons in the lodge may have begun them in a quarry. Masons are known to have worked in quarries; and not without reason, for by hewing and scappling stone there, and leaving little but the final shaping and dressing to be done on the site of the building, it would be possible to reduce the weight of stone to be carried, an important consideration in view of the expensiveness of transport in medieval times.

The building records on which our study of medieval operative masonry is based, though they leave little doubt that the majority of masons were journeymen, show that it was possible for some to climb out from the ranks and to acquire a higher status or greater gains, or both. There were, generally, three ways of doing that. One was by rising to the rank of foreman or overseer, i.e., to be first in command on a small operation or second in command on a large one. Such overseers, called apparators, apparillors or wardens, were distinguished in one or more of several ways from the other masons employed on the same building. They were commonly paid a higher wage; sometimes they received the standard weekly wage with a quarterly or an annual "reward" or bonus in addition; occasionally a warden drew the ordinary rate of pay but had a longer tenure. A second way of rising was to secure what may be called a staff appointment as master mason in the service of the Crown or of another employer, such as a cathedral chapter. The terms of such an appointment may be illustrated from the agreement made by the Chapter of Hereford with John of Evesham in 1359. The mason agreed to live in Hereford and not to work elsewhere without the Chapter's consent, to work diligently on the fabric and to teach others placed under him. In return he was to have a house, at 10*s.* a year, to receive a white loaf daily and 3*s.* a week for life. If illness should prevent him from working for one or two weeks he was to draw his full pay during that time; but if his absence from work should be longer he was to be paid only 12*d.* a week. The third way of rising was to undertake a building contract. The modern practice of letting out the whole of a large building to one person or one firm to construct was rare, if it occurred at all, during the Middle Ages. On the other hand, smaller bargains or contracts were not uncommon. There were several varieties, of which the simplest was taskwork, when one man or group of men received an agreed sum for scappling stone or some similar work easy to estimate quantitatively. A more elaborate kind of agreement was that whereby the mason undertook to supply not only the labour but some or all of the material for a tomb, a tower, a gateway or some other part of a building. After 1350, fairly large contracts became commoner. In the thirteen-eighties, for instance, William Sharnhale did work at Cowling Castle for which the contract price was £456, a sum equal to the total earnings of about 65 masons for a whole working year. Masons of this kind, whether overseers, chief cathedral masons, or contractors, were commonly distinguished, in the medieval way, by external marks of honour. They bore the title of master; they were provided with robes or furs to show the dignity of their office; and their entertainment was in accord with their status. A contract between John Wode and the Abbot of Bury St. Edmunds in 1436 provided that "he shall have his board in the county hall as a gentleman"; and in 1397 the masons who worked at New College, Oxford, dined with the Fellows.

Unfortunately, the documents in which the names of such masters and undermasters occur do not tell us exactly what work these men did, and it is difficult to decide how far they were architects in the modern sense of the word. That they supervised the building work is clear enough; but it has been doubted whether they designed the buildings or drew plans and elevations. It is beyond dispute that buildings were measured and, as contracts show, might be required to be built to specified dimensions. Moreover, the ground plan was probably marked out accurately on the site before the foundations were dug. Drawings to full scale were also required for good work on tracery and masonry joints, and the stones had to be fitted to them before they were set. If masons could make such drawings they were also capable, in all probability, of making such plans and elevations as would be required. That some masons could draw is evident from entries in building accounts. At Westminster Abbey in 1330 a shilling a day was paid to Master Thomas of Canterbury *tractanti super trasuram* (making drawings [?] on a tracing board) and repairing moulds; and the accounts relating to Westminster Palace in 1531 record an expenditure of 8*s.* on "two payre skrewis for tracerye roddis provided for the maister mason to drawe with in his tracery house." Whether the famous fourteenth-century mason, Henry Yevele, was a skilled draughtsman is not known; but it is possible that he drew a design, for the church of St. Dunstan, in London, was built according to his *devyse.* Certainly Roger Ward, master mason at Old Chatsworth, drew a *platt,* or plan, and was paid for it in 1551. That master masons were responsible for planning and designing their work may perhaps be inferred from one early and one late reference. The *Regius MS.*, of about 1390, lays it down that the master mason shall not work at night except in study; and the building accounts of the Tron Kirk in Edinburgh, 1635-38, refer to the making of four great lodges for the masons to hew in, one of which had "a study in the end thereof for the master mason." As late as 1703 it was observed that there were many master workmen "who could contrive a building and draw a draught or design thereof as well as most, and better than some, surveyors."

Mason and Freemason. It will be noted that in indicating the different grades of mason, no mention has been made of a special category described as *freemasons,* and that at the beginning of this chapter the term was assumed to be generally synonymous with *mason* and its Latin and French equivalents. That such was the case is evident from the use of both terms to describe the same man, as, for instance, the fifteenthcentury mason John Marwe of Norwich. It may, further, be noted that the London organization of the trade is, in its own muniments, called a company sometimes of masons and sometimes of freemasons. Similar, though later, associations in Newcastle, Norwich, Lincoln, Kendal, Ludlow and Exeter were

officially known as companies of masons; those in Oxford, Durham, Gateshead, Alnwick and Bristol were called companies of freemasons. *Freemason,* however, was less frequently used, and in the two earliest versions of the MS. *Constitutions of Masonry* it does not occur at all, though their charges were addressed both to fellows and masters of the craft. Any distinction or excellence which the term may now be thought to connote evidently did not seem important in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries.

The adjective *free* has been taken by various masonic writers to indicate either liberality (as in the seven liberal arts), status in a municipality or company (as in freeman of London), or freedom from feudal serfdom; and it may well have been the case that now and again the word was used in one or other of these senses. It should be noted, however, that a great number of masons could hardly be counted free of a company. Also, though the earliest MS. *Constitutions* laid it down that an apprentice should not be of bond blood, and though the migratory character of the mason meant, by the fourteenth century, that he could hardly be bound to the soil of the manor, his calling was in earlier times compatible with servile status. On the whole, it is likely that the freemason was so called, as a rule, from the material in which he worked, namely freestone, especially the tractable limestones found in a belt stretching from Dorset to the Yorkshire coast. This was the stone *par excellence* for carving and undercutting; and the freemason was one who carried out the finer work possible only in freestone. It may be significant that in Scotland, where there is little or none of it, *freemason,* as a trade name, does not appear to have been current.

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

Chapter II

The Organization of Masons in the Middle Ages

The Antiquity of Masons' Organizations. In times past antiquity added, and for some types of mind in our own day still adds, excellence to good institutions; and it is no wonder that the first English historians of freemasonry claimed that it had existed *ex principio mundi,* was known in Britain in the time of St. Alban, and was established here in the days of King Athelstan. At least one eighteenth-century mason believed that the freemasonry of his day contained elements of druidical wisdom. Such beliefs, based on insufficient and isolated facts patched out with anachronisms, are not worth discussion; but it is worth while to indicate the inherent improbability of the existence of freemasonry, as we have defined it, in early British history. Surviving monuments prove the existence, between Roman times and the Norman Conquest, of workers in stone; but we know next to nothing about their training and status, and we may conclude that their numbers, in an age when building in stone was relatively rare, were small. As stone buildings increased in size and number, and a demand for stone workers arose, the supply might be expected to grow as well, and the probability of organization to be greater. In all likelihood, therefore, freemasonry arose only about the time of the Norman Conquest, when building in stone was carried on with remarkable activity by kings, nobles, and churchmen. Westminster Abbey, begun under Edward the Confessor, the Tower of London and the minster at Durham were indications of this new energy; the calendars of the Liberate Rolls for the reign of Henry III (1216-72) show both a royal concern for building and the existence of some degree of central control of works with which the Crown was connected; the rapid and extensive castlebuilding of Edward I (1272-1307) required an enormous number of masons and other workers, and his activities, together with those of Edward III (1327-77) at Windsor, were probably of the first importance in their influence on the development of organization among masons.

The Lodge. It may be presumed that many of the stone workers of the eleventh century were capable only of rough work; and the multiplicity of wagerates for masons even in the later part of the thirteenth century, as at Vale Royal Abbey, suggests that up to that time the development of a mass of labour with a general standard of competence was still incomplete. By the second half of the fourteenth century, when, as the Windsor Castle building accounts show, the number of wage rates was considerably smaller, there was probably far less difference in skill than there had been previously between masons in general. Or, to put the matter another way, there were then many more hewers fit to work in the lodge. The earliest

mention of a lodge, so far as we have observed, occurs in a record of Vale Royal Abbey belonging to 1278; but there can be no doubt that lodges existed much earlier, for without them it is difficult to see how a church, abbey, or castle of any size and pretension to ornament could have been erected. Once the lodge came into existence, the organization of masons was likely to develop, either spontaneously from within, or by regulation from without. As the shire and the parish preceded the nation-state so, we incline to believe, the masons' lodge preceded the assembly of the *Regius* and *Cooke MSS.* and the London Masons' Company.

Primarily the lodge was a workshop—an *asteleria* or *atelier*—commonly a wooden hut or shed wherein the masons, protected to a greater or lesser extent against the weather, cut and dressed their stone on benches. At the same time, as occasional surviving inventories show, it might make a convenient storehouse for tools and tackle. It had, moreover, certain social aspects. In the Middle Ages the working day was very long, so that it was necessary for the mason to eat many of his meals away from home. It was also the custom, as it still is in some parts of Europe, to take a siesta in the middle of the day, especially in summer. Where, as at York Minster, the lodge was in or near a town, the mason might be able to go home for a mid-day meal, or out of the lodge at his "drinking times"; but in many instances, no doubt, the masons rested at noon in the lodge and, at the permitted times, drank there also. The lodge might thus be a kind of refectory and club; and it is likely that questions affecting the mason's trade were discussed, and grievances ventilated, within its walls.

Under the direction of the master mason or of his warden, the lodge might well constitute a group acting, to some extent, collectively, or at any rate subject to regulation as a unit. At York, as early as 1352, and possibly earlier, elaborate rules existed for the governance of the masons connected with the lodge. These were made by the Chapter which, according to an ordinance of 1408, decided doubtful points in connection with them. At Aberdeen, in 1483, the masons employed on the church of St. Nicholas reached an agreement regarding their future conduct, the maximum penalty for a breach of the rules being exclusion from the lodge. At St. Giles, Edinburgh, a statute made by the municipal authorities in 1491 laid down the conditions of employment for the master mason and his colleagues and servants. In a contract of 1537, by which the town authorities of Dundee appointed a master mason of the church of Our Lady, reference is made to "the auld use and consuetude of Our Lady Luge of Dundee," and there can be little doubt that the conditions of the contract were, in part at least, written statements of old-established customs governing the employment of masons on that fabric. Surviving contracts relating to masons at the cathedrals of Durham and Hereford suggest that the employment of masons was regulated at those churches; and, as has been said earlier, there was no lack of regulation, whether the rules were written or not, at the building of Eton College in the middle of the fifteenth century. In all these instances, except perhaps at Aberdeen, the regulating authority was the employer. It is, however, likely that the lodge was the local agency by which the customs of the trade were communicated to masons and preserved until, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, companies of masons or freemasons were formed to govern the trade. In any event, it is known that certain versions of the MS. *Constitutions of Masonry* were associated with particular lodges. Other versions may have had similar associations though the links have not so far been traced.

The Craft Gilds. Since the nineteenth century, when attention was directed afresh to the life and government of medieval towns, it seemed natural to connect the organization of masons with the craft gilds, which played so important a part in the municipal regulation of industry during the Middle Ages. The London Masons' Company obviously sprang from such a root, and there seemed no reason to suppose that it was the only institution of its kind. Moreover, the existence of the three ancient grades of apprentice, fellow, and master seemed to suggest that in times past the mason's trade, like others, had been organized in gilds. On the other hand, as a further search of the records relating to masons and building was to make plain, there are several considerations which run counter to such a conclusion. In the first place, apprenticeship could exist independently of gild organization and was not universal even in the later Middle Ages. In the second, the available records of medieval towns and cities contain very few references to gilds or regulations of masons. The *York Memorandum Book,* for instance, has preserved the regulations of more than forty trades, but that of the mason is not among them; and the published records of Norwich, Leicester, Bristol, Coventry and Nottingham are similarly silent. In Lincoln, indeed, a masons' gild was founded in 1313 but, at any rate in 1389, it was a social or religious fraternity and not a trade body. In fifteenth-century York, Beverley, Coventry, and possibly Chester, masons took part in Corpus Christi or Whitsun pageants; but that need not imply craft-gild organization. London is the only municipality in which masons' craft ordinances dating from the fourteenth or fifteenth century have been traced; and even in London no formally established masons' craft gild existed until some date between 1356 and 1376, though there is a trace of organization, possibly only temporary, among journeymen as early as 1306. In Edinburgh an Incorporation of Masons and Wrights was established by seal of cause, i.e., by an act of the municipal authorities, in 1475; but it was a company of artificers in the building trades and not a craft gild of masons. This relative scarcity of records relating to masons' craft gilds is probably not accidental. Our investigations suggest that the number of masons ordinarily living in a

medieval town was too small to make a successful or prosperous gild. In any event, the craft gild was a local institution; but large-scale building operations were often carried on outside the towns and their jurisdictions; and masons, as we have shown, were frequently migratory workers. An organization capable of meeting the needs of their calling would have to be wider in its jurisdiction than the narrow bounds of a medieval town.

The Assembly or Congregation. If we may trust the two earliest masonic manuscripts, such an organization existed; its governing body, the assembly or congregation, which every master was bound to attend, had some legislative and executive competence; and it was recognized by the public authority, whose officers attended its meetings. The two manuscripts differ somewhat in their account of it; neither gives any detailed picture, and both carry its origin back, with very little historical probability, to Athelstan's time. It does not follow, nevertheless, that there was no truth at all underlying the statements of these manuscripts. Statutes of 1360 and 1425 prohibited the formation of congregations or confederations of masons. These were probably associations which the economic condition of the times and the industry would be likely to produce, namely, organizations of wage-earners formed for the illegal purpose of maintaining or enhancing their wages; but it may have been the case that they sought to hide or to justify that object by proclaiming an intention, as is done in both manuscripts, to protect the employer's interest as well. Or, alternatively, the journeymen were held in control by master masons who attempted to keep in mind three objects, all indicated in the manuscripts. They were the payment of a fair wage, varying with the cost of living, to journeymen; the guaranteeing of sound work, without waste and undue cost, for the employer; and freedom from unfair competition among mason contractors.

That these were actual and mutually compatible objects need not be doubted; but, outside these two manuscripts, there is little or no positive evidence of organization on a county or regional basis to secure them. There is evidence, however, to confirm its possibility. In the first place, some craftsmen in England, like the leadminers and the wandering minstrels, are known to have had similar organizations and customs, and in Germany there existed in the fifteenth century an organization of much the same kind for the *steinmetzen.* In the second, the possible existence of a county or district professional tribunal is suggested by the conditions in a contract of 1434, whereby the mason who built Fotheringhay Church was required to measure the foundations "by oversight of masters of the same craft," and the competence of the workers employed was to be decided, at need, "by oversight of master masons of the country."

The Unity of Medieval Freemasonry. Masonic writers have shown some tendency to draw a fairly sharp distinction between "town" or "gild" masons on the one hand, and "church" or "cathedral" masons on the other; but the evidence, so far as it goes, is against any such division. Nothing is clearer than that the generality of masons could be used for either the "Gothic" work of churches or colleges, or for the building of castles, town walls or bridges. Commissions to conscript masons were usually so made out that masons in the employment of the church could not be taken. This, however, indicates not that they were of no use for castle-building, but that their employer must be protected against the seizure of his men. Upon occasion the protection was absent or ineffective, as when in 1479 the master mason of York Minster was trying to recover his men, who had been taken to work at Nottingham Castle. Nor were the master masons necessarily more specialized than others. Walter of Hereford, master mason at Vale Royal Abbey between 1278 and 1280, became master mason at Caernarvon Castle, and also built castles in Scotland. Henry Yevele was in charge of work at Westminster Abbey, Westminster Palace and the Tower of London. His contemporary, William Wynford, overseer of the masons at Windsor Castle in the thirteen-sixties, was later master mason at Wells Cathedral and the abbey of Abingdon; and other examples might be added. It follows, if the existence of the division of medieval masons be denied, that the masons' customs could not, as has sometimes been supposed, have had any peculiar connection with "cathedral" masons. In fact, the most explicit reference in independent records to the existence of such customs occurs in a document relating to the building of Sandgate Castle in 1539.

An extreme form, still to some extent current, of the belief in a special organization of cathedral or church masons, is that which was advanced as an explanation of widespread architectural similarities between different churches. This was attributed to their erection by the Comacine Brotherhood, which, according to one version of the myth, took its rise in the region of Como. Not a scrap of record evidence has been found to establish the existence of this migrant fraternity; and the basis seems to be mainly a mistaken etymology; for *comacinus* probably meant "fellow mason" (as *comonachus* meant "fellow monk") without reference to Como or any other place.

Masons' Customs. Given the masons' lodge, it was all but inevitable that the conditions of the men who worked in it, and their relations with the employer, should come to be governed by custom, that is, by a general rule or principle applied to successive instances as they occurred. Similarly, it would be a convenience for the administrators in charge of one or more royal buildings if, instead of making terms and arrangements with each individual worker, they could apply the same general rule to each batch of new workers sent to them, or to each of

several labour forces under their supervision. It need not have been the case that such a general rule was always invented by the employer or his agent. In some instances, and perhaps in many, they could afford to recognize a preexisting rule or practice known to and maintained by the masons themselves. That customs of this kind did exist is beyond dispute. Masons coming to Vale Royal Abbey in 1278 were paid for their tools "because it is the custom that their tools, if they bring any, shall be bought"; a record relating to the building of Nottingham Castle in 1348 refers to an *antiqua consuetudo* governing holidays; London Bridge masons in 1406 were provided with drink on Shrove Tuesday *prout mos est antiquus*; and in 1539 a magistrate of Folkestone was sent to Sandgate Castle to inquire about the custom of freemasons and hardhewers. It may be presumed that such customs related in the main to tools, hours, holidays and special rewards or celebrations, and that they varied from one locality or lodge to another. They were modifiable by statutes, such as those of 1360 and 1425, so far as those laws were operative, which was by no means fully; and we think it likely that the large-scale conscription of workers from different regions, beginning actively in the later thirteenth century, tended both towards greater uniformity in customs, and also to their extension to larger numbers of men. By the middle of the fourteenth century, therefore, one might expect to find some formulation of customs widely prevalent in the trade. The preservation of such customs would, naturally, be an important object of any body or organization of masons. In all probability we have the formulation in the Articles and Points of the *Regius* and *Cooke* MSS.; and it is possible that we have an organization to maintain them in the Assembly or Congregation.

The Articles and Points. We have attempted elsewhere to deal with the difficult questions of the date, provenance and relation of the two earliest masonic manuscripts, and can be here concerned with them only briefly as the earliest statements of the Articles and Points. The *Regius MS.*, in verse, was written about 1390, and the *Cooke MS.*, in prose, in the earlier fifteenth century. The later manuscript, however, represents an earlier version of the customs, from which the Articles and Points of both manuscripts are descended; the original document, or so-called "Book of Charges," was probably compiled about 1360.

The regulations vary in number and statement between the two manuscripts, but are in content subtantially the same in both. The Articles are directed chiefly to masters, i.e., to craftsmen in charge of a building operation; they are to be loyal to the lord, i.e., the employer, and not to waste his goods by giving more pay to any man than he may deserve, the price of corn and victuals being considered; no master is to take an apprentice for less than seven years, for the art cannot be learned in a shorter time; nor may he take an apprentice of bond blood, nor one that is maimed or physically incapable; like other masons, the apprentice is not to be unduly charged for, "that the lord of the place that he is taught in may have some profit by his teaching"; a master is not to be a maintainer of night-walkers or robbers; he is, wherever possible, to dismiss an insufficiently skilled workman and to take a better in his place, "to the profit of the lord"; lastly, no master is to supplant another, for no man can so well finish a piece of work as he that began it.

The Points are directed to fellows, i.e., to workmen other than the master in charge. Such a workman must love God and Holy Church and regard his fellows as brethren; he must be secret, not disclosing "the counsel of his fellows in lodge or chamber"; he must take his pay meekly at the time appointed and avoid quarrelling; if quarrels do break out between him and his fellows, the discussion must be postponed to the next holiday and then settled, for to pursue the matter immediately would mean hindering the building work and cause loss to the lord. The mason must keep the seventh commandment; the reason given for that, if not scriptural, may have been sound enough, namely, that breach of the commandment would lead to discord among masons. If a mason should be a warden, he should be a true mediator between his master and his fellows. Lastly, a mason who is more skilled than his fellows and sees one of them working wrongly, so that a stone is likely to be spoiled, should instruct him and help him to do the work properly, "that the more love may increase among them and that the work of the lord be not lost."

It may be doubted whether the articles and points are a complete statement of the masons' customs; but they do indicate clearly the various interests which the customs must, to some extent, have attempted to reconcile and serve. Thus the spirit of the articles and points is not unlike that underlying the regulations of medieval gilds, which attempted to be fair to both producer and consumer. Many parallels to the articles and points may be found in gild regulations; but there is no reason to suppose that the articles and points were copied bodily from any gild source; and they do not refer to some matters which gild rules could hardly avoid mentioning, such as the names, number, and functions of the association's officers.

Masons' Organization in London. The way in which masons were organized in a gild may be illustrated from the regulations drawn up in the one municipality where such a gild is known to have existed. The London regulations of 1356 do not prove the existence of a gild (which was, however, in existence by 1376) but they provide for various contingencies with which a gild would be concerned. They require a seven-years' apprenticeship; they prohibit one mason from taking the apprentice or journeyman of another before the expiry of his term;

they declare that any man capable of it may both hew stones and lay them; and they stipulate for sureties if a mason should take a contract. The ordinances made in 1481 both imply that the gild or fellowship had been badly administered and provide remedies. Wardens are to be elected every two years and outgoing wardens are to present accounts to their successors within one month, under heavy penalties for disobedience. Admissions are not to occur without examination by the wardens and four or six honest persons of the craft. Members of the fellowship are prohibited from enticing the workmen of another. Finally, the powers of the Fellowship are extended to include the right of search, oversight and correction of all manner of work pertaining to the science of masons within the city and suburbs.

From the Ordinances of 1481 and the later ones of 1521, it is clear that we have in the London Masons' Company a medieval craft gild with an oligarchy formed or forming within it, as happened in other places and other trades. Persons made free of the Fellowship were, according to the 1481 ordinances, "once in every three years to be clad in one clothing (i.e., livery) convenient to their powers and degrees" and to wear it when attending mass every year on the Feast of Quatuor Coronati. Every two years also they were to go to mass together on the octave of Holy Trinity and thereafter to "keep their dinner or honest recreation . . . And to have their wives with them if they will," each paying 12*d.* for his own dinner and 8*d.* for his wife's. A shilling would then represent a quarter of a mason's weekly wage, and, bearing in mind the livery and quarterages payable by members, we may suppose that the Fellowship was tending to become too expensive for the journeyman mason to join.

The 1521 ordinances show a marked tendency towards the establishment of a local monopoly. *Foreigns,* or non-freemen, are neither to set up for themselves nor to be employed at all while a sufficient number of freemen is available. Restrictions are placed upon apprenticeship; no ordinary member is to have more than one, a liveryman only two, and men who have twice been wardens three at most. A statute of 1548 made illegal the limitation upon *foreigns,* but in the following year the section was repealed at the instance of the London livery companies, and the Masons' Company kept on trying to set up a monopoly until the Great Fire of 1666 and even later.

The Quatuor Coronati. The reference in the London Masons' Ordinances of 1481 to the Feast of the Quatuor Coronati calls for some explanation. According to some accounts, these were four Roman stoneworkers who were put to death by Diocletian because of their refusal to forsake Christianity. The commemoration of the Four Crowned Martyrs was fairly widespread in the Middle Ages, and several churches were dedicated to them, including one at Canterbury in the seventh century. In the fifteenth century, they were patron saints of various continental gilds associated with the building trades, being held in honour more particularly in the Low Countries. They were also the patron saints of the German *steinmetzen.* Their position in England is less certain; the Church undoubtedly preserved their memory; the clerical author of the *Regius MS.* (c. 1390) describes the masons' craft as *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum,* but it is far from clear by what route and at what time that title came to mean anything to medieval operative masons in England. The *Regius MS.* account of the Quatuor Coronati does not form part of the historical section of the poem, but is an addition, probably taken direct from the original Latin version of the *Golden Legend.* The *Cooke MS.*, with its fuller history of the craft, makes no reference to the Four Crowned Martyrs, nor was an account of them embodied in any of the later versions of the MS. *Constitutions of Masonry.* In the later fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, the Quatuor Coronati, unlike Euclid, King Solomon, and Athelstan, were apparently not part of the history of the craft, as formulated by English masonic historians, and as accepted by operative masons, and there is no documentary evidence that they ever were so incorporated, or that they were ever acknowledged as patron saints in this country. The London masons honoured St. Thomas of Aeon, and the Edinburgh masons St. John. The feast day of the Four Crowned Martyrs, 8 November, was not kept as a holiday in the early fifteenth century even at a time when Saints' days and church festivals were very freely recognized. In no case with which we are acquainted was 8 November kept as a holiday prior to 1450. The first occasion on which we find it so observed was at Eton College in 1453. It was then kept as a holiday by the freemasons, but, unlike other feastdays, it was a holiday without pay. The same somewhat grudging recognition of 8 November occurred at Eton College in 1456, 1458, and 1459. We have not been able to trace 8 November as a holiday at any subsequent building operations, except possibly at the Tower of London in 1535, when three out of four masons absented themselves from work on that day. The reason for this may have been that, as mentioned above, the London Masons' ordinances of 1481 required each member to attend mass on that day. It thus appears probable that such recognition as was accorded to the Four Crowned Martyrs by English masons commenced only in the fifteenth century, and the existing evidence hardly justifies us in saying that at any period in England they were venerated as the patron saints of the masons. The association, such as it was, of the Four Crowned Martyrs with freemasonry, is commemorated in the name of the oldest masonic lodge of research, the Quatuor Coronati Lodge, No. 2076, London.

Chapter III

The MS. *Constitutions* and Their Evolution

All the chief elements in medieval freemasonry persisted, to some degree or other, in the centuries which followed. The masons' lodge remained and, with modifications which we shall indicate later, became an indispensable part of modern masonic organization. Municipal regulation of the mason's trade also survived, especially in Scotland; and the London Masons' Company, though its connection with the trade has become far less close and direct in the course of centuries, exists to this day. Finally, *littera scripta manet.* The rules and traditions of the craft were preserved, and, from time to time, were written down and copied anew. It thus becomes necessary to give some account of the differences between the various surviving versions of them, and to trace, though briefly, the evolution of what are commonly called the MS. *Constitutions of Masonry* or, more familiarly, the Old Charges.

One factor in bringing about the modifications and alterations with which we are to be concerned, was the change in the organization of the building industry; but for the moment we leave that question on one side, our main purpose in this chapter being not so much to account for the changing form and content of these masonic documents, as to describe them. We may, at the outset, remind the reader that each version of the MS. *Constitutions* usually consists of two broadly distinct parts, namely the regulations or charges, and the legend or history. The two parts were of different origin. The charges grew, more or less inevitably and directly, out of conditions which formed part of the mason's everyday experience; but the history or legend must have been compiled by some one with far more learning than the ordinary medieval mason could possess. Nevertheless, though one element in the MS. *Constitutions* was indigenous and one originally extraneous, the two combined make a unity. For the charges, which were rules to govern the mason's conduct, may well have derived an added authority from the legend, the purpose of which was to prove to the mason, and to keep in his mind, the great antiquity and nobility of his calling.

Since the days of Hughan and Begemann, the recognized practice in studying the Old Charges has been to classify them into families and branches, according to textual similarities or differences, to examine the various versions of the history, and to discuss the uses to which the manuscripts may have been put. For our present purpose, we accept both the conventional nomenclature of the MS. *Constitutions,* and the following classification, as set out by Bro. Poole:

A. *Regius*,

B. *Cooke* family,

C. *Plot* family,

T. *Tew* family,

D. *Grand Lodge* family,

E. *Sloane* family,

F. *Roberts* family,

G. *Spencer* family,

H. Sundry versions.

There are altogether no fewer than 100 known versions of the MS. *Constitutions of Masonry,* apart from some fifteen missing manuscripts which have been named on the strength of such evidence as has been traced concerning them. New versions are still being discovered; on the average, two are found every three years. It would not be possible, and it is not here intended, to catalogue and discuss verbal and textual differences between them all; but we shall review here the outstanding family and individual variations in regard to three points, namely (a) the content of the regulations, (b) the history, and (c) the form of the MS. *Constitutions.* In Chapter IX we shall discuss the part which they played in masonic ceremonies.

The Regulations. These, as we have explained, are statements of the masons' customs; though on some points, as for instance apprenticeship, they must be taken as indicating rather what was considered desirable than what was the common practice. It may be presumed that the customs were originally preserved and transmitted orally, and that they were first written down in the second half of the fourteenth century. The two earliest surviving versions of them are contained in the *Cooke MS.* (early fifteenth century) and the *Regius MS.* (c. 1390), the latter being a revision and amplification of material which the former manuscript presents in a simpler and originally older form. Both versions agree in the main; but the *Regius* version contains provisions which do not occur in the *Cooke MS.*, e.g., the prohibition of night work, and the rule requiring craftsmen to be told before noon if their services were no longer required.

The third version of the Regulations, in chronological order, is that contained in the *William Watson, Thomas W. Tew, Dauntesey,* and *Henery Heade* MSS. These manuscripts date from the

late seventeenth or early eighteenth century, but their charges are probably based on a late fifteenth- or early sixteenthcentury document, and possess more affinity to the Articles and Points of the *Regius MS.* than do those of the remaining modern versions. Thus the provisions in the *Regius MS.* regarding holidays, serving as warden, being a mediator between master and fellows, acting as steward, and helping a fellow who is less skilful, are also found in these four manuscripts, but they are not found in the *Grand Lodge No. 1 MS.* of 1583, or in any seventeenth- or eighteenth-century text, other than the four specified above.

The fourth and last version is that which appears in the charges general and singular of the remaining modern texts of the MS. *Constitutions of Masonry.* These new regulations differ from those in the *Cooke* and *Regius* MSS., not merely by the *omission* of many provisions, such as those concerning the fixing of the apprentice's wage, the substitution of a more perfect for a less perfect craftsman, the prohibition of night work, and the fixing of wages according to the cost of victuals, but also by the *addition* of various fresh provisions, of which the most striking is one allowing fellows, as well as masters, to take apprentices.

The History. The legendary portion of the MS. *Constitutions* is in essence a history of the building industry from biblical times onwards, based upon scriptural and such medieval authorities as were directly or indirectly known to the compiler. This history, like others, was from time to time revised and altered. How often that happened is not known, but the history has come down to us in five main forms, apart from the version prepared by Dr. James Anderson for *The Constitutions of the Free-Masons* early in the eighteenth century.

The earliest form is that contained in the *Regius MS.*, ll. 1-86, and in the *Cooke MS.*, ll. 643-726. These texts are descended from a common ancestor, which was probably in existence by *circa* 1360. According to this version, which may be styled the Old Short History, and can be regarded as the ancestor or common original of all the surviving versions, geometry (= masonry) was founded by Euclid in Egypt, and came to England in the reign of Athelstan, who ordained congregations and articles. The second version is that given in the *Cooke MS.*, ll. 1-642. This version, which may be styled the New Long History, after dealing with the biblical invention of geometry and other sciences, with the Two Pillars, and the Tower of Babel, explains how Abraham taught geometry to Euclid and founded the craft of masonry. It then refers to the Israelites learning masonry in Egypt, and to Solomon building the Temple in Jerusalem. It goes on to explain how masonry was organized by Charles II in France and by St. Alban in England. Finally, it states that Athelstan and his son gave English masons their charges. It was probably written after 1350, but before *circa* 1390.

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

A fourth version of the History is presented in *Grand Lodge No. 1 MS.* and most of the later manuscripts, including those of the *Sloane* and *Roberts* families. Strictly speaking, we are here concerned with several versions differing slightly from one another, but nevertheless sufficiently alike, so far as their main features are concerned, to be regarded for our present purpose as constituting one version of the History. They all apparently spring from an expansion of the Old Short History, an expansion very similar to that of the New Long History of the *Cooke MS.*, though freer from ambiguities and contradictions. On the other hand, its French legend is different: first, Charles II is replaced by Charles Martel; secondly, it introduces "a curious (= skilful) mason called Naymus Greens," who is said to have been present at the building of King Solomon's Temple, and to have brought the Craft to France. Who "Naymus Grecus" was is uncertain; E. H. Dring's identification of him with Alcuin, the teacher of Charlemagne, has recently been contested by Douglas Hamer, who identifies him, much more probably, with Nehemiah. The name "Naymus Grecus" has come down to us in nearly as many forms and spellings as there are surviving texts, which strongly suggests that it has been copied and miscopied many times. This makes it possible that the particular

expansion of the Old Short History (or the revision of the New Long History as the case may be) from which these versions are descended, was made about the same time as the *Cooke MS. Original* was prepared, that is, towards the end of the fourteenth century. How many intermediates there are between the expansion (or the revision) on the one hand, and the *Grand Lodge No. 1 MS.* of 1583 on the other, it is impossible to say. Obviously the *Grand Lodge MS. Original,* from which the *Grand Lodge No. 1 MS.* was copied, is older than 1583; it must be older than 1560, the date of the manuscript from which the *Levander-York MS.*, a member of the *Grand Lodge* family, was copied *circa* 1740; the language and style hardly suggest a date before the first half of the sixteenth century.

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

The fifth version is that occurring in the *Spencer* family. This form is probably a revision of the *Grand Lodge* version, brought about principally by omitting Naymus Grecus and Charles Martel, by introducing the Second and Third Temples and other prominent building operations, and by expanding the narrative leading to Athelstan and Edwin. Other modifications are the naming of King Solomon's master mason as Hiram Abif, the description of Edwin as *brother* of Athelstan, and the fixing of the year 932 as the date of Edwin's assembly at York. All the texts of this family date from 1725 or shortly afterwards.

Changes in the Form of the MS. Constitutions. In an endeavour to trace these, we propose to leave aside the *Regius MS.*, which is in a class by itself. It is a poem giving the Old Short History and the Articles and Points, together with an account of the Four Crowned Martyrs, a description of the building of the Tower of Babel, an account of the Seven Liberal Arts, portions of John Mirk's *Instructions for Parish Priests,* and the whole of *Urbanitatis,* a metrical treatise on manners. Instead, we treat the *Cooke MS.* as the oldest version. This consists of five elements:

i. a statement of man's debt to God;

ii. the New Long History;

iii. the Old Short History;

iv. the Articles and Points;

v. a brief Closing Prayer.

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

i. an Invocation to the Trinity;

ii. the History of Masonry;

iii. an Instruction regarding the administration of the oath to observe the Charges;

iv. an Exhortation to take heed of the Charges;

v. the Charges General and Singular;

vi. a brief Admonition to keep the Charges;

vii. a brief Closing Prayer.

Certain important further additions, however, appear in some versions. First, there are nearly a score which contain an Apprentice Charge of a definitely operative character, similar in content to the conditions of an apprentice's indentures. Secondly, of the versions which contain an Apprentice Charge, there are four or five, belonging to the *Roberts* family, which also contain a code of New Articles, of a definitely speculative character, laying down the conditions on which a person can be accepted as a freemason. Thirdly, at least seven versions contain a special reference to masonic secrets. Thus, the *Harris No. 1 MS.* and the *Dumfries No. 3 MS.* provide for the appointment of a tutor to instruct the candidate in secrets which must never be committed to writing. The *Drinkwater No. 2 MS.* contains an oath, in terms which resemble those of certain catechisms of masonry, to keep secret the signs and tokens to be declared to the candidate. The *Grand Lodge No. 2 MS.*, the *Harleian MS. 1942,* and the *Roberts MS.* give the oath of secrecy to be taken by a person before he can be accepted as a freemason. Bound up with *Harleian MS. 2054,* and in the same handwriting, is a scrap of paper referring to "the several signs and words of a freemason" to be revealed to the candidate and kept secret by him. Finally, three versions—the *Gateshead MS.*, which includes an Apprentice Charge, the *Alnwick MS.*, and the *Taylor MS.*—have Orders appended, of a definitely operative character, fixing the fines to be paid for various offences. Thus the MS. *Constitutions of Masonry,* in their most complete form, consist of the previously enumerated seven elements, together with

viii. the New Articles;

ix. an Oath of Secrecy;

x. an Apprentice Charge.

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

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

Chapter IV

The Mason Word

From the large number of copies of the MS. *Constitutions* which have survived, it is evident that these documents were not only important, but essential in the development of freemasonry. They are links between the "operative" masonry of the fourteenth century and the "speculative" masonry of the eighteenth, and it is easy to understand the desire on the part of so many lodges to possess and to prize copies of their own. Nevertheless, the MS. *Constitutions,* venerable as they might be in origin, would not of themselves have provided a very adequate basis for the ritual and ceremonies with which, by the eighteenth century, freemasons' lodges had become preoccupied. It would, of course, have been relatively easy to invent brand new rites and ceremonies, when the taste for them arose. Wilkes and his cronies at Medmenham provide a conclusive, if infamous, instance of a capacity to adapt quasi-medieval forms to eighteenth-century needs and uses. There is, however, evidence to show that masonic ritual, though it may have owed something to invention, was largely based on an

"operative" institution, which, if not as old as the *Regius* and *Cooke* MSS., was nevertheless real and of some antiquity. That institution is described shortly as the Mason Word; but had it been no more than a password or shibboleth, its importance and influence would have been far less than they actually were. In fact, the Mason Word connotes also certain ceremonies and an organization for the preservation and communication of a secret; and these became essential elements in modern freemasonry, not only in this country, but in others.

The Scope of the Mason Word. It is possible that in medieval times English masons had secret means of recognition; but there is not, so far as we know, any evidence to prove, or even to suggest it. The system of recruitment by impressment, so common in the Middle Ages, implies that the "pressed" man, if reasonably efficient, would be retained on the work, whether in possession of secret methods of recognition or not. Moreover, it was provided by Article VIII of the *Regius* and *Cooke* MSS. that a less skilled journeyman was to be replaced by a better skilled man as soon as practicable, which strongly suggests that according to the masons' customs, skill, and not a password, was the recognized test leading to employment. Secrets, indeed, there were, since the Articles and Points prohibit their revelation; but there is no reason to suppose that they included anything more esoteric than remarks and discussions in lodges (which it would not have been politic to communicate to employers), and technical or trade secrets, relating, for example, to the designing of an arch or to the way in which a stone should be laid, so that its grain ran, so far as possible, as it did in its native bed in the rock.

In Scotland, on the other hand, there developed in early modern times a system of recognition to which, by the later part of the seventeenth century at the latest, there had been joined other elements. According to the Rev. Robert Kirk, Minister of Aberfoyle, writing in 1691, the Mason Word "is like a Rabbinical Tradition, in way of comment on Jachin and Boaz, the two Pillars erected in Solomon's Temple (1 Kings vii. 21) with ane Addition of some secret Signe delyvered from Hand to Hand, by which they know and become familiar one with another." Similarly, a letter of 1697 in the *Portland MSS.* speaks of the Mason Word as "a secret signail masons have thro'out the world to know one another by. They alledge 'tis as old as since Babel, when they could not understand one another and they conversed by signs. Others would have it no older than Solomon. However it is, he that hath it will bring his brother mason to him without calling to him or your perceiving of the signe."

It is possible, as we shall attempt to show presently, to indicate the purpose of the Mason Word, the persons to whom it was communicated and the organization necessary to that end; but we have, unfortunately, too little documentary evidence to enable us to trace, with any certainty, changes in its scope, or to determine when, and from what sources, the esoteric knowledge connected with it was introduced. The *Edinburgh Register House MS.*, written in 1696, suggests that the essence of the matter lay in words, signs, a grip, and postures, which, together with "the five points of the fellowship" were communicated to members, either upon their first admission, or at a later stage. The "five points" are not explained, but simply listed as follows: foot to foot, knee to knee, heart to heart, hand to hand, and ear to ear. An explanation of a slightly different set of "five points," is given in the recently discovered *Graham MS.*, written in 1726, by means of a gruesome story about the three sons of Noah. Wishing to find some key to the knowledge which their father had possessed, they went to his grave, first agreeing amongst themselves that, if they should not come upon such a key, the first thing they found should be regarded as a secret. In the grave, they discovered nothing but their father's corpse. When the finger was gripped, it came away, and so with the wrist and the elbow. The sons then reared up the body, supporting it by setting foot to foot, knee to knee, breast to breast, cheek to cheek, and hand to back. Thereupon "one said here is yet marow in this bone and the second said but a dry bone and the third said it stinketh. So they agreed for to give it a name as is known to free masonry to this day."

Another possible explanation of the "five points" is provided by a story relating to Hiram, of which the oldest known form is that in Prichard's *Masonry Dissected,* first published in 1730. An advertisement of 1726, quoted by Sadler, which refers to "the whole History of the widow's son killed by a Blow of a Beetle" strongly suggests that a version of the story was known in 1726. Anderson's long footnote on Hiram, in the *Constitutions* of 1723, makes it not impossible that masons were acquainted with a version of the story as early as 1723. This story, which is also connected with a search for a secret, links it and the five points of fellowship with the exhumation of the body of Hiram, master mason at the building of King Solomon's Temple.

Investigation has so far failed to discover the sources of these necromantic stories, but it would be unsafe to conclude that they were early eighteenth-century inventions. It is possible that the Noah version is old, for an ancient tradition connected Ham, son of Noah, if not with necromancy in the strict sense, at any rate with the black arts. The tradition is recorded in Reginald Scot's *Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1586), and the connection is asserted in the thirteenth-century *Speculum Historiale* of Vincent de Beauvais. In the later part of the seventeenth century a connection between magic and the Mason Word was suspected in at least one part of Scotland. It would appear that in 1695 the household of Andrew Mackie, a mason living in Kirkcudbrightshire, was troubled by happenings of an apparently diabolic origin. The minister of the parish, who tried to exorcise the agent, and also published an

account of the matter in 1696, recorded that "The said Andrew Mackie being a meason to his employment, 'tis given out, that when he took the meason-word, he devouted his first child to the Devil; but I am certainly informed he never took the same, and knows not what that word is." It may be added that the word itself is as obscure in origin as the story. According to one masonic catechism, B.M. *Sloane MS. 3329,* of *circa* 1700, the master's word was *mahdbyn,* which is very similar to the form *matchpin,* given as the master's word in another catechism, the *Trinity College, Dublin MS.* of 1711. Whether the master's word should be regarded as the Mason Word is very uncertain, and the same is true of its meaning. That, for our purpose, however, is less important than the fact of its existence, and the obvious usefulness of the word and the five points of fellowship for ceremonial purposes.

The Purpose of the Mason Word. However useful it might be for ritual and "speculative" purposes, the Mason Word was first instituted to serve a strictly "operative" aim. That was to distinguish masons who were members of their trade organization, and to enable them to claim, at need, benefits in the way of employment and relief. The need for some secret method of recognition arose from two conditions peculiar to Scotland, namely, the possibility of employment open to what were called "cowans," and the existence of an industrial grade, without exact parallel south of the border, that of the entered apprentice.

There were in Scotland plenty of stoneworkers, because readily accessible stone, not unsuitable for building, was widely available. On the other hand, there were relatively few skilled masons, owing to the dearth of freestone capable of being carved or undercut. As a consequence, a test of skill would hardly suffice to distinguish masons from semi-qualified or unqualified stoneworkers, such as "cowans." Originally "cowan" meant a drydiker or builder of drystone walls; at some later, but unknown, date it came to be applied derogatorily to one who did the work of a mason, without having been regularly apprenticed or bred to the trade. It was doubtless "cowan" in this sense that the framers of the Schaw Statutes of 1598 had in mind, when they provided that no master or fellow of the craft should receive any cowan to work in his company, or send any of his servants to work with cowans, under penalty of £20 Scots for each offence. It was partly at least to prevent cowans from doing the work of qualified masons that the latter were entrusted with the Mason Word as a means of proving themselves. This explains a minute of Mother Kilwinning Lodge in 1707, "that no meason shall imploy no cowan, which is to say [one] without the word to work."

The system of entered apprenticeship, by creating a distinct class of semi-qualified ex-apprentices, further threatened the position of the fellow-craft or fully qualified mason. In Scotland in the seventeenth century, and possibly earlier, apprentices and entered apprentices apparently formed two distinct classes or grades. The Schaw Statutes of 1598 provided that an apprentice must be bound for at least seven years, and that, except by special permission, a further period of seven years must elapse before he could be made a fellow-craft. During this second term of seven years or less, as the case might be, the ex-apprentice was apparently an entered apprentice, and normally worked as a journeyman for a master, though the Schaw Statutes did permit an entered apprentice to undertake a limited amount of work on his own account, and lodge records show that he had a real, if subordinate, share in the government of the craft, and in its privileges. An entered apprentice, having been properly trained, though officially but semi-qualified, might well be as competent as many fellow-crafts, and consequently able, in a district where his status was unknown, to command a fellow-craft's wage, and to compete successfully with the fellow-crafts for employment. To prevent this, the fellow-craft was entrusted with secret methods of recognition distinct from those of the entered apprentice.

Organization and the Mason Word. Since the object for which the Mason Word was instituted would be defeated if the secrets were communicated irregularly or by unauthorized persons, it follows that control of the process was an important function of existing organizations of masons in Scotland. To that end there were required local associations, capable of co-operating with each other, and some supervising authority with a wide jurisdiction. The local organization was what may be described as the "territorial lodge," to distinguish it from the temporary or permanent workshop or lodge, associated with a particular building operation. Thus the word "lodge," as used in the Schaw Statutes of 1598 and 1599, appears to refer to an organized body of masons associated with a particular town or district. How old this type of organization was is uncertain. The earliest minute of the Lodge of Aitchison's Haven dates from 1598, and that of the Lodge of Edinburgh from 1599. The Schaw Statutes of 1599, however, describe the Lodge of Edinburgh as the principal lodge of Scotland, *as of before,* which obviously implies that it was in existence before 1599. The Incorporation of Masons and Wrights in Edinburgh was established by seal of cause in 1475, but it may well be that in Edinburgh the Incorporation was older than the Lodge, as was certainly the case in the neighbouring burgh of Canongate. Possibly the Lodge of Edinburgh grew out of the lodge at St. Giles for which regulations existed as early as 1491. Similarly the Lodge of Aberdeen may have grown out of the lodge at St. Nicholas, Aberdeen, where an agreement among the masons existed as early as 1483. About the beginning of the seventeenth century "territorial lodges" can also be traced at Kilwinning, Stirling, Dundee, St. Andrews, Perth, Dunfermline, Glasgow, and Ayr. Thus the system of "territorial lodges" appears to have been fairly widely

established in Scotland. In England, so far as we are aware, there were no official or semi-official "territorial" organizations bearing the name of "lodge." The only bodies of masons discharging official or semi-official functions, were described as "companies" or "fellowships," and roughly corresponded to the Scottish incorporations. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, however, and possibly earlier, there do appear to have been in the North of England lodges of a "territorial" type, but with no official status, such as those at Alnwick in Northumberland, and Swalwell in County Durham.

By the end of the sixteenth or beginning of the seventeenth century, there are various indications of co-operation among Scottish lodges. The so-called St. Clair Charters of 1601 and 1628 show that five lodges united in 1601, and seven lodges in 1628, or nine lodges in all, to support the claims of the St. Clairs of Roslin to exercise jurisdiction over the masons of Scotland; the Schaw Statutes of 1599 prove that the Lodge of Kilwinning exercised certain supervisory powers over the lodges in the West of Scotland; and a minute of the Lodge of Edinburgh, under date of 27 November 1599, with reference to a general meeting to be held at St. Andrews, implies that the Lodge of St. Andrews exercised some kind of supervision over Fifeshire lodges.

The central authority, which, in conjunction with the masters from the various lodges, controlled and supervised the "territorial lodges," was the King's Principal Master of Work and Warden General. Thus it was William Schaw, Warden General, who, "with the consent of the masters after specified," issued what are known as the Schaw Statutes of 1598. Originally the appointment of King's Master of Work related to a particular work, such as Stirling Castle or Linlithgow Palace, but at a later date the authority of the official sometimes extended to all royal works, in which case the holder was usually described as Principal Master of Work. The earliest of these wide appointments which we have been able to trace are those of Sir James Hammyltoun in 1539, and of John Hammyltoune in 1543.

The kinds of worker comprised in the organization we have described are clearly indicated in the Laws and Statutes of the Lodge of Aberdeen, 1670; and some light on their respective shares in the secrets associated with the Mason Word may be gained from two documents about a century apart in date, namely, the Schaw Statutes of 1598 and the *Edinburgh Register House MS.* of 1696. The lowest grade of organized workers, the handicraft apprentices, were bound by their indentures to keep secret their masters' concerns, but had no share in the government of the lodge, and were not given the Mason Word. The entered apprentices, on the other hand, were effective members of the organization, and, according to the Statutes of this Lodge, received the benefit of the Mason Word "at their entry." What additional esoteric knowledge, if any, was imparted to the fellow-crafts or master masons in 1670 is not clear from the Lodge Statutes. The Schaw Statutes of 1598 required the selection of intenders or instructors by each new fellow-craft on his admission, a provision which was effective, as is shown by minutes of the Lodge of Edinburgh for the first decade of the seventeenth century. As the candidate had to give satisfactory proofs of his technical qualifications before he was admitted, it is difficult to understand what functions these intenders discharged, unless it were to instruct the candidate in the esoteric knowledge associated with the grade of fellow-craft. The fact that the Schaw Statutes required two entered apprentices, together with six masters, to be present when a fellow-craft or master was admitted, would not necessarily prevent secrets being communicated to fellow-crafts. One possibility is that the entered apprentices retired for a time when this stage of the proceedings was reached; another is that the candidate retired with his intenders and received the esoteric knowledge outside the lodge, as was to some extent the method portrayed in the *Edinburgh Register House MS.;* a third possibility is that about 1600 the fellowcraft secrets were such as could be communicated in the presence of entered apprentices, as, for example, a word communicated in a whisper, and possibly a grip. By 1696 there were undoubtedly two sets of secrets, one for entered apprentices, and another for fellow-crafts or masters, and the entered apprentices had to leave the company before fellow-crafts were admitted. [See *The Ceremonies according to the MS. Catechisms* below.]

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

connected with admission to the grade of entered apprentice, it could have existed in 1598, by which time that category was well established; and so far as it was connected with limitation of the number of entrants to the trade, it might have originated earlier, for a tendency to exclusiveness in craft organization was by no means new at the close of the sixteenth century. The existence of the Mason Word in the seventeenth century, besides being clearly established by lodge records, is evident from a reference in Henry Adamson's *The Muses Threnodie,* published at Edinburgh in 1638; and the institution was well enough known in England thirty-four years later to be mentioned in Andrew Marvell's *Rehearsal Transprosed.*

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

Chapter V

The Period of Transition

In the history of freemasonry there is no sudden or significant change to chronicle in the early sixteenth century. Gould, indeed, committed himself to a contrary view in a sad summary: "the Reformation; no more churches built; the builders die out"; but his statement was based on a misconception of the importance of the Church as an employer of masons. That had tended to decrease even in the medieval period; and, as we shall indicate, the decline was to some extent offset by an increasing demand on the part of other employers. This tendency continued in the post-Reformation period. It may be worth noting, also, that the craft traditions of masons and other builders no more came to a sudden end than did the builders themselves. Gothic, in its later forms and manner, survived at Oxford and elsewhere, though mixed, harmoniously or otherwise, with more recent styles.

So far as the livelihood and prospects of masons were in question, the religious changes which occurred in the reigns of Henry VIII and his children were less important than another contemporary factor, less well understood in Gould's day than now, namely, the influx of silver from the New World discovered by Columbus. This tended to stimulate building in various ways. It assisted in the emergence of a mercantile class, enriched by rising commodity prices. Landlords, also, in so far as they were able to change or abolish ancient methods and conditions, had larger rent rolls out of which to pay for architectural magnificence. Lastly, the fact (with which we shall be later concerned) that wages tended to lag behind rising prices, meant that the labour cost of building was proportionately lower than in previous periods. The builders fared less well, but the activities of Bess of Hardwick, and others less eminent, meant that they did not die out.

This currency factor, so far as we know, constituted the only profound change in the conditions of the building industry during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and even this was not sudden. The industry had a century or more in which to adapt itself to changes which were in themselves gradual. In the period between the accession of Henry VIII and the death of Queen Anne, the organization of the industry was in fact evolving, through the gradual working out of tendencies, some of which had begun long before the Reformation.

The Change in Employers. Extensive rebuilding and repairing of parish churches, which distinguished the fifteenth century, very probably made little work of that kind necessary in the sixteenth; and the monks had ceased to build on a large scale long before the dissolution of the monasteries. The importance of the Crown, also, as an employer, was relatively less than it had been in the fourteenth century, but it still remained considerable. Indeed, its need of masons was so great, partly for works of national defence and partly for other purposes, that its powers of impressment continued to be used, not only in the reign of Henry VIII but, at least occasionally, in the seventeenth century. The place of the Crown and the Church as employers of masons was taken partly by the gentry, whose houses of brick or stone were

replacing the timber structures of their forbears or predecessors, and partly by the nobility, who were sometimes possessed by a spirit approaching a building mania. Municipalities continued to need masons, for bridges and public buildings; and so did University and College authorities, as the Bodleian and the Schools, the Ashmolean Museum, and Wadham (to cite only three examples) show.

The Rise of the Mason-Contractor. Another great change in the building industry was that which took place in its organization, but this, like the change in employers and the change in styles, was gradual. Large building operations in the Middle Ages were generally executed on the direct labour system, but smaller jobs, and even parts of larger jobs, were sometimes done by contract. Task work, the oldest form of contracting which can be traced, was not unknown in the thirteenth century, but after the Black Death in 1348 it became more common, which may perhaps be accounted for by the scarcity of labour and the need for finding more economical methods of working. Nevertheless, larger operations continued to be conducted on the direct labour system, and that system was still used in the first half of the sixteenth century on important works at Hampton Court, at Westminster Palace, and at Sandgate Castle. It continued to be used in the second half of the sixteenth and early part of the seventeenth centuries, but with more parts of the work done by task or by bargain than had formerly been the case. The erection of substantial works by contract appears to have become more common in the seventeenth century, and cases of masoncontractors occur where they had not previously been found. The change, however, was only gradual; thus Sir Thomas Tresham, who did a good deal of building in Northamptonshire in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, sometimes employed contractors, and at other times made use of the direct labour system; at Oxford, in 1610, Wadham College was being erected on the direct labour system, and Merton College was being extended by mason-contractors. It was not until the later part of the seventeenth century that the direct labour system was almost completely displaced by the contract system in London, and traces of the old system appear to have survived even longer in the provinces.

Masons' Conditions and Organization. Only a minority of masons had opportunities and capital enough to become contractors on any very large scale, and the great mass of workers in the trade continued to be, as they had been for centuries, wage-earners for the greater part, if not all, of their working lives. For them the sixteenth century, and part of the seventeenth, must have been a period of considerable hardship. The position may be stated summarily as follows. In the later part of the Middle Ages, from 1350 to 1500, masons' wages were relatively stable at a higher level than formerly, while food prices did not, on the whole, increase. Even so, bearing in mind the number of holidays without pay and the existence of unemployment caused by weather conditions, we cannot regard the ordinary mason as having enjoyed, during that period of 150 years, any very great abundance; but, in comparison with the 200 years which followed, his lot may be considered happy. The downward movement of his standard of living is clear from the following brief table of money wages and prices:

Years.	Money Wages 1501–10 = 100	Food Prices 1501–10 = 100
1501–1510	100	100
1511–1520	100	101
1531–1530	101	132
1531–1540	103	131
1541–1550	108	180
1551–1560	163	290
1561–1570	172	260
1571–1582	192	298
1583–1592	196	318
1593–1602	196	437
1603–1612	200	470
1613–1622	223	506
1623–1632	232	520
1633–1642	251	519
1643–1652	293	557

1653–1662	320	541
1663–1672	325	554
1673–1682	325	596
1683–1692	329	585
1693–1702	346	682

The catastrophe which these figures imply was lightened to some extent by the working of overtime and the elimination of holidays, though the remedies meant hardship of another sort. Systematic overtime made its appearance in the sixteenth century, for the first time, so far as we are aware, in the mason's history. It does not appear to have lasted, or at any rate to have continued with the same exacting frequency, but at times at least it might mean very arduous labour. Thus in one instance in 1531 a mason was paid for 136 hours overtime in one month; in another, in 1542, for 23 workdays, one holiday worked with double pay, one Sunday worked at ordinary pay, and 9 halfdays' overtime, in a period of four weeks. Secondly, the working year was lengthened by the disappearance of holidays. The medieval custom of paying for one feastday when two fell in the same week was still observed at York Place in 1515; the same privilege was claimed by the masons at Brent Bridge in 1530, though the accounts do not show whether the claim was admitted. Twenty-seven holidays with pay occurred at the Tower of London in 1535-36, and twenty at Dartford about 1542, there being in addition in each case twenty-four holidays without pay. To judge by a Berwick Castle account for 1557, holidays had almost entirely disappeared by that year. Between January 11 and November 14 only two days appear to have been observed as holidays. The great reduction in the observation of Saints' Days, which probably dates from about 1550, must seriously have affected, if it did not entirely eliminate, the custom regarding holidays with pay.

The hardship inevitably resulting from the lag between wages and prices was, in theory at least, admitted and removed by the famous Statute of Artificers, 1563, which provided that masons' wages, and those of other workers, should be assessed by the Justices of the Peace, in consultation with competent persons and with the sanction of the Lord Chancellor. The Statute abolished the rigid maxima previously enacted and required wage rates to be determined for the future annually with reference to the prices of provisions. In principle, therefore, one of the most important points of the *Regius* and *Cooke* MSS. had now become the law of the land; what St. Alban and Athelstan are supposed to have done in the distant past was, ostensibly at least, enacted under Elizabeth at the instance of Sir William Cecil.

The modification or decay of the masons' customs in the sixteenth century was not the only change affecting organization among masons. It is probable that the old system of regional assemblies, administering the customs, in so far as it really existed during the Middle Ages, disintegrated. At any rate there is no evidence whatever of its existence in Tudor times. Here and there it may have been replaced by the ordinances of the municipal companies, equipped with charters, and usually including other crafts as well as the masons, which were set up in some towns in the later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. These "companies" appear to have been somewhat similar in character to the "incorporations" which existed in the Scottish burghs in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, where the masons were usually associated with the wrights and other building crafts. Outside the towns, the old system does not appear to have been replaced by anything more than such regulations as the county justices were able to impose in accordance with the Statute of Artificers, 1563.

The obsolescence and disappearance of the "assembly" did not apparently entail the entire disappearance of the masons' customs, though the process of periodic revision almost certainly came to an end. A new type of lodge, associated not with a body of masons connected with a particular building, but with a body of masons connected with a particular town or district, came into being, an organization which, for want of a better term, may be described as a "territorial lodge." This new type of lodge can be traced in Scotland before the end of the sixteenth century, and in England at the beginning of the eighteenth, though very possibly it existed there at an earlier date. In so far as the MS. *Constitutions of Masonry* continued to have a practical interest for operative masons, it was in these "territorial lodges," and not in the newly established "companies" or "incorporations," that that interest was centred. At least six "territorial lodges" in Scotland, namely, those at Aberdeen, Aitchison's Haven, Dumfries, Kilwinning, Melrose, and Stirling, possessed versions of the MS. *Constitutions* in the second half of the seventeenth century, as is shown by the copies which have survived. The version belonging to the Lodge of Aberdeen was read to every candidate on his admission as entered apprentice, as is proved by an instruction contained in the Mark Book of the Lodge, dated 1670, and it is probable that the other versions were used in the same manner. Two eighteenth-century copies belonging to Lodge Dumfries Kilwinning, No. 53 (S.C.), and to the Thistle Lodge (originally Journeymen Lodge), Dumfries, No. 62 (S.C.), show signs of late revision by the addition of certain regulations of a practical character. Two English lodges, which were originally operative, at Alnwick and at Swalwell, have entered

amongst their early minutes versions of the MS. *Constitutions of Masonry,* to which are added "Orders" fixing the penalties to be imposed for breaches of regulations, more or less corresponding to the regulations in the MS. *Constitutions.* Thus, in the North of England, the MS. *Constitutions of Masonry* were still apparently the embodiment of living regulations governing operative masons as late as the first half of the eighteenth century. We are disposed to think, however, that the lodges at Alnwick and Swalwell were both within the sphere of Scottish influence, and that they were more typical of Scottish than of English practice. In England, generally, the MS. *Constitutions of Masonry* would appear gradually to have lost their practical interest for operative masons in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and to have passed into the possession of non-operative or accepted masons, amongst whose successors they are still cherished as an all important link connecting operative and speculative masonry.

Growing Importance of Plans and Designs. Another change in the building industry was the growth in the importance of plans and designs. Long before the advent of the sixteenth century, plans and designs must have played a part in all the more important building operations and, as we have endeavoured to show previously, master masons were formerly mainly responsible for their preparation. In the sixteenth century, we find not only more references to plans or "plots," but also indications that some of them were prepared by persons other than masons. This marks the beginning or the extension of a practice which ultimately led to the establishment of the profession of architecture and to the decline and disappearance of the mason-architect. This development may probably be accounted for, at least in part, by the substitution of classical architecture for Gothic in this country. Concomitantly, buildings came to be designed by men whose knowledge was acquired from travel or from books, and the union of architect and craftsman in the same person, common in the Middle Ages, became less and less frequent. It would be a mistake, however, to think that this interest of scholars in the art of building was entirely new. A special feature of the masons' trade in the Middle Ages was the appeal it made to men of education, in the days when education consisted largely of a knowledge of the seven liberal arts. One of those arts was geometry, and masonry, in so far as it consisted of planning and designing, might fairly be regarded as applied geometry, and consequently as a subject deserving of study. Thus geometry might lead to masonry and the tracing house, just as arithmetic, another of the seven liberal arts, might lead to commerce and the counting house. Actually, men of education in the Middle Ages were brought into contact with masonry for another and more practical reason, namely, that the administration of large building operations by the Crown and the Church called for a considerable amount of clerical work. Thus there was a practical as well as a theoretical reason why clerks or clergy should be interested in the art of masonry, and it is almost certainly to that interest that the Craft owes its so-called legend. Indeed, the author of the *Cooke MS.* (c. 1400) implies that he belonged to the Fraternity, and must be regarded as a non-operative member.

Chapter VI

The Beginnings of Speculative Masonry

Antiquarian Interest in Masonry. The Renaissance was an age of inquiry, characterized by a revival of learning and an endeavour on the part of artists and scholars to understand, and to model themselves upon, the past. In Italy, where the movement originated, the re-introduction of classical architecture represented a resumption of the art of Rome, and was a definite revival; in England the introduction of classical architecture was a foreign importation, alien to the country and its people. Although artists and scholars in this country adopted Italian styles of building, it is possible that the antiquarian interests which the Renaissance aroused led them to probe into the history and customs of those responsible for our medieval buildings, even though the style of those buildings was discarded for the time being as a barbarous product of the Dark Ages.

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

the Fellowship of the Masons because of its antiquity: and the more, as being a member of that society called Free-Masons." Yet another seventeenth-century antiquary, who very possibly had an interest in medieval masonry, if not in medieval building, was John Theyer, the Gloucestershire scholar, who at his death in 1673 owned the *Regius MS.*

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

Non-operative Masons. We cannot point to any definite instance in the Middle Ages of a non-operative member of an operative lodge, apart from the unknown author of the *Cooke MS.*; but if versions of the MS. *Constitutions* were *read* to candidates in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, as was undoubtedly done in the later sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries, then presumably a clerk would do the reading, in which case there may have been quite a number of non-operative masons in late medieval times. On the other hand, it is much more likely that the Old Charges were *recited* to candidates in earlier times, thus dispensing with the service of clerks. There are, however, as Begemann has pointed out, three respects in which some versions of the Old Charges suggest the fairly early existence of non-operative members. In the first place, the *William Watson MS.* of 1687 states that the charges were provided for "all manner of men who shall be made and allowed masons," an expression which very possibly corresponds to an earlier reference to "every honest mason or any other worthy workman that hath any love for the craft of masonry and would know how the craft of masonry came first into England." If these, or similar phrases were in the *Watson MS. Original,* which Begemann would date about 1480, and which we should date about 1520, then provision would appear to have been made for non-operatives in *circa* 1500. In the second place, in certain seventeenth-century versions of the Old Charges, the words "true Mason" in the statement near the beginning about "the charges that belongeth to every true Mason to keep," is replaced by "free Mason." This, on the assumption that "free mason" was coming to have something of its modern meaning in the seventeenth century, suggests the possibility that these particular versions of the Old Charges were being used by non-operatives. In the third place, the anagram upon the name of "masonrie," written by William Kay for his friend Robert Preston, with which the *York No. 1 MS.* of *circa* 1620 begins, would appear to be even stronger evidence of the particular manuscript being of non-operative origin, than the fact that it is one of the versions which substitute "free Mason" for "true Mason."

Scottish lodge records of the seventeenth century contain numerous examples of non-operative members of operative lodges, the earliest so far traced being John Boswell, laird of Auchinleck, who was present, as a member, at the Lodge of Edinburgh in June 1600. The increasing reference to plans and designs (some prepared by persons other than masons) which occurred in England in the sixteenth century, is also found in Scotland, but so far as we are aware, this development cannot be traced there until the seventeenth century, when we find not only some indication of the appearance of the professional architect, but also a tendency for the nobility and gentry to take a practical, as well as a theoretical, interest in planning and designing. Nevertheless, the available evidence shows that even as late as the seventeenth century the mason-architect was still a very important factor in the Scottish building industry. Thus several generations of the Mylne family, distinguished mason-architects, some of whom in turn held the office of Master Mason to the Crown of Scotland, were operative members of the Lodge of Edinburgh in the seventeenth century, and may very possibly have been the medium through whom various gentlemen were introduced into the Lodge as non-operative members. That amateurs in Aberdeen took a practical as well as a theoretical interest in planning and designing, is shown by the fact that in 1633 Dr. William Gordon, professor of medicine at the University, designed the crown of the steeple of the College, to replace one which had been blown down. Whether his interest in architecture led him to seek membership of the Lodge of Aberdeen, is not known, but it is not at all unlikely. When the Lodge records commence in 1670, we find that of the forty-nine fellow-crafts or master masons who were then members of the Lodge, only ten were operative masons; the

other thirty-nine consisted of four noblemen, three gentlemen, eight professional men, nine merchants and fifteen tradesmen. In other Scottish operative lodges at this period, the non-operative element was also present, but was apparently smaller than at Aberdeen.

The position regarding non-operatives in such English operative lodges of this period as can be traced is uncertain. More detailed reference is made to the lodges at Alnwick and Swalwell in Chapter IX; here it will suffice to state that there is no definite evidence of non-operative members in the former before its reorganization as a speculative lodge in 1748. In the latter, there are indications in minutes of 1732 and 1733, which point to the admission of gentlemen and non-working masons before the lodge accepted a "deputation" or warrant from Grand Lodge in 1735. The possibility that the Lodge at Chester, of which the great majority of members were non-operatives in 1673, was an operative lodge, is briefly discussed below.

Whereas in Scotland in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries men who were not masons by trade joined lodges of working or operative masons, in England at that period the practice appears generally, but not invariably, to have been different. The available evidence suggests that gentlemen interested in masonry usually associated not in operative, but in non-operative, lodges, or in lodges of "accepted" or "adopted" masons, to use the expressions of contemporary writers such as Aubrey and Plot. So far as we can tell, these lodges discharged no trade functions and were entirely or predominantly controlled by non-operatives, though their working and tenets were probably those of operative lodges. During the eighteenth century the word "adopted" disappeared from use, and the word "speculative" largely took the place of "accepted." The word "speculatyf" occurs in the *Cooke MS.*, of the early fifteenth century, in the sense of theoretical knowledge as distinct from practical skill; eighteenth-century masonic writers employed the word in a similar sense, as opposed to operative or practical, although by that date its general use in such sense was more or less obsolete. Gradually, the connotation of the word changed, until the term "speculative masonry" became practically synonymous with "freemasonry" in its modern acceptation as a peculiar system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols.

Local Organization of Accepted Masonry. According to Dr. Robert Plot, writing in 1686, the custom of admitting men into the Society of Freemasons was spread more or less over the nation, but more especially in Staffordshire; further, he informs us, that a meeting of the Society to admit members was referred to as a "Lodg," that a lodge consisted of at least "5 or 6 of the Ancients of the Order," and that a Fellow of the Society was called an "accepted mason." In most cases the records, if any, of these lodges of accepted masons have doubtless been lost. This was very possibly the case at Kendal; there is some reason for thinking that such a lodge existed there as early as 1594, in connection with the Company to which the masons, carpenters and other building crafts belonged. From one source or another we are able to trace six such lodges.

(i) The earliest known lodge of accepted masons which has been definitely traced was the so-called "Acception" connected with the London Masons' Company, to which members and non-members of the Company were admitted. This implies that the ceremony of admission to the Acception was different from any ceremony of admission to the freedom of the Company. The Acception can be traced in the earliest surviving *Account Book* of the Company in 1620-21 (?), 1630-31, 1638-39, 1645-46, 1649-50 and 1663-64, and in the first *Court Book* of the Company in 1677. It was probably identical with the Lodge held at the Masons' Hall, London, to which Elias Ashmole refers in his Diary on 10 and 11 March 1682. On that occasion, he and some other non-members of the Masons' Company were present, together with the Master and several other prominent members of the Company. Items in inventories of 1665 and 1676 make it appear likely that the Company possessed at least one version of the MS. *Constitutions of Masonry*, or Old Charges, and it is reasonable to conclude that this was used in connection with the ceremony of admission to the Acception.

(ii) Our only knowledge of a lodge at Warrington is derived from the famous entry in Elias Ashmole's Diary, under date of 16 October 1646: "I was made a freemason at Warrington in Lancashire." None of the persons whom he mentions as present appear to have been masons by trade. There is some reason for thinking that the version of the MS. *Constitutions of Masonry* known as *Sloane MS. 3848*, which was completed on the very day on which Ashmole was made a freemason, was used at this particular ceremony of acceptance.

(iii) Randle Holme the third, the herald and genealogist, was made a freemason at a lodge at Chester about 1665. In a list written *circa* 1673, preserved among his manuscripts in the British Museum, Holme gives the names of twenty-six persons who were apparently members of the Lodge. Subsequent investigations have shown that only six of these were masons by trade, fifteen of the remainder belonging to other branches of the building trade. As most of the leading building-trade employers of the city were members of the Lodge, it is quite possible that the Lodge was in some way connected with the company to which the masons and other building crafts belonged; it may even be that it was an operative lodge, notwithstanding the predominance of non-operatives amongst its members. As Holme also made a copy of the Old Charges (*Harleian MS. 2034*), which is likewise preserved among his

manuscripts in the British Museum, it is not unlikely that this particular copy, or the original from which it was made, was used at ceremonies of acceptance in the Chester Lodge.

(iv) Our sole knowledge of a lodge at Chichester in 1696 is derived from a petition presented to Grand Lodge in 1732 by Bro. Edward Hall, then member of the Lodge at the Swan at Chichester (constituted in 1724). In this he stated that he had been made a mason at Chichester by the late Duke of Richmond thirty-six years previously. As the petition was recommended by his son, the second Duke, who was Grand Master in 1724-25, it seems reasonable to assume that Hall was made a mason in 1696 as he claimed.

(v) The earliest surviving minutes of the Old Lodge at York are contained in a parchment roll endorsed "1712 to 1730." All the entries point to the Lodge's having been purely speculative, though from a speech delivered to the Lodge in 1726, by Francis Drake the antiquary, in which he addressed himself (*a*) to the working masons, (*b*) to those who were of other trades and occupations, and (*c*) to the gentlemen present, it would appear that the Lodge closely resembled the Lodge at Chester in its composition. From the original minute book of 1705-34, still in existence in 1778, but now unfortunately missing, it is known that Sir George Tempest, baronet, presided over the Lodge in 1705 and 1706, and also that the Lodge once met at Bradford in 1713, when eighteen gentlemen of that neighbourhood were made masons. It is likely, however, that this, or some other Lodge, existed at York before 1705. A version of the Old Charges, *York No. 4 MS.*, copied in 1693, bears below the signature of Mark Kypling, the copyist, five names set out under the heading "The names of the Lodg." Unfortunately, it is not stated where the lodge met, nor can Kypling's name, or that of any of the five members of the lodge, be traced in the Roll of Freemen of the City of York. The manuscript was presented to the York Grand Lodge in 1777, very possibly because of its previous association with the City of York. Evidence of a much older lodge at York is afforded by the *Levander-York MS.* of *circa* 1740, which is written on the fly leaves of a copy of Anderson's *Constitutions* of 1738. At the end, in the same handwriting as the rest of the manuscript, appear the words

> From York Lodge—copy'd from the Original engross'd on Abortive [=fine vellum] in the Year 1560.

Unfortunately the *Levander-York MS. Original,* which must have existed as late as 1740, has not been traced, and there is consequently no means of checking the statements at the end of the *Levander-York MS.* The lodge in 1560 was probably operative.

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

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

The evidence in favour of the existence of some central or district masonic authority in England in the seventeenth century would appear to be briefly as follows. In the first place, Robert Padgett, who in 1686 made a copy of the Old Charges known as the *Antiquity MS.*, describes himself at the end of the manuscript as "clearke to the Worshippfull Society of the Free Masons of the City of London," and this description seems too general to apply to a single or local lodge. In the second place, some of the rules included in the code of New Articles found in those versions of the Old Charges which belong to the *Roberts* family, imply the existence of some central or district authority. One refers to "the Master of that Limit and Division" where the lodge was kept, which seems to point to some kind of district authority; the other provides for the future regulation and government of "the Society, Company and ffraternity of ffree masons" by a Master, Assembly and Wardens as the said Company shall think fit to choose at every yearly general Assembly, which suggests some kind of central authority. The *Macnab MS.* of 1722 says the New Articles were added to the former charges "by ye best M^{rs} & fellows," without specifying a date; the *Roberts* print of the same year says the New Articles were made and agreed upon at a General Assembly held 8 December 1663. The two earliest versions of this family, the *Grand Lodge No. 2 MS.* and the *Harleian MS. 1942,* dating from the second half of the seventeenth century, both give the New Articles, but no indication as to how or when they were drawn up.

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

Chapter VII

The Formation of Grand Lodge

Dr. James Anderson. The formation and early activities of Grand Lodge are unfortunately shrouded in almost as much obscurity as the rites and ceremonies practised by English lodges in the first three decades of the eighteenth century. The minutes of Grand Lodge do not commence until 1723, and no minutes of any private lodge in London for so early a period appear to have survived. In the absence of official records, we have to rely upon secondary authorities, principally the Rev. Dr. James Anderson.

Dr. James Anderson (1679-1739) was the second son of James Anderson (1649-1722), glazier, of Aberdeen; he was educated at Marischal College, Aberdeen, being an Arts student from 1694 to 1698 and a Divinity student from 1698 to 1702. He was then apparently licensed as a minister of the Church of Scotland and probably preached for some years in Scotland, prior to moving to London in 1709. His first church there was in Glasshouse Street; in 1710 he moved with his congregation to Swallow Street, Piccadilly, where he remained until 1734, when he became minister of a church in Lisle Street, Leicester Fields. In 1731 he received the degree of D.D. from his old University, though his claim to such recognition cannot have been very strong, if we accept the opinion of such a competent judge as Chetwode Crawley, according to whom his one-time reputation as a profound Talmudic scholar had no foundation in fact, and his most ambitious publications in the realm of theology and philosophy do not rise above a dreary level of commonplace. His *Royal Genealogies,* for which he is perhaps best known, is largely based on a German work by John Hübner. But for his connection with freemasonry, the Rev. Dr. James Anderson and his work would undoubtedly have sunk into oblivion.

Although his father was very closely associated with the Lodge of Aberdeen, there is no evidence to show that the son was made a mason there; nor does he appear to have taken any part in the formation of Grand Lodge in 1716 and 1717, or in its early activities. According to his own account, Grand Lodge in 1721, "finding fault with all the copies of the old Gothic constitutions, ordered Bro. James Anderson, A.M., to digest the same in a new and better Method," but it does not follow that he was present at Grand Lodge in person, as he would not have been eligible to attend unless at the time he was Master or Warden of a regular lodge. In 1723, when Master of Lodge XVII (which has never been identified), he was present at Grand Lodge, and was appointed Grand Warden. On that occasion, he produced his book in print and it was approved; shortly afterwards, it was published under the title *The Constitutions of the Free-Masons,* and is commonly known as Anderson's *Constitutions* of 1723. From 1723 to 1730 he did not attend Grand Lodge, but probably for some years he was not qualified, as past Grand Wardens were not members until 1727. From 1730 to 1738 he attended Grand Lodge with fair regularity.

Dr. Anderson's claim to masonic fame is as author of the *Constitutions* of 1723 and 1738. According to his own account, he was appointed by Grand Lodge to prepare the first edition, but probably Begemann is right in believing that the initiative came from Anderson, and that

he volunteered to produce a *Book of Constitutions.* It was his "sole property," out of the sale of which he doubtless hoped to make a profit. There is certainly evidence to suggest that in other matters he had a keen eye to the main chance: on one occasion he sought commission on the fees or donations contributed to the University of Aberdeen by men who had received honorary degrees on his recommendation. In 1735, when the first edition of the *Constitutions* was exhausted, he sought and obtained the approval of Grand Lodge for the preparation of a new and revised edition, which ultimately appeared in 1738, and this too was his sole property. Further, on his representation that a certain William Smith, in *A Freemasons' Pocket Companion,* had pirated a considerable part of his *Constitutions,* "to the prejudice of the said Bro. Anderson, it being his sole property," Grand Lodge resolved that the Masters and Wardens of Lodges should discourage their members from buying Smith's books. There was, however, a real demand for a cheaper, handier, and more concise version of the *Constitutions,* such as was provided by the *Pocket Companion,* and one edition followed another, until it was finally superseded in popularity by Preston's *Illustrations of Masonry* in the seventeen-seventies.

Anderson's *début* as an historian was due to his having been invited, or his having volunteered, to "digest" the MS. *Constitutions of Masonry* in what he called a new and better method. Accordingly, in his *Constitutions* of 1723, he revised and amplified the accepted history of masonry, and in his *Constitutions* of 1738 he further revised and greatly extended the history. Even in that credulous age, there were critics who were not prepared to accept the craft legend; thus Dr. Robert Plot, the antiquary, in 1686 had stigmatized the history of masonry, as contained in a version of the MS. *Constitutions of Masonry,* as false and incoherent; and the author of *An Ode to the Grand Khaibar,* 1726, had poked fun at the whole legend. Anderson, however, was entirely uncritical. In the earlier history he not merely reproduced the old legends of the *Regius* and *Cooke* MSS., which passed for serious history in the Middle Ages, but added to them by describing Adam as the founder of geometry. Most of his additions, however, related to the history of masonry in Britain. His first version was approved by Grand Lodge in 1723, and his revised version in 1738; this was reprinted in the subsequent eighteenthcentury editions of the *Book of Constitutions.* It was closely followed and brought up to date by William Preston (1742-1818) in his *Illustrations of Masonry,* of which the first edition was published in 1772 and the twelfth in 1812. It provoked, however, sarcastic references from Laurence Dermott in *Ahiman Rezon,* the Book of Constitutions of the Antient Grand Lodge of which Dermott was secretary, and the views of the two Grand Lodges on the subject were so divergent that the historical section was omitted when the sixth edition of the *Book of Constitutions,* the first to be issued after the union of the two Grand Lodges in 1813, was published in 1815, and it has been omitted from all subsequent editions.

Serious scientific criticism of Anderson's history of masonry is not found before the later part of the nineteenth century, the most searching and relentless critic being Begemann. If Preston believed everything that Anderson wrote, Begemann hardly believed anything unless it was supported by independent evidence. He analysed Anderson's statements in great detail, especially those relating to the period 1717 to 1723, and showed how unreliable or inexact they frequently were. He accused Anderson of deliberately misquoting his authorities; there can be no question that Anderson's quotations at the best were never strictly accurate, and at the worst were anything but faithful versions of the originals. Begemann's criticism on this point was perhaps too severe; Anderson may have been constitutionally incapable of copying accurately any passage which he wished to quote, and was possibly unconscious of the fact that he frequently embroidered the statements of other writers, attributing to them ideas which were certainly not in the originals. Nevertheless, behind most, if not all, of Anderson's statements relating to masonry in England since the Conquest, there is probably a substratum of fact, though the facts may have become somewhat obscured in the process of "digestion." Anderson had also a tiresome habit of bestowing on prominent men throughout the ages recently established masonic titles, such as Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master and Grand Warden, just as fifteenth- and sixteenth-century painters represented biblical characters in Renaissance attire. In addition to these general defects, which he shared with contemporary writers, he had another, not unknown in writers of reminiscences, namely a tendency to exaggerate the part which he himself had played in contemporary masonic developments. This apparently led him not only to misrepresent what had happened, but also to make alterations in two places in the first minute book of Grand Lodge, which had probably been entrusted to him for the purpose of extracting information for the second edition of the *Constitutions.*

In 1723, in the first edition of the *Constitutions,* although he refers in his historical section to events as recent as the laying of the foundation stone of the parish church of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields in 1721, and to the Grand Mastership of the Duke of Montagu in 1722, there is no mention of the establishment of Grand Lodge. It was not until 1738, in the second edition of the *Constitutions,* that he gave an account of it—the principal account we possess—and an abstract of the activities of Grand Lodge, year by year, from 1717 to 1738. Although this edition, like the first, was approved by Grand Lodge, the statements contained in it cannot be regarded as official, and must be subjected to close examination.

Anxious as he undoubtedly was to magnify the part he had taken in masonic developments, Anderson did not venture to suggest, in the account which he wrote some twenty years after the event, that he himself was present at the formation or earliest meetings of Grand Lodge. This was very possibly because among former Grand Officers, to whom the manuscript was submitted for approval and correction, such as George Payne (Grand Master, 1718-19 and 1720-21), Dr. Desaguliers (Grand Master, 1719-20), and William Cowper (Secretary to Grand Lodge, 1723-24), some had very possibly been connected with Grand Lodge from its inception, and would in any case know that he could lay claim to no such connection. Apart from this check on Anderson's story of the formation and early years of Grand Lodge, there is some confirmation to be derived (*a*) from the list of Grand Officers, commencing in 1717, entered at the end of the first minute book of Grand Lodge; (*b*) from a list, probably written about 1724, of the Grand Lodge Feasts from 1717 to 1723, contained in the so-called "E. Book" of the Lodge of Antiquity, No. 2; (*c*) from an entry of 1721 in Dr. William Stukeley's Diary; and (*d*) from occasional contemporary newspaper references. The only other known account of the formation of Grand Lodge is that in *The Complete Freemason, or Multa Paucis for Lovers of Secrets,* published anonymously about 1763 or 1764. This differs somewhat from Anderson's account. In other respects, the history of freemasonry contained in *Multa Paucis* is based closely on Anderson, but it is possible that the author had some other source of information at his disposal, in addition to Anderson, when he came to describe the inception of Grand Lodge. Thus on this particular point, *Multa Paucis* may perhaps be regarded as an independent authority confirming Anderson in essentials.

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

(i) In both accounts, Sir Christopher Wren is the starting point. According to Anderson, the few lodges in London in 1716 "finding themselves neglected by Sir Christopher Wren" (previously referred to as Grand Master Wren) "thought fit to cement under a Grand Master as the center of Union and Harmony." The account in *Multa Paucis* is very similar. In view of the freedom with which Anderson bestowed the title "Grand Master" on historical characters associated with the building industry, as patrons or otherwise, such as Nimrod and Solomon in ancient times, William Wykeham and Henry Chichele in the Middle Ages, and Cardinal Wolsey and Inigo Jones in later times, we have no hesitation in regarding Anderson's description of Wren as Grand Master simply as a recognition of Wren's distinction as an architect. It is not even quite certain that Wren was a freemason; the main reason for thinking that he was a member of the Craft is that in the manuscript of Aubrey's *Natural History of Wiltshire,* completed in 1686, but not published until 1847, there is an addendum of 18 May 1691, which states that on that day a great convention of the Fraternity of Accepted Masons was to be held at St. Paul's Church, where Sir Christopher Wren and certain others were to be adopted as Brothers. On Wren's death in 1723, only two of the contemporary newspapers referred to him as a freemason; his family papers make no reference to his being an accepted mason; similarly in 1723, in the first edition of the *Constitutions,* Anderson refers only to "the ingenious architect, Sir Christopher Wren." Later writers, such as the author of *Multa Paucis,* and William Preston in his *Illustrations of Masonry,* who give particulars of Wren's masonic career, doubtless copied them from Anderson's *Constitutions* of 1738, and cannot be regarded as providing independent confirmation on the point. As Aubrey apparently wrote his addendum before the event it refers to had taken place, and as no other reference to the meeting has ever been traced, an element of uncertainty remains. Taking everything into account, we are disposed to think that Wren probably did join the Fraternity in 1691, but that he took little or no active part in freemasonry after his acceptance.

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

1. at the Goose and Gridiron Ale-house in St. Paul's Church Yard [now the Lodge of Antiquity, No. 2],
2. at the Crown Ale-house in Parker's Lane [lodge erased in 1736],
3. at the Apple Tree Tavern in Charles Street [now the Lodge of Fortitude and Old Cumberland, No. 12],
4. at the Rummer and Grapes Tavern in Channel Row, Westminster [now the Royal Somerset House and Inverness Lodge, No. 4].

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

represented at the inception meeting. Regarding the decisions reached, it may be noted that, according to Anderson, those present constituted themselves a Grand Lodge *pro tempore,* and "forthwith revived the Quarterly Communication of the officers of Lodges (call'd the Grand Lodge)." Further they resolved to hold the Annual Assembly and Feast, and then to choose a Grand Master. The account in *Multa Paucis* is much the same, but less detailed. Both seem to agree that Quarterly Communications and the Annual Assembly were to be *revived,* but neither offers any evidence that Quarterly Communications ever had been held up to that time. Actually, the first one recorded in Anderson was not held until 27 December 1720, and in all probability that was the first ever held. Anderson states that according to a copy of the Old Constitutions, a General Assembly was held on 27 December 1663, and made certain regulations which he quotes. The version of the Old Charges referred to would appear to be the *Roberts* print, or possibly the *Roberts MS. Original,* from which Roberts printed his version in 1722. The General Assembly mentioned was doubtless that described in the *Roberts* print as taking place on 8 December 1663; the Regulations were presumably the "Additional Orders and Constitutions" stated in the *Roberts* print to have been made at that Assembly. Anderson, to suit his purpose, altered the casual date of 8 December to the more masonic date of 27 December (St. John's Day in Winter), and also somewhat modified the wording of the "Orders." Thus Anderson provides no evidence, additional to that reviewed in Chapter VI, of the existence of any central or district masonic authority in England before 1717. In *Multa Paucis* there is no mention of any General Assembly or Regulations of 1663.

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

Very little is known about the first Grand Master, except that he was a member of the lodge which met at the Apple Tree Tavern. Though described by Anderson as "Mr. Antony Sayer, gentleman," he was probably not a man of much affluence or standing; towards the end of his life he was definitely in restricted circumstances, being a petitioner to Grand Lodge for relief on more than one occasion. At the time of his death at the beginning of January 1742, he was Tyler of what is now the Old King's Arms Lodge, No. 28. He was clearly a man of less distinction than the only other commoners who have ever held the high office of Grand Master, namely George Payne, who held it in 1718-19 and 1720-21, and J. T. Desaguliers who was Grand Master in 1719-20. Payne, about whose career very little is known, was an active member of Grand Lodge for many years; at his death in 1757 he was Secretary to the Tax Office and a man of some substance. The Rev. Dr. J. T. Desaguliers (1683-1744) was a lecturer in natural philosophy, a Fellow and Curator of the Royal Society, and Chaplain to the Duke of Chandos and to the Prince of Wales.

Chapter VIII

The Early Days of Grand Lodge

Restricted Jurisdiction of Grand Lodge. The events of 1716 and 1717 which led to the formation of Grand Lodge have been referred to as "a resuscitation of English Masonry" and as "the Revival." These descriptions are somewhat misleading; the events of 1716 and 1717 related not to English masonry in general, but to masonry in London and Westminster in particular. There is nothing in the surviving accounts to suggest that the members of the "Four Old Lodges" had anything more in mind than a gathering or organization of local lodges. Even six years later, in Anderson's *Constitutions* of 1723, the charges were stated to be "for the use of the Lodges in London," and the General Regulations "for the use of the Lodges in and about London and Westminster." According to the MS. List begun 25 November 1723, and entered on the first pages of the original minute book of Grand Lodge, the "regular constituted lodges" furthest afield were at Edgeworth [? Edgeware], Acton and Richmond. The fact that Grand Lodge in 1723 and 1724 passed various resolutions concerning lodges or brethren "in or near London," "within the Bills of Mortality," and "within ten miles of London," indicates the admittedly restricted jurisdiction of Grand Lodge in those years. By 1725, or shortly afterwards, a marked change had taken place; the MS. List of that year shows, in addition to numerous lodges in the London area, lodges at Bath, Bristol, Norwich, Chichester, Chester, Reading, Gosport, Carmarthen, Salford and Warwick. It also reveals the existence of a Provincial Grand Master, Deputy Provincial Grand Master, and Provincial Grand Wardens in Cheshire, officers who, early in 1727, wrote to the Grand Master to thank him for a visit to the lodges of the Province by the Deputy Grand Master. It was in 1725, too, that the Regulation of 1721 or 1723, relating to the making of masters only at a Quarterly Communication, was repealed, having presumably become unworkable, if it ever was observed, owing to the wider geographical distribution of the lodges under the jurisdiction of Grand Lodge.

The "Revival" of 1717. The "revival" of 1717, in so far as there was one, was a revival, according to Anderson, not of freemasonry, but of (*a*) Quarterly Communications and (*b*) the Annual Assembly. With regard to the former, we have previously mentioned that probably none had ever been held before the one recorded by Anderson as having met on 27 December

1720, so that in this respect there was probably no question of a revival. Regarding the Annual Assembly, it may be stated that operative masons in the Middle Ages probably held annual or triennial assemblies or congregations, as described in the *Regius* and *Cooke* MSS.; the only relatively modern assembly of masons—presumably of accepted masons—of which any indication has been traced, is that first recorded in the *Roberts MS.* of 1722 as having been held on 8 December 1663, a statement subsequently repeated by Anderson in his *Constitutions* of 1738, with the date altered to 27 December 1663. Even assuming that this particular meeting was held as stated in the *Roberts* print, and that it did consist of accepted masons, it may be pointed out that one such gathering is obviously not proof of an annual assembly of accepted masons.

We must now examine more closely (*a*) the reasons why Grand Lodge was formed; (B) the objects it had in view; and (C) the character of the organization established.

Reasons for forming Grand Lodge. Since we have no hesitation whatever in regarding the Grand Mastership of Sir Christopher Wren as purely a figment of Anderson's mind, and have come to the conclusion that Wren took little or no part in freemasonry after his probable acceptance in 1691, the reason given by Anderson and in *Multa Faucis* for the formation of Grand Lodge, namely, the neglect of the few lodges in London by Sir Christopher Wren, falls to the ground, and we have to seek some other explanation. As Anderson himself does not mention his own connection with Grand Lodge until 29 September 1721, and as he makes no claim to have been present in person at the preliminary meeting of 1716, or at the Annual Assemblies from 1717 to 1721, the presumption is that he had no first-hand knowledge of the inception and early meetings of Grand Lodge. No one who was party to calling the preliminary meeting of 1716, or who attended it, has left any record which has survived, and consequently we can only guess at the motives of the founders, who, probably, never clearly formulated them. The most reasonable assumption seems to us to be that the proceedings of 1716 and 1717, which resulted in the formation of Grand Lodge, were due, not to the decline, but to the growth in the number of lodges and to the consequent recognition of the increased need of central authority and control. Without this, an expansion in accepted masonry would be apt to bring about confusion, if not chaos, in place of the system which it professed to support and uphold.

The Objects of the Grand Lodge. The objects, according to Anderson, of the preliminary meeting of 1716 were (*a*) "to cement under a Grand Master as the center of Union and Harmony"; (*b*) "to revive [*read* to establish] the Quarterly Communication of the Officers of Lodges (call'd the Grand Lodge)"; and (*c*) to hold the Annual Assembly and Feast, at which the Grand Master was to be chosen. In other words, the first object was to establish a centre round which the movement could turn. The third object was to have an annual dinner, in connection with which there was to be a meeting to install a Grand Master, two objects likely to meet with general approval among the Brethren. The second object, which was very possibly the essence of the whole scheme, was to arrange for quarterly meetings of the Masters and Wardens of the lodges; such a body was to constitute Grand Lodge and was presumably to exercise undefined authority over the individual lodges. This attempt at centralization does not appear to have been too welcome among the lodges; in 1717 Grand Master Sayer "commanded the Masters and Wardens of Lodges to meet the Grand Officers every quarter in communication"; in 1718, George Payne, as Grand Master, "recommended the strict observance of the Quarterly Communication," but there is no record that any meeting was held before 27 December 1720.

It is not unlikely that the formation of Grand Lodge, in the minds of at least some of the brethren, had a more important object in view than the holding of an annual dinner and the election of a Grand Master. During his first year as Grand Master (1718-19), George Payne desired the brethren to bring to Grand Lodge any old writings and records concerning masons and masonry, and apparently several old copies of the "Gothic Constitutions" were produced and collated that year. At the end of his second term as Grand Master (1720-21), Payne at a meeting of Grand Lodge, as it would appear from Dr. Stukeley's Diary, under the date 24 June 1721, "read over a new set of articles to be observed." These were doubtless what are described in Anderson's *Constitutions* of 1723 as the General Regulations "compiled first by Mr. George Payne, anno 1720, when he was Grand Master, and approved by Grand Lodge on St. John Baptist's Day anno 1721." Unfortunately, we do not know whether the articles were "new" in the sense that they took the place of previous articles, or whether they were "new" in the sense of not existing before. In any case, it is not improbable that the drawing up of articles to regulate accepted masonry was one of the objects which at least some of the founders of Grand Lodge had had in mind from the outset. The "Additional Orders and Constitutions" of 1663 (as published in the *Roberts* print of 1722), assuming they were generally recognized by accepted masons, were far too vague in character to provide for all the contingencies likely to arise in a growing society. Furthermore, on account of the condition that no person should be accepted as a freemason unless at least one workman of the trade of freemasonry, in addition to four other freemasons, should be present, the "Additional Orders" or New Articles of the *Roberts* print may easily have been incompatible with the social ideas of some lodges.

To judge by the MS. List of 1723, the early lodges differed very considerably in their social standing. Of the "Four Old Lodges," No. 4 (originally meeting at the Rummer and Grapes, and subsequently at the Horn Tavern, Westminster) was undoubtedly the aristocratic lodge in 1723, when the Duke of Richmond was its Master, and the majority of its members were peers, sons of peers, baronets, knights, esquires, or army officers. Being located at Westminster, it was probably the most select lodge in 1717, though not yet patronized by the nobility. According to Anderson, the brethren decided to choose a Grand Master from among themselves in 1717 "till they should have the honour of a noble lord at their head." Further, he noted that during the Grand Mastership of Desaguliers (1719-20), some noblemen were made brothers, but it was not until 1721 that a nobleman, in the person of the Duke of Montagu, was installed as Grand Master. The other three lodges of the Old Four, as also various lodges constituted after 1717, appear to have consisted of less distinguished persons in 1723, and probably had various tradesmen among their members. Of the ten different men who were Grand Wardens during the first six years of Grand Lodge, two were carpenters, two stone-cutters, one a mason, and one a blacksmith. It is thus quite likely that these old lodges contained a fair sprinkling of operative masons, and not impossible that at least one of the Four Old Lodges in 1717 consisted predominantly of operative masons. Even so, it would probably not have been an operative lodge in the sense that it discharged trade functions like the early Scottish lodges, or the lodges at Alnwick and Swalwell, but a lodge of accepted masons, such as had been the case with the Acception connected with the London Masons' Company in the seventeenth century.

Whether or not we are correct in thinking that no Quarterly Communication was held before December 1720, and that the delay in establishing the scheme was due to the opposition of individual lodges to the new system of centralization, there can be little or no question that the attitude adopted by the lodges towards a suggested joint charity indicated dislike of centralization.

The General Charity. Not very much is known about the benevolent activities of the Craft in preGrand Lodge days. The Old Charges throw little or no light on the subject, apart from the injunction to receive and cherish strange masons, either by setting them to work for at least a fortnight, or by refreshing them with money to the next lodge. On the other hand, the Statutes of the Lodge of Aberdeen, 1670, provided for the maintenance of the Mason Box for the support of distressed brethren (more especially those belonging to the Lodge) and for the education and training of the children of deceased members. The attitude of the Lodge of Aberdeen towards charity, which was very possibly typical of the attitude of other operative lodges, appears to have been adopted at an early date by the accepted masons. John Aubrey, in his account of the "Fraternity of Adopted Masons," written in 1686, states that "when any of them fall into decay, the brotherhood is to relieve him." In the early days of Grand Lodge, as we learn from the *Constitutions* of 1723, every candidate was to make a voluntary contribution, in addition to the small allowance stated in the By-laws of the particular lodge, for the relief of indigent and decayed brethren, and the money so collected was to be disbursed by the lodge, until such time as it was agreed by all the lodges to pay the sums collected for charity to Grand Lodge, to establish a common stock.

It was at the Quarterly Communication of November 1724, that the centralized charity scheme was first brought forward. A special committee was appointed to consider the proposal; its report was submitted to Grand Lodge and to the private lodges, and was adopted by Grand Lodge on 28 February 1726. A committee for the charity was appointed in June 1727, but it was not until the end of 1729, after Dr. Desaguliers had reported in March 1729 that the spirit of charity was reviving in several lodges, that the first contributions from lodges were received. A few weeks later, at the Annual Assembly held 29 January 1730, Dr. Desaguliers, in recommending the establishment of a Standing Committee for the Charity, referred to the fact that the lodges had "at last agreed to set so commendable a work on foot." Two of the first brethren to be relieved by the General Charity after its establishment were Anthony Sayer, Grand Master in 1717, and Joshua Timson, Grand Warden in 1722.

In December 1730, the functions of the Standing Committee for the Charity were extended by Grand Lodge, when it was decided that in future all complaints and information laid before Grand Lodge were to be referred to that Committee, whose report on such matters was to come before the next Quarterly Communication for decision. Thus the Committee was the prototype not merely of the Board of Benevolence, but also of the Board of General Purposes.

Grand Lodge Organization. The character of the organization established in 1717 was of the simplest kind. Grand Lodge consisted of the Masters and Wardens of each regular particular lodge, together with the Grand Officers of the year, originally three in number, namely, the Grand Master and the two Grand Wardens. At first Grand Officers were all proposed and *elected* at the Annual Assembly; that was modified, so far as the Grand Master was concerned, in 1721, when the practice was introduced of the Grand Master proposing his successor at a meeting of Grand Lodge held some time before the Feast. At the same time it was decided that in future the Grand Master was to *appoint* both his Wardens and a Deputy Grand Master. In 1723, the minutes show that the officers proposed by the Grand Master Elect were elected by

ballot, though not without protest. In subsequent years, the system of *appointment* was followed. The appointment of a Deputy Grand Master, which commenced in 1721 when the first noble lord was elected Grand Master, raised the number of Grand Officers to four. In November 1724, Past Grand Masters were admitted as members of Grand Lodge; in February 1726, the same privilege was accorded to Past Deputy Grand Masters, and in May 1727, to Past Grand Wardens. There was no secretary to Grand Lodge until June 1723, and he and his immediate successors did not rank as Grand Officers. In the early days, Grand Lodge had no funds for general purposes, and the secretarial expenses were apparently met by the Grand Master, though after the establishment of the General Charity some of the secretarial expenses were charged to that fund.

Chapter IX

The Origins of Masonic Ceremonies

The Ceremony according to the MS. Constitutions. The nature of masonic ritual and ceremonies before 1730 is a matter of considerable uncertainty. Most of our information on the subject is derived from the MS. *Constitutions of Masonry* and the MS. *Catechisms of Masonry.* Many of the former, at the end of the historical section, contain an instruction, usually in Latin, that the person to be made a mason should lay his hand on the Book (= the Bible), held by one of the oldest masons, whilst the Charges were read out, the Charges being introduced by an Exhortation that every mason should take heed of the Charges which he had sworn to keep. There was, however, nothing peculiar to masons in this respect; a similar procedure was adopted in the Middle Ages by various gilds, which required new-comers to swear to observe the gild ordinances. As the Instruction in various versions begins "*Then* shall one of the elders . . .," or words to that effect, the presumption is that the History (introduced by the Opening Prayer or Invocation) had previously been read to the candidate. As indicated above, there is nothing in the *Cooke MS.* of the early fifteenth century to show whether the History and Regulations were read or recited to the candidate, and whether he had to swear to keep the Articles and Points, but it is quite possible that this practice was followed at that date, just as the masons at York Minster had to swear "upon ye boke" to keep the ordinances laid down by the Cathedral Chapter in 1370. The earliest versions of the MS. *Constitutions* to contain the instruction are the *Levander-York MS. Original* of 1560, the *Melrose MS. Original* of 1581, and the *Grand Lodge No. 1 MS.* of 1583.

The Ceremonies according to the MS. Catechisms. The ceremonies depicted in the MS. *Catechisms* are entirely different. According to the *Edinburgh Register House MS.* of 1696, which is the earliest known version of this kind of document, "the person to take the word" had first to take an oath of secrecy, in which he swore not to reveal by word or writing any part of what he should see or hear, or to draw it with the point of a sword, or other instrument, upon the snow or sand. He then went out with the youngest mason, from whom he learnt the sign, the postures, and the words of his entry. On returning, he said the words of entry and was apparently given the word by the Master. This sign and word were those of an entered apprentice, and, as the manuscript points out, there were others belonging to a master mason or fellow-craft. These were imparted as follows. All entered apprentices were ordered out of the company and none suffered to stay but masters. Then "he who is to be admitted a member of fellowship" knelt and took an oath of secrecy, after which he went out with the youngest master to learn "the posture and signs of fellowship." On returning, he made the master's sign and said the former words of entry (leaving out the "common judge"); the masons then whispered the word among themselves, and finally the Master gave him the word and the grip. There is nothing in the manuscript as to the nature of the master's sign, word or grip, though some indications are given regarding the entered apprentice's secrets.

The manuscript shows that a good deal of horseplay was associated with the imparting of the entered apprentice's secrets. Thus the oath was to be administered only "after a great many ceremonies to frighten" the candidate; when outside with the youngest mason, the candidate was to be frightened "with 1000 ridiculous postures and grimaces" before being given the sign, postures and words of entry; after rejoining the company, he was "to make a ridiculous bow" and "put off his hat after a very foolish manner." This horseplay may be compared with the practices common at the admission of freshmen to universities in medieval and later times, or with the tests imposed upon newcomers to the Hanseatic factory at Bergen. That something of this horseplay was apt to be introduced into the early speculative lodges is clearly implied by one of the by-laws of the lodge constituted at the Maid's Head, Norwich, in May 1724, which reads: "6. That no ridiculous trick be played with any person when he is admitted." These by-laws, which are stated to have been "recommended by our Worthy Brother Dr. Desaguliers," may be regarded as reflecting the desire of the recently formed Grand Lodge to maintain dignity in the proceedings.

In addition to indicating how the Mason Word was imparted, the *Edinburgh Register House MS.* gives a number of test questions, relating partly to the conditions of admittance, and partly to matters with which nobody could be acquainted without previous instruction. As the

manuscript provides answers to all the questions, and states that they have to be answered exactly, it is obvious that the necessary instruction regarding all the questions must have been given to the candidate on some occasion or other. It is, therefore, not unlikely that the test questions were asked by the Master and answered by one or more of the members present, for the instruction of the candidate, either at his ceremony of admission, or at other times when the lodge met.

The fact that in 1696 there were two distinct ceremonies, if they may be so described, one applying to entered apprentices and one to fellow-crafts or masters, is borne out by the *Chetwode Crawley MS.* of *circa* 1700, and is rather implied by the surviving fragment of a minute of the Haughfoot Lodge, dated 22 December 1702. We are disposed to think, however, that the entered apprentices and the fellow-crafts had distinct sets of secrets at a considerably earlier date. The minutes of Aitchison's Haven Lodge show that as early as 1598, when a new entered apprentice was admitted, he chose two entered apprentices as his intenders and instructors, and when a new fellowcraft was admitted, he chose two fellow-crafts as his intenders and instructors. If these intenders corresponded to the "youngest mason" and the "youngest master" of the *Edinburgh Register House MS.*, who taught the candidates the signs and postures, then it may well be that there were two sets of secrets in 1598, and that it was these which the intenders imparted to the newly admitted entered apprentices and fellow-crafts respectively. Thus, as we have suggested previously in discussing the status of the entered apprentice, it may well be that entered apprentices and fellow-crafts had distinct sets of secrets of a rudimentary kind from the time when the Mason Word as an institution was first established, probably in the second half of the sixteenth century.

Two Types of Ceremony. Quite apart from the question whether the secrets of the Mason Word were imparted to candidates in one or in two instalments, we are clearly concerned with two entirely different types of ceremony. The one, that depicted in the MS. *Constitutions,* consisting mainly in reading or reciting the Old Charges, very possibly dates from the second half of the fourteenth century. The other, that depicted in the MS. *Catechisms,* consisting mainly in imparting the Mason Word, is hardly likely to be older than the second half of the sixteenth century, though local passwords may have been used at an earlier date. The MS. *Constitutions* were undoubtedly of English origin; the two oldest versions, the *Regius* and the *Cooke* MSS., which are pretty close to the common original on which all versions are based, are both written in the dialect spoken in the South-West Midland area of England [Gloucestershire and West Oxfordshire] in the later part of the fourteenth century. The historical section of the MS. *Constitutions,* in so far as it relates to Britain, is concerned solely with England. Even those versions which are closely associated with Scottish lodges contain no reference to the development of masonry in Scotland, and more than one of them, e.g., the *Kilwinning,* the *Aberdeen* and the *Melrose No. 2* MSS., contain the charge that the mason is to be a "true Liedgeman to the King of England," so that they were copies of English originals. On the other hand, the MS. *Catechisms* appear to be either of Scottish origin, or from sources with marked Scottish characteristics. This is suggested both by the documents themselves with their references to "entered apprentices" and "fellow-crafts," and by the fact that the Mason Word, as an operative institution, undoubtedly existed in Scotland in the seventeenth century, and very possibly as early as the second half of the sixteenth century, whereas there is no evidence that it was ever in use among operative masons in England, except very possibly in the extreme North. As previously indicated, there are even some grounds for thinking that secret methods of recognition among operative masons were never in use in England.

Twofold Origin of Existing Working. As both types of ceremony have undoubtedly contributed to the development of present-day working, we are justified in saying that the existing working has not a single, but a twofold origin. At what date and in what manner the two types of ceremony became in some way combined is uncertain. If we are correct in our estimate of the antiquity of the two types of ceremony, that depicted in the MS. *Constitutions,* consisting mainly in reading or reciting the Old Charges, had probably been practised in England for a century or more before even the most rudimentary formalities associated with the imparting of the Mason Word had been adopted in Scotland. It is not until the second half of the seventeenth century, however, that we find any evidence of the two types of ceremony being combined. In the operative Lodge of Aberdeen in 1670, the entered apprentice, in addition to receiving the Mason Word at his entry, had read to him the "Mason Charter," which was the version of the Old Charges now described as the *Aberdeen MS.* As the lodges at Aitchison's Haven, Kilwinning, Melrose, Stirling, and Dumfries all possessed versions of the MS. *Constitutions* dating from the second half of the seventeenth century, it is likely that the Aberdeen practice was fairly general in Scotland at that period. The practice was possibly older, but it may be noted that whereas the minutes of Aitchison's Haven Lodge date from 1598, when there is reason to think that the secrets of the Mason Word were being imparted to entered apprentices and to fellow-crafts, the *Aitchison's Haven MS.* was not engrossed in the minute book until 1666.

The other available evidence, suggestive of a combination of the two types of ceremony, is that afforded by those seventeenth-century versions of the MS. *Constitutions* which contain special references to masonic secrets, namely, *Harris No. 1, Dumfries No. 3, Grand Lodge No. 2,*

Harleian 1942, Harleian 2054 and *Drinkwater No. 2.* None of these bears a definite date, but they are all assigned by Bro. Poole to the second half of the seventeenth century, with the exception of the last, which he dates as *circa* 1700. As these manuscripts, other than *Dumfries No. 3,* were probably used by accepted masons in England, the evidence seems to point to operative and non-operative members of Scottish lodges, and to accepted masons in England, using a combined type of ceremony in the second half of the seventeenth century. That accepted masons in the later part of the seventeenth century both used a version of the MS. *Constitutions* and imparted to candidates at least some of the esoteric knowledge associated with the Mason Word, is suggested by Dr. Robert Plot's reference to a large parchment volume which they had amongst them, containing the History and Rules of the craft of masonry, and his statement that their admission chiefly consisted in the communication of certain secret signs. Nothing shows more clearly the twofold origin of masonic ceremonies at the end of the seventeenth century, than the oath set out in the masonic catechism *Sloane MS. 3329,* of *circa* 1700, by which the candidate swore to keep secret "the mason word and everything therein contained" and truly to observe "the Charges in the Constitution." As late as 1723, if reliance can be placed on the earliest of the so-called "exposures," or printed catechisms of masonry, *A Mason's Examination,* the whole or part of a version of the MS. *Constitutions* was read to the candidate before any secrets were revealed to him. That the signs and words of an accepted mason were derived from the Mason Word of the Scottish operatives is strongly suggested by the fact that when Dr. Desaguliers, the prominent speculative mason, desired to visit the operative Lodge of Edinburgh in 1721, he was found "duly qualified in all points of masonry" and received as a brother.

Intermingling of Scottish and English Practices. How and when the MS. *Constitutions* reached Scotland from England, and how and when the Mason Word reached England from Scotland, are largely matters for surmise. Although the relations between the two countries were not very close from the time of the Scottish Wars of Independence in the fourteenth century, until the union of the two Crowns in 1603, the cultural and social break between the two countries was probably not so great as is sometimes suggested. As Dr. Coulton has remarked, all through the Middle Ages there was less difference between Yorkshire or Northumberland on the one hand, and Lothian or Fife on the other, than between any one of them and Kent. Consequently it is not impossible that one or both of the transferences took place before 1603, though the surviving evidence suggests a rather later date.

The transference may have come about in more than one way. Masons from one country may have worked in the other, and usages prevailing south of the Tweed may have become known to masons north of the Tweed and vice versa. Further, it is possible that the counties of Northumberland and Durham (Sunderland being a port by which many Scots entered England) may have served as neutral ground on which masonic practices prevailing in Scotland on the one hand, and in Southern England on the other, intermingled and blended. When the records of the old operative Lodge at Swalwell, County Durham, commence in the early eighteenth century, they bear very distinct traces of Scottish influence. The "Orders" of the Lodge date from *circa* 1730; the first entry in the minute book relates to 29 September 1725, and may be quoted in full:

> Then Matthew Armstrong and Arthur Douglas, Masons, appeared in ye lodge of Freemasons, and agreed to have their names registered as "Enterprentices," to be accepted next quarterly meeting, paying one shilling for entrance, and 7*s.* 6*d.* when they take their freedom.

The use of the term "Enterprentice" in the minutes of an English operative lodge points to very strong Scottish influence; the minute very possibly indicates that two Lowland Scots or borderers (to judge by their names) described as masons by trade, though presumably only entered apprentices in their own lodges, joined the Lodge at Swalwell, with the rank of entered apprentice, on payment of one shilling, it being provided that they should pay 7*s.* 6*d.* when they took their freedom, i.e. became fellows, the following quarter. If this interpretation is correct, it follows that the Lodge at Swalwell was very closely linked up with Scottish masonry. That this probably was so is strongly suggested by the fact that members of the Lodge appear to have possessed at least some knowledge of the Mason Word as an operative institution. So much is clear from clause No. 8 of the "Penal Orders" of the Lodge:

> If any be found not faithfully to keep and maintain the 3 ffraternal signs, and all points of ffelowship, and principal matters relating to the secret craft, each offence, penalty 10-10-00.

The Lodge, like the older Scottish lodges, gradually turned from an operative into a speculative lodge; in 1735 it accepted a "deputation" or warrant from Grand Lodge. It continued to meet at Swalwell until 1844, when it removed to Gateshead, where it recently celebrated its bicentenary as the Lodge of Industry, No. 48.

The Lodge at Alnwick, whose Orders are dated 29 September 1701, and whose minutes relate to the years 1703 to 1757, remained operative in character until 1748, when it was apparently reorganized as a speculative lodge, though it was never linked up with Grand Lodge. Its

records, however, show no marked traces of Scottish influence. It may be, nevertheless, that other northern lodges, of which no records have survived, acted, somewhat like the Lodge at Swalwell, as connecting links between English and Scottish masonry in the later seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

There is no evidence to show that the Mason Word was ever used among English operative masons, apart possibly from the North, nor does there seem to have been any need for it, or any machinery to administer it, in the seventeenth century. It seems more likely that English accepted masons obtained a knowledge of the Mason Word, not from English operative masons, but either from English travellers in Scotland who were entered as "gentleman masons" in Scottish operative lodges, or from Scottish masons, travelling or working in England, who made "gentleman masons" at a distance from their lodges, with or without the previous or subsequent approval of those lodges. In the well-known case of Robert Murray, quartermaster general of the Scottish army, who was made a mason at Newcastle on 20 May 1641 by members of the Lodge of Edinburgh, the fact was subsequently reported to the Lodge and recorded in the minute book. In a later case, where a member of the Lodge of Edinburgh entered several gentlemen in Ayrshire in 1679, without licence or commission, disciplinary action was taken against the offender. Traces of the custom of granting written licences to enter masons at a distance from the lodge are found in the minutes of the Lodges of Kilwinning, Dunblane, and Haughfoot. Under such dispensations, or without, it seems not unlikely that Englishmen were made "gentleman masons" in England by operative or non-operative members of Scottish lodges.

Possible Irish Influence. The stress we have laid upon the Anglo-Scottish origin of existing masonic ceremonies may cause readers to ask what part, if any, was played by Ireland in the development of freemasonry. So far as we can tell, Ireland does not appear to have contributed anything to the *early* development of freemasonry. No version of the Old Charges has been discovered in Ireland, and none appears to have been of Irish origin; nor have any old operative lodges on the Scottish model been traced. Freemasonry was probably imported into Ireland from England, and possibly to some extent direct from Scotland. The earliest reference to a Lodge of Freemasons in Ireland relates to Trinity College, Dublin, in 1688, and is contained in a Tripos, or satirical speech, delivered at the Commencements of the University of Dublin in July 1688. In the Library of the same College, in a volume of the collected papers of Sir Thomas Molyneux (1661-1733), a famous Dublin doctor and scientist, is the catechism of masonry known as the *Trinity College, Dublin MS.* It bears the date 1711 in an endorsement and is very possibly of non-operative origin, though no reference to speculative masonry in Ireland in the first two decades of the eighteenth century can be traced. The document contains the earliest certain reference to a trigradal system, but even assuming the date of the endorsement to be correct, and that the original from which the document was copied was of Irish origin, we should not be justified in saying that Irish speculative masons originated the trigradal system. That system, like other accretions to the original plan of masonry, probably developed gradually and independently in different parts of these islands. On the other hand, it is not impossible that some of the differences between English and Scottish masonic practice on the one hand, and Irish masonic practice on the other, may be accounted for by the survival in Ireland of old Scottish or English usages dating from the later seventeenth or early eighteenth century, which have since been modified out of recognition in England and Scotland, but which have remained more or less unchanged in Ireland. The *later* development of freemasonry probably owes a good deal directly or indirectly to the ultra-conservatism which characterized the Irish in their masonic practices. This, however, does not imply that the Irish were opposed to all masonic changes. Thus, when the old operative Apprentice Charge was replaced by a "short charge to new-admitted Brethren," clearly setting forth the fundamental doctrine of speculative masonry, that political discussions and religious controversies find no place in freemasonry, it was to the Grand Lodge of Ireland that the official promulgation of this new Entered Apprentice Charge in 1735 was due.

Chapter X

The Development of Craft Working

Modification of Ceremonies for Non-operatives. Scottish lodge records of the seventeenth century contain numerous examples of non-operative members. From the Laws and Statutes of the Lodge of Aberdeen, 1670, we learn that the admission fees were higher for a "gentleman mason" than for a "handicraft apprentice," but there is nothing to suggest a difference in the ceremonies of admission. The first clause of the fifth Statute provided that, among other payments, a "gentleman mason" had to pay for a dinner when he was admitted an entered apprentice, and for another dinner when he received his fellowship. Clearly, therefore, he was not admitted to both grades on the same occasion, though probably he would not have to wait three years before he became a fellow, as might be the case with a "handicraft apprentice," according to the second clause of the same Statute. In 1716 the Lodge of Dunblane resolved that non-operatives should no longer (as had undoubtedly happened in 1699 and 1700) be entered and passed on the same occasion. In 1727, we find two instances of

non-operative entered apprentices, who had been admitted elsewhere, being received as fellow-crafts in the Lodge of Edinburgh, but the usual arrangement at Edinburgh in the seventeenth century was undoubtedly for a non-operative to be admitted as entered apprentice and fellow-craft on one and the same occasion. This was also the case in the sixteen-seventies at Kilwinning and Aitchison's Haven, in 1687 at Dumfries, and in 1702 at Haughfoot. Thus, the practice of telescoping the two operative ceremonies into one for the benefit of non-operatives appears to have been fairly general in Scotland in the seventeenth century.

In England, in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, it is difficult to find much, if any, connection between operative and non-operative masonry. But for the "Orders" associated with three versions of the MS. *Constitutions of Masonry,* two of which are actually entered in minute books of early operative lodges at Alnwick and Swalwell, one would be disposed to say that the Old Charges had probably ceased to have any interest for operative masons as such, and that this heritage of medieval operative masonry had passed entirely into the possession of the accepted masons. As previously indicated, such evidence as we find in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, of the organized existence in England of accepted masons (whether masons or non-masons by trade) points to their association not in operative, but in non-operative lodges, or in lodges of accepted masons.

To judge by the early printed catechisms of masonry, the Scottish practice of telescoping the operative ceremonies into one for the benefit of non-operatives was frequently followed in England, so far as accepted masons were concerned. The practice, however, was apparently by no means universal. The manuscript catechisms of masonry, as distinct from the printed versions, suggest either two or three ceremonies. If we leave aside the *Edinburgh Register House MS.* (1696) and the *Chetwode Crawley MS.* (*c.* 1700) as being definitely operative, and the *Sloane MS. 332g* (*c.* 1700) as being a collection of notes on the Mason Word, rather than a mason's *aide-mémoire,* each of which indicates *two* ceremonies, there remain the *Trinity College, Dublin MS.* (1711), very possibly of nonoperative origin, and the *Graham MS.* with a definitely speculative character. Both these manuscripts suggest *three* ceremonies.

The Establishment of the Trigradal System. In those cases between 1700 and 1730, and earlier, where the esoteric knowledge imparted to accepted masons, instead of being telescoped into one ceremony, was divided between either two or three ceremonies, the surviving indications suggest that the division was not always the same. The working envisaged in the *Graham MS.* (1726) with its threefold scheme of (i) entering, (ii) passing, and (iii) raising or conforming candidates by three several lodges, appears to have followed fairly closely what was possibly Scottish operative practice in its fullest development, namely, (i) the admission of an entered apprentice, (ii) the admission of a fellow-craft or master mason, and (iii) the admission of a "master" (a problem discussed in the next chapter). A similar close correspondence to what was possibly Scottish operative practice in its fullest development appears to have been observed by Grand Lodge in 1723. Anderson's *Constitutions* of that year apparently recognized three categories of masons, each, so far as one can tell, with its own esoteric knowledge, namely, (i) apprentices, (ii) fellow-crafts, and (iii) the master of the lodge. On the other hand, the *Trinity College, Dublin MS.* (1711), with its secrets divided between (i) entered apprentices, (ii) fellow-craftsmen, and (iii) masters, and Prichard's *Masonry Dissected* (1730), which describes (i) the Entered Prentice Degree, (ii) the Fellow-Craft's Degree, and (iii) the Master's Degree, differ from the *Graham MS.* and Anderson's *Constitutions,* in that the esoteric knowledge shared between their *three* classes, corresponds to that imparted to *two* classes in Scotland, namely (i) the entered apprentice, and (ii) the fellowcraft or master mason.

Other early references to a trigradal system in masonry occur in *The Book of the Fundamental Constitutions and Orders of the Philo-Musicæ et Architecturæ Societas,* from which we learn that certain persons were (i) made masons, (ii) passed fellow-crafts and (iii) passed masters in London in 1725; and in a speech delivered on 27 December, 1726, by Francis Drake, the antiquary, Junior Grand Warden of the Grand Lodge of All England at York, in which it was stated that "three parts in four of the whole earth might be divided into E.P., F.C. and M.M." There is nothing to show, however, what esoteric knowledge was communicated to candidates in any particular ceremony.

The trigradal system of the *Trinity College, Dublin MS.* and of Prichard's *Masonry Dissected* was obtained (*a*) by treating fellow-crafts and master masons as two distinct classes, and (*b*) by dividing the esoteric knowledge imparted to Scottish operative entered apprentices among accepted entered apprentices and accepted fellow-crafts. By this device, three classes of accepted masons were created. These corresponded, however, only very superficially to the three classes of masons recognized in the MS. *Constitutions of Masonry,* or Old Charges, namely apprentices, fellows, and masters. The "apprentice" of the Old Charges corresponded to the "handicraft apprentice" in Scotland, who at the end of his period of servitude was admitted an entered apprentice, a category unknown in English operative masonry. The "master" of the Old Charges was either the master mason who organized the building operations on behalf of the Crown, the Church, or other employer, where the direct labour system was used, or the mason-contractor who erected a building for a proprietor. He

corresponded more or less to the "master" in Scotland, that is, the master tradesman, member of an Incorporation of Masons, and not to the master mason or fellow-craft of a lodge. The fellow-craft, or "fellow of the craft" to give him his full description as it appears in the Schaw Statutes of 1598, was a member of the Fellowship or Craft of Masons; and in the words of the *Edinburgh Register House MS.*, the person "admitted a member of fellowship" was made acquainted with "the five points of the fellowship." So far as we can tell, the "fellow" of the Old Charges was also a full member of the Masons' Fraternity. Similarly in the seventeenth century, the highest rank to which an accepted mason could attain was apparently that of "fellow." Referring to the Lodge held at Masons' Hall, London, on 11 March 1682, Elias Ashmole wrote in his Diary: "I was the senior fellow among them (it being thirty-five years since I was admitted); there was present besides myself the Fellows after named . . ." It would seem that, in some cases at least, the same was true in 1723, for according to Anderson's *Constitutions* of that year, the offices of Master and Wardens were filled from "among the fellow-craft." According to Anderson's *Constitutions* of 1738, the new Master, in choosing his wardens, called forth "two Fellow-Crafts (Master Masons)," which suggests that even as late as 1738 no very clear distinction between fellow-craft and master mason was as yet recognized by Grand Lodge.

The trigradal system pictured in the *Trinity College, Dublin MS.* and in Prichard's *Masonry Dissected,* undoubtedly reduced the status of the fellow-craft or fellow, by giving him merely a part of the esoteric knowledge which originally belonged to an entered apprentice, and by restricting to the master mason the esoteric knowledge originally given in Scotland to the fellow-craft. To this extent, it was a departure from early operative practice, a departure which became firmly established and has continued in Masonry ever since. The division of the original entered apprentice ceremony among entered apprentices and fellow-crafts has apparently not been the same in the workings of all masonic jurisdictions. This suggests that the final division in this country was not made until after accepted masonry had spread from Great Britain to Ireland and other parts. Thus, what was at the outset an innovation has become in course of time a landmark. On the other hand, the innovation apparently introduced by some accepted masons in some localities, of telescoping into one the two Scottish operative ceremonies of entered apprentice and fellow-craft or master mason, *plus* any ceremony associated with admitting a "master," was given up when the new trigradal system was firmly established. So far as we can tell, that system was introduced only slowly. In various lodges after 1730 two degrees appear to have been given on one occasion; in some cases it was the new First and Second Degrees which were conferred together; in others, the new Second and Third Degrees. In practice, therefore, if not in theory, a system of *two* ceremonies prevailed in some lodges long after the trigradal system had been introduced elsewhere.

Reasons for the establishment of the Trigradal System. The fact that the three degrees of (i) entered apprentice, (ii) fellow-craft, and (iii) master mason were made out of the two degrees of (i) entered apprentice, and (ii) fellow-craft or master mason, by dividing the esoteric knowledge originally belonging to the entered apprentice between the entered apprentice and the fellowcraft, and by transferring to the master mason that which originally belonged to the fellow-craft or master mason, appears to be unquestionable, though the date of the division is uncertain. The reason why the division was made is not known. Lionel Vibert, in his Prestonian Lecture for 1925, suggested that it was done by private lodges between 1723 and 1725, technically to enable them to give their members the rank of fellow-craft. This, he suggested, would qualify them for the Chair, and would make it possible to circumvent the Regulation approved or re-approved by Grand Lodge in 1723, and repealed in November 1725, that apprentices must be admitted "Masters and Fellow-Craft" only in Grand Lodge. This suggestion, however, met with little acceptance when placed before the Quatuor Coronati Lodge in 1926; in any case, there is very little evidence of the adoption of the trigradal system before 1730; even after that date its introduction was but slow. Other possibilities are that the creation of three degrees out of two was due either to failure to recognize the equivalence of the terms "fellow-craft" and "master mason" in the above-mentioned Regulation of 1723, or to a desire to have three classes of speculative mason to correspond to the three classes of operative mason mentioned in the Old Charges, even though the correspondence was only very superficial, as previously indicated. However uncertain the cause leading to the establishment of the trigradal system, there can be little doubt that its adoption received a great stimulus from the rapid sale of successive editions of Prichard's *Masonry Dissected,* first published in October, 1730.

The Reading of the MS. Constitutions of Masonry. How long the reading of the whole, or portions, of the Old Charges continued to form part of the ceremony of admitting entered apprentices is uncertain. From Anderson's *Constitutions* of 1723, we learn that the History of Masonry (as "digested" by Anderson) was to be read "at the Admission of a New Brother"; also that the Charges (similarly edited) were to be read "at the making of New Brethren, or when the Master shall order it." According to Anderson's *Constitutions* of 1738, the History of Masonry (as further revised and much extended by Anderson) was to be read at the admission of a New Brother, but that apparently no longer applied to the Charges. How far these instructions were carried into effect, it is impossible to say. The earliest minute book (1733-56)

of the Old King's Arms Lodge, No. 28, records that parts of the *Constitutions* were read on various occa=sions between 1733 and 1744, and this was also done at the Old Lodge at Lincoln, No. 73, in 1733 and 1734; but in the latter case certainly, and in the former case probably, the readings took place on nights when there were no candidates. The fact that several versions of the Old Charges were copied or printed after 1723 suggests that the reading of the Old Charges in their older forms may have continued well into the eighteenth century.

Chapter XI

The Royal Arch

Declaration of the Act of Union of 1813. By the Act of Union of 1813 between the premier Grand Lodge (or that of the "Moderns"), established in 1717, and the Atholl Grand Lodge (or that of the "Antients"), established in 1751, it was declared that Pure Antient Masonry consisted of three degrees, namely, those of the entered apprentice, the fellowcraft and the master mason, including the Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch. This declaration, which bears so closely on the problem of the origin of masonic degrees in general, and of the Royal Arch in particular, was treated by most masonic historians in the nineteenth century, at least so far as the Royal Arch was concerned, not as a statement of an historical fact, but as a mythical claim, not to be taken seriously. They maintained that the Royal Arch originated in the seventeen-forties, which would place it outside the scope of this book. A new and more analytical approach to the problem has been made by twentiethcentury masonic students, and we feel that it is necessary to examine the problem here.

In order to make clear the nature of the problem with which we are concerned, attention may first be drawn to the implications of the Declaration. If by Pure Antient Masonry was meant a system of masonry in which the three distinct degrees of entered apprentice, fellow-craft, and master mason can be shown to have existed, even in their most rudimentary forms, it would probably not be safe to fix a date prior to 1723 or 1725 for the origin of Pure Antient Masonry. In that case, the premier Grand Lodge and its subordinate lodges, during the first six or eight years of its existence, did not practise Pure Antient Masonry. If, on the other hand, by Pure Antient Masonry was meant the system of masonry practised by the premier Grand Lodge at its foundation in 1717, and by its subordinate lodges at that time, then it is highly probable that it did not consist of three distinct degrees. The only way to reconcile the two statements

i. that the three degrees of entered apprentice, fellow-craft, and master mason are all part of Pure Antient Masonry, and

ii. that Grand Lodge has practised Pure Antient Masonry from its foundation in 1717,

is apparently to ignore the First, Second, and Third Degree ceremonies as they exist to-day, and to think instead of the esoteric knowledge and legends out of which those three ceremonies are built up. The probability is that much of the esoteric knowledge now imparted in the three ceremonies was communicated to "accepted" masons in 1717, as also at an earlier date, either in *one* ceremony, or in *two*.

Once it is recognized that Pure Antient Masonry cannot be identified with the practice of the three degrees of entered apprentice, fellow-craft, and master mason, but must be identified with the esoteric knowledge associated with those degrees, without reference to its presentation in one, two, or three instalments, then the claim of the Royal Arch to be part of Pure Antient Masonry must be examined in a new light. It is not a case of looking for a ceremony such as is now worked, or even of tracing the use of the name "Royal Arch" in 1717, but of considering whether the principal esoteric knowledge now associated with the Supreme Order can be shown to have existed in Masonry at the time of the foundation of Grand Lodge. If that can be shown to have been the case, then the Royal Arch can claim to be part of Pure Antient Masonry with as much justification as the entered apprentice, fellow-craft, and master mason degrees.

Possible Origin of the Royal Arch. One solution of the problem would be that the Royal Arch was originated by non-operative or accepted masons before 1717, possibly in the seventeenth century. Against this may be urged (*a*) that non-operative masons in Scotland were part and parcel of the operative lodges, and practised whatever ceremonies were practised by the operative members, and (*b*) that accepted masons in England appear at that time to have modelled their ceremonies upon Scottish operative practice; there is no indication that accepted masons began to reform or elaborate operative ceremonies before the seventeen-twenties. The period in which entirely new ceremonies were constructed, more particularly on the continent, did not begin until about 1740. We are disposed to think that by Pure Antient Masonry was meant something which, in any case in a rudimentary form, was derived from the operative masons, but we do not press this interpretation as it is impossible to be sure what the Brethren in 1813 did mean by the expression. But it is along those lines that we endeavour to seek a solution.

If some of the esoteric knowledge associated with the Royal Arch was imparted to certain Scottish operative masons before 1717, we have to ask ourselves whether there was any category of masons, other than (i) the entered apprentices, and (ii) the fellow-crafts or master masons, who were likely to have secret methods of recognition. One possibility is that the masons who were serving, or had served, as Masters of Lodges constituted such a category. Another category, possibly, was constituted by those fellow-crafts or master masons of a lodge, who were also burgesses or freemen of a burgh, by virtue of their membership of an Incorporation of Masons. These men were doubtless recognized by the municipal authorities as masters, in the sense of master tradesmen or mason-contractors. It is probably they who are referred to in the Schaw Statutes of 1599, when it is stated that "no masters but [of] the Lodge of Edinburgh" were convened. The Deacon and Masters of the Lodge of Edinburgh, who controlled the Lodge in the seventeenth century, were all members of the Incorporation of Masons and Wrights. It was against the authority of these masters of the lodge that the journeymen or fellow-crafts rebelled in the early eighteenth century, when they formed the Lodge of Journeymen Masons.

If any section of the mason community, apart from entered apprentices and fellow-crafts or master masons, possessed esoteric knowledge, it would seem most likely to be either (i) the Masters, or other presiding officers of lodges, or (ii) the master tradesmen or master masons of the various Incorporations of Masons. Just as entered apprentices and fellow-crafts only required the Mason Word to prove themselves when working, or seeking work, outside their own areas, so Masters (whether presiding officers of lodges or master tradesmen), supposing they did possess special esoteric knowledge, would only require it to prove themselves outside their own areas, where as masters of lodges they might be attending masonic conferences, or as master tradesmen they might be seeking or executing contracts. In the latter case, presumably, freeman masons of the burghs were claiming a standing and capacity to work outside the area in which they ordinarily claimed a monopoly. That master tradesmen, who were members of an Incorporation or "privileged company" established by seal of cause, and their servants, had the right to reside and work in the bounds of any other company, privileged or unprivileged, was laid down in the so-called Falkland Statutes of 1636. Very possibly this was no more than the recognition of an old-established custom.

The legend communicated to fellow-crafts or master masons, to explain the origin of the five points of fellowship, had a much closer bearing on the esoteric knowledge imparted to them, than was the case with the history communicated to entered apprentices. Moreover, the legend has come down to us in at least two very different forms, in what concerns externals. All this suggests that the story communicated to fellow-crafts did not represent an existing fully developed legend, but was especially constructed for the purpose, very possibly, in part at least, by the utilization of existing traditions. Both the Noah and the Hiram stories, by indicating that the secrets of a fellow-craft or master mason were substituted secrets, seem to imply the existence of another set of secrets which, by contrast, may be described as the real secrets, though probably there is no question of one being more genuine than the other: one belonged to the fellow-crafts or master masons, the other, it may be supposed, to masters of lodges or to the master tradesmen who were members of an Incorporation of Masons. Both possibly existed long before the explanatory stories were constructed. Had there not been some further esoteric knowledge, which in the first instance was not imparted to fellow-crafts or master masons, it is difficult to understand why the specially constructed stories should not have been complete in themselves, instead of hinting at further knowledge to come. It therefore seems to us that the particular form given to the stories was to show the existence of some further esoteric knowledge, possibly dating from about the same period as the Mason Word, to which the candidate might ultimately attain.

Nature of the Esoteric Knowledge imparted to "Masters." As to the nature of this further esoteric knowledge which may have been imparted to "masters", we are obliged to rely on such indications as can be gathered from early eighteenth-century evidence. It seems to point to two different things, namely, to the Word, or the Primitive Word as it is designated in one place, and possibly to the Rule of Three.

The two earliest references to the Word with which we are acquainted both belong to 1725. One is contained in a skit on masonry, embodied in a letter of "Verus Commodus," concerning the Society of Freemasons, in which he states that the Doctor [probably Desaguliers] pretends he has found out a mysterious hocus-pocus Word, which belongs to the anathema pronounced against Ananias and Sapphira in Acts v. The other occurs in a masonic catechism, *The Whole Institutions of Free-Masons opened,* of which we print the relevant paragraph:

> Yet for all this I want the primitive Word, I answer it was God in six terminations, to wit I am, and Johova is the answer to it, and Grip at the Rein of the Back, or else Excellent and Excellent, Excellency is the answer to it, and Grip as aforesaid, or else Tapus Majester and Majester Tapus is the answer to it, and Grip as aforesaid, for proof read the first of St. John.

The seal on the "Deputation to Constitute," granted by Lord Montague, Grand Master in 1732, to St. John the Baptist Lodge at Exeter, bears the motto in Greek: "In the beginning was the Word." The same motto occurs on the contemporary warrants of lodges at Bath and Bury. The fact that the Greek for "beginning" is αρχε (*arche*) makes it even possible that the motto was intended to contain a pun, "in the Arch was the Word". An undated endorsement in a relatively modern handwriting, on *Grand Lodge No. 1 MS.* of 1583 commences: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (St. John i. 1). The idea of a Demogorgon, so dread that his name was not to be mentioned, occurs in sixteenth- and seventeenthcentury literature both in Scotland and England. Thus, although no specific reference in masonry to the Word has been traced before 1725, it is not unlikely that the idea is much older, and that it may conceivably go back to the seventeenth or even the sixteenth century.

The earliest reference with which we are acquainted to the Rule of Three occurs in 1723 in a masonic catechism, *A Mason's Examination:* "If a Master Mason you would be, Observe you well the Rule of Three." An advertisement of 1726, quoted by Sadler, refers to "the necessity there is for a Master to well understand the Rule of Three." The account in the *Graham MS.* of 1726 is fuller; it explains how Bezaleel agreed to instruct the two brothers of King Alboyin in the theoretical and practical part of masonry, conditionally on their not disclosing it "without another to themselves to make a treble voice," and how, after his death, the secrets of masonry were lost, because they were known to none "save these two princes and they were so sworn at their entering not to discover it without another to make a treble voice."

In addition to the Word and the Rule of Three, which suggest the rudiments of the esoteric knowledge now associated with the Royal Arch, there are also in the masonic catechisms of the seventeen-twenties slight indications of the esoteric knowledge nowadays imparted to Installed Masters. How many, if any, of the secrets supposedly communicated to "masters" date from the sixteenth or seventeenth century, there is no evidence to show.

Telescoping of Esoteric Knowledge. During the third decade of the eighteenth century, and very possibly earlier, *all* the esoteric knowledge imparted to operative masons in Scotland was, in some cases, apparently telescoped into one ceremony for the benefit of accepted masons in England. At that time a primitive form of the esoteric knowledge now associated with the Royal Arch may very possibly have been mixed up with a primitive form of the esoteric knowledge now associated with the Third Degree. The distinction which apparently existed in Scotland between the master masons of a lodge (= fellowcrafts), the master of a lodge, and the masters who were members of an Incorporation of Masons, was probably not appreciated in England, and thus esoteric knowledge properly belonging to a "master," may quite well have been imparted to master masons, even after the all-inclusive one-ceremony system had been abolished. A further ground for confusion may have arisen from the fact that the expression "master mason" was sometimes used, both in Scotland and in England, to denote the master of a lodge. This, for example, was the case at the Lodge of Scoon and Perth in 1658, and at the Lodge of Hamilton Kilwinning in the seventeen-thirties. Anderson, describing in the *Constitutions* of 1738 the preliminary meeting of Grand Lodge in 1716, states that the brethren put into the Chair "the oldest Master Mason (now the Master of a Lodge)." The minutes of the Lodge at Swalwell show that the presiding officer was described as "Master Mason" in 1733, 1734, and 1735.

Possible confirmation of the suggestion that esoteric knowledge properly belonging to a "master" was imparted to master masons, may be sought in two directions. One is a document, of somewhat doubtful authenticity and date (the so-called *Rite Ancien de Bouillon*), professing to be a Third Degree ritual of 1740, in which some of the esoteric knowledge now associated with the Royal Arch is mixed up with esoteric knowledge now associated with the Third Degree. The other is a Third Degree tracing board, printed in a masonic catechism of 1745 (*L'Ordre des Francs-Maçons trahi*), which suggests a combination of the Third Degree and the Royal Arch. In this connection, however, it must be pointed out that in Ireland, where the Mark, the Royal Arch, and the Knight Templar degrees were conferred by Craft Lodges in the eighteenth century and even later, more than one tracing board has survived containing symbols associated with the Craft, the Mark, the Royal Arch and the Knight Templar degrees, but there is no reason to think that the various ceremonies were not entirely distinct.

So far as we are aware, there is no evidence that the *legend* now associated with the Third Degree, and the *legend* now associated with the Royal Arch, were ever combined in one ceremony. In our opinion, for reasons to be set out shortly, the legend now associated with the Royal Arch was not adopted until after 1751, by which time the combining of a rudimentary Third Degree and a rudimentary Royal Arch in one ceremony, if it ever did occur, had probably ceased. When the two sets of esoteric knowledge, in so far as they ever had been combined, were finally severed, that was done, not by mutilating the ceremony of admitting a master mason, but by restoring the position, in the matter of esoteric knowledge, to that which had existed under the original plan of masonry. In origin, the Royal Arch was not the completion of the Third Degree.

Masters' Lodges. Failure to recognize the difference which apparently existed in Scotland between a master mason, a master of a lodge and the masters who were members of an Incorporation of Masons, probably led, not only to the continuance for a time of the innovation of telescoping, for the benefit of accepted masons, esoteric knowledge, some of which properly belonged only to masters of lodges or to "masters," but also to variations in the use of the expression "Masters' Lodges." In the early years after 1725, when the Regulation that apprentices must be admitted "Masters and Fellow-Craft" only in Grand Lodge had been repealed, it is quite possible that Masters' Lodges conferred the Third Degree on members of ordinary lodges which were either unable or unwilling to work the degree; but it is very difficult to believe that the Masters' Lodges established as late as the end of the eighteenth century were formed for the special purpose of conferring the Third Degree.

In addition to Masters' Lodges, there existed a Scots Masons' Lodge in London in 1733; further, there are records of brethren being made Scots Master Masons at the Bear Lodge at Bath in 1735, and at the Lodge of Antiquity in London in 1740. In Scotland, as we have endeavoured to show, "masters" as distinct from the master masons of a lodge, possibly had esoteric knowledge of their own, which appears to have been the prototype of that now associated with the Royal Arch, and perhaps of that now associated with Installed Masters. It therefore seems not impossible that the work done in the Scots Masons' Lodge, and the degree of Scots Master Mason conferred on masons at Bath and in London, were the Royal Arch in a rudimentary form.

In connection with the Masters' Lodges traced by John Lane between 1733 and 1813, attention may be drawn to two further points, (i) These Masters' Lodges, like early Royal Arch Chapters, frequently met on Sundays, whereas ordinary lodges did not. (ii) These Masters' Lodges were all connected with ordinary lodges on the register of the Grand Lodge of the Moderns, which did not officially recognize the existence of the Royal Arch, whereas no Masters' Lodges were traced in connection with the Grand Lodge of the Antients, which permitted its subordinate lodges to confer the Royal Arch under their Craft warrants. These points, taken by themselves, prove nothing, but taken in conjunction with the other information available, they do suggest that, in some cases at least, Masters' Lodges were concerned with working a ceremony other than the Third Degree, very possibly some rudimentary form of the Royal Arch, which was perhaps the same as the ceremony described elsewhere as making Scots Master Masons.

Early References to an Arch. Casual references to an Arch can be traced in masonic literature from 1723 onwards. Thus at the end of the historical section of the *Constitutions* of 1723, Anderson refers to the Royal Art being duly cultivated and the cement of brotherhood preserved, "so that the whole Body resembles a well-built Arch." Two of the early printed masonic catechisms have the question "Whence is an Arch derived," to which one replies "From Architecture" and the other "From the Rainbow." In this connection, it may be noted that the arms of the Grand Chapter of All England at York contained a rainbow, but the arms were not adopted until the second half of the eighteenth century. The earliest mention of "Royal Arch" appears to be in a newspaper account of a masonic procession at Youghal, in Ireland, on St. John's Day in Winter, 1743, when the Master was preceded by "the Royal Arch carried by two excellent masons." Which, if any, of these references relate to, or imply the existence of, a masonic ceremony is problematical. It may well be that the word was used in a symbolical sense. Various masonic writers hold that the word "arch" in connection with the Royal Arch, had originally nothing whatever to do with the noun "arch" (= a curved structure or vault), but was the adjectival prefix "arch" (= chief, pre-eminent, as in archangel, archbishop, archduke). The fact that the word "arch" in eighteenth-century masonry was not infrequently used in association with the words "excellent" and "superexcellent," seems to support this interpretation. Against this interpretation, it can fairly be urged that all the early references quoted above relate to the noun "arch," which was very possibly introduced into Masonry because the arch was regarded as the supreme achievement in architecture, and because its erection was the work of the most skilful craftsmen.

A possible early reference to the Royal Arch ceremony is contained in a letter of 1 January 1735, written by Mick Broughton to the Duke of Richmond, in which he jokes about "superexcellent" and refers to three masons being "made Chapters" at Ditton, where Dr. Desaguliers was visiting the Duke of Montagu. The first definite reference to the Royal Arch as a degree appears to be that of Dr. Dassigny in 1744; he refers to an assembly of master masons at York "under the title of Royal Arch Masons"; to a certain impostor in Dublin, who pretended to be "Master of the Royal Arch"; and to a brother "who had attained that excellent part of Masonry in London." In the Bylaws of Lodge Stirling Kilwinning, adopted in 1745, a fee of 5*s.* is fixed for conferring the Degree of "Excellent and Superexcellent," which was very possibly the Royal Arch in essentials though not in name; and there is some reason for thinking that these essentials had been imparted to some Brethren of Ancient Lodge Stirling Kilwinning at an earlier date.

The Royal Arch and the Grand Lodge of the Antients. Reference must finally be made to one other method of approaching the question of the origin of the Royal Arch, a method first adopted by W. J. Songhurst in 1919. It consists of a threefold proposition, (i) The first

proposition, that the Royal Arch was known to, and worked by, the Antients in 1756, and inferentially from their establishment in 1751, is a conclusion about which we feel there can be no question, (ii) The second proposition, that the Antients derived their work from the Grand Lodge of Ireland, founded in or before 1725, was proved by the researches of Henry Sadler, in what concerns the relationship, and of Chetwode Crawley, in what concerns the date. From this proposition, in conjunction with the fact that the Irish Royal Arch legend (relating to the repair of the Temple under Josiah) is quite different from the English Royal Arch legend (relating to the rebuilding of the Temple under Zerubbabel), it seems to follow that no Royal Arch legend had been adopted by 1751. Had the Josiah legend existed in Irish Masonry in 1751, it would doubtless have been adopted by the Grand Lodge of the Antients, the leading spirit of which, Laurence Dermott, had been made a Royal Arch mason in Dublin in 1746. In that case, it would almost certainly have been adopted by the United Grand Chapter of the Royal Arch Masons of England, when established in 1817, if the Antients in the Arch at all resembled the Antients in the Craft in the matter of pertinacity. On the other hand, it is very unlikely that the Zerubbabel legend existed in Irish Masonry in 1751, as that would imply that at a later date Irish masons changed over from one legend to the other, something entirely contrary to the ultra-conservatism which characterized the Irish in their masonic practices. (iii) The third proposition, that the Grand Lodge of Ireland derived its work from the premier Grand Lodge in London, we are inclined to put somewhat differently, namely, that Irish Masonry derived its working from English Accepted Masonry at some date prior to the establishment of the premier Grand Lodge in 1717, and possibly also direct from Scottish operative masonry, during the second half of the seventeenth century. To this problem we have referred previously.

From this threefold proposition it seems to follow that the premier Grand Lodge of 1717, or English accepted masons before 1717, or Scottish operative masons in the seventeenth century, possessed some esoteric knowledge (now associated with the Royal Arch) which was either not transmitted to English Craft lodges constituted under the premier Grand Lodge, or if transmitted, was subsequently lost by those lodges generally.

Chapter XII

Freemasonry in the Seventeen-Twenties

Growing Prominence of Freemasonry. Amongst the contemporary writers whose observations throw light on freemasonry in the early days of Grand Lodge, mention may be made of Dr. William Stratford, Canon of Christ Church, Oxford, and of Dr. William Stukeley, the antiquary. The former, writing to Lord Harley in April 1722, says ". . . perhaps the noble person that laid the first stone is a freemason. That has been an honour much courted of late by quality." A passage from Stukeley's Diary, referring to the meeting of Grand Lodge on 24 June 1721, at the Stationers' Hall, has already been quoted. An earlier entry in his Diary, under the date of 6 January 1721, states, "I was made a freemason." Referring to this event, he wrote at a much later date in his Common Place Book that "immediately after that, it [= freemasonry] took a run and ran itself out of breath thro' the folly of its members." It is difficult to be sure to what, exactly, he was alluding. There can, however, be no doubt about the growing prominence of freemasonry at this period, some leading indications of which we may now briefly consider under five heads: (*a*) mock masonry, (*b*) rival clubs or societies, (*c*) the so-called "exposures," (*d*) numerical strength, and (*e*) developments outside England.

Mock Masonry. The election and installation of the first noble Grand Master in 1721, with its public procession of the Brethren in masonic clothing through the City, undoubtedly brought the Fraternity into some prominence. In the following years, the Fraternity is likely to have attracted even more public attention, as from 1723 onwards the procession on foot through the City was replaced by a carriage parade, when the Grand Master Elect was escorted in coaches by distinguished brethren in masonic clothing from his mansion in the West End to the particular hall in the City, where the annual assembly was to be held. These outdoor processions of Grand Lodge undoubtedly lent themselves to the ridicule of the humorists, but it was not apparently until the seventeen-forties, after the close of our period, that mock processions were organized by opponents. It was probably these burlesques which led Grand Lodge in April 1747, to decide to discontinue the procession to the Grand Feast.

Rival Clubs or Societies. Another, and more immediate consequence of the growing prominence of the Fraternity, was the establishment of clubs or societies of a convivial type, modelled, at least in externals, upon freemasonry. These imitators were mostly mere rivals, but in at least one case, that of the Gormogons, they appear to have been definitely anti-masonic. These clubs or societies very possibly derived some support from discontented masons who were hostile to the developments which were taking place in the relationship of Masonry to religion and possibly to politics. Regarding the former, it may be noted that the latitudinarian character of Anderson's first charge, "Concerning God and Religion," incorporated in "The Charges of a Free-Mason" of the *Constitutions* of 1723, marked a very great change in the basis of Masonry, by substituting Theism for Christianity. It is perhaps

noteworthy that Pennell, in preparing the Irish edition of the *Constitutions* issued in 1730, whilst so modifying Anderson's wording of this particular charge as to make it quite non-sectarian, nevertheless included a Prayer to be said at the opening of a Lodge, or the making of a Brother, which was definitely Christian in character. At the same time, Anderson's second charge, "Of the Civil Magistrate supreme and subordinate," though really only a restatement of the second general charge of the MS. *Constitutions of Masonry,* by enjoining obedience to the Civil Powers and discountenancing rebels against the State, may have been unpalatable to brethren with strong Jacobite sympathies, though the somewhat unguarded phraseology of the concluding sentences of the charge might almost be held to imply approval, or express condonation, of armed rebellion. Nevertheless, this very possibly accounts for the otherwise remarkable behaviour of the Duke of Wharton, that brilliant but eccentric and profligate nobleman, who in 1722-23 was Grand Master of the Freemasons, and a year later was an active supporter, if not the actual originator, of the Gormogons. According to Gould, there is some ground for thinking that the irregularities of which Anthony Sayer, first Grand Master, was found guilty in 1730, consisted of allying himself with the Gormogons, who soon after that date seem to have disappeared. Another rival society at this period was that of the Khaibarites, who were certainly in existence as early as 1726, in which year was published *An Ode to the Grand Khaibar,* poking fun at the legendary history of masonry, and as late as 1730, when mentioned by Prichard in the introduction to *Masonry Dissected.* Still another was the Honorary Freemasons, who were singled out for special mention by Dr. Desaguliers in Grand Lodge in August 1730. Their organization, which styled itself the worthy Society of Honorary Free-Masons, can be traced in the daily press as early as 1726 and as late as 1739. Two imitators, who were possibly established as early as 1730, but whose heyday was undoubtedly in the second half of the eighteenth century, were the Gregorians and the Bucks.

The so-called "Exposures." Yet one other consequence of the growing prominence of freemasonry was the publication of various newspaper articles, pamphlets and broadsheets, professing to disclose the secrets of freemasonry. The earliest of these, *A Mason's Examination,* was printed in the *Flying Post* in April 1723, and at least nine or ten of them made their appearance before the end of 1730. As in more than one case only a single copy of a broadsheet has survived, it is not improbable that there were others of a similar character which have not been traced. With one exception, none of these early publications appears to have enjoyed any great measure of success, as in only one or two cases does there appear to have been a second edition or reprint. The exception was Prichard's *Masonry Dissected,* the first of a more elaborate type of masonic catechism, which apparently made a great hit. It was published in October 1730, and in eleven days it went through three editions, in addition to being reprinted in two newspapers, and continued to find a ready sale for many years afterwards. Within a few years it was translated into Dutch, German, and French, and several editions were issued in Scotland. The presumption is that it was the masonic demand for this and later catechisms, such as *Three Distinct Knocks* (1760) and *Jachin and Boaz* (1762), which led to the printing of so many editions. Prichard's pamphlet, like one earlier catechism, *The Mystery of Free Masonry* (August 1730), led Grand Lodge to take steps to prevent false brethren being admitted into a regular lodge, by requiring a visitor to be vouched for as a regular mason by a member of the lodge. *Masonry Dissected* was also answered by an anonymous pamphlet, *A Defence of Masonry* (1730), a compliment previously paid to one other of the so-called "exposures."

Numerical Strength of Freemasonry. The likelihood that there was some foundation for Stukeley's remark, about Masonry "running itself out of breath through the folly of its members," is supported by an examination of the limited statistical material available. This suggests that there occurred something of the nature of a mushroom growth and decline in Masonry after 1723, the low-water mark being reached about the end of 1728, as the following figures, relating to the number of lodges which can be traced at different dates, tend to show:

Date	No. of Lodges
June 1717	4
June 1721	12
Dec. 1722	20
Nov. 1723	30
1723–24	51
1723–24	52
1725	63
1725	70
1725–28	77

Jan. 1729	54
Oct. 1730	67
1730–32	102

A detailed comparison of the various lists of lodges shows that while new lodges were being constituted, others were lapsing. Thus the net gain of 25 between the MS. List of 1723-24 (52) and that of 1725-28 (77), was brought about by the formation or recognition of 33 new lodges and the disappearance of 8 lodges; the net gain of 25 between the MS. List of 1725-28 (77) and that of 1730-32 (102), was brought about by the formation or recognition of 57 new lodges, the reinstatement of 3 old lodges, and the disappearance of 35 lodges. Although 77 lodges appear in the MS. List of 1725-28, some of these had probably lapsed before the last lodges on the list were constituted in April 1728. Thus there was probably little or no net growth in the number of lodges between the later part of 1725 and the beginning of 1728, after which an excess of lapses caused the number to decline from perhaps 65 or 70 to 54 at the beginning of 1729. After that date, according to John Lane, the statistician of freemasonry, the number of new lodges for several years exceeded the number erased. His investigations show that the number of lodges on the register of Grand Lodge was as follows:

At the end of 1728	57
1729	61
1730	76
1731	83
1732	108
1733	126

The net growth of 69 between the end of 1728 and the end of 1733 was accounted for by the constitution of 71 new lodges and the erasure of two.

Although the foundation on which new lodges were erected in the seventeen-twenties was doubtless not always very sound, as a consequence of which many of them collapsed very quickly, a circumstance to which Stukeley was probably referring in his statement, nevertheless much good work was done in those early days. This is shown by the fact that of the 52 lodges on the MS. List of 1723-24, ten survive to the present day; of the 33 lodges which appear for the first time in the MS. List of 1725-28, three survive to the present day; of the 57 lodges which appear for the first time in the MS. List of 1730-32, five survive to the present day.

In drawing attention to the growth of freemasonry in England, as reflected in the number of lodges which can be traced at different dates between 1717 and 1733, we must remind the reader that these were all lodges connected with Grand Lodge. In addition, there were certainly in England at that period other lodges of accepted masons, such as the Lodge at York, which had formed itself into a Grand Lodge in 1725, as well as lodges of operative masons, such as those at Alnwick and Swalwell, which might have non-operative members.

Development of Freemasonry outside England. Finally, brief reference may be made to the development of freemasonry outside England up to the year 1730. The main features of masonic evolution in Scotland, which in its early stages cannot be separated from masonic development in England, have been touched upon in previous chapters. The Scottish operative lodges continued to admit non-operatives in the early eighteenth century, as in the seventeenth. It was not until 1736, after the close of our period, that the Grand Lodge of Scotland was established, more or less on the English model. In Ireland, where, as mentioned before, a freemasons' lodge existed as early as 1688, the Grand Lodge, which can first be traced in 1725, was very possibly established in 1724, or even in 1723. The movement in favour of centralization was probably stimulated by the publication of Anderson's *Constitutions* of 1723. Before 1730 masonic activities can also be traced in the South of Ireland; in 1725 the Society of Freemasons at Cork applied to the corporation for a Charter; by 1726 the Grand Lodge of Munster was already in existence, as is shown by its earliest preserved records. There is a tradition, more or less substantiated, that the first lodge in France was formed in Paris by the Earl of Derwentwater in 1725. The minute book of Grand Lodge shows that lodges were constituted at Madrid in 1728, at Fort William, Bengal, in 1729, and at Gibraltar in the same year. From the same source we learn that a "Deputation" appointing a certain Daniel Cox to be Provincial Grand Master of the Provinces of New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania in America, was issued in June, 1730. He attended Grand Lodge in January 1731, but there is no evidence to show that he ever constituted a lodge, or that he ever made any return to Grand Lodge, as required by the terms of his appointment.

Internal Developments of Freemasonry. Having examined briefly some of the leading external features of freemasonry in the early days of Grand Lodge, it remains to say something about internal developments. Freemasonry in the first three decades of the eighteenth century had little of the ideas now associated with it. It is true that the MS. *Constitutions of Masonry* included an Invocation to the Trinity, a declaration of loyalty to the Crown, and an admonition to call masons brothers, but there is practically no mention of Relief and Truth, two of the three grand principles on which Freemasonry is nowadays stated to be founded. Further, there is little or no trace of allegory or symbolism either in the *Regius* and *Cooke* MSS., or in the later versions of the MS. *Constitutions.* As G. W. Speth pointed out nearly fifty years ago, lodges of accepted masons were little more than convivial societies, the remnants or offspring of ancient trade societies, with a certain amount of mystic ceremony, which had been handed down. Men of education joined the lodges either on account of an interest in architecture, which the Society of Freemasons had inherited, or were supposed to have inherited, from their operative ancestors, or out of curiosity about its secrets and mysteries. Thus, as late as December 1726, Francis Drake, the antiquary and Junior Grand Warden of the Grand Lodge of All England at York, was still commending gentleman masons to study geometry and architecture; whereas Dr. William Stukeley, the antiquary, who was made a freemason in 1721, stated some years later that curiosity led him to be initiated into the mysteries of Masonry.

The secrets and mysteries of freemasonry in the first three decades of the eighteenth century appear to have been very much the same as those associated before the end of the seventeenth century with the giving of the Mason Word to operative masons in Scotland. The reader must not allow himself to be misled into reading into the tenets of freemasonry in the early eighteenth century ideas for which a careful study of the masonic documents of the period provides no foundation. As previously indicated, some changes (such as the formation of three ceremonies out of the material which had originally served for two) were introduced into speculative working in the seventeen-twenties but, so far as we can tell, they were superficial rather than fundamental. Even the innovations, stated in 1726 to have been introduced "by the Doctor [= Desaguliers] and some other of the Moderns," appear to have consisted mainly of replacing the old method of "drawing the lodge" with chalk and charcoal, by a system of tape and nails, which in its turn was superseded by the floor cloth and the tracing board. As late as 1730, the main *motif* of the explanatory legend communicated to the candidates when instructed in the five points of fellowship, whether it was the Noah story or the Hiram story, was still concerned with an act of necromancy, namely, an attempt to obtain a secret from a dead body. It was not until later, after the close of our period, that a new orientation was given to the story, and that stress was laid on the unshaken fidelity of Hiram in refusing to betray the secrets of a master mason, and the five points of fellowship were utilized to emphasize the beauty and the duty of fellowship.

Conclusion. The year 1730, much more than the year 1716 or 1717, marks a milestone in masonic history. Freemasonry during the third decade of the eighteenth century appears to have been substantially the same as in the pre-Grand Lodge period. The various masonic documents up to 1730 have a strong family resemblance, apart from the legend of the *Graham MS.* After that date, the picture changes completely. The publication of Prichard's *Masonry Dissected* in the autumn of 1730 may be regarded as the last phase in the Battle of the Degrees, even though it was probably a good many years before the trigradal system was universally adopted. Before the end of 1730, Grand Lodge was firmly established, the General Charity had begun to function, the first Provincial Grand Lodge was in existence, and, what is deserving of particular notice, the first lodges outside Great Britain and Ireland had been constituted; for it must never be forgotten that, in the words of Chetwode Crawley, the distinguished Irish masonic historian, "all Freemasonry in existence today can be traced through one channel or another to the Grand Lodge of England." The setting up of a network of Provincial and District Grand Lodges, to act as intermediaries between Grand Lodge and its subordinate lodges outside the London area, the formation of numerous new Grand Lodges in all parts of the world, and the spread of freemasonry over the whole surface of the habitable globe, fall outside the period covered by this Short History. By 1730 the foundation of Freemasonry had been truly laid; the erection of the great superstructure had still to come.

Bibliographical Note

A.Q.C. = Ars Quatuor Coronatorum [The Transactions of the Quatuor Coronati Lodge, No. 2076, London.]

Q.C.A. — Quatuor Coronatorum Antigrapha [Masonic Reprints of the Quatuor Coronati Lodge, No. 2076, London.]

With the publication in recent years of Poole's Q.C Pamphlet No. 2 on the *Spencer* family, *The "Yorkshire" Old Charges of Masons,* in which Poole and Worts have printed some twenty versions of the MS. *Constitutions of Masonry,* and our own edition (in collaboration with Douglas Hamer) of the *Regius* and *Cooke* MSS. *[The Two Earliest Masonic MSS if* at least one version of every family of the Old Charges is readily available to students. The Minutes of

Grand Lodge from 1723 to 1739 have been transcribed and edited by Songhurst in *Q.C.A.*, x. Anderson's *Constitutions* of 1723 and 1738 can be consulted in facsimile reproductions published by Quaritch and in *Q.C.A.*, vii, respectively. Various important Irish documents will be found in Chetwode Crawley's *Camentaria Hibernica.* The MS. *Catechisms of Masonry,* on the other hand, are relatively difficult of access, but we hope, as soon as circumstances are favourable, to publish, in collaboration with Douglas Hamer, an edition of the earlier manuscript and printed versions, and thus to make it possible, for those who desire to do so, to study these essential documents for themselves.

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