

By the solemn Act of Union between the two grand lodges of Freemasonry, in December, 1813, it was "declared and pronounced that pure Ancient Masonry consists of the three Degrees and no more, viz. those of an Entered Apprentice, the Fellowcraft and the Master Mason, including the Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch."

'Ancient' is here spelt with a c to prevent confusion with the "Antients", but we must admit forthwith that, but for our "Ancient Brethren of the 18<sup>th</sup> century to whom the Royal Arch was "the root, heart and marrow of masonry," Royal Arch Masonry even if we had it in England today as an officially recognised rite, a point open to some doubt - might be ~~less~~ something less than the core-stone of our Order.

There are many references to the Royal Arch being worked from the 1740s in Ireland and Scotland. There is no doubt that by 1760 rudimentary Royal Arch ceremonies were being worked throughout England, Irish, Scottish and American Freemasonry.

Lawrence Dermott Secretary of the Antients grand lodge says he was a & made a Royal Arch Mason in 1757

Thomas Dunsterby comes prominently into the early History of Royal Arch (in the Moderns grand lodge) in a letter states he was made a Royal Arch Mason in 1754 (probably a Royal Arch attached to his mother lodge in Boston (U.S.)) He was one of the few who helped to keep the grand Chapter of the Moderns in Working Order.

The Royal Arch was practised in the "Antients' lodges" and all came under the jurisdiction of their grand lodge.

Though the "Moderns" grand lodge officially disowned the Royal Arch many of their lodges worked it, and a number of prominent members were Royal Arch Masons.

The "Antients" regarded the Royal Arch as a degree for Masters in the Chair and for Past Masters.

The first grand Chapter in the world was constituted in 1766 by Lord Blagney, Grand Master of the Premier grand lodge (Moderns). Charles of Compost signed 11<sup>th</sup> July 1766.

In June 1766 Lord Blagney was exalted into Sacerdotal Chapter, he immediately became 1<sup>st</sup> Principal of the Chapter and Grand Master of the Royal Arch.

At the Union of the two grand lodges the number of "Moderns" chapters in existence

far exceeded those of the Antients.

Though Worcestershire was a joint Province with Gloucestershire, Salop, Hereford and Herefordshire under Sir Robert de Cornwall in 1753 at this time there was only one Lodge in existence 119 at the Talbot Hotel Stour-bridge. By the Union in 1813 there had been in the Province "Five Antient Lodges" and "Four Moderns Lodge". The only survivors of this period being Harmonic N° 457 now 257 and Worcester N° 574 now 280.

There was no record of any of these Lodges working the Royal Arch until 1808 when we find that during the second year in the chair of W. Bro. J. Allen, the first Royal Arch Chapter was opened, which, although possessing no ritual or appointments as its more legitimate and more favoured successors, doubtless had its interest. Beafield (as was not infrequent at that period) in the Lodge. Brother Allen seems to have given much time and talent in prosecution of the Royal Arch, and to have enrolled many members.

How long this Chapter continued we have no information, possibly the death of its originator occurring in May 1813, or the promulgation of its laws of the Supreme Grand Chapter soon afterwards may account for its extinction.

at the Swan Inn, Dudley.

Immediately after the consecration  
Bro. William Masfield, and five other Brethren  
were proposed, balloted for and then exalted  
and appointed to offices in the Chapter.

At the same period we find that nine petitioners  
from the Worcester Lodge N.º <sup>349 (280)</sup> ~~280~~ who desired to  
hold a Chapter for "The cultivation of the  
grand and universal science" were granted  
a charter.

This being authorised, the first Convocation  
was held on the 9<sup>th</sup> December, 1844, when  
six of the petitioners proceeded to business,  
ten Brethren were proposed for exaltation  
and five as joining members. As these  
were from their own lodge it can be  
taken that they were members who were exalted  
in the lodge in the early part of the century.

On the 15<sup>th</sup> December the Chapter was  
consecrated and the first three Principals  
although members of the Worcester Lodge,  
had been exalted into "Chapter of Fortitude  
N.º 348 Worcester.

E. Comp. J. Bennett Fortitude 348  
" " James Knight " "  
" " Robert. Rising " "

Joseph Bennett was 1<sup>st</sup> Principal until 1848  
The Chapter was dormant until 1858  
when Joseph Bennett was re-elected 1<sup>st</sup>  
Principal and the Chapter revived.

At this period the qualification for membership was a Master Mason of twelve months standing. In the May Convocation of Grand Chapter 1856 Clause 20 be altered from 12 months to four weeks. The Chapters felt very strongly on this change and deputations were sent to London.

Fines were imposed in the Chapter of Dudley for absence. Principals 23 Officers 15

In 1846 that any Companion not being present shall forfeit five shillings to the funds of the Chapter.

Royal Standard Chapter No. 730 <sup>(498)</sup> was consecrated in 1854, and the next Chapter King Hope and Charity in 1871

We now refer to the minutes of the Chapter of Dudley for 20<sup>th</sup> January, 1880, when we find Companion G. B. Chapman was installed as M.E.Z. On April 7<sup>th</sup>, 1880 a Chapter of Emergency was held, when Companion Sir Edmund H. H. Beckman (Provincial Grand Master) of the Alfred Chapter, Oxford, was balloted for and elected a joining member. At the same meeting it was stated that "E. Comp. G. B. Chapman, M.E.Z. had resigned the office of M.E.Z. Companion Beckman was proposed, balloted for and elected to fill the office of M.E.Z.

On April 20<sup>th</sup> of the same year, the following Dispensation was read and Companion

bekehene installed as M.E. 2.

To the Principals and Companions of the Chapter  
of Dudley N<sup>o</sup> 252.

You having represented to the M.E. and Supreme  
Grand Z of the Order of Royal Arch Masons  
of England that you are desirous of placing  
in the First Chair of your Chapter the  
Companion Sir Edmund Anthony Herbert  
bekehene Bart. M.P. F.S.R. &c &c. of High  
Coast Worcestershire, who has not served  
the Office of Second or Third Principal,  
or that of Scribe or Secretary but who  
is, <sup>otherwise</sup> duly qualified and requested a dispensation  
for the purpose. The M.E. The First Grand  
Principal has taken the subject into mature  
consideration and is pleased to accede your  
request. You are therefore authorized  
and empowered to install the said  
E. Comp. Sir Edmund bekehene into the  
First Chair of your Chapter previously  
passing him thro. the Third and  
Second Chairs provided he shall have  
been duly elected in conformity with  
the general laws of the Order and the  
Bye laws of your own Chapter but not  
otherwise.

It would appear that E. Comp. Chapman resigned  
to allow Sir Edmund bekehene to qualify  
in the oldest Chapter of the Province for the  
Office of Prot. Grand Superintendent.

On September 21<sup>st</sup> 1880, Sir Edmund Anthony Huxley Bechmore was installed Grand Superintendent of the Province ~~and~~ at Worcester, when Provincial Grand Chapter was held under the Banner of St. Wulstan's Chapter No. 280.

St. Wulstan's Chapter was opened by the Principals, and the Comps. and Grand Officers were then admitted.

The patent was read, and E. Comp. Sir Edmund Anthony Huxley Bechmore was escorted into the Chapter by E. Comp. M. Darnison 252; Comps. W. H. Jones 498 proceeded by E. Comp. W. Bristow Acting Director of Ceremonies.

He was installed by W. B. Shedwell H. Clarke, G. L. of England assisted by W. K. R. Bedford, V. P. G. (Eng.) as H. Comp. Massfield as S.

Proposed Albert Brown, P. 2. 280 Com. G. Treas  
The following Officers were appointed.

S. E.	W. Bristow	252
S. M.	J. Fitzgerald	377
P. S.	W. H. Jones	498
1 <sup>st</sup> A. Secy	E. F. Pilack	280
2 <sup>nd</sup> A. Secy	H. Cross	280
S. W. B. R.	J. W. Spooner	377
ST. B. R.	W. H. Westwood	498
D. C.	F. J. Westbury	252
ORG.	J. Treman	252
Janitor	J. Smith	280

Until 1889, Pres. Grand Chapter was held Biennially.

In 1882, a committee formed to ~~prepare~~ prepare the By-laws of Provincial Grand Chapter which were presented and approved.

In this year the Convocation was moved to the month of May, and as it was held under each Chapter banner in turn.

On the Death of Camp Camp Book reported (accounts not audited). Balance brought forward £45.10 (1880-1887). The Treasurers book commences in 1887 & up to now no trace could be found of any Treasurers account between 1880-1887.

In 1889 it was reported that some of the officers collars & jewels were lost and couldn't be found. The Pres. of Treas. was authorised to purchase new jewels and collars, and a book purchased to record the issue of collars and jewels called the Jewel Book.

In 1891 the attendances had dropped to 14 Compans and it was suggested that the Pres. Chapter might go back to bi-yearly meetings, the question was left open for discussion. In 1893 the total attending had again increased to 42.

It is noted that in 1894 collars & jewels of absent Camps appointed were collected on their behalf by other Compans.



A special W.G. Chapter Meeting held at  
Worcester 3rd Jan 1895

The purpose was <sup>to</sup> vote of condolence  
to Lady Beckmore and Family on the death  
of Sir Edmund Beckmore.

19th Nov. 1895

E. Comp. A. Johnson of Sept. District  
spoke of the proposed memorial brass to  
be placed in Worcester Cathedral in loving  
memory of our late Gr. Superintendent, and  
proposed that a sum of £50 be given by  
W.G. Chapter for this purpose.

This offer was lauded down by the  
Dean and Chapter of the Cathedral.

28th May 1919

The making of returns by each Chapter  
was considered at this meeting. We also  
find the Prov. Gr. Superintendent attending most  
of the Chapters in the Province

27th Aug. 1920 We find for the first time  
a copy of the Prov. summons giving (in numbered  
items) the order of the consecration ceremony  
was attached to the Prov. S.E. minutes. It was the  
same as in use in 1975. The previous minutes do  
not mention an 'Oration by Prov. G. S.'

By 1920 there were 500 R.A. Masons in the Province.

In 1924 it was announced that Grand Chapters  
should sanction more than one steward by each  
Chapter could be appointed.

15th 1880.  
1894

Sir Edmund Behrens

1884	252	Pharis Dudley
1884	280	St. Wendens
1854	377	Royal St. Andrews
1871	498	Hop & Family
1890	529	Barrow Hill

19th Nov. 1891

E. Camp. A. G. Jacobsen.

1897	2385	Jacobson Shop
1897	2034	Hayfield Shop
1905	573	Greenway

1906.

E. Camp. Jacobsen closed

1909/  
1917

Gen Sir Wm. Campbell

1918.

Feb.	3643	Campbell Shop.
Nov.	1874	Behrens Hughes

1919/  
1933

E. Camp. W. T. Page Inlath

20th Dec. 1919		Arli Shop
Jan. 1920		Abbott Field
Jan. 1920		King's Heath
Aug. 1920		Page
Sept. 1929		St. Nicholas

1934.

FEB Royal's Shop

1944

JAN Barrow Hill Shop

1934/  
1954

E. Camp. SS, Summers.

1944	18 Nov.	St. Eg. Church
1945	FEB	Haravi
1951	7 May	Barrow Hill

14 April 1955 per J. E. Greenwood  
1963 May 1958

Local Churches  
Worcester Diocese

1963. E. Camp. J. N. Griffiths

14 Nov. 64	Verona
29 Sept 65	Northfield
30 Nov. 1966	Almeon
16 Jan 1967	St. Thomas
30 Nov. 1967	Woodlands
23 <del>Jan</del> 1967	Weathercock
20 JUNE 1968	Wyke
8 JAN 1969	St. James
14 Dec 1971	Chapel of St. George
20 APRIL 1972	St. Andrew
11 MAY 1972	St. Mark
29 MAR 1973	Red Rose Chapel
29 " 1974	St. Martin
29 JAN 1976	St. Peter
28 JUNE 1976	Holy Wells
29 Sept 1976	Trinity
1 JULY 1978	Severn
23 NOV 1978	St. Andrew
26 Jan 1978	Brome
Jan. 1980	Sabine

19  
1979

73  
1977

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