

THE FORMATION OF THE GRAND LODGE OF CANADA IN ONTARIO

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1972 2-3-4

Extracted from "The History of the Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario by Walter S. Herrington, Past Grand Master, and Roy S. Foley, University Lodge No. 496 G.R.C.

Original Extract made by R.W. Bro. William George Gamble, Grand Historian, 1946 to 1963, with Revision made by R.W. Bro. John Thornton Marshall, Grand Historian, 1964} to 1972, both of the Grand Lodge of British Columbia, Antient, Free and Accepted Masons.

PART. I

The Grand Lodge of Canada was formed on October 10th, 1855
William Jarvis

The first Provincial Grand Lodge in Upper Canada was warranted by the "Antients" on March 7th, 1792, with William Jarvis as the Substitute Grand Master of Masons for the Province of Canada West. It had five Lodges under its jurisdiction, but in 1817, when Brother Jarvis died, there were twenty-six. In 1802, a Schismatic Grand Lodge was formed at Niagara, because of the dissatisfaction over the removal of the Grand Lodge to Toronto.

Roderick McKay and Simon McGillivray.

A convention met on August 27th, 1817 at Kingston, with representatives of eleven Lodges present. Roderick McKay was chosen as Grand Master and application was made to the Grand Lodge of England for recognition, and continued to meet for five years without response from England. In 1822,

4.

however, Simon McGillivray was appointed Provincial Grand Master by the Grand Lodge of England. Brother John Dean of Bath was chosen as Grand Secretary - he it was who made the prime move in calling the Convention of 1817.

The first meeting was held in September, 1822 with 18 Lodges represented. There was a feeling that a Canadian should have been appointed Provincial Grand Master, but Simon McGillivray had visited the country in 1800, he was a nephew of Simon McGillivray, famous fur-trader, and was identified with extensive business enterprises in Canada. He was well fitted for the task. He could be firm, without appearing dictatorial and persuasive without loss of dignity. He gave dispensations to twenty Lodges, and hoped to bring in the other sixteen. He succeeded in placing the Craft on a working basis before his death in 1840. While a few Lodges manifested a deep interest in Freemasonry and "kept their home fires burning yet throughout the Province there was a gradual decline in Masonic activities" no small portion of which, upon the part of the individual lodges, may be attributed to the so-called "Morgan Incident".

Captain William Morgan

William Morgan was born in Virginia in 1774, and came to Toronto where he spent the year of 1821-1822. On his return to the United States he gained admission to a Lodge at Batavia, in New York State and joined the Royal Arch Chapter at Leroy, New York in May 1825. He tried to form a Chapter at Batavia but the

brethren there managed to form one and to exclude him. He thereupon threatened to write an exposure of Freemasonry. Some of the Brethren had him removed to Fort Niagara in 1826. After being kept a prisoner there for several weeks, he disappeared and what happened to him was never known. It is alleged that he was put to death on September 24th, 1826 and his weighted body committed to the waters of the Niagara or Lake Ontario. This man, a stonemason by trade, was dissipated in his habits, neglectful of his family, and was rarely free from debt. There is no evidence that he was a member or was ever admitted to any Lodge in Canada, but upon his return to the United States he managed to gain admission to the Lodge at Batavia by representing himself as having joined the Masons during his residence in Canada. This incident led to a great outcry among the enemies of Freemasonry, and had political as well as Masonic repercussions. As the supposed fate of Morgan furnished material for political orators, editors and pamphleteers, in more than one election across the border, from the mass of evidence it is very difficult to separate the fictitious from the true. Although the Craft, as a body, was in no way implicated in the crime, yet the publicity given to the occurrence could not fail to bring Freemasonry into disrepute and dampen the ardor of the faithful brethren in Upper Canada who, amid most discouraging conditions, had been making heroic efforts to place the Provincial Grand Lodge upon a firm footing.

Ziba M. Phillips

In 1842, Brother Ziba K. Phillips of Brockville who was made a Past Deputy Provincial Grand Master by Brother McGillivray 20 years before, called a meeting of delegates of all the Lodges to take into consideration the "State of the Craft" and the necessity of forming a permanent Provincial Grand Lodge. At least four Lodges responded to the summons, the Brethren west of Kingston ignoring the invitation. A petition was forwarded to the Grand Master in England, requesting that the Hon. Robert Baldwin Sullivan be appointed Provincial Grand Master. No reply was received. R.W. Brother Phillips called another meeting at Smith Falls in 1845. Forty-six brethren were in attendance representing eight Lodges. They went through the form of organizing an independent body, the "Grand Lodge of Free Masons Canada West" elected Bro. Phillips as the Grand Master. This Grand Lodge issued Warrants and held regular Communications until the Fall of 1845. St. Andrew's Lodge in Toronto in 1845 attempted to revive the Provincial Grand Lodge by petitioning the Grand Lodge of England to appoint one of St. Andrews' past masters, Brother T.G. Ridout, as Provincial Grand Master, only to discover that one of their own members, Sir Allen Napier McNab, had been appointed Provincial Grand Master by the Grand Lodge of England and the Grand Lodge of Scotland, nine months previously

5.

Sir Allen Napier McNab

Sir Allen Napier McNab was the first native-born Canadian to occupy the position and was Prime Minister of Canada from 1854 to 1856. He was Initiated in 1841 at the age of 43, but did not take his Master's degree until 1845. He was a conspicuous figure in the Legislative Assembly of Upper Canada and was considered as one of the foremost statesmen of his day. Following his entrance into the Craft he did not appear to be very impressed with the Order and evidently "did not prize the appointment, having failed to mention it to any of his friends".

On a visit to Edinburgh in 1842, he had been made Provincial Grand Master in Canada, although there were at that time no Lodges in Western Canada operating under a Scottish Warrant. Five years later, while in England, he was made

Deputy Grand Master of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Canada West. When he heard that Barton Lodge at Hamilton, in which he had taken his Second Degree was going to support a petition of St. Andrew's Lodge to have Brother Ridout appointed Provincial Grand Master he attended the meeting and informed them of his appointment. Brother Ridout was induced to accept the position of Deputy Grand Master.

The meeting was held in the Masonic Hall at Hamilton on August 9th 1845, with Sir Allen McNabb presiding. Twenty-seven delegates were present from seven Lodges, extending from St. John's in Kingston to Norfolk in Simcoe. From the latter Lodge came Brother William Mercer Wilson, who was appointed to the rather unimportant Office of Assist-and Director of Ceremonies.

By 1852 there were thirty-four Lodges in this the third Provincial Grand Lodge of Canada West. In June of that year, at the semi-annual meeting, Notice of Motion was given to memorialize the Grand Lodge of England to permit the Provincial Grand Lodge to exercise "absolute control of the working. and operation of the Craft within this Jurisdiction - the United Grand Lodge still retaining and exercising a superior and governing power". No answer was received, so in October 1853, a Notice of Motion was given to be presented in May for an independent Grand Lodge in Canada West. At another meeting held in October, 1854, still no reply had been received. At this meeting a sum of £300 was set aside as the nucleus for a permanent Fund of Benevolence. It was reported at this meeting that there were thirteen Lodges in Canada West operating under the Grand Lodge of Ireland, but nothing could be done at that stage for very obvious reasons.

The Hamilton Meeting of 1855

Then came the memorable meeting of October 10th, 1855 in Hamilton when the all-important resolution was adopted with but one dissenting voice. There were delegates from forty-one Lodges present, all the way from Montreal to Windsor, but they were not all of one mind and the resolutions had to be so carefully worded as not to offend any of the wavering brethren.

The first resolution passed was that the meeting be conducted according to the rules and regulations governing the Grand Lodge of England. The resolution to form a Grand Lodge was submitted - the conclusion of which read as follows:

"Therefore be it resolved that in order to apply a remedy to the evils, to form a perfect fraternal union and harmony, establish order, ensure tranquility, provide for and promote the general welfare of the Craft, and secure to the fraternity of Canada all the blessings of Masonic privileges - it is expedient, right, and our bounden duty, to form a Grand Lodge of Canada "

Resolution:

"That we, the representatives of regularly warranted Lodges, have in convention assembled, resolved that the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of Canada, be and is hereby formed upon the Ancient charges and constitutions of Masonry."

6.

A Committee was formed, led by Brother William Mercer Wilson, to prepare a Constitution. The report was presented and adopted the next morning, and Brother Wilson was elected the first Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Canada.

The Grand Master of New York, declined to allow a Past Grand Master of that Jurisdiction to perform the installation ceremony. The Hon. H.T. Backus,

Past Grand Master of Michigan graciously accepted the invitation and performed the ceremony on the 2nd of November, 1855.

The first act of the Grand Master was to forward to the Grand Lodge of England, an address in which he detailed the causes leading to the formation of the Grand Lodge of Canada and the many unheeded appeals, concluding:

" engage in one common cause - the good of our fellowmen, by promoting the interests of our time-honoured institution, and it being our first wish and highest ambition to establish and perpetuate a sincere and intimate alliance with the Grand Lodge of England, we extend to you, in the name of our divine art, the right hand of Brotherhood, and confidently claim from you a reciprocation of our fraternal regard."

The Semi-Annual Communication of Canada West

Within two weeks of the formation of the Grand Lodge of Canada, the Provincial Grand Lodge of Canada West held its semi-annual communication in Toronto, and received a letter from the Grand Master of New York, explaining why he had refused to give his consent that his Grand and Past Grand officers might perform the consecration and installation ceremonies. A letter was received from Norfolk Lodge at Simcoe withdrawing its allegiance from the Provincial Grand Lodge. It was also announced that seven more Lodges had followed the example of Norfolk Lodge.

The Provincial Grand Lodge warned all Lodges not to back Norfolk Lodge or admit to their Lodges any member of such Lodges, until the Provincial Grand Master received instructions from England on how to act. At their next meeting in May (1856), the Provincial Grand Lodge adopted a report issued from the Provincial Grand Secretary's office, directing the Grand Secretary to publish for the information of the Masonic fraternity at large, a true statement of the facts connected with the movement leading up to the formation of the new Grand Lodge and boldly asserting that the statements issued by that Grand Lodge (of Canada) were not borne out by the facts. Yet this same report contained the following concluding paragraph:

"Nearly the entire craft agree in the belief that an independent organization is essential to the proper and effectual working of the Craft in this Province" but follows up this declaration with the expressed determination to attain this end:

"in a legitimate manner and not by violence."

Copies of the report were made by the Provincial Grand Secretary and were sent to the Grand Lodges of England, Ireland and Scotland, to all the Grand Lodges in the United States and to all Lodges holding their warrants under the Provincial Grand Lodge. In the previous year, despairing of obtaining any replies to their written communication to Grand Lodge of England, appointed as their personal representative there, W.. Bro. R.H. Townsend of London, with full power to act in the matter.

H.R. Townsend

Brother Townsend attended the quarterly communication of the English Grand Lodge in March, 1856, and brought to their attention the discourtesy shown to their Canadian brethren, alluding to the Committee appointed to deal with grievances of the Canadian Provincial Grand Lodge, which had made virtually no recommendations but reported that the matter was under the control of the Grand Master. Brother Townsend then moved that the Committee's report be printed and circulated. This placed the onus on the Grand Master to show cause why some action had not been taken. Another brother moved and

7.

gave notice of motion, that at the next meeting he would move that a Provincial Grand Lodge should have all the privileges of Grand Lodge, except that every three years it should submit to the Grand Lodge of England, the names of the brethren for the position of Grand Master.

A Vacillating Grand Master

At the next meeting, the Grand Master in England, no doubt feeling that he was in a defensive position, presented a lengthy address, characterizing the action of the organizers of the new Grand Lodge as rebellious, expressed indignation that the notice of motion would have been given without consulting him, and promised to lay before Grand Lodge, at an early date, a plan which he hoped would be satisfactory to all the Provincial Grand Lodges and get rid of their complaints.

The Grand Master riot being present at the next meeting, the acting Grand Master gave the report suggesting certain changes in Provincial Grand Lodge finances and exchange of Communications, but declined to assent to any alteration of the laws, so as to enable the Provincial Grand Lodges to elect their own Grand Masters and made no comment on the question of an independent Grand Lodge and no reference was made to the Special Committee. The autocratic attitude of the Grand Master was challenged and the deliberate manner in which the claims of the Canadians had been neglected was referred to. An overwhelming majority favoured the reading of the Report to the Committee, but nothing was done and the whole matter was deferred to the October 1st meeting four weeks later.

Earl of Carnarvon

At that meeting the Earl of Carnarvon championed the cause of the Provincial Grand Lodges and secured the unanimous endorsement of a resolution to refer the address of the Grand Master to the Colonial Board for consideration and report at the next quarterly meeting. In conclusion the Earl said: "I move also that the report be printed and distributed amongst the brethren at their entrance to Grand Lodge, and that Grand Lodge considers that no scheme will be satisfactory which fails to approve of the Colonial Brethren having a voice in the appointment of the Provincial Grand Master.'

This was the position of affairs in England on the first of October 1856, and it looked as if some definite action was about to be taken. At any rate, the question had been wrested from the hands of the Grand Master and the Grand Secretary, who had been largely responsible for the delays in dealing with it.

William Mercer Wilson - The First Annual Communication

At the first Annual Communication of the newly formed Grand Lodge held on July 9th, 1856, fifty-one delegates were present, representing thirty-three Lodges. Grand Master William Mercer Wilson provided the outstanding feature of the meeting with his address *, which said in part:

"Actuated by the true spirit of Masonry which has, and I ever trust will, direct the actions of this Grand Lodge, your officers have steadily persevered in the conscientious discharge of the important duties entrusted to them, and to correct or to defy the opposition of the violent.'
and again

"keeping prominently in view that the good of the Craft is the object to

which our efforts
are directed; and I feel assured that, however we may individually differ
in opinion as to
the best method to be adopted in order to secure that great end, we shall
never forget that
as brethren it is our special duty to work together in harmony, peace, and
unity."

* For Address in full, see pages 36-43 in the history

The Grand Master pointed out the necessity and importance of stance in high
office, of paying
8.

frequent visits to the subordinate Lodges; he thought a uniform system of work
essential and suggested adding the "Mark" to the Fellowcraft. He thought the
"Mark" not properly a part of the "Arch", but as belonging to the Second Degree.
He traveled widely and felt it the duty of every Grand Master to do so.

He congratulated the Brethren upon the prompt and hearty recognition by the
Grand Lodge of Ireland, and said that a number of Grand Lodges in the United
States, had already, and in the most fraternal spirit, acknowledged the:

"Correctness of our Masonic position, whilst a few others have delayed their
recognition
out of courtesy to the Grand Lodge of England. The correctness of our course has
been clearly demonstrated by many of the most distinguished and best informed of
Masonic writers and authorities."

Reference was made to Brother Joseph T. Evans, the Grand Master of New York,
who had stigmatized the Grand Lodge of Canada as "spurious, schismatic and
rebellious", and presumed to censure the other Grand Lodges for acknowledging
the independent Masonic existence of the Grand Lodge of Canada. The Grand
Master blamed the circular issued by the Provincial Grand Lodge of Canada West,
which had doubtless misled the Grand Master of New York, and was responsible for
his attitude.

No reply had been received from the Grand Lodge of England.

The Register of Grand Lodge showed thirty-nine Lodges with a total membership of
1,179 Freemasons.

T.D. Harington

The Provincial Grand Master for Quebec and Three Rivers, Bro. T.D. Harington,
wrote to the Grand Secretary of England, in reply to a request for his views on
the situation in Canada. The Provincial Grand Lodge of Canada West met in
Toronto on October 22nd, when a copy of his letter was read in which he had
sounded a note of warning to the English Grand Lodge.

"Worthy men waver, feeling themselves unsupported, and finally, although
retaining their
English affection, but losing hope and confidence they reluctantly look to
self-government.
They will, of course be received by the self-constituted G.L. of Canada, to
which they will give
their adherence, unless the loyal P.G.L. is driven to declare its own
independence."

Two resolutions were carried; one expressing regret at the reception by the Grand Master in England of communications from the Provincial Grand Lodge and defended the Deputy Provincial Grand Master and commended him for his zeal for Masonry and his efforts to maintain it in unsullied purity and another condemning the Grand Secretary in England for his careless method in dealing with Canadian correspondence and blamed the Grand Master for not calling him to account.

"That this Provincial Grand Lodge desires to express in the Strongest terms, their disapproval of the unjust and uncautious treatment which they have experienced at the hands of the M.W. Grand Master of England."

They then passed another resolution:

"That the Lodges and individual brethren under this Jurisdiction are hereby strictly forbidden to hold Masonic communication with the self-styled Grand Lodge of Canada or any Lodges or any individual having any connection therewith."

9.

When they decided to make one more appeal to the Grand Lodge of England, and for this purpose a Special Committee was appointed:

" to embody fully in a petition, the grievances and present wants of the brethren"

and a special meeting was arranged for July 8th, 1857 to consider the report. Fourteen were present at the meeting but the Grand Master was absent.

A Trial of Patience.

The report after blaming the officers of the Grand Lodge in England had made such a strong case against the Grand Lodge in England that

"they had evidently convinced themselves that M.W. Bro. Wilson was not after all

such a transgressor as their former references to him would indicate"

It gave a history of the Provincial Grand Lodge from the appointment of R.W. Bro. Jarvis in 1792 to the date of the report. They thought the time had passed for moderate concessions from the Grand Lodge in England and asked for the establishment of the Provincial Grand Lodge as the Grand Lodge of Upper Canada, with full unrestricted powers.

The Grand Master made the excuse that there was some confusion with reference to the so-called Independent Grand Lodge and the Provincial Grand Lodge of the same place. He made several concessions regarding the appointment of the Provincial Grand Master; retaining all fees of every sort and kind; but thought the question of warrants for new Lodges would have to be left with the Colonial Board. He refused to have the Provincial Grand Master appoint subordinate Provincial Grand Masters and intimated that Grand Lodge would retain a supervising power.

Thomas Gibbs Ridout

By direction of the Deputy Grand Master R.W. Bro. Ridout, the Provincial Grand Secretary replied -

"that the concessions proposed in that statement are made at too late a period to be acceptable to the Canadian Craft, and that they will not be sufficient to

ally the strong feeling of discontent prevailing throughout the whole jurisdiction."

He also stated that the brethren were waiting for a reply to their memorial and said,
"should an unfavourable reply be received to that memorial, in three months there will be scarcely a Lodge that will retain the allegiance to the Grand Lodge of England."

He gave this not as his personal view, but as the decided opinion of the Deputy Grand Master and Officers of the Provincial Grand Lodge.

The Grand Secretary replied that the memorial had been received and referred to the Colonial Board and the Grand Master, and said:

" I am further directed to express the earnest hope of this Grand Lodge that the remedies proposed by the M.W. Grand Master will be found to meet the requirements of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Canada West."

But the Grand Secretary had already been warned that the remedies proposed fell far short of satisfying the Canadians. The short sighted policy of the Grand Lodge of England could produce but one result. This correspondence was in March and April 1857.

10.

Invitation to the Provincial Grand Lodge

The Provincial Grand Lodge met in Toronto on June 30th, 1857. The carefully prepared memorial had produced no result. The time for action had arrived. The Deputy Grand Master held out no hope of obtaining from the Grand Lodge of England the privileges they sought. Meanwhile a letter from Brother Wilson had arrived. It read:

"Dear Brother Richardson,

I am much pleased to learn that your Provincial Grand Lodge will meet in Toronto on the 30th inst., and that some decided step will then be taken on the important question of

selfgovernment. I most sincerely hope that the brethren on that occasion will be actuated

by no feeling other than a desire for the good of the Craft. Union is essential to Masonry

and I trust that many days will not be allowed to pass before we can present to the Masonic

World a phalanx of united brethren. Our Grand Lodge will meet at Montreal on the 8th Proximo

and I need scarcely say how delighted I would be to meet you and every member of your Grand

Lodge on that occasion. You have many men of sterling ability and sound Masonic knowledge among you, whose services are required and whose talents are wanted to assist in building our Masonic temple in this Province. For my own part, I shall never rest satisfied until every good Mason in Canada is united under one banner, and I am happy in the belief that these sentiments

are becoming more general and that the members of the Craft, almost universally, are now desirous of forgetting the past and of becoming more united for the future. Waiting with much anxiety the result of your meeting but relying

upon the triumph of sound Masonic principles, I continue, dear Brother Richardson,

Very truly and fraternally yours,
'William M. Wilson' "

To that letter was appended a postscript commenting on the action of the Grand Lodge of England, which concluded:

"The division which has taken place amongst us has made no change in the friendly feeling I have ever entertained towards those brethren with whom I was so long and happily associated; and all I request is that they will give me, and those with whom I act, credit for the same honesty and integrity of purpose they claim for themselves,
a claim which I cheerfully concede to them.'

Such a letter could scarcely fail to produce good results and the fact that other Grand Lodges were welcoming the new Grand Lodge had a good deal of weight in influencing the Provincial Body.

Provincial Grand Lodge Moves Towards Union

The resolution forbidding fraternal intercourse with certain Lodges was rescinded. The reading of the correspondence with the Grand Lodge of England was followed by a series of resolutions which were very far-reaching in their effect.

"Resolved - That with unfeigned grief, this Provincial Grand Lodge, in fidelity to the Order within the Province, is constrained to declare that separate organization is necessary for the efficiency and stability in Canada.'
11.

"Resolved - That on confirmation of this foregoing resolution (at the next ensuing meeting of this Provincial Grand Lodge) this Grand Lodge shall declare itself an independent Grand Lodge, all warrants from the Grand Lodge of England being returned thereto."

"Resolved - That the interests of Masonry require that proper unity of the Craft should be restored and maintained throughout the Province."

"Resolved - that this Provincial Grand Lodge being actuated by the spirit of the foregoing resolutions and accepting an intimation of an anxious desire on the part of the members of the Grand Lodge of Canada, for a union with those comprising this Provincial Grand Lodge with a view to the restoration of perfect unity amongst Freemasons of Canada."

They paid graceful tribute to the spirit of amity of the Committee of the previous October - that had framed that last petition to the Grand Lodge of England, by naming the same men as a Committee:

"With power to take such measures as they may consider necessary and expedient to effect such unity -and to meet any Committee appointed for a like purpose by the Grand Lodge of Canada, and with them to negotiate preliminary terms on which such re-union may be accomplished and consolidated, reporting at the next

meeting of the Provincial Grand Lodge.'

Recognition Steadily Increases

The Grand Lodge of Canada met at Montreal on July 8th, 1857. Warrants were issued to nine Lodges, formerly Under Dispensation. Foreign correspondence revealed that many Grand Lodges had recognized them. The Grand Lodge of England, the senior Grand Lodge of the World, which was honoured and respected by all sovereign Grand Lodges, many of whom were proud to call her their Mother Grand Lodge had not recognized them. It was felt that any step calculated to assist in securing that recognition was warmly welcomed.

The Report of the Committee on Foreign Correspondence of the Grand Lodge of Florida was presented in full. The Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of South Carolina commended the Grand Lodge of Canada for sticking for independence and concluded:

"It is not to be doubted that the Grand Lodges of the United States will, with one accord, extend the right hand of fellowship and recognition to this younger sister.'

Recognition was also given by Ireland, District of Columbia, Alabama, Iowa, Connecticut, Louisiana, Maine, Michigan, Oregon, New Hampshire, Kentucky, Texas and Vermont.

The Joint Committee

The Grand Master in his Address expressed regret that he was unable to accomplish unity. The Committee on the Grand Master's Address recommended that a Committee of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Canada West and any other Committee from the Provincial Grand Masters of Canada East meet with them to negotiate preliminary terms on which to try to bring about union.

A resolution for the appointment of a Committee was passed but the Committee was instructed " that they entertain no proposition not based on an entire independence of Freemasonry in Canada, nor any implication upon the constitutionality or correctness of the present position of this Grand Lodge but to meet them on all other points".. The Grand Master stated that he wished to resign, but he was re-elected.

The meeting of the joint committees was held on August 5th, 1857.
12.

"Resolution - That unity being the first and fundamental principle of Freemasonry, the more widely that principle will admit of practical application in the government of the Craft, the better will the interests of Masonry be served. It is, therefore, the opinion of this meeting that union of the whole Masonic fraternity in Canada, under one Grand Lodge, will best promote the interests of all Freemasons in Canada."

Another resolution stated:

"That in view of the terms of authority under which this meeting is hold, no question of constitutionality as affecting either body be discussed, but that both Lodges meet as equals and in a spirit of a mutual and generous conciliation for the good of Masonry."

The Articles of Union

Eleven Articles of Union were submitted but the two Grand Lodges deadlocked on the first:

'There shall be from and after next ensuing, a full, perfect and perpetual union between the two fraternities of Free and Accepted Masons of Canada above described so that in all time thereafter they shall form and constitute but one brotherhood and that the said community shall be represented in one Grand Lodge, to be solemnly formed, constituted and held on the said next ensuing, and thence-forward forever."

The Grand Lodge of Canada wanted the date "July 9th 1858" inserted in each case and the word "two" deleted in froxiti of "fraternities". While the original seems very unobjectionable the meeting adjourned without attempting to deal with the remaining Articles.

Provincial Grand Lodge Declares Independence

At the meeting of the Provincial Grand Lodge on September 9th, 1857 the action of its Committee was approved, but although no action was taken, the Committee remained. Sir Allen McNab in the Chair announced that by the adoption of the Minutes of the Meeting on June 30, the Provincial Grand Lodge had declared its independence, and requested the surrender of all Warrants issued to Lodges under its jurisdiction by the Grand Lodge of England. They then constituted themselves the "Ancient Grand Lodge of Canada" and

" proceeded to set their house in order, following quite closely the same procedure adopted two years before by the other independent Grand Lodge."

Grand Lodge of England Appeals

The Grand Lodge of England appealed to R.W. Brother Harington, Past Provincial Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Quebec and Three Rivers, for such information as in his opinion would be useful in dealing with the troubles in Canada. Harington pointed out that he had written a long communication to the Grand Secretary on September 18th, 1856 on the condition of the Craft in Canada, in which he blamed Grand Lodge (of England) for not attending to complaints made from Canada, and for losing the allegiance of the two Grand Bodies. As he did not receive any answer for over a year, he resigned as the Provincial Grand Master of Quebec and Three Rivers and reminded them that it was a result of their inaction that there were two independent Grand Lodges in Canada, and that no man carried more prestige than Sir Allen McNab, who had become Grand Master of the "Ancient Grand Lodge of Canada."

This letter evoked a reply with a promptness hitherto unknown in communications with England. His letter was dated November 9th and the reply of the Grand Master was penned on December 5th. The

13.

Grand Master in his letter to Harington administered a "mild rebuke" to Sir Allen McNab for calling in the Warrants and flatly refused to recognize either of the Grand Lodges. He also accepted Harington's resignation and appointed James Dean as Provincial Grand Master of Quebec and Three Rivers. Harington in reply wrote a long letter dealing exhaustively with every argument advanced by the Grand Master of England but he received from the Grand Secretary this reply;

"His Lordship having given the whole subject his mature deliberation, does not

observe any grounds or any new circumstances alleged, which induce him to alter his expressed opinion."

Harington then decided to turn his attention to the all-absorbing question of the Union of the two independent Grand Lodges.

W.C. Stephens and T. D. Harington

Harington communicated with both Ridout and Wilson and wrote a draft of Articles he hoped would be acceptable to each one. The only really radical change was the substitution of the "Grand Lodges" for "the two Fraternities" in the first Resolution of the joint Committees. Both Grand Lodges received Harington's proposals favourably and appointed representatives: Brother W.C. Stephens for the Grand Lodge of Canada and Brother T.D. Harington for the Ancient Grand Lodge, to agree upon the terms of Union and to submit the same for confirmation. These were men of broad vision, the result of their labours was a "Proposed Preamble and Resolutions for finally settling the union of the Craft in Canada." That R.W. Bro. Harington approached the subject with an open mind is quite evident from the fact that "his proposed Articles of Agreement were cast aside and an entirely different approach adopted. The final document being the basis of the Union of the two Grand Lodges, may rightly be considered as one of the most important documents relating to Freemasonry in Canada." (For the full text see pages 68 to 70 of the History.)

Union is accomplished

All Canadian Masons looked hopefully forward to a meeting of the Grand Lodge of Canada summoned for July 14th, 1858, to meet in the hall of King Solomon's Lodge in Toronto, where the Brethren were admitted into one Grand Lodge amid scenes of united applause, happiness and satisfaction - "It was disorder, if such it may be styled, that gladdened the hearts of all present." When order was restored, they all joined hands and encircled the room as the M. W. Grand Master Wilson pronounced the invocation that came direct from his heart: "May the links thus united never be broken."

M.W. Brother Wilson was re-elected as Grand Master in 1858 and R.W.. Bro. Thomas Ridout as his Deputy. The rank of Honorary Grand Master was conferred upon Brothers Harington and Stephens. Among the distinguished visitors were the Grand Masters of Vermont and Kentucky, both of whom had manifested the keenest interest in the affairs of the Grand Lodge of Canada. At the time of the formation the Grand Lodge of Canada had forty-one Lodges on the Register: fifteen from the Grand Lodge of Ireland; one from the Grand Lodge of Scotland; fifteen from the Canada West of the Grand Lodge of England, and ten from the Grand Lodge of Canada East.

In 1859 M.W. Brother Wilson was again re-elected as Grand Master with R. W. Brother Harington as his Deputy Grand Master, who then served as Grand Master from 1860 to 1863 inclusive.

Unaffiliated Masons

M.W. Brother Wilson was 'not only an honoured and respected leader among the Masons of Canada, but his reputation went far beyond the borders of his native land."

The position of the unaffiliated Mason has ever been the subject of much controversy and Grand Master Wilson had very decided views upon the question and gave expression to them in his

14.

Address as the Grand Master in 1859. He quoted from the Old Charges as follows:

"Every Mason ought to belong to a Lodge, and to be subject to its by-laws and the general regulations; one visit should be allowed to an unaffiliated Mason; no brother should leave his Mother Lodge, except for the purpose of joining another.'

In commenting on the rights and privileges of a Mason who has demitted from a Lodge and has not affiliated with another, he held:

"that by his demission he violates the principles and disobeys the precepts of the Order and divests himself of all the rights and privileges which belong to him as a member of that organization; still remaining, however; subject to the government and discipline of the Order."

The report of the Committee on Foreign Correspondence of the same year gives the views of other Grand Masters upon the same subject, which makes it quite clear that M. W. Brother Wilson was not alone in taking the stand he did. It was pointed out that many men join the Craft to satisfy morbid and idle curiosity; to know the Secrets of the Order and, when once gratified, take no further interest in the institution; he who stands aloof and looks on coldly at the struggles incident to life, nor adds a portion to the common fund allotted to relief should never be a Mason; he is a stone unfitted for the building and would always mar the beauty of our noble edifice; that men then join the Craft for purely selfish reasons, to aid in traveling Masonry being a convenient Passport or introduction among strangers and in strange lands; and also to support flagging zeal or pecunious economy.

Recognition by the Grand Lodge of England

The Union of the two Grand Lodges having been happily effected there was still wanting recognition by the Grand Lodge of England. Although there had been heated correspondence over the action of the Canadian brethren, there was never a time when they lost their respect and reverence for the Mother Grand Lodge, which finally on December 1st, 1858, passed a Resolution, limited in extent, recognizing an Independent Grand Lodge. This was not satisfactory to the Canadian Brethren, but negotiations between the two Grand Masters, William Mercer Wilson and the Earl of Zetland, resulted in the "Zetland-Wilson Agreement" which was confirmed by the Grand Lodge of England on June 1st, 1859. This agreement "stipulated that the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Canada should extend over the whole Province, etc.."

The Great Aim of Freemasonry

At the Annual Communication held in Ottawa in July, 1860, there were on the Register of Grand Lodge one hundred and thirty-six Lodges and two Under Dispensation, and the Grand Lodge of Canada was in Fraternal Correspondence with the three British Grand Lodges and thirty-seven in the United States.

Said Grand Master William Mercer Wilson:

"To God and to Him alone are we indebted for the peace, happiness and prosperity which has attended our efforts and blessed our labours. With gratified hearts and due solemnity, we would therefore earnestly entrust our Common Father to

continue to use His protective blessing and guidance:

and again:

"The Great Aim of Masonry, as I understand it, is to cultivate and improve the mind and to impress upon its votaries the solemn truth that there is an omnipotent, omniscient, and

15.

ever-loving God, who rules and governs all. In the interesting and beautiful ceremonial of our

Order, we are constantly reminded of this great and important truth, and also that same Mighty Power, that fashioned and sustains the Universe, created the mind of man, bestowed upon him

a thinking, a reasoning and a feeling nature, placed him in a universe of faculties to comprehend them, and enable him to rise by his meditations to a knowledge of their origin."

His work being accomplished he then surrendered his gavel, as Grand Master, to Brother Harington.

Footnotes

1. The Second Earl of Zetland ruled as the Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England, from 1844 to 1870. He it was that signed the Original Charters for Victoria Lodge No. 1085 (783); Nanaimo Lodge No. 1090; Union Lodge No. 1201 (899); and British Columbia No. 1187.

2. The words "in the Province of Ontario" were added to the Title the "Grand Lodge of Canada" in deference to the other Provincial Grand Lodges. It first appeared on the title pages of the Proceedings of 1888:

3. The original manuscript of the first draft of the late R. W. Brother Gamble, late Grand Historian, in his own handwriting, is safely lodged in the Provincial Archives at Victoria, with the other Historical Records of Grand Lodge.