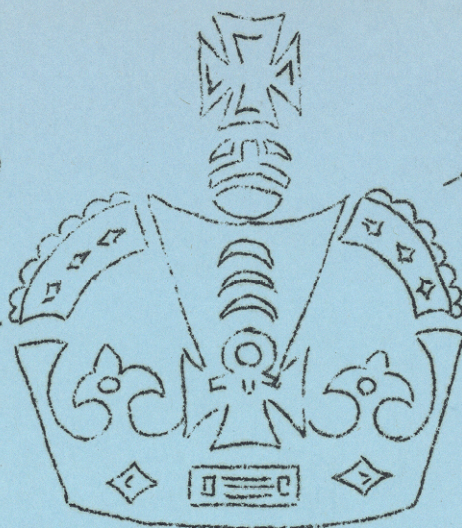


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THE CORONATION YEAR

With all loyal subjects, the Freemasons of the Empire will celebrate the crowning of His Majesty George VI, King, Emperor and Freemason. Our Grand Master has requested that this memorable occasion be recognized by the Craft Lodges of Alberta and as a small part of that recognition, your Editor has ventured to make this issue of the Grand Lodge Bulletin a Special Coronation Number.

The interest of the British Royal Family in Freemasonry is well-known in a general way and the re-publication of a paper, in its original form prepared for the now defunct Installed Masters' Association, may crystallize that interest here and prove suitable material in a Lodge celebration. With that end in view the entire issue of the Bulletin is used to present a revision of the paper for the use of the brethren.

FREEMASONRY AND THE BRITISH ROYAL FAMILY

The association of the British Royal Family with Craft Freemasonry is a long and honorable one, beginning in 1737 with the initiation of Frederick, Prince of Wales, father of George III.

There are, of course, many pretty stories in Masonic lore of the connection of crowned heads with the Order. King Athelstan is said to have granted a charter as far back as 936; Prince Edwin, his son, is supposed to have presided over a Grand Lodge at York; Edward III, two years after the Battle of Poitiers, is credited with a revision of the Constitution of Freemasonry, and records have been alleged of the initiation of Henry VI in 1450 and William III in 1690. Research students have relegated all these tales, to the storehouse of doubtful legend if not to the scrap heap of fable.

Generally agreed to have been an Operative Fraternity, Craft Freemasonry early adopted the practice of receiving certain non-operative initiates who became known as Accepted Brethren interested in Speculative Masonry. With the formation of The Grand Lodge of England in 1717, the practice had become so firmly established that Lodges of Speculatives were more numerous than Operatives.

By 1721 the Grand Lodge of England had become stabilized and Craft Masonry was developing into what, for want of a better definition, might be termed a middle-class institution. In common with most organizations of the time it sought the prestige of aristocratic leadership and two far-seeing worthies, Desaguliers, a Huguenot Frenchman and Anderson, a Scot, were the main instruments in finding the necessary blue blood and so linking the Royal Household and the Peerage so firmly to Freemasonry that the long line of Princes and Peers who have been enthusiastic Craftsmen has never been broken.

In 1721, John, Duke of Montague, became Grand Master. He was Lord High Constable of England at the coronation of George I, seems to have been an extraordinarily capable man with strong scientific tastes and was made an Honorary Doctor of Medicine and a Fellow of the College of Surgeons at Cambridge. He was a staunch Hanoverian. In the same year as Montague was elected Grand Master there was initiated into Freemasonry, Philip, Duke of Wharton, as staunch a Jacobite as Montague was Hanoverian.

From the first Wharton aspired to the Grand Mastership and history records considerable internecine warfare before he finally ascended the Masonic Throne in 1723. But poetic justice prevailed and Wharton was deposed and practically expelled, to be succeeded by the Earl of Dalkeith. In Dalkeith's regime, in 1737, there was initiated Frederick, Prince of Wales, father of George III and the first Prince of the Royal House to become a Freemason.

Whether the political difference of Hanover and Stuart were at the bottom of the business or not will probably never be known, but about this time the Grand Lodge of England was torn asunder and a rival Grand Lodge set up. Both had their followers, peers and commoners, and both developed rapidly.

After the death of Frederick, no royal Masons were made until 1766 when Edward Augustus, Duke of York, and William Henry, Duke of Gloucester were initiated. In the following year, Henry Frederick, Duke of Cumberland became a Mason, destined in 1782 to preside as Grand Master.

In 1770, there was initiated, at Plymouth, William Henry, son of George III, later Duke of Clarence and still later William IV of England.

During the next decade there was a flood of royal initiates, some joining the Atholl Grand Lodge and some the Senior Grand Lodge, now respectively known as Ancients and Moderns. The Prince of Wales and Frederick, Duke of York were received in 1783. Edward, Duke of Kent, father of Queen Victoria, was initiated at Geneva in 1790 and Prince Augustus, Duke of Sussex, later an outstanding Grand Master, in 1798.

One effect of the influx of royal blood into the respective Grand Lodges was a clamor for reunion, and to Francis, second Earl of Moira, must go the major credit for bringing to a happy issue the United Grand Lodge of England.

In May 1813, the Moderns elected the Duke of Sussex their Grand Master and immediately the Ancients countered by electing the Duke of Kent, his brother, as their Grand Master. The time for reunion was ripe and on St. John's Day, December 27th 1813, a special Grand Assembly was called in London to effect the Union.

It must have been a magnificent occasion. The royal brothers, each a Grand Master in his own right, entered Freemasons' Hall together and ascended their respective thrones amid all the pomp and ceremony beloved of the Anglo-Saxon race. The Lodge was prayerfully opened and the two Grand Masters vacated their thrones together to deposit in the specially designed Ark of the Masonic Covenant, the Act of Union, creating the United Grand Lodge of England.

Kent proposed his brother as the First Grand Master and so the Duke of Sussex became the Most Worshipful Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England. The cup of brotherly love was presented to the newly installed Grand Master who drank to the assembled brethren the toast, "Peace, Goodwill and Brotherly Love all over the world." It is recorded that the session closed with solemn prayer and with the most festive harmony and brotherly love.

The Duke of Sussex reigned as Grand Master for thirty years. He died in 1843, his memory being perpetuated by the Sussex wing of The Royal Freemasons' Hospital.

It had been tacitly agreed for diplomatic reasons that no reigning sovereign would hold the office of Grand Master. In lieu of an active office, however, an Honorary Office had been created, that of Grand Patron, and both George IV and William IV were Grand Patrons. With the accession of Queen Victoria the office was temporarily abandoned.

Royal connection with Masonry was suspended in 1851 with the death of the Duke of Cumberland and was not revived for seventeen years when one whose Masonry was contemporary in part with many of our own Alberta brethren was initiated an Entered Apprentice.

Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, was interested in Freemasonry, but differences at the Court of Queen Victoria made it inadvisable that he be initiated in England. Indeed, popular feeling at the time seems to have been against his being initiated at all and even "Punch", that famous cemetery of the heavy jocularity of the period, went so far as to publish a parody of the Entered Apprentice's Song. But Albert Edward was not to be so easily dissuaded and on a visit to Sweden found sympathetic assistance. In December 1868 he was made a Mason in Nordiska Foista Lodge in Stockholm. The Presiding Officer was King Charles XV of Sweden and one of the Wardens the Crown Prince Oscar, later King of Sweden.

Sweden was recognized by the United Grand Lodge of England but the news of Albert Edward's initiation came to England by hearsay only, there being no official communication. The Grand Master decided to settle the question by personal enquiry and on May 31st 1869, the Earl of Zetland, in the House of Lords, personally tried the Prince of Wales and found him worthy and well-skilled.

The custom in the Grand Lodge of England is to elect Princes and Peers, Honorary Past Grand Masters with the idea that later the chosen Honorary Past Grand Master may be elected active Grand Master. Zetland accordingly gave notice that at the next Quarterly Communication he would move the election of Edward, Prince of Wales, to be Honorary Past Grand Master. Meantime Scotland stole a march by electing the Prince their active Grand Patron.

Having joined Alpha Lodge in London so that he might qualify under English Law the Prince of Wales was duly elected Honorary Past Grand Master. Meantime Zetland, full of years decided his work was done and resigned in favor of the Marquis of Ripon, who became Grand Master in 1869. Ripon reigned for five years, at the end of which he adopted the Roman Catholic faith and resigned his office. His successor was Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, who reigned as Grand Master until his accession to the Throne of the British Empire as Edward VII in 1901.

Probably the most important incident in his long reign as Grand Master was the severing of the connection with the Grand Orient of France upon that Body's declaring certain of the Landmarks matters of individual conscience and not prerequisite for admission.

In 1875 the Duke of Connaught and Albany was initiated and in 1886, the Heir Apparent to the Crown, the Duke of Clarence was received. The late King George V, who became Prince of Wales on the death of Clarence never became a Mason.

In 1886 the Duke of Connaught was elected Provincial Grand Master for Sussex, the first occasion on which a Prince of the Royal House had been elected to that office.

Albert Edward was a great protagonist of the Craft and hundreds of cases are on record where he used his influence for the general good. In 1887 at a great assembly of Freemasons to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of his mother, Queen Victoria, as Grand Master he headed the deputation which delivered the address of homage to the Queen at Osborne House. Again in 1897, on the occasion of the Diamond Jubilee he performed a like service. At his solicitation, Queen Victoria herself in 1882 became the Chief Patroness of the Royal Masonic Institution for Girls. In the Masonic Schools at Wandsworth the Great Assembly Hall is known as Alexandra Hall and was opened by the Prince of Wales as Grand Master accompanied by Princess Alexandra.

In 1890, in accordance with custom, the Duke of Connaught was elected Honorary Past Grand Master. Coming events were casting their shadows before and when the good Queen Victoria passed to the undiscovered country and Albert Edward ascended the Throne, the Duke of Connaught succeeded him as Grand Master on the Masonic Throne on July 17th, 1901.

Edward, Prince of Wales, was initiated in Household Brigade Lodge in May 1919, became a Grand Warden of the Grand Lodge of England, Provincial Grand Master for Surrey, was nominated as Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Scotland but resigned on behalf of his brother when he ascended the Throne as Edward VIII. On his accession he assumed the rank and title of Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of England.

GEORGE VI AS FREEMASON

As Prince Albert, Duke of York, the present King, whose Coronation we celebrate, was initiated in Navy Lodge No. 2612 at an Emergent Communication held on December 2, 1919. The ceremony was performed by the late Lord Amptill, Pro Grand Master, in the presence of many distinguished Masons, including his brother, the Prince of Wales, the Earl of Donoughmore, Grand Master of Ireland and Brigadier General Gilmour, Grand Master of Scotland.

As Duke of York he served as Master of his Lodge in 1921-22. On February 11th, 1921, he was perfected in the Rose Croix Chapter No. 169 of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite. On March 8th, 1932 he was advanced to the Thirty Third Degree and became an Honorary member of the Supreme Council of England. In 1923 he succeeded the Prince of Wales as Senior Grand Warden of the United Grand Lodge of England. In 1924 he was elected Grand Master of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Middlesex and Senior Grand Warden of the Mark Masons Grand Lodge in 1929. In 1931, he became the Grand Master of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Mark Masonry in the Province of Middlesex.

On November 30th, 1936, he was installed Grand Master Mason of the Grand Lodge of Scotland at the Bicentenary celebration of that Grand Lodge in Edinburgh.

Grand Masters of the Masonic Grand Bodies of England usually hold office for life but when a Prince of the Royal House ascends the Throne of Empire, as was the case with George IV, Edward VII and Edward VIII it has been the custom to pass the purple of the Fraternity to a successor. Whether George VI will do likewise with his office of Grand Master of Scotland remains to be seen. In Scotland the Grand Master holds office for one year only and there is a possib-

ility that King George may remain in office till the end of his term on November 30th, St. Andrew's Day, 1957. It is certain that King George will retain a deep and sympathetic interest in Masonry. Evidence of this is already forthcoming when in March of this year it was announced that he had agreed to become Grand Patron of the three Royal Masonic Institutions of the United Grand Lodge of England, The Royal Masonic Benevolent Institution, The Royal Masonic Institution for Girls and the Royal Masonic Institution for Boys. The King has also intimated his intention of making an annual gift to the Royal Masonic Hospital.

Queen Elizabeth has likewise taken a deep interest in the philanthropic activities of the Craft both when she assisted her father, the Earl of Strathmore, before her marriage and afterwards as the Duchess of York. At the recent Scottish Bicentenary celebrations of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, she received the freedom of the City of Edinburgh "in recognition of her unwearied devotion to schemes of philanthropy and her unfailing sympathy in aiding institutions for the relief of human suffering."

Truly the Royal Art is in Royal Hands!

A.M.M.

THE BRITISH EMPIRE

Behind the Pomp and Circumstance, the Pageantry of Ceremonial, there is deep feeling amongst not only the vast multitude who are privileged to view the magnificent spectacle in London on the 12th day of May, but also and perhaps still deeper amongst the many millions of those who cannot be present. It is to them a renewal of their faith in the British Empire and for all it stands. The Monarchy represents to them the heritage handed down by their forefathers, of precious liberties, rights and privileges gained at great cost.

The Coronation of the King reminds them of these things and is a guarantee that they will endure as they have in the past, will be enlarged and added to in the future and be maintained and strengthened by him, who in solemn words swears to do the will of the people, to serve them to the utmost of his ability and to maintain the Constitution — the form of government which has come to be accepted by British peoples the world over as the best yet devised by man.

The King and Queen represent not rulers whose word is law, but the central head of Empire to whom the humblest subject may appeal, and who exemplify in themselves the best there is in family life — the unit base of the British conception of society. At the same time, by their devotion to public duties, by their help and sympathy to those in need, they are an example ~~to~~ to their peoples in every station of life. The entire British Empire will be as one in acclaiming Their Majesties — LONG MAY THEY REIGN.
