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CANADIAN CRAFT MASONRY AND ITS RITUALS

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An Address by

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to the
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PREAMBLE

The following paper on Canadian Craft Masonry and its Rituals was prepared by invitation for presentation to the Research Lodge of Oregon, No. 198, Portland, Oregon, on 16th March, 1972.

Because of the original nature of the request the text of the Paper has been largely retained and only amended slightly to suite the requirements of the occasion of its presentation to the Victoria Lodge of Education and Research. Kenneth Reid
P.G.M.

CANADIAN CRAFT MASONRY AND ITS RITUALS

After the surprise visit of so many of the members of the Research Lodge of Oregon to Victoria Columbia Lodge No. 1 on the occasion of the Installation of Officers last January 8th, (1972), and the honour of your presence on that occasion, it is indeed a pleasure to reciprocate in some small way by being invited to address your Lodge of Research in Portland, I am greatly honoured to be your guest. These exchange visits between your Jurisdiction in Oregon and ours in British Columbia not only strengthen the ties of friendship and Brotherhood between us, but do much to enhance our knowledge of Freemasonry in each other's area, for we are all closely related, not only historically in the growth and development of this Pacific North-west, but in many cases in the customs of the countries of our origin.

It is the intention of this paper to endeavour to shed some light on the advent of Freemasonry in that large, somewhat little understood, and I am afraid sometimes little appreciated country north of the 49th parallel known as Canada. We Canadians of British descent are too often inclined not to speak for ourselves, or to tell the world who and what we are, all too often to our detriment. Let us firstly take a brief look at Canada geographically, and to place ourselves in the picture as we in Canada relate to the Masonic Fraternity.

An examination of a large map of Canada shows the country extending over 4,500 miles from coast to coast, east to west; from Halifax in Nova Scotia to Victoria in British Columbia. I hope to give you some idea of our Masonic population and distribution, following which I would like to tell you briefly, but of necessity inadequately, the source of our masonic origin and the intriguing story of our various masonic rituals. You may be surprised to learn that in Canada as well as in British Columbia our Grand Lodges work and recognize a variety of different rituals, while in most, if not all of your jurisdictions, your Grand Lodges recognize only one, or one standard ritual for each jurisdiction.

The population of Canada of about 22½ million or so is largely confined to a

narrow strip over an area 4,500 miles long and extending within 200 miles north of the Canada- U.S. border, with the greatest proportion of these within an zone 100 miles north of the border. Canada is divided into ten provinces, together with some unorganized areas, and masonically with nine Jurisdictions and nine Grand Lodges, with a total active masonic population of over ¼ million masons and probably as many inactive or non-affiliated ones.

Let us take a look at those masonic divisions or jurisdictions for a minute:-

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Province (1970 lists)	Grand Lodge	Lodges	Members
Nova Scotia	1866		117 12,511
New Brunswick	1867		49 8,303
Prince Edward Island	1875		17 1,444
Quebec	1869		111 15,668
Ontario	1855		635 24,737
Manitoba	1875		119 14,587
Saskatchewan	1906	197	15,270
Alberta	1905	177	18,119
British Columbia	1871		169 25,704
Totals		1,591	236,343

The Province of Newfoundland is governed masonically by a Provincial Grand Lodge under Scotland, and a District Grand Lodge under England. (In 1997 the Lodges of English Registry in Newfoundland, with the blessing of United Grand Lodge formed the Grand Lodge of Newfoundland.)

THE NOVA SCOTIA STONE

The very first recorded evidence of Freemasonry anywhere in North America occurred in Nova Scotia. In 1827 Francis Alger and Dr. C. T. Jackson, while conducting a mineralogical survey of Nova Scotia, discovered a piece of trap rock: measuring about 2½ ft. long and 2 ft. wide, half buried in the sand shore of Goat Island in the Annapolis Basin. On the upper side of the rough stone was engraved "the square and compasses of the Free Mason and in the centre in large and deep Arabic figures, the date 1606." (see--p. 136, History of Freemasonry in Canada, by J. Ross Robertson, P.G.M. , G.L. of Ontario. Toronto, 1900.)

It is supposed that it was either a Head stone of the grave of an early French soldier stationed there in 1603 under the French attempt at colonization, or that it was a commemorative stone to mark the first cultivation of the soil and the formal possession of the country by French colonists.

FREEMASONRY IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

Since I am more familiar with the history and practice in British Columbia I would like first to discuss the Origin of Freemasonry in British Columbia and something of its rituals in use. It may interest you to know that there are to my knowledge at least four, and possibly more, approved rituals in use in Canada, along with many variations of these, four of them approved and practised by the Grand Lodge of British Columbia. This is compared to what I believe is your practice of one universal standard ritual for the whole of your Jurisdiction, and a similar practice in most if not all of the United States

jurisdictions

How did Freemasonry first come to British Columbia? In answering this question it will follow that an understanding of the origin of Freemasonry in each jurisdiction will, in most cases, explain the origin of the rituals in use in that jurisdiction.

The coast of British Columbia was discovered firstly by the Spanish explorers, followed closely by the British, for two main reasons: firstly to discover a Northwest Passage over North America; and secondly to expand the valuable fur trade. The first real settlement in what is now British Columbia was made on Vancouver's Island in about 1840, and was first named Fort Camosun, later Fort Victoria, and eventually was incorporated as the City of Victoria in 1862. When gold was discovered in the canyons of the Fraser River on the mainland in 1858, and later in the Cariboo country in the mainland interior,

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miners, who had been working the goldfields of California from about 1849, and which were then about worked out, hearing of the new discoveries of gold in the north, flocked by every means of transportation available to the colony of British Columbia in search of fortune. Fort Victoria, being the only existing sizable community on Vancouver's Island, mushroomed overnight with miners on their way to the gold fields. With them came many settlers, and many masons; not necessarily California Masons or California citizens but of many nationalities, including a few who probably had obtained their masonry in California. It was not long before someone wanted to establish a lodge at Victoria, and in reply to an announcement in the weekly newspaper several Masons met in 1858 to establish a Lodge. They agreed to petition the United Grand Lodge of England for a Charter, which was issued on March 19th, 1859 to Victoria Lodge No. 1085 under the English Constitution. The ritual they practised was the English Emulation Work as promulgated by the Emulation Lodge of Improvement of London, formed following the Union of the Ancients and Moderns in 1813, as close as their memory afforded. This ritual is still followed today by the descendants of that old Lodge, now known as Victoria Columbia No. 1, and which follows a published ritual known as the "Perfect Ceremonies of Craft Masonry". This ritual has the approval of the Grand Lodge of British Columbia with some slight variations which have crept in over the years largely due to our close association in our formative years with Californian Masonry, but for the sake of tradition we are adverse to changing them. Thus was established our first ritual.

In 1862 a number of Masons of the community and of old Victoria Lodge, not entirely happy with the English form of work, desired to form a lodge working in the ritual to which they had been accustomed when in California and in the Maritime Provinces of North America from which some of them had come. They petitioned the recently formed Grand Lodge of Washington Territory for a Charter to form a new lodge in Victoria. However the Brethren of old Victoria Lodge No. 1035 took exception to this procedure and the application to the Grand Lodge of Washington Territory was quickly returned. (see History of G. L. of B. C., 1971, p. 21)

Among these Brethren who desired to use California type of work was a recent emigrant from Montreal, Dr. Israel Wood Powell, a member of Elgin Lodge No. 384, S.R., a lodge which practised a form of the so-called "Scottish" or "American" Work emanating from the New England Colonies. Dr. Powell persuaded this group in Victoria to adopt the ritual of his own lodge in Montreal, and since Lodges under the Scottish Constitution were permitted to adopt their own form of ritual these Brethren were then persuaded to petition the Grand Lodge

of Scotland for a Charter, which they did, and which was granted on the 4th day of August, 1862, and so Vancouver Lodge No. 421, G.R.S. was established in Victoria working the "American" ritual much to the joy and satisfaction of the members accustomed to the California form of work. (see History of G.L. of B.C. 1971, pp. 24 -26)

So we now have two lodges in the Colony of Vancouver's Island in 1862 working two distinct form's of ritual. There was at this time a third lodge, on the mainland Colony of British Columbia at New Westminster, near the mouth of the Fraser River, Union Lodge No. 1201 E. C., Chartered by the United Grand Lodge of England on December 16th, 1861, also working the "English" or Emulations ritual, although some years later, in 1877, it adopted the "American" form of work and still works that ritual today. By 1871, the year of the formation of Grand Lodge of British Columbia, there were nine lodges established in the now united Province of British Columbia, four of these working the English, or Emulation form of ritual, and five working the American form of ritual.

THE AMERICAN OR "WEBB" RITUAL

It might be of interest here to explain this form of ritual generally known as the "American" or Webb Ritual, and was called the American Rite by Bro. Albert G. Mackey, although this explanation should be well known to Brethren of the Research Lodge of Oregon. I quote from the History of Freemasonry and Concordant Orders, 1912 edition, Henry Leonard Stillson, Editor-in-Chief, on page 198, an article entitled "The American Rite" by Thomas Smith Webb, P.G.M. of the G.L. of Rhode Island, 1813-14.

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"...In the United States, following the establishment of independence (1776), the ritual of the Fraternity was made distinctively American by the blending of the "work" of the

"Antients" and the "Moderns" of England with that of Scotland, and as then revised

and pruned of its surplusages, it gives us the "Work" or ritual as it is now generally

practised throughout the country."

THE EASTERN PROVINCES, UPPER & LOWER CANADA & THE PRAIRIE PROVINCES

For reasons which will become self-evident later, I would like at this point to leave the early development of Freemasonry and its rituals in British Columbia and discuss the origins and rituals of the Craft in Eastern and Central Canada, and return again to British Columbia before concluding.

Freemasonry came to early Canada from several sources. It has been claimed by some historians that Freemasonry was first introduced into Canada in 1721 shortly after the formation of the Grand Lodge of England in 1717, but such claims are entirely without substantiation.

NOVA SCOTIA

From the History of Freemasonry in Canada, by J. Ross Robertson, P.G.M. (Ontario), published in 1900, we read on page 147

"It is recorded in a register book of the Grand Lodge of England that in 1737, William

Douglas, Commander of H. M. S. Falmouth, was appointed Provincial Grand Master

for
the Coast and the Islands of America and Captain Robert Cumins for Cape
Breton and Louisbourg."

Also it is reported in the same record, additionally:-
"Excepting such places where a Provincial Grand Master is already deputed."

Also from the above source, page 148, we read:-
"There is reasonable evidence that a lodge of Freemasons was instituted
under a Boston
warrant at Annapolis Royal in Acadia, now Nova Scotia, and that this warrant was
extant in
1749 at Halifax and that it was the primal one, which with others
eventually formed the
Grand Lodge of Nova Scotia."

And again from the records of St. John's Grand Lodge of Massachusetts,
24th December, 1760, we read:-

".....Our Rt. Worshl Grand Master Mr. Price Granted a Deputation at ye
Petition of sundry
Brethren at Annapolis, in Nova Scotia, to hold a Lodge there, and
appointed Mjr. Erasmus
Jas. Phillips, D.G.M., who has since, at ye request of sundry Brethren at
Halifax,
granted a Constitution to hold a Lodge there, and appointed The Rt. Worshl
His
Excellency Edwd. Cornwallis, Esq., their First Master."

The ritual in use at the above occasion (1740) must of course have been
one in use by the original Grand Lodge of England, as the Antient or Atholl
Grand Lodge was not established until 1753. It is interesting to note that Royal
Standard Lodge No. 398 at Halifax is still in operation under the United Grand
Lodge of England.

NEWFOUNDLAND

The pioneer warrant for a lodge in Newfoundland was erected by the
Provincial Grand Lodge at Boston in the New England Colonies in 1746. In 1774,
lodges were warranted in Newfoundland by the Grand Lodge of England (Antients),
and in 1784-85 by the Moderns. Lodges were also warranted about
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this time by the Grand Lodge of Scotland. There is still no Grand Lodge of
Newfoundland and at this date (1972) the government of the Craft is under
District and Provincial Grand Lodges of England and Scotland respectively, and
work the rituals of these jurisdictions.

QUEBEC (LOWER CANADA)

In the History of Freemasonry in Canada, by Robertson, on page 159 it is
recorded:-

"Ten years after the founding of the first Craft warrant at Halifax,
indeed, a few weeks
after the gallant Wolfe had wrestled Canada from France on the memorable
Plains
of Abraham, the military lodges in the regiments of the victorious army
met and held the

first celebration of the festival of St. John the Evangelist, on the newly acquired soil on 27th December, 1759."

"There is no record in the books of the Grand Lodge of England of any warrants issued to lodges in Quebec earlier than 1762" and in that year, 1762, there were six lodges working in Quebec City. (see pp. 200 -201)

The Lodges in Quebec today practise generally the "English" and the "Canadian rituals, with several lodges working under the authority of the Grand Lodge of England, for example, in Montreal, St. George's No. 440 and St. Paul's No. 374.

BRITISH NORTH AMERICA - THE NEW ENGLAND COLONIES.

The Pennsylvania Gazette, published by Benjamin Franklin, contains many references to Masonic occurrences as early as 1730, and the History of Freemasonry in Canada records on page 225 that the Grand Lodge of England (Antients) or "Seceders" as they were called, established the first lodge of "Antient" Masons in Philadelphia and both Scotland and Ireland established lodges there about the same date. On page 458 of the above reference it is recorded:-

"The assertion is made by a distinguished authority that the earliest lodges in Canada were established by Warrants from New England. While this statement is correct in the sense that some warrants were granted by American authority the history of the lodges of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec and Ontario show that with the exception of three or four lodges, - and those not of early erection,- all received their authority from Provincial Grand Bodies which had been erected by the Mother Grand Lodge across the sea."

ONTARIO (UPPER CANADA)

About 1780 and 1787, we find the fortified city of Kingston the cradle of early Masonry in Ontario, then known as Upper Canada. In 1792, William Jarvis was appointed Provincial Grand Master of Upper Canada by the "Antients" or Atholl Grand Lodge of England, with his Grand East at Niagara, and many lodges were warranted in the area. During the period to follow, up to the year 1858, several Grand Lodges were formed in Upper Canada by England (Antients and Moderns), by Scotland, and by Ireland and we also find the formation of a rival Grand Lodge of Canada in 1855, adding to the confusion.

Finally on the 14th July, 1858, union between the several rival Grand Lodges was resolved, and there was formed, "The Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of Canada", from which we derive our all Canada title of A.F. & A.M., it being derived from the influence of the Antient Grand Lodge and the United Grand Lodge of England of 1813. This "Grand Lodge of Canada" originally embodied both Lower and Upper Canada. In 1869 the Grand Lodge of Quebec (Lower Canada)

was formed following the formation of the two Provinces of Quebec and Ontario by the British North America Act of 1867, leaving the Grand Lodge of Canada, A F. & A. M , in charge of Ontario only.

FRENCH LODGES

There does not appear to be any record of French lodges being established in Canada prior to the capture of Quebec City in 1859 by Wolfe. The French however maintained a chain of Forts leading from Lower Canada to Louisiana by way of the Mississippi Valley, and it is recorded that some of these there were French Lodges, probably instituted by Louisiana. These French Lodges played an important part in the formation of the Grand Lodge of Missouri.

THE CANADIAN RITUAL

Mention has been made previously in several instances of the use of a form of ritual known as "Canadian", particularly in Quebec and in Ontario. The "Canadian" work was said to be a form of English work as determined by the Grand Lodge of Canada following formation in 1858. The Canadian Ritual was developed largely by the Grand Lodge of Canada from the work of the "Antient" and "Modern" Lodges and those established by Scotland and Ireland. When the Grand Lodge of Canada was formed at the time of the union of the several rival Grand Lodges, it took the rituals of the Antient, Modern, Scottish and Irish Lodges and developed the Canadian Ritual for use in its Jurisdiction, from which stemmed the Canadian Ritual as practised today

MANITOBA

Proceeding westward we now come to the first of the three great Canadian Prairie Provinces, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. The Grand Lodge of Manitoba was founded by three Lodges originally constituted by the Grand Lodge of Canada, and using the Canadian ritual of Ontario. These Lodges were Prince Rupert No. 1, Lisgar No. 2, and Ancient Landmark No. 3. The Grand Lodge of Manitoba was formed at Fort Garry, now the City of Winnipeg, on May 12th, 1875.

In 1874, an attempt was made to introduce a form of American ritual into Manitoba, when a dispensation was issued to form a lodge at Fort Garry by the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Minnesota, but after three years under dispensation it was withdrawn. However there was still some dissension even in Manitoba over the choice of rituals, for in 1879 a resolution was passed by the Grand Lodge of Manitoba, "that each lodge in the jurisdiction, or that may hereafter be formed under the Grand Lodge, be accorded the privilege of adopting the "Ancient York Work" (as the American Work was sometimes called") or the "Canadian Work" as they may deem suitable" (Hist. of F.M. & C. Orders p. 487)

SASKATCHEWAN AND ALBERTA

The Grand Lodge of Saskatchewan was constituted in 1906 by lodges established by the Grand Lodge of Manitoba. It works the Canadian ritual almost exclusively, with only two Lodges using the American form of work.

The Grand Lodge of Alberta was established in 1905 by lodges originally chartered by the Grand Lodge of Manitoba. The Lodges in Alberta are permitted to work both the Canadian and the American rituals, as are those in Saskatchewan.

BRITISH COLUMBIA (Continued)

The first instance of the Canadian work being used in British Columbia was when Mountain Lodge No. 11 was chartered at Donald (now moved to Golden), in 1887, and instituted by W. Bro. D.W.H. Horlock, a native of Ontario, and a Past Master of Kamloops Lodge No. 10. (see Hist. of G. L. B. C., p. 161). As he and almost all the Officers were from Ontario it was only natural that Mountain Lodge No. 11 would want to use the Canadian ritual.

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If as now this Canadian work was considered to be a ritual separate from the English, it introduced a third ritual into the Jurisdiction of British Columbia. It became a distinct Canadian ritual over the years and was recognized by the Grand Lodge of British Columbia as a separate work on the formation of Mountain Lodge No. 11 on February 17th, 1887, and of Cascade Lodge No. 12 on May 11th, 1888, largely through the influence of W. Bro. Horlock and M.W. Bro. William Downie (P.G.M. of B.C.) both of whom originated from Ontario.

We find that at this time we now had in British Columbia three established rituals the English Emulation, the American and the Canadian work, and we will conclude this address with the entry of yet another, a fourth ritual, the Australian.

THE AUSTRALIAN RITUAL

"The ritual in use in Australia was essentially English, although differing in some minor matters. It had come into existence as a result of the three Grand Lodges in New South Wales, a State of Australia, each using separate rituals, merging into one Grand Lodge, the Grand Lodge of New South Wales, on September 1st, 1888, at which time it was decided to have one common ritual. Accordingly a learned and scholarly committee was appointed to frame such a ritual, and took what it thought best in each of the rituals which had been used prior to that time, the English, the Scottish and the Irish, and the result was the formation of what has come to be known as the Australian ritual." (Hist. G.L. B.C. 1971 p.463)

A number of former Australians living in B.C. in 1906 petitioned the Grand Lodge of British Columbia for a lodge which was to be known as Southern Cross, and working the Australian Ritual, a ritual to which they had become accustomed in their home land. After some slight variations to make it fit the requirements of Grand Lodge and the work done by other local lodges a dispensation was granted in 1906 and the lodge constituted on July 17th, 1907, as Lodge Southern Cross No. 44, in Vancouver, and thus a fourth, the Australian ritual was introduced into the British Columbia system. Today two lodges work this ritual in Vancouver, Lodge Southern Cross and Commonwealth No. 156.

STANDARDIZATION OF RITUALS

Many suggestions and attempts have been made over the years in British Columbia to unify or standardize our rituals, even to adopt one standard ritual for the Jurisdiction, but all to no avail. The Grand Lodge of British Columbia has in recent years standardized for all new lodges a ritual for each of the adopted workings, and has, or is making available printed copies of these

standardized rituals, but in doing so has allowed all established lodges to continue their traditional work.

Of the 170 active lodges in British Columbia today, 13 practice the Emulation ritual; 81 the Canadian ritual; 74 the American ritual and 2 the Australian ritual.

As our Grand Historian has said in his recently published History of the Grand Lodge of British Col (1971), page 205:-

"Many eminent visiting Freemasons have said, British Columbia Freemasonry is enriched by

the fact that there are such interesting variations in the ritual without the essential precepts

and land-marks of the Craft being violated."

SINGLE vs. MULTIPLE RITUAL

A great deal can be said for the adoption of a single standard ritual by a Masonic Grand Jurisdiction. Such a standard ritual makes for uniformity and equality, and simplifies the task of administration and government. On the other hand multiple rituals increase and introduce interest and variety in the work of the lodges, and particularly the interest of visitation between lodges within the same jurisdiction. The Brethren of British Columbia, and for the most part the whole of Canada generally speaking, prefer to follow the practice as adopted in England and Scotland, where, in Scotland any reasonable masonic ritual desired by a constituent lodge is allowed providing the approval of the Grand Lodge of Scotland is secured. Scotland ".....allows her daughter Lodges to adopt the Ritual of their choice and to make such minor changes as do not affect the usages, customs and landmarks of the Order." (Hist. of G. L. of B.C., p. 466) In England on the other hand, besides the Emulation working as prescribed by the Emulation Lodge of Improvement formed in 1823 after the Act of Union of the "Antients" and the "Moderns" in 1813, there exist numerous variations of the work, some of which are known by the names of their authors, such as:- "Hemmings", "Prestons", "Logic", "Bristol", etc., all receiving the approval and the blessing of the United Grand Lodge of England.

Many Jurisdictions which practise only one standard ritual may deem it strange that others can get along harmoniously with lodges working different rituals. In British Columbia we find no difficulty; in fact the variety of the workings seems to add to the interest and competition. True there are some variations, even with the same ritual being used by several lodges, but these are minor and only add to the interest. Just what is the purpose of a lodge ritual? Is it a competition in perfection of performance, - or is it an allegorical lesson in fundamental truth?

ADOPTED RITUALS - GRAND LODGE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

In British Columbia a happy and satisfactory compromise has been established between the various workings within the Jurisdiction with the adoption by Grand Lodge on the recommendation of its Committee on Rituals in 1954 of what is known as the British Columbia Canadian Work, and in 1963 the British Columbia Ancient Work.. In each case the Lodges which were formed prior to the adoption of these rituals are permitted to follow their traditional work, while all new Lodges formed following these dates of adoption are required to follow the rituals prescribed by Grand Lodge:-

1. The British Columbia Emulation Work.
2. The British Columbia Ancient Work.
3. The British Columbia Canadian Work.
4. The British Columbia Australian Work.

Victoria, B. C.
February 20th, 1973.

16. Sacred Law.

This paper, my Brethren, is a condensed resume' of the historical story covering the writing and transmission