

THIRD PERIOD

PROVINCIAL GRAND LODGE, HEADQUARTERS AT QUEBEC "UNITED"

The "Peace and Goodwill" that should have been universal among freemasons, was to receive a blow in Canada; due to what at first thought would appear to be a very trifling reason, the method of recording colonial lodges in London adopted by the "United Grand Lodge". For the new United Grand Lodge had to deal with two separate prior bodies; and the "bookkeeping system" used by the Seniors or "Moderns" was held to have been superior to that of the "Antients" and was therefore adopted for the future. Lodges reporting through foreign Provincial Grand Lodges had not only their own provincial numbers, but also separate numbers on the London list, bringing them into line with all the other lodges under the "Modern" sanction; but this was not the case with the "Antients".

For instance, in 1770, St. Paul's had its provincial number 10. (This was an interesting number, for it was the one formerly allocated to the lodge in the 47th regiment, from which lodge Lieut. John Price Ginnett was selected to be the first Provincial Grand Master of the first Provincial Grand Lodge formed in Quebec in 1759.) The famous old "47th" had been drawn away for more active service prior to 1770; and St. Paul's got the vacant number 10; and was then given No. 515 on the London register. It got a new provincial number 4 in 1786; but its London number remained the same. And in 1792, there was a renumbering in London; and their London number was altered to 424.

But when St. Paul's swung over to the Duke of Kent's "Antients" in 1797, and got the provincial number 12, there was no corresponding Grand Lodge number. All the lodges who thus "swung over" to the "Antients" in Canada had each from that time to be content with its provincial number only.

The Craft in Canada carried on, and Br. Claude Denechau reported his lodges to London, and awaited his new "Deputation", "Patent" or "Warrant" as Provincial Grand Master.

But it was slow in coming forward; instead, he was drawn into a long protracted correspondence anent the details of his Antient lodges; and it was not until the 3rd of January, 1820, that the document was actually signed and forwarded; and under this Patent he was duly installed on the 12th June, 1820.*

(This original Patent is preserved in the library of the "Grand Lodge of Quebec" at Montreal). But, in the meantime, Denechau had been acting as P.G.M. pro tem of the "United" Grand Lodge: between 1814 and 1820 he is said to have issued Warrants to two new Lodges, but to have noted on the Warrants that they were to be "confirmed" on his receiving his own "deputation" from London; and later in 1820 he is said to have gone round himself, and properly "confirmed" the two warrants. In 1818, there was published in Quebec under his sanction a little book called the "Mason's Manual", in the preface of which it states "this is intended to supersede and prevent the irregularities arising in subordinate lodges from a want of acquaintance with the regulations as laid down in the "Book of New Constitution" unanimously accepted by the United Grand Lodge of England, at the memorable Epoch when the interests of Ancient and Modern Masons were cemented forever". Although this book was published two years prior to the reception in Canada of Denechau's "patent", he issued the order to all his subordinate lodges that "a copy should be presented by the Lodge Secretary to every person newly initiated into masonry".

But, when the long wished for "deputation" or "patent" arrived in Quebec in 1820 it contained one tremendous surprise. Instead of appointing him as Provincial Grand Master for the whole of Lower Canada, (as had been the case with H.R.H. the Duke of Kent and the "Antients"), it constituted him "for the Districts of Quebec and Three Rivers" only! Just why and wherefore, no mason in Canada has ever been able to explain; (Graham in his "History" suggests that it may have been due to a natural ignorance in London of the actual geography of the new colony of Canada), but the true reason will probably

* Graham's "History of Freemasonry", pp. 154-156.

never be reliably confirmed at this late date. However, it is an indisputable fact that it caused dismay among Canadian freemasons; and was to have a far-reaching effect upon the Craft in Canada. It remained, of course, quite legitimate for the lodges both in the remaining portion of Lower Canada, and the few lodges then existing in Upper Canada, to continue to report to London through Br. Denechau's P.G.L. at Quebec as being the nearest and most accessible provincial Grand Lodge; and this plan these now "outside" lodges followed for a period of about two years only.

In 1820, there was a rivalry between the cities of Quebec and Montreal. Up to the end of the French regime, Champlain's old city of Quebec had easily maintained its position as the leading city in Canada, both commercially and socially. But after the formal cession in 1760, the British in Montreal had been able to establish the "North West Fur Company of Montreal"; a company that was rapidly to extend its trade (with no better means of transportation than birch bark canoes), across the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Ocean itself, up the Mackenzie river to the Arctic ocean, and down south through the "Wyoming" territory as far as the land which forms the present State of Utah. This new fur company had become the most formidable rival that the old Hudson's Bay Company, (then established for well over a century) was ever to know. In consequence, the older city of Quebec had fallen behind in the commercial race; and even in social matters Montreal was beginning to challenge its supremacy. In comparison, Three Rivers was then a small and unimportant town; and it was impossible to conceive that the freemasons in the ardent, confident, fast-growing city of Montreal, (which two years before had torn down all its stone fortification walls for the very purpose of permitting the city to expand), should forever continue contentedly to view their three lodges reporting as forming a part of the "District of Three Rivers"!

One of the most outstanding social events in Canada was the opening of the new "General Hospital" in Montreal in 1821,

(the original building on Dorchester Street is still maintained intact as forming the Main Entrance to the present much enlarged hospital). The hospital authorities called on Br. Denechau at Quebec to have the cornerstone laid by his Provincial Grand Lodge, and this was done on the 6th day of June, 1821, with much pomp and ceremony. All the documents relating to this masonic event, including all the current newspaper accounts of the ceremony, have been carefully preserved up to the present time by the General Hospital authorities. Another full account is to be found in "Hochelaga Depicta" published in 1839, and highly prized by all Montreal historians as an invaluable book of reference*. Under the cornerstone are two parchments: one giving the names of the subscribers and first directors, (among whom appear the names of many well known members of St. Paul's Lodge); the other is the proper masonic document, including the numbers of the three masonic lodges which were then in actual existence at Montreal and which attended the ceremony; namely: "Union Lodge", provincial number 8; "St. Paul's Lodge", provincial number 12; and "Wellington Persevering Lodge", (established just after the battle of Waterloo, and having the provincial number 20).

The whole masonic procession assembled at St. Paul's lodge rooms, in the then famous City Tavern, at No. 73 St. Paul Street. Preceded by a band, they marched uptown to the new building on Dorchester Street. Rt. Wpfl. Br. Denechau did not attend as Provincial Grand Master, but deputed as his representative and substitute for the occasion, Rt. Wpfl. Sir John Johnson, Bt., who was at that time residing in Montreal. Sir John Johnson, (then a "United" Mason) had been the last Provincial Grand Master of the senior Provincial Grand Lodge of "Moderns" at Quebec; in which position he had been installed

* "Hochelaga Depicta", by Newton Bosworth, pages 124-130.

in 1788, but his P.G.L. had been disintegrated by the steady "swinging over" of the Canadian lodges to the Duke of Kent's "Antients" from 1792 on.

Shortly after this event, we find St. Paul's got into agreement with "Union" and "Wellington Persevering" Lodges, as to the desirability of having a second Provincial Grand Lodge with headquarters at Montreal; and in the following year St. Paul's began to circularize the lodges in the district known as the Eastern Townships to this effect. The plan was to draw an imaginary line from north to south forty miles west of Three Rivers, through the city of Sorel, (at that time known as the "town of William Henry"); and that the new Provincial Grand Lodge, (if and when formed) should have jurisdiction over all of the portion of Lower Canada west of this imaginary line. And in the next year, they were ready to petition London. The petition was signed in St. Paul's Lodge on St. John's Day 1822, and backed up by other similar petitions from "Eastern Township" lodges; and the new Warrant was granted in April 1823,* and Br. William Magillivray was appointed the first Provincial Grand Master. (William Magillivray was ~~not~~ a member of St. Paul's; ^{and} ~~but~~ Turtan Penn, the first P.G. Secretary, was the sitting Master of St. Paul's). At the same time, the United Grand Lodge in London created a third Provincial Grand Lodge for Upper Canada; and appointed ^{Simon} ~~another~~ Magillivray to be its first P.G. Master. William Magillivray and Simon Magillivray were brothers; both daring travellers and explorers; both had been famous members of the "North West Fur Company", (which was sold out to the Hudson's Bay Company in 1821) and the city of Fort William on the shores of Lake Superior is named after the elder brother, William; whose portrait is preserved in the museum in the "Chateau de Ramezay", in Montreal.

This new subdivision of Canada therefore produced a fresh alignment of territory. From the limits of Nova Scotia, (including the city of Quebec), and up the St. Lawrence river

* Graham's "History of Freemasonry", pp. 62, 63, 164.

as far as lake St. Peter would remain under the jurisdiction of the P.G. Lodge at Quebec, under Br. Claude Denechau. Then *all* from William Henry (Sorel) at the western extremity of the same lake, (including the city of Montreal), to the ~~western~~ *eastern* limits of Upper Canada, would come under the new P.G. Lodge of "Montreal and William Henry". And the entire Province of Ontario, (then known as Upper Canada) would constitute the territory of Br. Simon Magillivray's new P.G. Lodge at Toronto.

It will be seen that in 1823, this new subdivision placed the P.G. of Montreal and William Henry in the most important position of the three. In fact, St. Paul's petition referred to states "There are at present in this District thirteen lodges, whereas in the District of Three Rivers only eight". This leading position the Montreal P.G. Lodge was to maintain for a time; then to fall behind Toronto, due to the rapid growth of freemasonry in the purely English-speaking Province of Upper Canada.

The establishment of these two new Provincial Grand Lodges gave the young "United Grand Lodge" in London the very opportunity they wanted to "balance their books" as far as Canadian Lodges were concerned; and to regularize their entries in London in this respect; and they were not slow to seize the opportunity. They were really facing a very serious difficulty in London with regard to Canadian Lodges: their duty was to prepare a new combined "List of Lodges" from the London records of both prior Grand Bodies, which of course had to be properly numbered and in faultless sequence. And here were the "Antient" lodges in Canada with provincial numbers only, and no London numbers at all! Yet they could not deny these Lodges, which had operated under the Provincial Grand Mastership of the Duke of Kent, who himself had been the Grand Master of all the "Antients" at the formal amalgamation! The solution seemed to lie in the edict issued in the fall of 1823 by the new "United" Grand Master, H.R.H. the Duke of Sussex, to the three Provincial Grand Lodges in Canada, instructing them

to call on each of their lodges to turn in its "Antient" warrant, and obtain a fresh "United" warrant from London.

His Royal Highness' commands were:

"Though there are several lodges in the district, yet none of them hold their Warrants from the Grand Lodge of England, but assemble under dispensations or Warrants which have been granted by Provincial Grand Masters (i.e. his brother, the Duke of Kent or his deputies) or Provincial Grand Lodges."

"In regard to such of them as do not hold Warrants from this country, you should require them to apply in regular form for such documents through you, the Grand Master's chief anxiety being the regularity of proceeding."

There were to be registration fees, but the edict continues:

"The Grand Master, however, is pleased to say, that he will recommend to the Grand Lodge to permit the warrant to be issued to all such Lodges as are at present meeting under Provincial Dispensations, free from the accustomed fee of Five Guineas, payable upon the Constitution of new Lodges."

This is the reason that St. Paul's warrant dates from 1824. This is the reason that for over a century, the date of St. Paul's last warrant is the one recorded in London, instead of as is customary, the date of the earliest warrant of the Lodge. This is the reason that freemasons the world over, referring to the "Masonic Year Book" of the Grand Lodge of London, form the impression that the Lodge was actually only founded in 1824.

As the "Modern" Lodges in Canada were "healed over" to Antient Masonry under the Duke of Kent, they received their new Provincial "Antient" warrants but, apparently were never called on to turn in their former "Modern" dispensations. So St. Paul's kept its first 1770 warrant as a precious relic until the burning of the Masonic Temple in 1833, when it was destroyed "with the original minute books, charters, records and muniments of the Lodge." St. Paul's was therefore at that time the only Montreal Lodge that had ever had the equivalent of a London Warrant, and in returning its "Antient"

* See "History and By-laws of St. Paul's Lodge" (1876)
pp. 207, 219, 220.

Warrant in accordance with the above edict, endeavoured to emphasize its earlier Senior or "Modern" foundation. But no particular exception was made to the general rule adopted in London for Canadian Lodges, and no notice was taken of the special wording of their request. St. Paul's "Antient" warrant was turned in to the new P.G. Master of the new P.G.L. of Montreal and William Henry, accompanied by the following petition: *to our copy of which is appended this memo.*

"Memo.- The original petition of which the foregoing is a copy, was transmitted to the Grand Lodge of England by the P.G.M. on the 28th January 1824 by James Stuart Esq."

(Signed) T. Penn, P.G.S.

The Petition read:-

cc To The Right Worshipful The Honourable William McGillivray, Provincial Grand Master for the District of Montreal of the United Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons of England.

We the undersigned Master, Wardens, and Brethren of Lodge No. 12 held at Montreal and which has heretofore acted under the authority of a Warrant from the Provincial Grand Lodge at Quebec under the authority of His Royal Highness Prince Edward, Duke of Kent, Right Worshipful Grand Master &c &c, dated the first day of May 1797, having at heart the prosperity of the Craft and being anxious to exert our best endeavours to promote and diffuse the general principles of the art in this district; being also particularly desirous to supply any deficiency or remedy any irregularity in the authority under which we have heretofore acted and to be received and acknowledged as a regular Lodge under the constitution of England and to have the names of our members Registered accordingly in the Books of the Grand Lodge.

In consequence of these several reasons WE PRAY for a Warrant of Constitution or such other regular authority as it may be competent in you to grant empowering us to meet as a regular Lodge at Montreal on the second Tuesday or every month and there to perform the duties of

Masonry in a constitutional manner according to the forms of the Order and the laws of the Grand Lodge.

We also pray your interposition and assistance in obtaining for our Lodge a regular Warrant of Constitution and in procuring the Registry of the names of our members in the Books of the Grand Lodge, and the prayer of this Petition being granted we promise strict obedience to the commands of the Most Worshipful Grand Master and to the Laws and Regulations of the Grand Lodge.

Your petitioners beg leave farther to state that this Lodge was first established by warrant dated the eighth day of November 1770 granted by the Right Worshipful and Honourable John Collins, P.G.M. for Canada by virtue of a Patent from His Grace Henry Duke of Somerset, Duke of Beaufort &c &c, and continued to work under that warrant until 1797 when it was laid aside and the warrant which we now hold substituted. SAINT PAUL'S LODGE being the oldest now in existence in the District of Montreal your Petitioners hope the R.W.P. Grand Master will please to take the same into consideration in issuing the new Warrant

Read and approved in Open Lodge

Montreal 23rd September 1823

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|----------|-------------------|----------|
| (Signed) | Michael Scott | W.M. |
| | R. Harwood | S.W. |
| | A. Banbury | J.W. |
| | Abner Bagg | Treas'r |
| | John Rawlins | Secret'y |
| | Turton Penn | P.M. |
| | Joseph Shuter | P.M. |
| | John Smith | |
| | Jason C. Pearce | |
| | P. Lussier | |
| | William Cormack | |
| | James E. Campbell | |
| | F. Mackenzie | |
| | James Scott | |
| | Horatio Gates | |
| | Frederick Griffin | |
| | Jacob Bigelow | |
| | James Farrar | |
| | P.W. Monk | |
| | M.J. Hays | |
| | Gwyn Owen Radford | |
| | Stanley Bagg | |
| | James C. Grant | |
| | Jabez D. Dewitt | |

In consequence, St. Paul's first Warrant from the new "United Grand Lodge" was issued on the 29th March 1824, and by virtue of this Warrant the Lodge operates today.

In this manner, the Status of the Canadian Lodges was regularized, and the whole question of Canadian "Antients" was considered closed and disposed of once and for all, apparently to the permanent satisfaction of the "United Grand Lodge". Whether this arrangement, (by which all Canadian lodges were to be recorded as having a uniform year of beginning) was to remain permanently satisfactory to the different Canadian lodges, is another story. Thirty years afterwards the first independent Grand Lodge, the "Grand Lodge of Canada", was begun in Hamilton, Ontario, in the year 1855. St. Paul's Lodge, backed only by the St. Lawrence and St. George lodges, steadily resisted this innovation, deeming the establishment of such an institution to be "irregular and unconstitutional".* But the new Grand Lodge of Canada grew steadily in power and influence; and one of the strongest pleas they could make for the support of Canadian Lodges was the promise of a new numbering, dating each lodge back to its actual origin prior to the issuance of the "United Grand Lodge" edict of 1823.

The new Grand Lodge in London had, however, to deal with the records of two prior Grand Bodies, and while the matter of the "Antient" lodges in Canada was now closed and disposed of, there still remained the open ledger of the original 1759 Senior Provincial Grand Lodge of "Moderns" at Quebec. Not one of these early lodges was in operation as a "Modern" lodge at the 1813 "Amalgamation" date; one only (St. Paul's Montreal) had now become a properly warranted "United", with number 782 on the "United" list. Apparently, the method decided on was to "erase" all of these "Modern" Lodges as from 1813, so that they would not obtrude on the records of the United Grand body in 1814. It was, it seems, a wholesale erasure. Alive or dead, it

* See the Minutes of St. Paul's Lodge, 25 Sept. and 27 Dec., 1855, and subsequent.

appears that they were all to be solemnly marked, "Erased in 1813". *

In the garrison at Quebec, British regiments used to come and go. It had been the practice of this first P.G. Lodge (with its military origin) to grant Military warrants to the officers of many of these regiments while they remained in Quebec. All the existing Military warrants remaining on record, were "erased in 1813."

And, of the Civilian lodges:

The famous "Merchants, Quebec, No. 1" (London No. 151), which had been the first lodge in Canada to swing over from Moderns to Antients, was "erased in 1813".

"St. Andrew's No. 2, Quebec," (London number 152), of which Lodge James Thompson (^{So Long} the faithful P.G. Secretary of this Provincial Grand Lodge, ~~was~~) had been Master a great many times, was "erased in 1813".

"St. Patrick's No. 3, Quebec," (London No. 153), which probably ceased to meet about 1792, was "erased in 1813".

"St. Peter's No. 4, Montreal", (London No. 154), which "broke up" in 1775, was "erased in 1813".

And "St. Paul's, No. 10, Montreal" Number 4 Provincial in 1786 (London Number 424), which had survived all the changes ~~in Canada~~ in Canada; which had become a leading Antient lodge in 1797; which was powerful enough in 1823 to be the active agent in promoting the new "Provincial Grand Lodge of Montreal and William Henry", and which is still considered a "leading" Lodge in Montreal, was also solemnly, as a "Modern" lodge, marked "erased in 1813".

In this manner did the records of the first Provincial Grand Lodge in Canada become closed in London, to remain closed, forever and a day.

* See Lane's "Masonic Records".
See "History of Freemasonry and Concordant orders" by
Fraternity Publishing Co., Boston, Mass.
See "Graham's History of Freemasonry". p. 39