

7542/1005

UNITED GRAND LODGE OF ENGLAND,

FREEMASONS' HALL.
GREAT QUEEN STREET.
LONDON, W. C. 2.
9th. November, 1881.

R.W.Sir and Brother,

It having been recently brought to the notice of the M.W. the Grand Master that a question has been raised in one of the Provinces as to the relative precedence of Grand Officers and Provincial Grand Officers within the respective provinces of the latter.

His Royal Highness deems it desirable to call your attention to the matter, and to inform you that Grand Officers have a clear right of precedence, as such, over all Provincial Grand Officers, whether in their own province or not.

This precedence has been invariably acknowledged and acted on, and has been the established usage and custom of the Craft for over 150 years without protest or question, and in every case recorded of Great Masonic Ceremonials in the provinces, the Officials records show that the Grand Officers of England, present and past, have always taken precedence of local Masonic Authorities of whatever grades (other than that of Provincial Grand Master) they may have been.

The M.W., The Grand Master, as the Fountain of Masonic Honour under the English Constitution, has therefore declared that such is to be considered as being - and as having been from time to time immemorial - the status and precedence of the Grand Officers of England in relation to those of the respective Provinces, and I am now commanded by His Royal Highness to notify the same for your information and future guidance.

SHADWELL L. CLERKE. G.S.

To The R. Worshipful Sir Walter W. Burrell, Bart., M.P.
Provincial Grand Master for Sussex.

(From "History of F.M. in the Prov. of Sussex T.Francis 1883
pp 73")