

Open

I wh I venture to hope has not been useless

In my career as a Fr^m of nearly 52 years standing, I have been asked from time to time to perform many & varied ^{roles} ~~positions~~ & on the invitation of our W.M. I venture to give this paper & hope the subject matter will prove instructive & interesting.

The title of tonight's paper, ^{Em. Rit. & why it is adopted} was suggested to me by reason of some queries on working having arisen during my visit to L³.

It is a fact that many different Rituals are in existence & in our County we see examples ^{but} as long as difference of wording only takes place I see no reason to offer any objection but some glaring cases of variation in essentials are to be met with especially the case of having the 2^d S with the R. in the 2^d O.

Now I will trace from the beginning how the E. Work? originated

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Em: Rit & why it sh^d be adopted in L under the E.C.

2 G.L.^s of Eng: ^{erected} ~~was~~ prior to the Act of Union of 1813

one ^{of} dating from 1717 to 1813 was called the Regular or Constitutional G.L. & the members were known as ^{of} W Masons or Moderns -

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It naturally followed that these 2 G.L. were not friendly disposed to each other & differences in Rit: & procedure existed ~~with other objection~~

Fortunately this great & undesirable diff^y in working was ended in 1813 by uniting all E. L under one G.M. & one Constitution into what we ^{now} call the U. G.L. of E. †† 1A

Now the Articles of U. wh. bound the 2 G.L. together laid it down that in future there sh^d be uniformity of working in the I. P. & R throughout all L under the rule of the E. Con.

This uniformity of working was obtained by constituting in 1813 the L of Recon: ^{the} members composing this L being chosen ^{as explained} equally from the original 2 G.L.

The L of Recon. agreed upon a Rit: that was formed to retain the Ancient & best ^{portions} common to both of the 2 G.L. & to omit what was spurious in either.

This L of Recon. held many meetings to teach the Rit: to representatives from Loud & Prov: L. between ^{the} 1813 & 1816 in wh. latter year the L of Recon. was dissolved ^{but previous to dissolution of this L of Recon. the agreed Ceremonies of I. P. & R were rehearsed before a Special}

† † I A

The Articles of U were signed & sealed on 25 Nov 1813
by the Duke of Sussex G.M.
W.R. Wright P.G.M. in the Ionian Isles
Arthur Telford } Past G. Wardens.
James Deans }
on the one part.

by the Duke of Kent G.M.
Thomas Harper Deputy G.M.
James Berry } Past Deputy G.M.
James Aglar }
on the other

21 Arts of U in all.

most import being Art II ~~1811~~ which was
declared & pronounced that there should be no more
of 3 J & no more by ~~the~~ the E.A. the F.C. &
the M.M. including the Supreme Order of the H.R.A.
art V enjoined that the 2 G.M.s shall appoint each
9 M.M. or P.M.s of their respective fraternities, with
warrant & instructions to either hold a L. to
be entitled the L. of Recon. or to visit the
several L.s for the purpose of obligating,
instructing & perfecting the members.

I.B.

This uniformity of working decreed by G.L. as the duty of all loyal Frms^{rs} was not by any means cheerfully assented to by every Frms^r or by every L for many Ls cherished the accumulated errors & whims of successive Frms^{rs} under the affect: but delusive name of L. traditions - even as many do to day

The preservation of an unaltered ceremonial is ~~difficult~~ ^{not easy} in any ord^r L & the rapid increase of the number of Ls made any real control ^{difficult} by those keeping to the strict ceremonies, who had rec^d the approval of the G.L. & the Bm now present. I hope to convince all the Frms^{rs} that by adopting the working preserved to the Craft by the Em: L of Improvement they will avoid new blunders or new traditions creeping into the working of Ls & avoid future troubles for I can assure you it only takes a few years for these new blunders to become spoken of as "old traditions".

When the number of Ls was small these divergencies might have been controlled ~~but~~ in the last.

G.L. in May 1816 & in the Min: of the G.L. convocatum the following month, that is June 1816, it is recorded that G.L. adopted, confirmed & authorised the Ceremonies as rehearsed before it in May 1816 by the Members of the L of Recon: -

That Authority & Sanction of the M. G. L. of 2 has never since been revoked & the Ceremonies authorised by the M. G. L. of 2 in June 1816 remain the only authorised Cerem: for J. P. & R.

For the benefit of P. M. S. -

The Install: Cer: was later settled by the G. M thro' a Board of Install. Mast who held 4 meetings for that purpose & the Install. Cer. agreed upon & worked in 1827 has never been set aside & remains to day the only authorised Cer:.

G.L. Library possess manuscript Rit. of the H. Cerem: belonging to Bth who were known workers at that time - oral teaching was in favour & it is interesting to note a printer of temporary sq: named Caret - who took part in the meetings of the L of Recon: got into trouble for printing & selling a Rit: about 1835 wh had on its title page "as taught by the later P. Gilkes"

Before the Act of 16 in 1816 L of I did not exist & rehearsals may of course been held privately but general rehearsals for general instruction were unknown.

It is important to notice that ~~For the information of the members of the Craft~~ these Cerem: as worked by the L of Recon: before

the U.G.L. of E & which our G.L. as at present
Constⁿ duly authorized were to be taught to the
members of the Craft generally under Reg^s issued
by G.L. in so called L of Imp. & those

P.M.s who were qual^d went around various L^s
as teachers, or as they ^{were} first called Lecturers or
Lecture Masters - Later on these P.M.s were
called Preceptors but this term was not adopted
until some years later.

The govt of these L of I is laid down in Books
of Constⁿ (158) ~~144. 145. 146. 158.~~

However a small sectⁿ of the members of the U.G.L. of E
^{did} slightly alter the name L of I & so evaded the
restraint & interference of any body outside
themselves but when Masonic bodies deal
with matters relating to Eng Craft Ritual whether
the Assocⁿ be styled Club, Study Circle, Masonic
Assocⁿ, L of I, or otherwise it certainly appears
to me to be dangerous to leave it free from &
outside the jurisdiction of the U.G.L. of E

Now among all teachers of Rit at the time
of the Union the name of Peter Gilkes stands out
prominently -

P.G. was initiated in British L No 4, now No 8,
in 1786 was Mast of several Lond. L & attended
the meetings of the Special L of Promulgation in
1809-11 - This L of Promulⁿ was the preliminary

to the later Act of Union & was intended to prepare
 Mast. & Brn for that uniformity of working which
 later was taught by the L of Recon in 1813-1816.

When the L of Recon: was constituted P.G. was a
 member & he needed only to modify his previous
 working so as to bring it into line with the
 agreed & authorized rendering & his attendance
 at the meetings of the L of Recon: is a proof of his
 desire to be exact & at the meetings of the
 B of I. Ms in 1827 when the Gov of Install was
 agreed ^{upon} P.G. is recorded as attending on every
 occasion.

The Q. G. S. at the time of the Union Wm H White
 & Edwards Harper both active participants
 in the work of the L of Recon: have left their
 testimony to the accuracy & authority of the
 teaching of P.G. - Other L^s throughout the Country
 have ^{also} left testimony that P.G. was fully master
 of the Recon: System & strictly observed them.
 So all this evidence proves that P.G. was from
 1816 to his death in 1833 an authorized teacher
 of the Recon: working -

In 1823 several well known workers of the
 Recon: Cerem: founded the Emul L of Improvement
 and P.G. was one. (to teach what we now
 call the E. Rite)

P.L. attended the 1st meeting of Emul L of Imp -
 visited it frequently & 18 months after its founding
 became a joining Member & leader of its Com:
 & as the present members of this Com: are the
 pupils of P.L. carrying on in a direct and
 unbroken line his working of the Regu Cer:
 the Emul: working is generally accepted as the
 stand: throughout the Rs under the E. Post^m -

To prevent any intro of unauthorised procedure
 the Com: of E. L of Imp is elected annually by the
 working members of the L & the senior member
 of the Com: acts as leader of it but all have equal
 power in checking & controlling the preservation
 of the Rit: unchanged & unaltered.

The foot of E L of Imp is in the hands of this
 Com: & not in the hands of any one member - this
 def of foot is the factor that has enabled E
 to hand down the Grem: unaltered & unchanged
 from gene to gene. A Com: checks & controls
 each Memb: preventing any change & alteration
 wh. may arise from inadvertence or from
 lapse of memory on the part of any one of them.
 & what is of still greater value it prevents
 death interfering with the continuity of the work
 for the death remove one of the Com: the vacant
 place is at once filled by a Capable & reliable
 worker chosen for his intimate knowledge of
 Rit. by the surviving Mem: of the Com: - No = 6

meets every Friday eve at Fins. Hall except July Aug - Sept.

any M.M. who is a regular subscriber to any S. can attend. small fee req^d - 1/6

To see Marouie Rib rendered with strict accuracy is interesting & instructive & I strongly advise any of my hearers to visit the E.L. of J. when in London. I conclude with some remarks made by Chas. Brn -
Don E. Pitt

Rev. G. M. The value of the stand: set up by E. L. of J. has been fortified & enhanced by the zeal & devotion of the little band of teachers who carry on this work. It is . . . E teachers neither claim nor seek to exercise Authority . . . that wh they do is in strict accordance with those Art of U on wh modern E. Eng is based. That it is not open to anybody to question the influence wh they exercise - E.L. of J. has maintained for over 100 years the practice of oral teaching. & it has done this by an admirable system wh has endured so far as it is humanly possible that there sh^d be no deviation from the origl Cer. wh were accepted by G.L. from the L of Recm. in 1816 - This preservation in its integrity of teaching without books is thoroughly in harmony with the Antiquity of the Craft. No S is compelled to adopt E working but the majority of Eng Fm^s gladly & gratefully look to E for example & guidance.

G. Sec^y is the Treas^r of the E. L. of J. & the G. M. is also a supporter so the followers of E are in good company. } Gould's History of Free. } Wonnacott's a L of Recm. } Sadlers History of E.L. of J. } Roman & Rankin.