



Provincial Grand Lodge of Forfarshire

The King and the Craft

SCOTLAND'S ROYAL FREEMASONS

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Published June 1936

The approaching bicentenary of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, the intimation that His Majesty the King has been graciously pleased to become Patron of the Ancient Scottish Craft and the fact that H.M.H. the Duke of York has consented to accept office as Most Worshipful Grand Master Mason during the bicentenary year give point to this comprehensive article which is from the informed pen of the R. W. Provincial Grand Master of Forfar shire.

'The King and the Craft,'
An Ancient Masonic Toast.

WILLIAM PRESTON, an Edinburgh man who rose to distinction in English Freemasonry and bequeathed part of his means to found what is known as the Prestonian Lecture, has a paragraph in one of his books which much repetition has made familiar to Craftsmen in every part of the world. Dwelling upon the importance of the Fraternity, Preston says: No Institution was ever raised on a better principle, or more solid foundation. Monarch's in all ages have been encouragers and promoters of the Art; and Have never deemed it "derogatory from their dignities to level themselves with the brethren, to extend their privileges, and to patronise their assemblies."

Preston, who was known as Little Solomon by those who did not love him, was buried in St Paul's Cathedral more than a hundred years ago, but certain happenings in Scottish Freemasonry at the moment indicate that his words are as true as when he wrote them in 1772. His Majesty the King has just indicated his gracious willingness to become Patron of Scottish Freemasonry, and the heir-presumptive, H.R.H. the Duke of York, will be installed a few months hence as Most Worshipful Grand Master Mason of Scotland.

This association of the Throne and the Craft has been notable since ever Freemasonry as we know it to-day came into being at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Beyond this historic period lie the countless generations which imaginative writers such as Anderson, the Aberdonian, who founded the Grand Lodge of England, and Oliver, who made many notable contributions to the literature of the Craft, have peopled with Kings and Princes who donned the Apron and moralised on the Compasses and Square. Indeed, he is a conservative easily pleased who is content to go no further back than Solomon, King of Israel, and Hiram, King of Tyre. The ordinary Freemason is satisfied to find a starting point in the building of the Temple which was the glory of the world, but the real enthusiast penetrates to the architectural triumphs of forgotten civilisations and claims all the Kings that come in his way.



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So far as Scotland is concerned, the traditionalists plead for a long pedigree. They cherish a pleasing romance that the Royal Order, which is practically the highest and sublimest peak to which Masons may ascend, was founded by King David, the *sair Sanct* for the Crown, and restored by King Robert the Bruce, who gave it some sort of recognition on the battle-field of Bannockburn to signalise the valour of a band of Knights Templars who fought for him there. It is a long cry from 1314 to 1936, but those who are familiar with the workings of the Royal Order tell us that the King of Scotland is still regarded as Hereditary Grand Master and they add that, at all meetings of this exalted group, the principal chair is left vacant unless the monarch happens to be present. One author, commenting on the happy circumstance that His Majesty joined the Order at Edinburgh in 1933, when he was Prince of Wales, says that "in days to come the chair may be occupied," but the fact that the King on his accession to the Throne intimated that he could not accept the position of Grand Master Mason seems to render anything of the kind unlikely.

All the Kings from Bruce have been claimed as patrons of the Craft, and indeed the Lodge of Scone and Perth, which flourishes in the Fair City, cherishes a tradition that King, James VI. was actually a member of that venerable body. Whatever may have been the facts before the days of Grand Lodges, it is certain that since the foundation of these august assemblies Princes have frequently accepted the mallet as an emblem of authority.

The first Prince of Wales to become a Freemason was Frederick, the eldest son of George II., and according to a *record* of the time he was admitted to the Craft, on November 5, 1737, at "an Occasional Lodge held at the Prince of Wales's Palace of Kew near Richmond." Three of ...Frederick's sons followed their father's example. These were the Dukes of York and Gloucester, who were initiated in 1766, and the Duke of Cumberland, who joined the Order in the following year. Cumberland went further in Freemasonry than any of his brothers. He was elected Grand Master in 1781, and, it is interesting to reflect that, while he occupied the Masonic

throne, five of his nephews joined the Craft. These were sons of George III. — The Prince of Wales, who became George IV.; the Duke of Clarence, who became William IV.; and the Dukes of York, Kent and Sussex. Cumberland continued as Grand Master till 1790, when he was succeeded by The Prince of Wales, who held office till 1813 when his place was taken by the Duke of Sussex.

Differences on matters that are now wholly forgotten led to the establishment of rival Grand Lodges in England. It was just, about this time that overtures for peace and reunion were successful, and the Duke of Sussex had the satisfaction of reigning over a united Grand Lodge for thirty years.



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The work of reconciliation was materially assisted by the Duke of Kent, whose grandson, another Prince of Wales, became Grand Master in 1874, and continued in office until 1901, when he ascended the throne as King Edward the Seventh. Although a Patron of Masonic agencies, the late King George was not a member of the Craft and the direct royal succession was therefore broken and remained so until 1919. In May of that year the present King was Initiated into the Household, Brigade Lodge, No. 2614. and, in the following December, the Duke of York entered the Navy Lodge No. 2612

Each has held office as Master of his Lodge and each has occupied the position of Provincial Grand Master—the King as Grand Master of Surrey, (and, incidentally, the first Prince of Wales to rule over a Province), and "the Duke of York as Grand Master of Middlesex.

The most spectacular representation of the intimate connection between Royalty and Freemasonry in our time was seen at Olympia in May 1932, when, in the presence of 80,000 brethren in full regalia, and 8000 ladies, five princes conducted the ceremony of laying the foundation stone of Freemasons' Hospital and Nursing Home. That great institution was being built at Ravenscourt Park, nearly two miles away, but as not more than 1500 persons could be accommodated there, it was decided to have the picturesque ceremonial at Olympia whence, by electricity, at the precise moment, the foundation stone at Ravenscourt could be laid in position. As Grand Master Mason of the Grand Lodge of England the Duke of Connaught presided, and He was attended by the Prince of Wales, who carried the Cornucopia with corn; the Duke of York, who carried the Ewer with wine; Prince Arthur of Connaught, who carried, the Ewer with oil, and Prince George, who carried the Vessel with salt; while, from the Royal Box, the Princess Royal, the

Duchess of York and Princess Arthur of Connaught surveyed what is believed to have been the largest and most splendid Masonic pageant ever held.

In spite of its long and interesting history of monarchs who sat in mythical chairs as Masters of Lodges, it was not until the beginning of the nineteenth century that the Scottish Craft really began to cultivate the patronage of Royalty. The first intimate and personal association was rather curious. On St Andrews Day, 1805, the then Prince of Wales, who had identified himself with the Craft in England, was "elected" Grand Master and Patron of Scottish Freemasonry, and this, office was conferred annually upon him until 1820, when he succeeded to, the Crown. But Bro. Murray Lyon points out that the office was no more than titular, as the Prince, not, being a member of a Scottish lodge, was ineligible for election to the Grand Mastership. On his accession, his Scottish title was changed to that of "Patron of the Most Ancient Order of St John's Masonry in Scotland."



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The title lapsed on the death of George IV, but was revived in 1870, when the Prince of Wales who afterwards became Edward VII., graciously exceeded to a request made by the Earl of Dalhousie that he should become Patron of the Order in Scotland. His Royal Highness, who had joined the Craft at Stockholm in 1868, had had the rank of Past Grand Master conferred upon him by the Grand Lodge of England in 1869, and now, in October 1870, he attended the Grand Lodge of Scotland and was formally installed into office as Patron amid scenes of great, magnificence and enthusiasm. His jewel of office was a gold star studded with gems and surmounted by a Prince of Wales's feather in silver. His rank was denoted by the square, compasses and segment of a circle which depended from the star, and Scottish character was added to the jewel by the introduction of the figure of St Andrew surrounded by a wreath of thistles.

Reference has been made to the fact that his predecessor as Prince of Wales was ineligible for office in respect that he had not established connection with any Scottish Masonic Lodge. Profiting by this experience, the brethren arranged for His Royal Highness to be admitted on the following day to membership of the Lodge of Edinburgh (Mary's Chapel) No. 1, which, the Prince was proudly informed, was probably the oldest Masonic body in Scotland and certainly possessed the oldest Masonic records of any Masonic body in the world. The Prince's certificate of membership, beautifully illuminated on vellum, was enclosed in a golden casket.

His Royal Highness always took a keen interest in the Scottish Craft. It was thought that this might cease when he laid aside the trowel for the sceptre on the death of Queen Victoria, but, in replying to a message of sympathy sent to him by Grand Lodge, he said he would continue to be the Patron of all Scottish Freemasonry, and so he remained until, in Masonic phrase, he laid aside the working tools of life.

The death of King Edward VII put a temporary period: to the connection of Royalty with our Scottish Craft, but the connection was revived in 1924, when his grandson, another Prince of Wales and now King Edward VIII., became an Honorary Member of Scottish Grand Lodge, At a Quarterly Communication held at Edinburgh on November 1, 1928. the Earl of Elgin, who was then Grand Master, stated that he had approached the Prince of Wales and was glad to be able to inform the brethren that His Royal Highness had consented to become an Honorary Member of the Grand Lodge of Scotland. Lord Elgin added that, in accordance with the Constitution, he would make a motion to that effect at their next meeting on St Andrew's Day. In keeping with this intimation, Lord Elgin made his formal motion on November 30, remarking that the Prince much regretted that he was unable to be with them that, evening but hoped to attend one of their meetings in the following year.

The motion was carried with prolonged applause and evoked the liveliest interest in Masonic circles everywhere. Lord Elgin, who was present at a Festival of English Freemasons held in April, 1924, referred to the forthcoming visit of the Prince to Scotland and said that



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he might assure His Royal Highness in advance of the heartiest welcome that it was in the power of Scottish Freemasons to give. Later, it was arranged that the ceremony should be carried out on December 8, 1924, Grand Lodge postponing its Festival of St Andrew until that date.

Freemason's Hall in Edinburgh was packed to capacity and the Earl of Elgin had the privilege of presiding over what was probably the most brilliant gathering ever held under Masonic auspices in Scotland, Grand Lodge having been opened in due and ancient form, announcement was made that "Brother His Royal Highness the Prince of Scotland,

Duke of Rothesay," sought admission. The assembled brethren sprang to attention when the Prince, wearing his regalia as a Provincial Grand Master of Surrey, escorted by Grand Stewards, headed by a piper in full Highland costume, entered the Hall, shook hands with the Grand Master and bowed his acknowledgement of the hearty cheers that rose from the assemblage.

The brethren, said the Earl of Elgin, addressing the Prince, had already given a token of the enthusiasm which his visit inspired in them, " But they have left it to me," went on His Lordship, " to express a few words of welcome which they would like to convey to your Royal Highness. We welcome you as our rightful and honourable Prince, a most distinguished member of our Royal House. We esteem you as being a pattern and an example of what a good Freemason should be, and in saying that I refer to the character and abounding energy which you have always displayed in the interests of others less happily placed than yourself, your sportsmanship, your good comradeship and, if I may say so* your smile."

Commenting on the fact that it was the Prince's first visit to them, Lord Elgin said it was not the first made by one of his name and title. Several of his predecessors had visited them and held office in that Grand Lodge, but he would only refer in that respect to the Prince's honoured and respected grandfather, who, in 1870, as Edward, Prince of Wales, undertook the responsibility of Patron of the Scottish Craft, Thereafter the Earl pinned a jewel on the Prince's breast bearing the inscription : " Presented as a token of Honorary Membership by the Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of Scotland to Right Worshipful Brother H.R.H, the Prince of Wales, K.G., K.T., &e., Prince and Steward of Scotland on the occasion of his visit, 3rd December, 1924,'* and greeted him as a brother.

After the brethren saluted the newly-made member according to ancient custom, the Prince expressed his appreciation of what had been done : " I thank you very sincerely for the honour you have conferred on me to-night in making me an Honorary Member of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, for the very kind words that you, Most Worshipful Grand Master, have addressed to me, and for the jewel you have just given me. I feel that it is a great privilege



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that I should be here with you to-night at the installation of your successor as Grand Master of Scotland and have my Honorary Membership conferred on me by you, who have occupied this most honourable position for the past three years."

Thereafter Lord Elgin installed the Earl of Stair as his successor and the company adjourned to the North British Hotel, where four hundred brethren, including the Prince, celebrated the Festival of St Andrew.

Already, in 1924, thoughts were turning to the bicentenary of Grand Lodge which was due to be celebrated a few years later, and this may explain a remark made by Lord Elgin in the course of the proceedings. He said it was not his privilege to have the opportunity of handing over to the Prince the mallet of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, but he looked forward to the day when perhaps his successor would have that privilege. A step nearer the event was taken in 1933, when the Prince was affiliated as a member of Lodge Mary's Chapel, Edinburgh No. 1, and the event seemed within sight when, in 1934, Lord Saltoun was able to inform Grand Lodge that His Royal Highness had graciously agreed to become Grand Master in the year of the bicentenary.

The lamented death of King George involved a change of plans. What was possible to the Prince was not practicable to the King, and other arrangements had to be made. It is a happy circumstance that the Duke of York, on whose shoulders must naturally fall many of the duties that would have devolved on the Prince of Wales, has consented to accept office, and nothing will be wanting on the part of the Scottish Craft to make his reign brilliant and successful.

A very pleasing gesture, in one way symbolical of that "level" on which Masons meet, may be read into the Duke's choice of a Lodge for affiliation. A few years ago, the Prince of Wales selected a city lodge. The Duke has chosen a lodge in a rural locality. In both the principles of virtue, morality and brotherly love are inculcated in the manner that is known wherever Scottish Freemasonry flourishes. To be sure, there may have been additional considerations that weighed with the Duke. Lodge Glamis bears a name that has many happy associations for him, and one of its Past Masters is his Honoured father-in-law, the Earl of Strathmore.

This interesting little lodge, which is numbered "99" on the roll of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, works under a Charter that was granted by that body in 1765, but it had flourished for a generation before that and had had indeed quite an aristocratic origin. The Honourable Company and Society of Freemasons was inaugurated in 1738, and selected as its Grand Master and Governor, the Right Honourable Thomas, eighth Earl of Strathmore. It is believed that the Earl was a Mason before the founding of the Lodge in Glamis, and this is not unlikely when it is remembered that his brother, Earl James, whom he succeeded in the title, was Grand Master Mason of England five years earlier.



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There is no doubt that the Grand Master and Governor was keenly interested in all that pertained to the ancient Craft, as we learn that meetings of the brethren were occasionally held in Glamis Castle on his express invitation. Nor was his interest in Masonry purely local, for two years later he was, appointed Grand Master Mason of Scotland, and when he retired from that exalted office on St Andrew's Day, 1741 he made the usual donation of £10 for the relief of indigent brethren.

Whether the Lodge of Glamis had any active Jacobite connection is not known, but several prominent members were "out" in the 'Forty-five.

Possibly it was in consequence of the turmoil of these troublous days that the Lodge practically became dormant during the Rebellion and remained so for a number of years. At length, however, in 1761, John Ogilvy of Rochelhill, who had been initiated in 1739, and who had fought for the Auld House of Stewart, rallied the members, who proceeded to elect office-bearers, appointing Ogilvy as Master, and" William Gammack, another Jacobite, as. clerk, and treasurer.

The reconstructed Lodge, in common with many Lodges in Scotland, celebrated St John's Day by an annual procession. The Masons' Walk, as it was called, was a notable event, A record of one held in the year of the Lodge's revival may be quoted as typical.

The members present judging it highly reasonable that the day should be devoutly solemnised, after having properly apparelled themselves, proceeded in a decent parade from Mr Ganimack's house, down the great avenue of Glammis, across the Barns Green and up the east avenue to the Cross, which they went thrice round, and returned in the greatest decency and order to the house whence they set out, where they dined. After which, in the most regular manner, they drank the toasts proper for the Day.

The fact that the Masons finished and dined where they started suggests that "Mr. Gammack's house was the village inn.

Gradually Lodges throughout the country which had on their work in a sort of splendid isolation saw the wisdom of being linked up with the Grand Lodge of Scotland and so the old Mother in Edinburgh gathered her, daughters, about her in bonds of loyalty and affection. In return for their allegiance, Grand Lodge issued Charters to Lodges, giving them a status in the national system and empowering them to "make Masons and collect fees." Lodge Glamis came into line in 1765, and on November 11 in that year received its Charter, giving it position as No.126 on "the Scottish Roll. A revision of the roll at a later date had the effect of advancing Glamis to No. 99., which place it holds at present. Ogilvy of Rochelhill continued as Master till 1767, when Gammack was appointed, but ill-health prevented his accepting office, and Ogilvy remained in the chair till 1771.



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Long before Mr Lloyd George produced his National Health Insurance Bill, with its attractive slogan of money for nothing or nine pence for four pence, the little Lodge of Glamis had its sickness scheme and its scale of pensions for widows and orphans. The Scottish Department of Health— fat and flourishing on State subsidies and employers' contributions—might smile at "the scale of benefits, but they were secured for a payment of less than a penny a week ! When the Rev. James Lyon, D.D., minister of the parish, drew up his Statistical Account in 1836, there were two hundred members in the Lodge, with funds amounting to £350. This system of organised relief on an agreed scale for fixed quarterly contributions was something alien to the spirit of Freemasonry. It crept into the institution and was tolerated for a time, but when Friendly Societies took the matter up on business lines, the Craft abandoned this method of assistance, preferring to exercise its kindly benevolence on the principle of not letting the right hand know what the left hand did. In its own time Lodge Glamis followed the fashion and for many years it has confined its activities to Freemasonry as that word is generally understood.

A return to the glories of its early days was made in 1890, when Lord Glamis was elected Right Worshipful Master His Lordship was in office when he succeeded to the earldom in 1904, and, 'as Earl of Strathmore, he continued to preside over the Lodge until 1908.

It is then, through this characteristic little Lodge, with its honourable history of nearly two hundred years, that the Duke of York will pass on his way to the throne of Scottish Freemasonry. The ceremony of affiliation will take place on some date convenient for His Royal Highness and will most likely be performed by Sir Iain Colquhoun of Colquhoun and Luss, who, in virtue of his position as the Most Worshipful Grand Master Mason, is a member of Lodge Glamis. Having thus been "made" a Scottish Craftsman the Duke will be installed as Grand Master Mason of Scotland at Edinburgh on Monday, November 30 next. In ordinary circumstances, installation takes place in Freemasons' Hall, George Street, but, in an effort to suit the convenience of the thousands of brethren who will wish to be present, it is anticipated that the function on this occasion will be held in the Usher Hall. As a pageant, the Duke will see the Ancient and Honourable Society of Free and Accepted Masons at its best, for, in addition to delegates from the Grand Lodges of England, Ireland, and America, and some of the Continental Grand Lodges with which the Grand Lodge of Scotland is "in amity," as the Masonic phrase has it, there will be a noteworthy representation of brethren from District Grand Lodges in the Dominions and elsewhere.





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Article Transcribed by Iain D. McIntosh, Substitute Provincial Grand Master - December 2013.

Scanning was done on an A4 CanoScanLiDE 200 - 400 dpi. Software - Abby Finereader 6 OCR.
Converted to pdf format using Adobe Acrobat 9.

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