

# THE TWO OLDEST WARRANTED CHAPTERS

*BY BRO. NORMAN ROGERS*

We are all well aware that the origin of the Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch is wrapped in mystery, and that there are few records prior to the establishment of Supreme Grand Chapter; that this was established for the central control of a ceremony which was rapidly gaining ground— perhaps not so much in London as in the Provinces—is a possibility which admits of little doubt. Whatever may have happened in the preceding years, it is certain that on 22nd July, 1766, a Grand and Royal Chapter was established by means of a Charter of Compact, signed at the Turk's Head Tavern, Soho, London, by Lord Blayney, Grand Master of the "Moderns", eight Grand Lodge Officers and nineteen other Companions, a number which indicates that the Royal Arch must have gained some ground in the preceding years.

This new Grand Chapter did not immediately grant Warrants for subordinate Chapters indeed, it was not until 13th January, 1769, that it resolved:

"ordered that a seal be immediately made for the public use of the Society according to the plan specified in the Charter", and four "passed the Seal of the Chapter" on 14th July, 1769, viz. :—

1. To Bro. John Brooks, to be held at his residence.

This was later known as "Restauration Lodge or Chapter of the Rock Fountain Shiloh", London. It is believed to have ceased working about 1823 after being revived in 1812.

2. Euphrates Lodge or Chapter of the Garden of Eden, Manchester.

This was dormant for some time, being revived in 1788, when it was removed to No. 6. Its last return was in 1848, and it was removed from the List in 1861.

4. The Bethlehem Lodge or The Chapter of the Nativity. Burnley, Lancs. This is still working, and one of the subjects of this paper.

5. The Cana Lodge or Chapter of the First Miracle, Come, Lancs. This is also still working, and the other subject.

Other Chapters which were authorised at a later date were: —

3. The Lodge of Tranquillity or Chapter of Friendship, Portsmouth. Warranted on 11th August. 1769, and still working.

6. The Lodge of Intercourse or Chapter of Unanimity, Bury, Lancs. Warranted also on 11th August. 1769, and still working.

7. The Lodge of Hospitality or Chapter of Charity, Bristol.

Warranted 11th November 1769, and still working.

It will be seen, therefore, that of the first seven Chapter Warrants issued in 1769.

No less than four went to Lancashire of these, three are still working. Nativity.

No. 126 (originally No.4) and Cana No. 116 (originally No. 5) now being the

oldest **warranted** Chapters extant. We can only presume the reason for this preference to Lancashire when the site for the 1st Freemasons' Hall in Great Queen Street was purchased in 1774, the Conveyance was apparently prepared by Bro. John Allen, Prov. G. Master for Lancashire (1769-1806), who was Chancellor for the Duchy of Lancaster. Then, too, the Charter of Compact was lost for many years, being found among his papers after his death in 1811, so that it is presumed that he drafted it; certainly he signed it as N., and he was 1st P. of the Grand Chapter in 1772 and 1782. He was exalted on 13th November 1765, in the London R.A. Chapter which was the forerunner of Grand Chapter.

That Lancashire was a stronghold of Royal Arch Masonry before the Union is quite evident when we consider that, in the Royal Arch Laws and Regulations of 1796, the number of Chapters in Lancashire and Cheshire (of which John Allen was Grand Superintendent) is given as 16, whereas London is credited with five only; further, the 1823 List shows London with 17 and Lancashire with 38.

## THE TWO TOWNS

Burnley, once a Roman station, is now a County Borough in North - East Lancashire, its main industries being cotton spinning, weaving and engineering. Towneley Hall, an old mansion with accommodation for men-at-arms, indicates the expansion of Burnley from village to market town even in 1801 it had a population of 2,224, which rapidly increased to 20,828 by 1851, and over 100,000 today. It is now a progressive Municipal Borough, its progress from Vestry to Commissioners, and thence to County Borough status, being largely due to its situation on extensive coal seams.

Colne (pronounced "Kow-n" in the Lancashire dialect, but as "Kone" by the purist) is situated only six miles north-east of Burnley, a few miles east of Pendle Hill, the traditional haunt of the seventeenth-century Lancashire Witches, and near to the home of the "lettuce quarry" and "treacle mine" legends. It is also of considerable antiquity, set amid the hills and dales of Lancashire and Yorkshire, and near the Haworth moors, the country of the Brontes; sheep farming made it a centre for woollens in the fourteenth century, though it is now largely a cotton town; its population in 1801 was 2,476, i.e., larger than Burnley, though today it numbers only about 24,000.

In 1763 the wage of a journeyman weaver was 8d. a day, and earnings in other trades 3s. a week.

## THE LODGES

In these two towns—or rather villages, as they then were—two "Moderns" Lodges were constituted by John Smith, Prov. G. Master for Lancashire (1760-69):—

1762 Royal Lancashire Lodge, Colne, No. 276 (now No. 116).

1763 Silent Temple Lodge. Burnley. No. 305 (now No. 126),

The Colne Lodge met at the “Old Hole i’ th’ Wall Inn” from 1762 to 1797, and was then known by that name; it has met consistently in the town. There is a tradition that the Lodge was established in 1732, based on the strength of a minute dated 25th February, 1782, which records the funeral of a member, “he being a member of our lodge upwards of 50 years. Aged 83 years “. It has even been said (*Manchester Transactions*, vol. v, p. 11) that because the Rules of 1760 were signed by 35 members, and the Brother who died was sixth on the List, that all these facts prove the existence of the Lodge from at least 1732. What is the truth? In “ 200 Years of Freemasonry in Bury (A.Q.C., 1viii. p. 85) we find that four Brethren from Colne were initiated on 29th September 1757, and another on 27th December 1758, in the Lodge of Relief, Bury, and to three of these five a Warrant was issued on 4th February 1762, by John Smith, Gentleman, of Manchester, Prov. G. Master for Lancashire. The Lodge Rules and Regulations of 27th March, 1760, certainly ante-date the Warrant, but we are all aware of the fallacy of presuming that the 35 members who subscribed to them being members at the first date, for it was an old custom to require each candidate to sign these By-laws to show that he was conversant with them, printed copies being conspicuous by their absence. What the By-laws do prove is that the members were meeting without a Warrant, the five Brethren initiated in Bury in 1757 and 1758 having applied for a Warrant to the previous Prov. G. Master, Dr. Wm. Ratchdale, of Liverpool. If they applied to his successor, John Smith, it could only have been in 1760, or later, for his Patent was dated 23rd June 1760: he would give them a temporary authority to meet, dealing with the Warrant at a later date, in this case February. 1762. The By-laws really show that the Colne Brethren were meeting before the Warrant was issued—but surely not before 1757, for the first name on the List of Members of the Lodge in 1760 is that of Lawrence Whittaker, the first Master in 1762. and he was initiated in Bury on 29th September 1757.

The first record in the Lodge minute books concerning the R.A, is; “1773 June 24 Re<sup>d</sup>, of John Hartley for Receiving of Arch Step. 5:0.” A second one is -- “5 May 1822, Agreed that the Royal Arch Chapter he held on first Sunday in every month and the Knight’s meetings on every other month”.

From 1762 the Lodge met regularly each month, with four Quarter days for subscriptions to be paid, and it still meets, as in those early days, on the “ Thursday On or before the Full Moon.

The Burnley lodge was the second Lodge constituted by Bro. John Smith, Prov.G.Master for Lancashire. It has met consistently in the town from its inception, and was named Silent Temple Lodge only in 1807. It is pure conjecture to say that, as the Colne Brethren were meeting regularly about 1760, and as Colne wvas a larger village than Burnley at that time, it is most likely that the latter took their Masonry from Colne,six miles away, rather than suppose that it came from Yorkshire. It is certain that the original members at Burnley were not initiated in Bury, as the Colne members were.

But what about the Royal Arch? Here you have two Lodges warranted in 1762 and 1763, and two Royal Arch Chapters, still attached to the two Lodges, warranted in 1769. There is no trace of succession from earlier records in Lancashire, so that the reasons for these early Chapters is not yet known.

## GRAND CHAPTER

The Charter of Compact implied, and the Regulations of 1788 directed, that no recognition should be given to any Companion (unless exalted before 1766) who had not been exalted in a regular Chapter and duly registered. A query then arises as to how anyone could be registered as exalted in a regular Chapter before 1769, seeing that Charters were not issued until that year. In the case of Charity Chapter, Bristol, correspondence shows that Founders were accepted, provided assurances were given that they were bona fide Arch Masons. Further, there is a case in Lancashire (Unanimity, No. 42) of three members being exalted in a Moderns' *Lodge* in another town in December 1768, the three then applying for, and being granted, a Warrant on 11th November 1769 (No. 6), so that Grand Chapter obviously did not hold strictly to the 1766 rule.

Grand Chapter minutes record the following: —

5773—14 July (Turk's Head). The following Warrants of Constitution passed the Seal of the Chapter: —

- No. 4. To our E. C.s Jno. Dean, Rd. Sager & Wm. Powers to hold a Cr. at Burnley Coun. Lancaster under the title of The Bethlehem Lodge or The Chapter of the Nativity.
- No. 5. To our E. C's Thos. Hargreaves, Jas. Lonsdale & Jas. Varley to hold a Chapter at Coln in the County of Lancaster under the title of Cana Lodge or The Chapter of the First Miracle. (Not one of these appears on the list of Jurymen for Colne in 1776. *i.e.* those having a vote and owning property worth more than £10 a year, or being tenants of property worth more than £20 a year.)

Thomas Hargreaves was Master of the Lodge in 1768 James Lonsdale, Deputy Master and Jas. Varley a member (Master only in 1771). Hargreaves was a carpenter, Lonsdale a weaver, and Varley a mason.

Both Chapters were to meet on Sundays—Burnley on 29th October next, and Cana on the first Sunday in every month. These Sunday meetings continued until the middle of the nineteenth century, despite an official ban in 1811 by Grand Chapter, and a decision in 1806 that Sunday meetings on licensed premises were illegal. As late as 1796, more than 25 per cent of the Chapters on the List met on Sundays but these ceased after 1863, when Grand Chapter declared it to be “illegal to hold a Chapter of Royal Arch masons on a Sunday”.

In Grand Lodge Library is to be found one of the most informative comments on the proceedings of this period; it is a letter written to the Grand Secretary, Samuel Spencer, by Thomas Hargreaves, Master of the Lodge at Colne, and 1st Principal in the 1769 Cana Warrant, *viz.*: —

4 June 1768. "About the year 1762 we solicited Mr. Smith (Prov.G.Master for Lancashire) for his protection and he granted us a Warrant". . . "and we expected Mr. Smith or some other provincial for our County palatine would a pay'd us a visit before now in order to Try our proficiency in the Craft and enlarge our Instructions we are pretty well Satisfied with the progress we have made in the first and 2d. Steps but are at a Loss to know how we should attain proficient Instruction in the third Step which is a particular reason why we have not already obeyed the request of the Letters we have received. The only 3d. steps we ever received has been since Transcribed and published in a Pamphlet called T. . . but as things of that kind is not Countenanced with us we did not know whether to confide in it or not.

#### NATIVITY CHAPTER

The books of this Chapter are fairly complete, but certainly not very informative; No I for instance, is a parchment backed register of the members from 1769 to 1838, obviously incomplete in the early stages; the paper is water-marked 1794. This register really begins in 1775, and shows that the members were mainly between the ages of 21 and 30, up to 1819, only six out of 140 are in the early 40's: the members were mainly of the working class, labourers, inn-keepers, weavers and artisans being predominant. The second book is water marked 1795, and contains the Rules of 1801, a Register and Cash Book, with minutes from 1802 to 1812. There are no minutes in any of the books before 1802, and even cash records for the eighteenth century are conspicuous by their absence, so that it is difficult, in consequence, to ascertain details of early ceremonies. Even the Silent Temple Lodge itself has cash records only prior to 1798.

#### CEREMONIES

Up to 1810 the term used was "Initiation", then being changed to "Exaltation", and becoming "Exalted Royal Arch excelant Mason" by 1820. The following excerpts show the changing scene: —

Feb.12,1815. "Duly Exalted R.A. or Most Excellent Companion."

Dec.15,1815. "Lodge not opened in consequence of the Principals being on Pendle Hill along with Mr. Sugden, from Halifax, the Union Instructor."

Aug.10,1817. "A new Code of Laws and Regulations received from the Grand Chapter to be put into full force."

Mar.8,1818. "It was Unanimously agreed that a Letter should be sent to the Grand Lodge London to inform them of the Unlegal Practices wich is carred on at Bottoms Making Royal Arch Masons in an Unlegal Manner."

Aug.8,1819. "Agreed to write to Coln Chapter respecting the making of Royal ArchMasons for £1 6s. 0d."

July. 8,1821. Twenty-four new aprons were to be ordered, and "A Hammer was presented for the use of the presiding Chiefs of this Chapter of Excellent Royal Arch Masons".

Mar. 9.1823. The Chapter is now being closed "In due form and with solemn prayer".

June.13,1830. "The Lecture was gone through in a masterly stile."

Apr.8,1838. The 1st Principal "delivered the Introductory Part and the First Section (Similar entries down to 1848 are altered to "The introductory part of the science".)

Feb.10.1839. The 1st Principal "lectured on the Sevral Degrees of the Royal Arch" (On later occasions he "lectured on the several parts of the Royal Arch", and also "explained the History of the Royal Arch Masons".) How interesting this would be to us today!

Dec.14.1845. For the first time there is mention of the "Ceremony of Installing a Companion also the explanation of the ceremony -

At the following meeting, the " Lectures belonging to the Ceremony of Installation" were practised by the 1st Princ., who had been in office for 12 years, with various members of the Chapter to assist him as 2nd and 3rd P.'s.

Jan.13.1850. Up to this meeting the 1st Princ. only had been elected—obviously by show of hands—and he appointed all the other Officers.

Now, a Ballot is taken for the three P's. though four years afterwards the old method is resorted to.

Feb.13.1868. The term "Exalted to the Sublime Degree of a Royal Arch Mason" is used for the first time, probably because some Rochdale Companions took the whole of the ceremony; now, too, there is a record of the 3rd P. being "installed", the other two P.'s continuing in office.

May.10.1872. The Prov.G.Supt. (a member of the Chapter) authorised the Past Princ. Of Chapter 623 to be 1st P., and the other two P's were " installed. (There is still no mention of a ballot for the three P's until much later.)

Nov.12.1873. The Installations of all three P's are performed for the first time.

Mar.22.1875. "The Perfect Ceremonies, including the Installations and "Addresses", was presented to the Chapter.

## **BY –LAWS**

The first recorded "Rules and Regulations to be observed by the Brethren" were made in January 1801, and provide for the meetings to be held on the second Sunday in each month at 4 p.m. from October to March, and at 5.30 p.m. from March to October, the Chapter being opened half-an-hour later. The members had to take it in turns to act as Tyler, being fined 6d. for non-attendance; this was effective until 1813 when a regular Tyler was appointed, his allowance "being 12d for each meeting plus "One Glass of Spirit & Water or Ale to the Amount of Sixpence". He was fined 1s. for neglect of duty.

It was only in December. 1853. that the meeting day was altered from Sunday to the second Thursday in each month at 7 p.m., this being altered to 6 p.m. in 1854. As a result, attendances fell, seldom more than five members being present; from 1858 to 1865 the minute book is marked each month "Chapter not opened.

From the various By-laws it appears that there was no ballot for new members until 1820. The Exaltation Fee was One Guinea, increased in 1812 to Three Guineas, which remained the charge throughout the nineteenth century. The

subscription up to 1805 was 2s. 6d, per year, increased then to 2s. 6d, per half-year; it was changed only in August 1854 to 10s, per year.

Fines were incorporated in the Rules of 1801, such as:-

One Shilling For Intoxication (or exclusion).

The Innkeeper to have a fire in the Lodge Room an hour before the meeting or forfeit Sixpence.

Oct. 8. 1820. "Companion Thomas Eastwood was fined in one Shilling for being Intoxicated, he left the Chapter room without paying his fine."

Nov. 12, 1820. " R. Holgate fined 1s. for swearing."

Even in the revised Rules of August. 1854, the 8th Rules reads:

Every Companion coming to the Chapter Room intoxicated, swear an Oath, or giving any Companion the lie, do pay a fine of One shilling or be excluded."

A peculiarity of these By-laws, certainly in force until the 1860's, was that a Companion who wished to resign had to give notice and pay 1s., which was strictly enforced.

### THE SOCIAL BOARD

The records show that there was a restriction on the amount to be spent, food not coming into account until 1854, when there was "a Dinner each November", which was then the Installation month. Yet the members were not without their good cheer, for the allowance for liquor was 5s. per meeting, 8s. in 1807, and 10s. in 1812, for an average attendance of 10 or 12. Ale was then 2d. per quart, Spirits 6d. per glass. There are no indications of "toasting" at the meetings, and it is evident that, right up to the 1880's, the proceedings consisted of a ceremony (brief) or a lecture, followed by a social glass. Even in 1856-1865, when the Chapter was seldom opened (there were generally four or five members present), those who were present took care to spend the "Shot" or allowance, the landlord's bills showing it against "Rum, Gin or Whiskey", and not "Brandy or Negus" or "Ale or Porter".

### THE PRINCIPALS

Until 1809 the election of the Principals was always in the order, Z., J., and H., and they were "appointed into Office", no Installations apparently taking place. In 1800 the 1st P. was called the R.W.M.. in October. 1805, the M.E.M., and only after 1820 was the title changed to M.E.Z. there is no evidence until well into the 1870's of his having been subjected to a ballot; he was simply "Appointed", after which he appointed the other Officers.

### INTERESTING ENTRIES

Oct.9,1803.Paid for Jewels, £11. (There now appears to be only one of these.)

Candles cost 10d. to 1s. 2d.. but served for three meetings.

Feb.14,1808.The Chapter paid half the expenses for three Chairs. £5 10s., probably those now used by Silent Temple Lodge.

Sept.14.1806.Before the end of his year. the 1st P. was " Expeld from this Society, being accused of unnatterall crimes".

July11.1813."A Brass plate with device to be annexed to the Secretary as a

Badge of Distinction.” (There is now no trace of this.)

Jan.14,1821.A new Ballot Box for candidates was used for the first time.

Nov.10,1822.“ Companion John Hartley paid his Marriage Fee in due Form.”

May11.1823.“ Comp. Richd. Chaffer paid half a Guinea for his Marriage Fee it being the regular Sum for the Same.” (This is what is called in the North paying sour footing . i.e.. “treating” those present, for there is no record of such half - guineas ever being received by the Chapter.)

Dec.14.1823.The Chapter was evidently taking notice of the new Regulations, for it was decided that the ‘ Sojourners have cloathing suitable to there office”.

At the following meeting, orders were given for “ six Aprons, three for the Sojourners and three for the Past Principals to be made of Kids Leather and prepared according to the Articles”.

Dec.13.1829.The minutes record the Chapter not having met here (Cross Keys Inn) since the 11<sup>th</sup> day of February 1827, in consequence of the Charter and Furniture having been illegally removed from this House by the Members of the Lodge of Silent Temple 206 to the Royal Oak in this town and then kept by force against the consent of the Companions until November last, no meetings of the Companions have been holden at this place under the Charter since that time. . ”

Jan 10<sup>th</sup> 1830 It was agreed “that an Address expressing the Gratitude of this Chapter be presented to the R.W. Prov.G.Supt., John Crossley, esqr., for his kindly and steady support of this Chapter during the late troublesome and unpleasant proceedings with the Lodge of Silent Temple”. It was then decided “To celebrate the recovery of the Charter by a masonic festival”.

Feb 14<sup>th</sup> 1830. The Prov.G.Supt. informed the Chapter that Silent Temple had petitioned to be reinstated, and submitted to the conditions imposed, *i.e.*, a £5 refund they were also told “ not to be pertinacious about the other conditions”. (The real trouble appears to have been that the three P. ‘s had removed the Furniture and Jewels, etc., to the Royal Oak against the wishes of the majority, and refused to give them up; the Lodge had removed, and the members thought the Chapter should do so, on the ground that it was attached to, and inseparable from, the Lodge. The 1st P. was ordered to return the property, and, on his refusal, was suspended by the Prov.G.Supt. “for contumacy “. He was summoned to appear at Grand Chapter, did not appear, and was expelled “for breach of Laws and disobedience. Then the Lodge itself was suspended on July 31st. 1828. and only when the Chapter’s property was returned to the Cross Keys Inn did the Prov.G.Master “re-instate the Members of the Lodge to their Masonic functions. One of the leading members in this dispute was Comp. Le Gendre Starkie. M.P., who on December 13th 1829, was “appointed Z., and he appointed his Officers”. He was Provincial G. Master for Lancashire (Western Division), 1826-65.)

## THE PLAINS OF MAMRE ENCAMPMENT. No. 8

James Radcliffe. Joseph Wood and William Yates were the three to whom a Warrant for a K.T. Conclave was granted on 10th March 1806, to be held at the Thorn Inn, Burnley, and to meet on the fourth Sundays of alternate months. The

first 17 Knights on the Register of the Preceptory have all been traced as members of the Chapter of Nativity, but there is little in the minutes, either of the Chapter or the Preceptory, to indicate the close affinity of the two Orders, except that they shared the same Lodge room and furniture. On two occasions minutes indicate that notice had to be given to the Chapter before joining the K.T.'s. That the affairs of the Chapter were bound up with those of the Plains of Mamre Encampment is certain, for the Principal Officer of the one often coincided with that of the other. James Radcliffe, for instance, was 1st P. of the Chapter no less than 21 times between 1814 and 1847, and Grand Master (Eminent Commander) of the Plains of Mamre for over 40 of the years between 1806 and 1854, signing himself in the last-mentioned year "as G.M." and delivering a "Lecture", as he did on many occasions in both Chapter and Encampment. Indeed, he may be said to have kept both Orders alive through the troublesome times of the Bank Crises of the 1820's and 1830's, with their consequent unemployment, as well as the "Hungry Forties", when employees in the cotton towns suffered so much; for it was not until the latter half of the nineteenth century that better wages led to a higher standard of living, with consequent social changes. When Jas. Radcliffe died in 1855, both the Chapter and Encampment almost came to an end, the Chapter having only seven Exaltations between 1854 and 1865, reviving them through Joining Members.

#### THE CANA CHAPTER

The books of this Chapter are complete except for some years between 1841 and 1856, when, apparently, few meetings were recorded owing to the small attendances. There is doubt about the value of some of the early records of the 1st Minute Book, which covers the period from 1769 to 1804. It begins with: -

#### RULES & ORDERS

Which are punctually to be Observed and Kept by the United Members of the Right Worshipful Society of Royal Arch Masons.

1st. That Lodge be held in COLNE, each Sunday Six Weeks, or Eight Times in the Year to be computed from next Sunday to Candlemas May Day, Lammas and All Saints.

2d. The time of Meeting shall be precisely at 5 o'clock & sit till Eight. Each Member to spend at pleasure & put 2d. in the box for a Fund and each absent Member shall pay his Dues to the Fund. A visitor to bear equal Expences with the Members.

3d. The Officers shall be chose out of the Members on Trinity Sunday which shall be the Festival. Every Person not attending who resides in Town or within 3 miles shall forfitt Sixpence to the Fund - Sickness excepted.

4<sup>th</sup>. Any person desirous of becoming a Member shall pay for making seven shillings & sixpence.

The value of these Rules is that they are one of the earliest examples of Chapter By-laws, and they should be read in conjunction with the “ Principia “, which is supposed to be the earliest of Grand Chapter By-laws. These Chapter By-laws are followed by the days of meeting. *i.e.*, December 18th. 1769, and eight others in 1770, together with a List of Members, six in number—presumably the Originals. Then, too, there are other lists showing that there were 20 members in 1778 and 15 in 1788, most of these members attending the Installations on Trinity Sunday, though the seven other regular meetings seldom attracted more than eight. Between 1814 and 1824, meetings were held each month in the year, attendanees varying from 12 to 25.

### **THE FIRST MINUTE BOOK**

This is of 72 pages, of which 49 are devoted to cash records, and 19 to bare records of members and election of Principals. In this, as in the second and third books, there are very few real minutes—not at all surprising, as many other Lancashire Lodge and Chapter Minute Books are similar bare records, probably because of the insistence that nothing of an “esoteric” nature must be written. Was this not also true of the Lodge of Reconciliation (1813-6)?

The only indication of the early ceremony is on page 8, where sundry cryptic letters indicate the reading of passages from the Old Testament (Ruth, Judges and Genesis, *i.e.* the w’s and pw’s of the first two d’s), and then a reading of Numbers. xxvii, 23 (a charge to lay hands), winding up with St. John, i, 1. The 2nd Book (B) is simply a Register of Members, compiled by the Scribe E. in 1810. and said to include all members from 1769 to 1806, though it actually runs to 1836 these members are of the artisan class, with a sprinkling of Shopkeepers. Farmers and Professional men, whose ages were from 21 to 36 for the most part, very few being over 40. It is noteworthy for the following beautifully-engrossed passages: -

A Mason’s chief and only care  
Should be How to live within the Square.  
The stone unshap’d as lumber lies,  
Till Mason’s art its form refines  
So Passions do our soul disguise.  
Till social virtue calms our minds.

### **CEREMONIES**

Up to 1814 the term used was “initiated”, then to 1822 “raised”, and afterwards “exalted”. The meeting day was changed in 1826 to Sunday on or before the Full Moon a reminder that the Royal Lancashire Lodge, to which the Chapter is attached, still meets nine months in the year on “Thursday on or before the Full Moon”, while the Chapter meets on Thursday after the Full Moon “five times per year, and the K.T. Preceptory on the “ 2nd Thursday after the Full Moon”, the same five months.

The following excerpts may provide some information

Apr 3, 1814. " Robert Homer raised front the Chair to he initiated In Royal Arch Masonry."

May 1 1814. Raised six Chair Masons to that of the Illustrious Order of Royal Arch or Excelent Masons.

July 3 1814. Scribe N's duties appear to have included those of Treasurer, while the Scribe E. was sometimes termed "Grand Recorder".

Oct 6 1822 "TheLecture gone through." The Officers at this time were dubbed "Most Excellent Grand Masters" or "Principal Masters". In July, 1823, they were called the three Grand Principals.

Aug. 13 1826. The Lector was then gone throu by the Companions Presant."

Mar. 11 1827. "The Companions went throu the Lector, Making Part and the Estorical part."

(From the following meetings it appears that the ceremony had three parts The Exaltation part, the Lecture, and the Historical part. The Lancashire Ritual of 1797 in Grand Lodge Library also has three parts in the R.A. section these are in the form of a catechism *in extenso*.)

Aug. 24, 1828. The term is used for the first time, " Exalted to the Sublime Degree of a Royal Arch Companion."

Nov. 16, 1828. The members were evidently searching for information, as they "Resolved, that a number of members attend at the Bottoms for the purpose of noticing the form of there Chapter, and to receive instructions if any can be gained".

May 17, 1829. "Agreed on, that a sufficient Number of Persons from the Bottoms come on Sunday the 28th of June, 1829, to give us the Super Excellent etc. etc."

(There is no record of this visit.)

Jan. 3. 1830. The term now appears. " Exalted to the Sublime Degree of Super Excellent Royal Arch Mason."

Oct. 31, 1830. The charge fixed for the Super Excellent degree to Companions from other Chapters was 2s. 6d. Many from other Chapters in the district came to take it.

Oct. 7. 1832. The minutes note that there was an Introduction and three Sections to the Lecture.

Apr. 18. 1861. TheGrand Scribe E. notified the Chapter that a Companion who had been exalted seven years before had been made earlier than allowed by the Laws, and that he should be re-exalted, which was accordingly done.

Apr. 19, 1882. At this meeting, Franklin Thomas, who is marked "of Blackburn". and "P.G.J." conducted the ceremony. He was also present at the next meeting as Princ. Soj.

July 6. 1882. This meeting is noteworthy in that four members of Perseverance Chapter. 345, Blackburn. and two from Nativity. 126. Burnley, conducted the ceremony, there also being present six members of the Chapter who had been exalted within the previous two years, thus showing how Cana Chapter had fallen from its earlier strong position. The members at this time were obviously not conversant with the ceremonies, for visitors from Blackburn and Burnley were brought in to conduct them.

Jan. 24, 1884. John Bollard was installed as Z. by Dispensation, he being at the same time Z. of Nativity Chapter, Burnley.

July 22, 1886. The Chapter was being opened by the three P.'s. after which the Companions were admitted.

## BY-LAWS

On September 3rd, 1815, the following addition was made to the 1769 Rules:-  
"Agreed that the Masters being absent at a monthly meeting shall forfeit the sum of one Shilling each and Scribes 6d. each, the time of meeting at Half past two O'Clock on the first Sunday in each month".

This Rule was signed by 35 members, of whom only five appear to have been exalted at a later date; yet, on May 6th 1827, three new Rules were made:

First, that the Master of the Cana Chapter being absent at Half past two any monthly meeting shall forfeit sixpence, each Scribes and Sojourners to pay if absent three pence each, the time of meeting Half past two o'clock Sunday on or before every full moon.

Second, that each Companion shall pay the sum of one shilling per Quarter, the same to be expended monthly in liquor by the Companions then present.

Third, that each companion neglecting to attend by three o'Clock shall pay for his own Liquor over and above his monthly Contribution.

These new Rules indicate three things. *viz.*, that the Chapter was still looked on as a Lodge, as it was in 1769; secondly, the officers previously elected were five only. *i.e.* Z., H. and J., and the two Scribes, but now Sojourners are mentioned and thirdly, the Sunday meeting was variable according to the Full Moon (13 meetings). It was only in August 1854, that the By-laws specified four times per year, this being altered to five times as late as 1893.

The "admittance" fee, which was 7s. 6d. in 1769, became (10s, in 1788, 12s. 6d. in 1812, and £1 in 1814, with a jump to £3 3s. in 1817. The subscription, which was 6s. in 1813, became 1s. per quarter in 1815. There is a curious minute stating:-

Oct. 5, 1817. "Every Companion Raised to Royal Arch shall pay the sum of three Guineas and Return them £1 14s. 6d. as a present". (What was the object of this curious rule? Was it an evasion of a Grand Chapter regulation?)

This return of part of the Exaltation Fee was rescinded in 1831. the effect being that there were few candidates in the next 10 years.

## FINES

In this Chapter also, fines were common, not only because they contributed to the common stock for refreshment, but also as a form of discipline. The 1769 Rules show that each absent member was fined 6d., but this probably applied

only to Officers, for an entry in 1808 states:— “The officers who does not attend at each Meeting to forfeit 6d. if they do not attend by 3 O’Clock in the Summer and 2 O’Clock in Winter, and each Member 3d. No excuses.”

Other alterations were:

Aug. 5, 1827. “Resolved, that any Companion calling for Liquor after he has had his allowance knowing that he has his allowance, to be fined 1s. for each Glass he calls for, and the Tyler filling such Liquor to him that calls shall be fined 2s. for each offence.”

Nov. 24. 1833. All Fines were abolished from this meeting.

## THE SOCIAL BOARD

The expenses of each Chapter meeting in the 1780’s were evidently based on the number of candidates. Out of the admission fee of 10s., 5s. was paid for Registration and 2s. 6d. allotted to Chapter expenses, so that only 2s. 6d. could be spent, in addition to the quarterly subscription and the fines collected. No wonder that meetings at which there were candidates were much better attended!

For many years from 1804, the Cash Book shows expenses at an Admittance “to be 2s. for Liquor and 10d. or 11d, for Tobacco, even the cost of Visitors, 6d. each, being entered. In 1817 the allowance was increased to 5s.

Sept.6.1803.“ An agreeable meeting, two Visitors from Burnley. Expended in Ale 1s. 6d., Tobacco 6d.

(The latter is a common entry, the price varying from 6d. to 7d. for 1lb.)

Oct.1.1815.The subscription was fixed at “ 1s. per quarter to be expended monthly in Liquor by the Companions then present. Each Companion neglecting to attend by 3 O’Clock shall pay for his own liquor.

July “A Comfortable Repast of Chees & Bread & Beer.”

Aug.“Repast of Liquor. No Chees & Bread.”

Oct.“The Companions Ragailed themselves with I Pinte of Wine.

Dec.Fifteen members attended “ to Celebrate the Anniversary for this Chapter, and partook of an Excellent Dinner in the Lodge Room of a Goose, Leg of Mutton & a Tongue, and enjoyed themselves with the greatest Conviviality.”

Dec.25.1835.On this day a similar feast is recorded as: “A special feast Meat 10s. 6d., Ale 2s., Cooking etc. 3s., Total 15s, 6d.”

## PRINCIPALS

In the 1788 List of Members the Principals were marked Z. H. and J.but at some of the meetings they were recorded as “ Most Excellent Grand Masters” “Principal Masters” or “Three Grand Principals”.

## INTERESTING ENTRIES

The simple form of the Chapter is indicated by the following entries:

	s.	d.		
Sept.13 1778.Henry Spencer for a Carpett	8	0		
For a Candle Stick	5	0		
for this Book		4		
for a pound of Candles		6 ½		
			13	10½
July 3 1785.A Bible			7	6
May3.1812.A pair of Compasses			1	0
July15.1821.Furniture for the Chapter	£4	14	0	
Oct..1825.A Floor Cloth			17	0
July8.1830.Hargreaves Hudson for Painting the Emblems			12	6
Dec.25,1832.Cash paid to S. Dyson for Spirits of Wine, 4d., and for Gunpowder. 2d.				

Among many other matters, this Chapter is noted for having kept intact the three Principals' Clothing, Sceptres and Aprons, along with a number of other Aprons which are evidently of eighteenth century vintage.

Apr. 6 1783.Sixteen skins were purchased for Aprons at 14d. each. In September 1783, 30 yards of Ribbon and Silk were purchased for 5s. 4d., obviously to ornament the plain skins. Then, in October, a member was paid 10s. 6d. "for Aprons making".

Now comes an entry which suggests that the members were changing the pattern, as there are enough of the original one for the numbers then attending Cana Chapter: — July 3 1814. To Aprons and making. £2 6s. 8d. while in 1830 an apron, sash and jewel cost each candidate £1 11s. 6d.

Sick payments to members began to appear in 1834, the allowance being 3s. per week, with a Funeral grant to members and widows of £1, which was increased to £2 by 1845 yet it was not until February 1841, that subscriptions to the Fund were collected!

## THE RITUAL

One can only surmise what form the Ritual of these two Chapters really took, based on sundry entries regarding lectures but it was evidently of a similar structure to that of the Craft, namely, a Catechism.

Nor is there anything of note regarding the Union of Chapters in 1817, or the R.A. Ritual adopted by Grand Chapter on 21st and 25th November. 1834, except an entry in Cana minutes:

June 14. 1835. "A letter received from London was considered, which requested the presence of one of the Companions."

From the extended Opening and Closing of the Cana Chapter now in operation, one can only surmise, from its similarity to the Blackburn Ritual, that Franklin Thomas, the author of *Etiquette of Freemasonry*, must have had some influence in its adoption. He visited both Cana and Nativity Chapters in 1882, and was, at one time, Mayor of Blackburn.

## THE CANA WARRANT

This is in first-class condition, probably better than any other of the eighteenth century, the reason may be because of the following minutes:

(Cana Chapter) September 15th. 1823. "This being the first Meeting since the Receate of the new Warrant"

(Grand Chapter) May. 1821. All such Chapters as were existing prior to May 1817, and had not yet made known to which Lodge they were attached, be allowed until the Grand Chapter in May 1822, to supply the information, each of them to receive a new Charter free of expense.

8th March, 1822. A Warrant of Renewal was granted by Grand Chapter.

18th April, 1822. The Grand Scribe E. notified the Chapter that the Old Charter must be returned in exchange for the old one, which was ready for signature by the Three Grand Principals.

Centenary Warrants of Chapters are due to a resolution of Grand Chapter, dated February 1st 1882, and confirmed on May 3rd 1882, which stated that all Chapters able to prove an uninterrupted existence for 100 years would be granted Centenary Warrants, with permission to wear a distinctive jewel. Both Chapters made application, and were granted the Warrants in 1883.

In the case of Cana Chapter, the Centenary Warrant was presented to the Chapter on 29th September, 1883, and it was stated that the Chapter was working "under a Charter of Confirmation". The Grand Superintendent of the Province was then asked to get back the original Warrant "now in the Archives of the Grand Chapter", and at the following meeting on 24th January it was reported to have been received. For sixty years, then, it was in store in Freemasons' Hall—hence its really excellent condition.

## THE CANA PRINCIPIA

Another of the prized possessions of Cana Chapter is the following: — THE PRINCIPIA to be observed by all regular constituted Chapters of the Grand and Royal Arch:-

1st That as soon as the Chapter is duly formed, an account shall be transmitted to the Grand Chapter containing the names of each respective Officer and Companion, and that this be done annually immediately after the election.

2nd That they have full Power to make any Bye-Laws for their own Government, provided they don't interfere with the fundamental ones of the Most Excellent Grand and Royal Chapter.

3rd That their Jewels and Ornaments be such as in use in Grand Chapter.

4th That they make no Innovation in the Business of the Chapter, and if any doubts should arise, they must always be referred to the Grand and Royal Chapter for decision.

5th That they should contribute annually to the Grand Chapter so much as they reasonably can towards raising a Fund to be employ'd to the most truly benevolent and advantageous Purposes.

6th That no Man of bad or Immoral Character be admitted a Companion, nor any one until he hath passed through the several Probationary Degrees of Craft Masonry, and thereby obtain the necessary Passport as a reward of his Services.

7th That no man be admitted for an unworthy consideration, or for a less sum than is usually paid for the three previous Degrees.

8th That they take evry Method to forward the true Purpose of our Order, which is to promote all the useful Arts and Sciences and create universal Peace and Harmony, and that every Companion do consider it as his Duty to lay before the Chapter whatever may tend to such Salutary Purposes.

9th That any new Discovery or other Matter thought worthy of Observation be communicated to the Grand and Royal Chapter, which will always be ready to support and forward whatever may be found useful to the Public in general, or that Chapter in particular, not repugnant to the Common Welfare.

The following statement, added at some later date, has been written underneath — “This Principia is the oldest known copy of Grand Chapter By-Laws, and is the work of the same hand as the Chapter Warrant, which is dated 1769.”

It is not known by whom this statement was added.

#### PLAINS OF TABOR PRECEPTORY, No. 110

This Preceptory of Knights Templar has a Warrant dated 1805, but there is little doubt that the Order was worked before then, for a minute of Cana Chapter says: — May 31. 1795. Dr. to Plains of Tabor Knight Templars, £1-16-9.

From other minutes it is obvious that the affairs of the Chapter and those of the Knights Templar were very closely interwoven, even long after the Union of the two Grand Lodges in 1813. The first of the three Founders named in the Warrant, John Ridihalgh, was 1st P. of Cana Chapter nine times between 1784 and 1822, and W.M. of the Lodge five times between 1783 and 1801.

## CONCLUSION

There are two problems which still require some elucidation

1. The Warrants of these two Chapters (along with two which are now erased from the list) are dated 12<sup>th</sup> May 1769, yet they only passed the Seal of the Chapter on 14<sup>th</sup> July 1769, Nativity Warrant stating “ Sunday, the 29<sup>th</sup> October next ensuing whereas Cana Warrant states “The 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of every month next ensuing”. One explanation may be that Grand Chapter ordered, on 13<sup>th</sup> January 1769, a Seal to be made, that this was not ready until July, and that, in the meantime, the Warrants had been prepared and dated.

2. That explanation may be correct, but it still does not answer the question why Cana was to meet on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in every month—apparently, immediately whereas Nativity was postponed until the following October. Was Cana then meeting as a Chapter attached to the Lodge, without warrant, as the Lodge itself was doing, certainly from 1760 to 1762? There are no records in the minute books, except lists which were obviously written at a later date the only slight evidence appears to be a framed coloured Certificate hanging in the Lodge Room, as follows: —

AND THE DARKNESS COMPREHENDED IT NOT

In the East, a Place full of light where reigns Silence and  
Peace Adorn'd with all Honours and Assembled by the Mysterious  
MEMBERS OF THE LODGE IN DUE FORM.

To the right Worshipfull, Worshipfull Master Wardens And other Officers  
of All Regular Lodges of the Antient and Honourable Society of Free  
and Accepted Masons.

We the Master, Wardens and Secretary of the Lodge of Masons No.  
276, Holden in the Sign of the Hole in the Wall in Coln, in the County  
of Lancaster, Do Certifye that Richard Bradley was Regularly Admitted  
a Mason, and hath taken 1, 2, 3. Degrees of Masonry at the above Lodge,  
as appears by the Register of the said Lodge.

Given under our Hands and Seal of our Lodge at Coln this  
29<sup>th</sup> day of March. AD. 1764 AM. 5764.

Witness

Charles  
Alexander  
Secretary

Stephen Ellis                    Master  
Thomas Hargreaves        SW.  
Chris. Hartley                JW.

Our congratulations should go out to the members of these two old Chapters,  
who will be the first to celebrate their Bi-Centenaries on 12<sup>th</sup> May, 1969

	Entry on page 8 of 1st Minute Book of Cana Chapter, referred to on page 62.
P	Ruth, Chap. 4. v. 21(Reference to Boaz).
B	
P x C	Judges, chap. 12, v. 6 (Shibboleth).
C	Gen.. chap. 46, v. 10 (Jachin). 1st Kings. chap. 7, v. 21(Jachin and Boaz).
B	
C x M	Gen.. chap. 4. v. 22(Tubalcain).
M	Gen.. chap. 4. v. 22 (Tubalcain).
B	
M x Ch	Numb., chap. 27. v. 23 (Charge to lay hands).
(?)	St. John, chap 1. v.1(In the beginning)

The Acting W.M. said

Norman Rogers is this year's Prestonian Lecturer yet he finds the time and energy to give us this excellent, but tantalising paper. Excellent, since it provides information much needed in our study of the Royal Arch. Tantalising, because all the way through Bro. Norman Rogers has, we feel, definitely something "up his sleeve", but on this occasion Magician, whilst showing us he has the rabbit, never takes it out of the hat.

It is especially interesting to me that details and methods in what to us is the far North of England conform to such details as are to be found in the far South-West.

The first recorded Chapter in Devon was Unity Chapter at Plymouth, 10<sup>th</sup> November 1780, and by 1791 the number had risen to ten.

The first recorded meeting of the R.A. in Barnstaple took place in 1785, when two Lodges combined to "initiate" a number of Brethren.

Of those who presided, none were P.M.'s. and the "Master" in the Chair was the J.W. of Loyal Lodge. Lodge of Good Intention provided some of the officers. Both Lodges had been warranted for less than two years, yet five Brethren in each were qualified—one wonders how?

Another point that intrigues me is Bro. Norman Rogers' mention of the close connection with the K.T. Encampments. It seems to have been something much closer than the mere matter of qualification, for shortly after the Barnstaple meeting an Encampment was in existence in the district, at Bideford, where the "Trine" Encampment received a Warrant from Dunckerley in 1791.

Later the same conditions were repeated when a R.A. Warrant for Barnstaple was obtained in 1812, an Encampment coming into being at the same time, with

the same officers in both degrees, and the two accounts being kept in the same book. Various purchases were shared, including the “ Finch Lectures  
Today we feel the R.A. is attached to the Craft, but in the eighteenth century the Chapter and the Encampment seem to have been in much closer relationship. It is with much pleasure I move that a hearty vote of thanks be accorded to Bro. Norman Rogers for his valuable and stimulating paper.

Bro.H. CARR said — I have much pleasure in seconding the vote of thanks to Bro. Norman Rogers for his interesting survey of the early books of these two old Chapters. What a pity it is that in their inordinate desire for brevity the early Scribes left so many questions and problems for us that cannot be answered from their own records.

Bro. Rogers mentions two craft Lodges at Colne and Burnley, warranted in 1762 and 1763 respectively, and although he seems to imply that they were connected with the Chapters of 1769, I cannot find any definite statement on this point. At Colne it is evident (through Hargreaves etc.) that there was a close connection, but the Colne *Lodge* minute of 1773 recording a R.A. making seems to show that there, at least, the Lodge of 1762 and the Chapter of 1769 *were both working the R.A. contemporaneously!*

The ‘ dual-titles “ of these Chapters (each comprising the name of a Lodge with a different name for the Chapter) provide another problem. These bodies were chartered as Chapters, primarily for the purpose of conferring the R.A. Why, then, were they endowed with dual titles as Lodges and as Chapters? Were they, in fact, conferring as *Lodges* the qualifications, which entitled their candidates to proceed to the R.A.? The Hargreaves letter of 1768 clearly relates to Craft, *not R.A.* and it suggests that there may have been a real shortage of MM's who were qualified to take the R.A. Incidentally, there seems to be no suggestion in the Burnley records of a real or fictitious “ Chair ‘ ceremony as an essential qualification for the R.A. while it was certainly customary at Colne.

The all-too-brief extracts relating to R.A. ceremonies are very mystifying. References to a Lecture, as though there was only one lecture, references to the *Several Degrees “* of the R.A. the *Introductory Part ‘* and the “ *First Section* all suggest substantial differences from present-day practice. I wonder if it would be possible (without touching on esoteric matters) to draw up a synopsis of the probable contents of the R .A. ceremony at different periods during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries : and this brings me to another question which has been propounded on several occasions without a wholly satisfactory answer: In the 1740's when the R.A. ceremony makes its first appearance, what are the elements or essential parts of ceremonial or ritual which would justify us in stating that a particular ceremony was, in fact, the R.A.?

I am sure that we are all grateful to Bro. Rogers for a paper, which gives us so many interesting points for discussion.

Bro. Bernard Jones writes:

I offer my warm personal thanks to Bro. Norman Rogers for his paper I have had real enjoyment in reading it, and congratulate him on writing a paper containing so much fresh and even fascinating material. He is fortunate in dealing - and dealing so happily - with two of the oldest Chapters known, two Chapters in a province that has had so many historic Chapters, and I greatly envy him his valuable sources of first-hand information I remember with gratitude that some of this information he generously made available to me two or three years ago, and I was able to incorporate it in a recent book.

I cannot offer, nor do I wish to offer, any criticism of the paper. I regard it as a rich source of material and shall always be glad to be able to refer to it. The paper contains many odd pieces of information, and surely one of the oddest is the entry under date December 25th, 1832: "Cash paid to J. Dyson for Spirits of Wine. 4d., and for Gunpowder, 2d." I wonder whether Bro. Rogers has any explanation of this entry. The Spirits of Wine could hardly be wanted for playing Snapdragon (brandy would give a better flavour), but I am told we must not rule out the possibility that the Gunpowder was used as a means of obtaining some peculiar effect in the course of a ceremony, but what effect I am at a loss to imagine.

I am sure that the paper will long be referred to as a source of reliable information on old Chapter customs, of which hitherto very little has been known.

Bro. ERIC WARD said: — The only criticism I have of Bro. Rogers' most interesting paper is that it is too short, for it poses many intriguing questions, which could profitably be developed if we were not so restricted by space. The query, "how anyone could be registered as exalted in a regular Chapter before 1769, seeing that Charters were not issued until that year", not only seems unanswerable when put that way, but also raises other questions. The expression "regular" does not appear to have been actually used in this connection in the early G.Chapter records, which may have been deliberate if the term signifies "non-Antient", as it certainly did in Blue Lodge records. On the other hand, if regular in this context means R.A. Masons working under Warrants of the "Moderns" E.G. & R.C., then we have next to ask ourselves how many *irregular Chapters* there were prior to the formation of this E.G. & R.C. anyway. The "Grand Chapter" manifesto (c. 1765) acknowledged the existence of R.A. Masons previously "passed" somewhere unspecified. According to the by-laws of 1766, a Brother could be admitted to this Chapter if he could prove that he had been exalted before 12th June 1766 or in the Caledonian Chapter, or "any Chapter in the Country", *i.e.*, presumably outside London. The Charter of Compact was not put into effect until 1769, and, therefore, was of nil account prior to that date. The Laws of 1778 (not 1788, as stated) are again specific in recognising pre-1766 R.A. Masons, but in no instance is there any qualification other than the date of their being made. This suggests that there would be no

discrimination against “Ancient” R.A. Masons of pre-1766 vintage. If not, where else would most of them come from to start new Chapters? And what about the old Chapters, which the By-laws of 1766 imply already, existed “in the Country” and elsewhere?

At Fredericksburg, Va., in 1753, the candidate was raised to the R.A. Degree in a “Royal Arch Lodge” at Bristol (Crown), in 1758 and throughout, they, too, held a “Royal Arch Lodge”, and the Sun Lodge of Perpetual Friendship (“Moderns”) raised candidates to the R.A. in a “Lodge” in 1768. At York, in 1762, we find “A most sublime or Royal Arch Lodge”, whilst Dermott, in 1772, naturally wrote of a “Royal Arch Lodge” even after the “Ancients” G.Chapter had been nominally formed.

This leads to the still further query, how did the dual titling of subordinate bodies come into being, *e.g.*, “Lodge of Hospitality or Chapter of Charity”, since obviously Grand Chapter had no authority to concern itself with a Blue lodge already working under a G.L. Warrant? Why not simply use the Chapter name? Books and plays of the past had dual titles, the better to make apparent the contents, and it could be that the bare term “Chapter” was unfamiliar to many as applied to Masonry, but well known in other quasi-Masonic activities. *e.g.*, the Gregorians, who from at least 1734 seem always to have congregated in Chapters. Hence to call a genuine Masonic gathering a Chapter and nothing more might to the uninitiated (or should we say unexalted) have savoured of irregularity or plagiarism. But by linking the term Chapter with that of Lodge, which latter was previously familiar to R.A.’s as well as other Masons, the impression of a sense of closer unity with the general body is at once apparent, and this seems to me to have been the objective. I am, of course, aware that Anderson used the word “Chapter” in the sense of an assembly of Free Masons, and also that Broughton wrote in 1734 of “Masons made Chapters” which could have been used in the late medieval sense when Ecclesiastics and Knights who attended Chapters came to be credited with much significance. What is significant to the contention that Chapters were virtually unknown as denoting the R.A. is that in the *Constitutions* of 1767, Art. III. page 346, Entiek followed Anderson in regarding “Lodge” and “Chapter” as interchangeable terms, for, having spoken of Grand Chapter, he immediately followed with “the said Grand Lodge”.

It is hoped that the above remarks are sufficient to show that the method of acceptance of the three principal founders of the Chapter of Charity was quite natural and just about the only way that any could be accepted, but in passing it is noteworthy that the same three were also the first W.M., S.W and JW, of Hospitality Lodge. Furthermore, two of them came from the Sun Lodge, which had transferred to the “Moderns” from the “Ancients”, to which persuasion it reverted after being warned off the R.A, by the then Grand Secretary of the “Moderns”.

In support of the inference that the methods of Grand Chapter were, to say the least, haphazard in its early days, I quote an unpublished letter from Heseltine to the Chapter of Charity: —

Drs. Commons 14 July 1770

Inclosed I send you the Con<sup>n</sup>, for holding a G & R. Chapter at Bristol, with proper Ins<sup>ns</sup> for your conduct. You'll see by its date that applic<sup>on</sup> was accord<sup>g</sup> to promise made in Dec<sup>r</sup> last & y<sup>r</sup> Pet<sup>on</sup> granted. When signed it was sent as usual to the Embellisher, who mislaid it, and I was apprehensive of being under the necessity of making out a new one; in this situation matters stood for some time, and on the receipt of your favour of the 22nd May, I again applied relative to the patent, and it was ab<sup>t</sup>, a month since found, but then B<sup>r</sup> Maclean informed me he sh<sup>d</sup> be at Bristol in a few weeks, and w<sup>d</sup> take it with him. I therefore expected to have seen him for some weeks past, but last night the meeting of our G.C. was informed of his being gone into the Country for some time, and now take this opportunity of Transmitting it and at the same time request your excuses for the delay which really arose from the mistakes above stated. I have not a doubt but through y<sup>r</sup> zeal in the cause the sublime degree will flourish in Bristol, and received additional lustre. One thing more, I have to request on this head that you will be part<sup>ly</sup>, cautious as to the moral characters of the Candidates for reception into our Order, and from time to time acq<sup>t</sup> us w<sup>th</sup> your proceed<sup>gs</sup> and I beg leave to assure you that you may on all occasions depend upon the strictest attention to your correspondence and inform<sup>on</sup>.

Bro. *FRED L. Plck* writes: -

We are grateful to Bro. Norman Rogers for his paper on these two venerable and interesting Chapters. I hope it will be possible to bridge the gaps in their story, so that in 1969 they may be among the first Royal Arch Chapters to celebrate their bi-centenaries.

There are several references to the Chapter at Bottoms, whose activities were deplored by Nativity in 1818, and who supplied "instruction" to Cana in 1828. J.E.Craven tells us in his fascinating book on *Freemasonry at Bottoms* of John Greenwood, born of humble parents in 1802, who was Exalted in 1824 and Installed First Principal in 1826. He only reached the Craft Chair two years later, in 1828. Bro. Greenwood, despite his then few years in Freemasonry, had mastered the rituals of many degrees and was in great demand as a Masonic instructor. Perhaps he was a Yorkshire Peter Gilkes!!

Another noted Freemason referred to is Franklin Thomas, also something of an instructor, After a successful career at Blackburn he removed to Oxford, and is remembered as the author of *The Etiquette of Freemasonry* as well as the compiler of the Oxford Ritual and the Revised Ritual. The influence of Franklin Thomas is still reflected in the working of many East Lancashire Lodges or perhaps his work was influenced by the varied Lancashire workings with which he came into contact.

Our Bro. Bernard Jones's *Freemason's Book of the Royal Arch* contains illustrations of a fine set of Principals' Robes, Aprons and headdresses formerly used in Cana Chapter. These are now preserved in the Masonic Temple, Manchester.

Bro. F.R. Worts writes:-

In the citations from the Minutes of both the Cana and Nativity Chapters, Bottoms, a small place near the border between Yorkshire and Lancashire, is mentioned; it was near to Colne and not too far from Burnley. Bottoms is held in esteem as one of the oldest centres of Masonry in Yorkshire. The Chapter of Affability No.308 (attached to the lodge of Prince George No. 308) still “ works “ there; it was warranted in 1807. The references in the Cana and Nativity Minutes must be to this Chapter. Fortunately, the Chapter of Affability has its complement of records extant; they reveal much of Chapter interest.

The following points seem relevant to Bro. N. Rogers’ study of Cana and Nativity:

(1) Social class of Companions: The first Companions of Affability were two blacksmiths, two farmers, two spinsters, two weavers (doubtless “domestic”), one carpenter, one butcher, one shopkeeper and one showmaker. All were humble men none employed labour. The “shopkeeper” was 60 years of age, but the average age of the others was only 29 years.

(2) Fees: Much variation. This is unexplained. e.g.:

May. 1811 - June 1812: 15/- for “the Making”.

Later in 1812: Six Candidates paid 12/6 each for “ Making “.

June, 1814: Six paid 17/6 each.

Aug.. 1816: Three paid 10/- each.

Feb.. 1818: At the same meeting, one paid 13/- and two paid one guinea.

No lack of Candidates between 1812-1826 no less than 67 Candidates were exalted. Was it the custom then to charge a fee according to the known “*means*” of the Candidate?

(3) Bro. Rogers cites Nativity’s accusation of Masons at Bottoms being guilty of “Unlegal Practices”: March 8th. 1818.

No reference to this *in* Minutes of Affability, but this probably became known, and also, probably resulted in the following resolution passed “unanimously” in the Chapter; the meeting is simply dated 1820: —

“. . . . that hereafter every proposal shall always be at least ONE MONTH, *i.e.*, four WEEKS for every candidate to be exalted, and that this resolution on no account whatever be violated.”

(4) Passing of the Veils: From Bro. Rogers’ study, neither Cana nor Nativity included this “ceremony” in their “work”, This is strange. The “Veils” were practised in Affability Chapter from 1818 to 1874—the best-known example of this, among the few known examples, in Masonic history. The “ceremony” was popular. Other local Chapters followed their example: Good Intent at Hebden Bridge and Judaea at Keighley. There can be no doubt (from Affability Minutes) that Companions at Colne (presumably Cana) were most interested. Bro. Rogers cites Cana’s Minutes of “Nov. 16th, 1828” and “May 17th, 1829”, which show that

these Colne Companions were wishful of learning more about the “work” at Bottoms; and they invited a number of the Affability Comps. to visit them. The sequel is found in the Affability Minutes: it is extraordinary:-

June 28th, 1829.

Memorandum: That at a Chapter of Emergency held at a private room in Colne, Lancashire. When the following Companions from the Chapter attached to the Lodge of Prince George, Bottoms, Stansfield, attended [here follow names of six Companions], and the following Companions passed the Veils, Wm Asqurth, Wm Dixon, Wm Robinson, Wm Riding, Isaac Robinson, Robt. Robertshaw, Jno. Smith, Wilkn Parkinson, Jno. Dyson, and Wm Riley, and at the same time they sent 2/6 each which will amount to the sum of £1/ 5/0 for the good of the Chapter at this place Bottoms in Stansfield.

Perhaps Bro. Rogers may be able to identify some or all of these Colne Companions from the records of the Cana Chapter.

In Affability’s Minutes there is no other reference to Chapter Masonry in Colne. They list many visitors; 2 doubtless some came from Colne, Burnley and other near townships.

(5) Ritual; Bro. Rogers whets appetite. What work was being used by these old Chapters? Is it extant?

The question is sharpened by a Minute of Affability, “dated July 2nd. 1865”:-

“By the request of several of the Companions from Halifax, John Greenwood went through the Exaltation Ceremony, being given the old way of working”. “In the old way of working”. . . John Greenwood was exalted in 1823, he was reputed to be a “Master ritualist”. Was the “old way of working” ante-Union? And would it have been similar to the ritual of Cana and Nativity in the late eighteenth century? Regrettably, these records of Affability are lost.

Bro. L.E.C. Pickover said: -

I find Bro. Norman Rogers’ paper very interesting because it is one step nearer to disentangling the Royal Arch and the other degrees that were emerging at the time.

Finch, in his letter to the Grand Master in 1812, wrote a diatribe against Grand Chapter, stating that he would not acknowledge it because it worked only two points instead of ten. That the scroll with St. John 1 inscribed upon it, although the proper discovery, was not made correctly in the working by Grand Chapter, whereas if they worked his ten points, then, in point number eight it was correctly discovered.

It would be interesting to know if, in his study of these early minutes, Bro, Rogers found anything that would throw light upon this point.

Bro. Norman Rogers writes in reply:-

It is gratifying that the members of the Lodge should have taken so much interest in this paper especially as the minute books were so tantalisingly vague in detail, a feature to be found in many eighteenth century Craft records.

Bro. Oliver raises a question which is quite natural, but it is obvious that, in the earliest days of Grand Chapter, the qualifications for the Chairs could not be so stringent as those of today. A typical example is that of Charity Chapter, Bristol, in 1769, when three Brethren were accepted as Petitioners (and as 1<sup>st</sup> P's) for warrant No. 9 on the assurance that all were "Companions of the Order". Bro. Ward provides proof that the degree was being worked in both "Antient" and "Modern" Lodges in Bristol prior to the petition. It is implicit in the case of the two oldest Chapters that the same must have happened in Burnley and Colne.

The close connection of the Royal Arch and Knight Templar degrees in the eighteenth century is well authenticated, not only in Devon, but in many other places, and in some the membership of one was akin to that of the other, with a further advancement to that of Royal Arch Knight Templar Priests. The divorce was after 1813, when clause 2 of the Articles of the Union (which must have been the cause of some dissension, with its inevitable compromise) compelled their severance. A handwritten Warrant of 1819 (St. James of Jerusalem No. 33) shows that Robert Gill, the Acting Grand Chancellor, was carrying on by himself, the Duke of Sussex; though Most Eminent Grand Master; having no interest in the K.T's. In effect, the Duke of Sussex was sticking close to the terms of the 1813 Act of Union, and insisting that other Orders (apart from the R.A., which had been judged an integral part of the Craft) should have separate governing bodies, a position which was provided for in Clause 2 and which was intensified by Grand Lodge's decision on the Mark Degree in 1856.

The statement that there was a close connection between the two Lodges and their Chapters, Bro. Carr, *is* in the paper, just before the paragraph on "Grand Chapter". The very fact that both met at the same places, and shared expenses, is implied in "Interesting Entries". Most Chapters in Lancashire worked closely with their Lodges, and still do, though there are a few notable examples. Nativity is an instance of this close connection, for the dispute of 1827 – 1830 which resulted in the suspension of Silent Temple Lodge, was really because the Lodge insisted on the Chapter's removal with them, whereas the majority of the Chapter members wished to stay at their old meeting-place, and disputed the contention of the Lodge that they were subservient to that body. It is true that there does not appear to be any record of the Chair ceremony at Burnley, but the reason may have been that the Lodge usurped that prerogative, its minute books were not available.

The Hargreaves letter was included to show that the members at Colne were not certain in June 1868, of their 3<sup>rd</sup> degree, and yet they obtained a R.A. Warrant (with Hargreaves as 1<sup>st</sup> Principal) on 14th July 1769, this does not give

a date for the first meeting (as Nativity does), and implies that the Chapter (or Lodge) was already conferring the degree, though there is no record of this in the Lodge minute book. Certainly, the lodge itself worked before the Warrant was obtained in 1762. May we not suppose then, that the dual names of the first Chapters in 1769 were given with the intention of providing certain ceremonies prior to exaltation, which might be frowned on by the "Moderns", though practised by the "Antients"? It is a matter of regret that there are no detailed records of ceremonies prior to the 1766 Grand Chapter, but those of around 1800 certainly show some development, and must have provided the basis for various Chapter Lectures to be given.

Bro. Bernard Jones asks for specific information regarding the use of Spirits of Wine and Gunpowder, which I cannot give. What is certain is that there are many old records mentioning them (and the Pistol), and I could only hazard a guess (like Bro. Jones) at their uses. May I refer him to similar examples quoted in the *Manchester Transactions* for 1955, pp. 59-61?

Bro. Eric Ward extends my query regarding the qualifications of Chapter Founders prior to 1766, and then gives the answer that the Grand Chapter By-Laws of that year implied the existence of Chapters before the Charter of Compact. So did Dassigny in his *Enquiry of 1744* (pp. 16 and 32). while Hughan, in his *Introductory Sketch* (p. 10), gives further proof, apart from the reference in the "Antient" Grand Lodge minutes of 1752.

Bro. Pick mentions the influence of Franklin Thomas. The extended Opening and Closing of the Colne Chapter, as well as others in the district, bears a close affinity to those at Blackburn, where he was a member. To Bro. Worts, I would say that all those he quotes as taking the Veils in 1829 were members of the Colne Chapter, having been exalted between 1807 and 1828, and, indeed, two of them were P.Z.'s; the conclusion reached is that the Veils ceremonies were not being worked between these years, if they ever were.

Bro. Peckover's query regarding Finch's diatribe was probably on the question of St. John 1 or Genesis 1, which leads me to summarise my conclusions on the "tantalsing aspect". First, it should be remembered that there was no esoteric installation of Principals in the early days of Grand Chapter (*vide* Bernard Jones. p. 71), and, indeed, one could produce evidence of a much later date. Taunton, for example, began in 1839, and others could be cited. True, the two Grand Chapters were united in 1817, but it was not until 1834 that the new Ritual was approved (promulgated in 1835), and this date appears to coincide with the appearance of Installations, the Addresses following later. In 1835 the ritual of the Chapter of Charity, Bristol, in its form of Opening, Closing and Exaltation, was quite different from "the form which had been adopted by this Chapter" (*Freemasonry in Bristol*, p. 667), and it was not until the following year that the "new form of Grand Chapter" was adopted, *i.e.*, after 1835 (*Freemasonry in Bristol*. p. 667). This date appears to coincide with the appearance of Installations in many parts of the country, and with the change in the Exaltation ceremony insisted on by Grand Chapter in November 1835.

A study of late eighteenth century ritual shows, and the books of these old Chapters at Colne and Burnley verify the fact, that the ceremony, up to 1834,

followed the pattern of the Craft in the pre-Reconciliation era, namely, a short ceremony with Ob. (Lancashire records show time limits of 10 to 15 minutes) this was followed by a Catechism to impart certain esoteric information regarding the ceremony and the Veils. What is not surprising is that this Catechism is, in many places, definitely Christian.

What theory, then, is more feasible than that the Royal Arch was first instituted to provide for those who felt that the Craft had been de-Christianised by the Constitutions of 1723, and the Royal Arch and Knights Templar. which were in such close association, gradually came to be developed in the 1740's and 1750's to fulfil their desires for a more comprehensive system.