

**ROSE CROIX MASONRY**  
**IN**  
**WARWICKSHIRE, WORCESTERSHIRE AND**  
**SHROPSHIRE & STAFFORDSHIRE**

A brief account by Ill. Bro. K. Malin, 32°, and Ill. Bro. P.B. Davis, 31°,  
of its development in the West Midlands since 1845

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Nowadays Rose Croix masonry is part of the very fabric of masonry in the four Midlands Counties covered by the three Districts. This has not always been the case as the growth of the Order only really began after the Great or First World War, 1914 - 1918, with the significant expansion to its current 60+ Chapters happening after the Second World War, 1939 - 1945.

After many years of obstruction by the Duke of Sussex, the Grand Master Mason from 1813 to 1843, who saw as his first priority the consolidation of the rival Antient and Modern Grand Lodges into the United Grand Lodge of England, the Ancient and Accepted Rite [ usually known as the Rose Croix ] was established in England under the auspices of the Supreme Council for the Northern Jurisdiction of the USA. The Patent forming our Supreme Council was issued to Dr. Robert Thomas Crucefix and was dated 26 October 1845.

In its early days the Order would appear to have been somewhat slow to expand and current records indicate only four Rose Croix Chapters in the entirety of the four counties until the Great War of 1914 - 1918. It is possible that there were other chapters, but it seems strange that, if there were, they did not survive. Of all the 60+ Chapters in the three Districts, only three, The Vernon Chapter No 5, Warranted on 21 March 1852 and meeting in Birmingham, The St. Dunstan Chapter No 12, Consecrated on 10 February 1860 and meeting in Worcester, and The Pengwerne Chapter No 141, Warranted in 1898 and meeting in Shrewsbury, predate 1900. According to the current Inspector General for the Worcestershire District, the St. Dunstan Chapter still retains some characteristics of its antiquity. In the case of the Vernon Chapter, all last remnants of its affection for certain of its quite harmless and well loved usages, were squeezed out in the major revisions of 1990. By and large, therefore, all three Districts now work the same Ritual, as is the case throughout our jurisdiction.

The Himalaya Chapter No 80, with a Warrant dated 31 July 1878 and meeting at Stratford-upon-Avon, was formed in India and was given a home in Warwickshire in the 1980s. Also, Shakespeare Chapter No 15, meeting in Warwick has a slightly unusual history. This Chapter was Warranted on 10 April 1861 but surrendered its Warrant in 1893. The Chapter was resuscitated in 1921 and so takes its seniority from then.

In the early days of the Ancient and Accepted Rite in England all administration was handled by the Supreme Council based in London. With the growth of the Order a measure of power was devolved to the provinces. Our four counties came under the new West Central District in 1874. During the next 75 years up to 1949 this District was divided to form:

- o West Central District and North Central District in 1905
- o West Central District and Staffordshire & Shropshire in 1929
- o Birmingham District and Gloucestershire & Hereford in 1947 - West Central thus disappeared.
- o Warwickshire District and Worcestershire District in 1949 - Birmingham District disappeared.

Thus the development of the Rite in the three Districts as currently constituted can be shown in the following tables.

**The development of the Ancient and Accepted Rite in the West Midlands.**

**Under Supreme Council, 33°, from 1845**

The Vernon Chapter No 5  
21.3.1852 : Birmingham

St. Dunstan Chapter No 12  
10.2.1860 : Worcester

**Under West Central District from 1874 to 1905**

Pengwern Chapter No 141  
1898 : Shrewsbury

**Under West Central District from 1905 to 1929**

Barnard Chapter No 190  
30.12.1917 : Birmingham

St. Nicholas Chapter No 198  
26.10.1918 : Kings Heath

Stoke-on-Trent Chapter No 187  
1916 : Shelton

Shakespeare Chapter No 15  
1921 : Warwick

All Saints' Chapter No 217  
1920 : West Bromwich

Temple Chapter No 223  
15.9. 1921 : Birmingham

St. Chad Chapter No 233  
1922 : Tamworth

Cathedral Chapter No 258  
25.3.1926 : Birmingham

Holy Trinity Chapter No 248  
1925 : Wolverhampton

St. James's Chapter No 253  
1926 : Handsworth

**Under West Central District from 1929 to 1947**

St. Martin Chapter No 286  
29.1.1931 : Edgbaston

Gervase Pagnel Chapter No 316  
22.4.1937 : Dudley

Holy Grail Chapter No 389  
12.6.1947 : Rugby

St. Agnes Chapter No 344  
28.9.1944 : Kings Heath

**Under Staffordshire & Shropshire 1929 to 1947**

St. Peter ad Vincula Chapter No 273  
19.10.1929 : Shelton

Walesho Chapter No 331  
1938 : Aldridge

Betheny Chapter No 376  
21.11.1946 : Stafford

**Under Birmingham District 1947 to 1949**

St. Benedict Chapter No 403  
25.3.1948 : Coventry

**Under the Three Districts 1949 onwards**

<b>Warwickshire</b>	<b>Worcestershire</b>	<b>Staffordshire &amp; Shropshire</b>
Warwickshire District Chapter No 483 9.12.1954 : Warwick	Chapter of the Holy Cross No. 427 21.9.1950 : Stochford	The Mummery Chapter No 619 18.11.1965 : Wolverhampton
Priors Chapter No 488 8.9.1955 : Warwick	St. Arn of Malvern Chapter No 600 13.3.1965 : Worcester	St Alkmund Chapter No 668 23.6.1969 : Whitchurch
Abbey of Etone Chapter No 500 24.5.1965 : Nuneaton	Hales Owen Chapter No 615 16.6.1965 : Halesowen	Leek Chapter No 748 29.10.1973 : Leek
St. Alphege Chapter No 540 10.12.1959 : Knowle	St. Mary & All Saints Chapter No 688 24.11.1970 : Kidderminster	Aldridge St. Mary Chapter No 771 16.1.1975 : Aldridge
Gerold Anderson Chapter No 560 11.7.1961 : Coventry	St. Francis of Assisi Chapter No 711 4.1.1972 : Kings Heath	Sandwell Chapter No 792 2.11.1976 : West Bromwich
Stratford-upon-Avon Chapter No 620 8.7.1965 : Stratford	St. Edmund, King and Martyr Chapter No 730 13.11.1972 : Dudley	Morfe Chapter No 871 20.3.1980 : Bridgnorth
Leigh Chapter No 681 12.2.1970 : Edgbaston	Breme Chapter No 802 26.6.1979 : Bromsgrove	Wrekin Chapter No 954 28.4.1986 : Wellington



**Warwickshire**

Aesculapius Chapter No 687  
11.6.1970 : Edgbaston

Allesley Chapter No 701  
27.5.1971 : Coventry

Clarendon Chapter No 716  
10.2.1972 : Edgbaston

Greswold Chapter No 851  
28.9.1978 : Knowle

Guy's Cliffe Chapter No 877  
27.3.1980 : Warwick

Edgbaston Chapter No 931  
14.7.1983 : Edgbaston

Silhill Chapter No 937  
23.2.1984 : Knowle

Himalaya Chapter No 80  
31.7.1878 : re-domiciled in  
Warwickshire 1984 :  
Stratford-upon-Avon

Temple Balsall Chapter  
No 979  
12.11.1987 : Knowle

Aldwyn Porter Chapter  
No 1048  
19.11.1992 : Warwick

**Worcestershire**

St. Kenelm Chapter No 876  
12.6.1980 : Kings Heath

Merston Culy Chapter No 883  
27.2.1981 : Stechford

St. Theodore Chapter No 887  
18.5.1981 : Worcester

St. Mary's Abbey Chapter  
No 903  
22.3.1982 : Halesowen

Oldswinford Chapter No 908  
27.9.1982 : Stourbridge

Bordesley Abbey Chapter  
No 918  
21.2.1983 : Redditch

Stechford Trinity Chapter  
No 935  
29.3.1984 : Stechford

Worcestershire Chapter  
No 935 : 29.3.1984  
Halesowen & Worcester

Evesham Chapter No 994  
31.5.1989 : Evesham

Northfield Chapter No 1022  
18.6.1991 : Northfield

Wenceslas Chapter No 1114  
22.4.1998 : Kings Heath

**Staffordshire & Shropshire**

Kidsgrove Chapter No 965  
16.1.1987 : Kidsgrove

Trent Valley Chapter No 975  
2.11.1987 : Burton-on-Trent

Samaritan Chapter No 990  
24.10.1991 : Cradley Heath

Castra Nova Chapter No 1023  
17.6.1991 : Newcastie-under-Lyme

Note: Warwickshire Chapters give the date of the Warrant, whereas Worcestershire and Staffordshire & Shropshire Chapter give the date of Consecration.

For information the west Central District of 1874 covered Birmingham, Gloucestershire, Northamptonshire, Warwickshire and Worcestershire; and later Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire and Shrewsbury. The smaller West Central District of 1905 covered Birmingham, Gloucestershire, Shropshire, Warwickshire and Worcestershire

Sources

- o The various Masonic Year Books
- o Lt.Col.H.G.R. Canning. A Record of Rose Croix Chapters of Improvement : c1974
- o C.J. Mandlberg. Ancient and Accepted : Quatuor Coronati, 1995

**OUR RULERS AT DISTRICT LEVEL SINCE 1874**

**From 1874 to 1929**

**West Central District**

Charles Fendlow, 33° 1874  
 Appointed Deputy Inspector General upon  
 formation of West Central Division, 32°  
 (later promoted to 33° and Inspector General)  
 Died 31/1/1905  
 Lt.Col George Walton Walker, 33° 1906  
 Rowland George Venables, 33° 1919  
 John Suckling Pritchett, 33° 1920

**From 1929 to 1947**

**West Central District**

John Suckling Pritchett, 33° 1929  
 Matthew Clarke, 33° 1941  
 Major H.A. Jewett, MC, 33° 1944

**From 1929**

**Staffordshire & Shropshire**

John Frederick Gerhard Pieterston, 33° 1929  
 Seth Smith Somers, OBE, 33° 1937  
 Robert Bradley Mummery, 33° 1954  
 Rev. Preb. Harry Baylis, 33° 1964  
 John Leslie Brockhouse, 33° 1969  
 James Edward Vickers Toney, 33° 1971  
 John Clayton, JP, 33° 1980  
 Frederick John Skidmore, 33° 1990  
 Anthony John Bolus, 33° 2000

From 1947 to 1949

Birmingham District

Major H.A. Jowett, MC, 33° 1947

From 1949

Warwickshire

Gerald Graham Alderson, MB, FRCS, 33° 1949  
David Mitchell, 33° 1961  
Sir Stanley Jaffa Harley, BSc, DL, 33° 1972  
Donald Stanley Icke, 33° 1978  
Brig. Dr. John Henry Huby Oliver, OBE,  
TD, DL, 33° 1988  
Peter Waring, 33° 1998

From 1949

Worcestershire

Rev John E. Grosvenor, MBE, TD, 33° 1949  
Leonard W. Greenwood, MA, 33° 1963  
Harry A. Nock, MC, 33° 1975  
William D.S. Bennett, 33° 1984  
Charles W. Paglin, 33° 1987  
Edward F. Hanson, JP, LL.D. (Hon), 33° 1990  
Dr. H. John White, JP, 33° 1997

The phenomenal growth in Rose Croix masonry took place after the end of the Second World War. As we all know, Craft Masonry is not allied to any one specific religion - the key factor in gaining membership is a personal belief in a Supreme Being. On the other hand, membership of the Rose Croix is totally dependant on a belief in the Holy Trinity. As the conventional Christian denominations lose membership, it is a fact that membership of the Christian Masonic Orders is increasing.