

MOTHER GRAND LODGES

The transformation of Free Masonry from independent lodges, with an occasional General Assembly, to a highly organized constituent body, or from an Operative Craft with some honorary members as Speculative or Accepted brethren, to a Speculative institution, began in London in 1703, when St. Paul's Lodge passed the following resolution:

"Resolved, that the privileges of Masonry, shall no longer be confined to Operative Masons, but be free to men of all professions, provided that they are regularly approved and initiated into the fraternity."

The father of modern Speculative Free Masonry was the Rev. Jean Theophilus Desaguliers, son of a French Huguenot clergyman. In 1685 the King of France abolished the freedom to exercise the Protestant religion in that country. Rev. Desaguliers left the country and found refuge in England; his son, Jean, being two years of age. He was educated at Oxford; became a clergyman and Doctor of Civil Law, a lecturer in experimental philosophy; moved to London and lectured in physical Science; was associated with Sir Isaac Newton; was made a Mason in the "Goose and Gridiron Lodge" in 1713.

He collaborated with the Rev. James Anderson, a Presbyterian minister, in gathering old documents relating to the Masons and preparing the history of Free Masonry, and the Constitutions.

He gave Masonry a prestige not previously enjoyed. The older brethren, who had not for some time visited the Lodges, began to gather around the institution, and men of prominence joined the fraternity among them the Prince of Wales, Frederick, son of George II, and Alberg Wolfgang, afterwards King of Schaumberg-Lippe, who introduced Frederick the Great to become a Free Mason.

In 1717, a number of the members of four Lodges in London assembled at the Apple Tree Tavern in Covent Garden, and placing the oldest Master of a Lodge in the chair, constituted themselves a Grand Lodge, electing Mr. Anthony Sayer, Grand Master, by show of hands.

They met on St. John's Day, 24th June, 1718, when George Payne was elected Grand Master. In 1719 Rev. Theophilus Desaguliers was elected Grand Master, and Rev. James Anderson, Grand Secretary. They gathered all the information available as to the history, traditions, charges, regulations and old manuscripts relating to the Ancient Builders and early Free Masonry, submitting them to the criticism of fourteen learned brethren. From these, Anderson compiled a History and Constitution, which was approved by Grand Lodge in 1722 and published in 1723, in which they called themselves the "Grand Lodge of England." There is no record of consultation with Lodges or Masons by correspondence or otherwise outside of London, either before or during the formation of the Grand Lodge on the subject of its organization. Probably this led to the bitter opposition to the movement by many of the brethren throughout the country.

In 1725 the Masons at York organized a Grand Lodge, which they styled "The Grand Lodge of All England." It ceased operation in 1745, revived in 1761, and finally died in 1792.

The Grand Lodge of Ireland was instituted in 1731, and the Grand Lodge in Scotland in 1736. In 1751 a number of Masons in England organized a Grand Lodge which they called the "Grand Lodge of the Ancients," dubbing the Grand Lodge of England "The Moderns." This Grand Lodge of the Ancients continued with great success until they and the Moderns united in 1813, taking the name "The United Grand Lodge of England."

In 1813 the Duke of Sussex was Grand Master of the Moderns, and his brother, the Duke of Kent was Grand Master of the Ancients. These two royal Grand Masters decided on united the Free Masons of England into one Grand Body.

A Lodge of Reconciliation was formed, composed of nine brethren from each of the Grand Lodges. The two Grand Lodges met together on St. John's Day, December 27th, 1813, all the attendants having been reobligated and certified by the reconciling Lodge.

The two Grand Masters were seated, one on each side of the Throne. The Act of Union, having been previously

prepared, was read and adopted.

The Duke of Kent announced that he had accepted the office of Grand Master of the Ancients with the express purpose of uniting the two Grand Bodies, and moved that the Duke of Sussex be made Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge, which was unanimously carried.

Thus ended the rivalry and discord among Free Masons in England.

THE GRAND LODGE OF IRELAND

After the completion of the Grand Lodge of England in 1722, Masonry began to grow as never before. This stimulated the zeal of Masons in Ireland; representatives of Lodges met in convention in 1727, again in 1728, and again in 1729 in the City of Cork, formulating plans year after year and obtaining affiliations of Lodges until, on St. John's Day, 24th June, 1731, they met and adjourned until August 9th, 1731, when they completed the organization of their Grand Lodge and the Right Honorable James, Lord Baron of Kingston was elected Grand Master.

The Irish Free Masons claim to have the oldest Masonic ceremonies in the world. That may be true, as it was in Ireland that the Christian Mysteries were first practiced in the British Isles, and there the love of ancient lore is found greater than in any other part of Christendom.

Free Masonry has always had to combat the influence of sectarian narrow-mindedness in Ireland, although her benefactions have very often extended to the widows and orphans of her opponents.

The Grand Lodge of Ireland has played an important part in spreading Free Masonry throughout the world, instituting civil and military Lodges.

The oldest Lodge in Quebec owes its origin to Ireland, and a more eventful history attaches to it than any other Lodge on Earth.

THE GRAND LODGE OF SCOTLAND

There is an old tradition that some time after the Conquest, there was a training school for builders in the valley of Glenbeg, where the Master workmen from other parts of the British Isles met for deliberation, and that at the beginning of the 8th century the superior knowledge of the "Masters of the Valley" was recognized.

When the Abbey of Kilwinning was built by the Christian Builders about 1055, the Lodges of Operative Masons held their General Assemblies there (as the English workmen held their assemblies at York). At Kilwinning the General Assemblies elected Grand Masters of Scotland, who governed the Craft in that kingdom.

After the formation of Grand Lodges in England and Ireland, Masonry was spreading to the Continent and the British Colonies in America. In this growth, for want of organization, Scotland had at first no part. Even her own home territory was being encroached upon by the Grand Lodges, and it became imperative to adopt the Grand Lodge idea.

Four of the Lodges in Edinburgh led the way, circularizing the Lodges throughout Scotland, requesting them to send Masters and Wardens to that city to organize a Grand Lodge. A draft of a constitution had been prepared, which was submitted with their request.

On Tuesday, November 30th, 1736, the Masters and Wardens of thirty-three Lodges met in St. Mary's Chapel and organized the Grand Lodge of Scotland; William St. Clair of Rosslyn, Grand Master.

Mother Kilwinning did not participate at first, but taking the title, "Royal Grand Lodge and Chapter of the Order of Herodim of Kilwinning," remained independent for some time, as, for a period, did "Melrose Lodge."

These Mother Grand Lodges, England, Ireland and Scotland, have planted Modern Speculative Free Masonry in nearly every country in the world where "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity" are the basic principles of society.

By: Leonard Morris, P.G.M.; G.R.P.E.I.

Published at Vancouver, B.C.; 1934.

Submitted by D. Roy Murray

King Solomon Lodge, No. 58, GRS