

## **HISTORY OF ROYAL ARCH MASONRY IN CANADA**

(by George L. Gardiner)

### **Canada (Ontario)**

The early history of the Grand Chapter, Royal Arch Masons of Canada is somewhat obscure, but the earliest record of Royal Arch Masonry in Upper Canada (now the Province of Ontario), dates back to 1782. At that time, Lodge No. 156, attached to a unit of the British Army stationed at Fort Niagara, after raising Brother Joseph Clements to the Sublime Degree of a Master Mason, exalted him to companionship in the Holy Royal Arch. This record conclusively proves that this Military Lodge assumed Royal Arch powers and that the degree was actually conferred at Niagara in 1782.

In 1795, William Jarvis, Provincial Grand Master, warranted a Royal Arch Chapter at Kingston, Ontario, in connection with a Craft Lodge No. 6, now known as Ancient St. John's Lodge No. 3. The chapter was Warranted as St. John's Royal Arch Chapter. In 1819, this chapter became known as St. John's Chapter of Royal Arch Masons, under the Provincial Grand Chapter of Upper Canada. This Provincial Grand Chapter was actually organized in 1818. A Masonic convention was held at Kingston, in 1817, to reorganize the craft under the leadership of Ziba A4. Phillips. After establishing a Provincial Grand Lodge, attention was directed to Royal Arch Masonry, and, in 1818, a Provincial Grand Chapter was formed with the following constituted Chapters:

Frontenac Chapter No. 1, Kingston; Union Chapter No. 91 Ernestown; St. John's Chapter No. 4, York (now Toronto).

The ritual then in vogue in the United States was adopted; the officers were designated High Priest, King, and Scribe, and the degrees of Mark Master, Past Master, Most Excellent Master, and Royal Arch were worked, using the American ritual.

The Provincial Grand Chapter was short-lived due to conflicting opinions as to whether the American system and ritual should be continued or the system and ritual changed to bring Canadian Royal Arch Masonry into harmony with that existent in the Mother Country. The resulting friction between two factions was responsible for the Provincial Grand Chapter becoming inactive, and, in 1831, it ceased to function.

The Grand Lodge of Canada having been established on a firm basis, Colonel William Mercer Wilson, Grand Master, became concerned as to the fate of the Royal Arch. He issued a summons calling upon Royal Arch Masons to attend a convention in the City of Hamilton. This meeting was held January 19, 1857, with but eight members attending. The Grand Master stated that Royal Arch Masonry had declined in Canada during the past thirty years, and expressed the opinion that this was due solely to a diversity of interests, and the want of uniformity in the work. Chapters were then working under different Grand Chapters, with different constitutions. As a result of this meeting, it was decided to proceed with the formation of the Grand Chapter of Upper Canada. The Constitution of the Grand Royal Arch, Chapter of England was adopted. The principal officers to be designated as Grand Z., Grand H., and Grand J., Grand Scribe E., Grand Scribe N., and Grand Treasurer. These officers, unlike the English system, were to be elected

annually. The degrees to be conferred consisted of the Mark Master Mason, Most Excellent Master, Past Master and the Holy Royal Arch. The three first mentioned were included in the system to assimilate with Royal Arch Masonry in the United States, thus permitting a free exchange of visitations between members and chapters of the two countries. On January 20, 1857, the meeting was continued, and the name of Grand Chapter was altered to the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Canada, by which name it is known to this day. At this meeting, three chapters were represented: Hiram Chapter, Hamilton; St. John's Chapter, London; St. John's Chapter, Hamilton. The following officers were elected and installed by Czar Jones, Past Grand High Priest of the Grand Chapter of Michigan:

W.M. Wilson, Simcoe, Grand Z; A. Bernard, Montreal, Grand H., Thos. Duggan, Hamilton, Grand J; Thos. B. Harris, Hamilton, Grand Scribe E; William Daniell, London, Grand Scribe N; William Bellhouse, Hamilton, Treasurer; John Morrison, Hamilton, Janitor.

It may not be amiss to furnish a short biographical sketch of Canada's first Grand Master and Grand Z, one who pioneered Freemasonry in the early days, when the craft was represented in this country by a number of lodges and chapters owing allegiance to bodies located in the Mother Country and the United States. William Mercer Wilson provided the guiding hand that brought order out of chaos, Masonically speaking. This distinguished craftsman came to Canada from Glasgow, Scotland, at the age of nineteen, and rose rapidly in his chosen profession of law, ultimately becoming judge of the County, Court of Norfolk. He became interested in Masonry at an early age and soon turned his talent and organizing ability to the task of establishing the craft on a solid basis. He is credited with the creation of the Grand Lodge, and, later, the Grand Chapter of Canada. Truly, it may be said that he laid the foundation upon which has been reared the superstructure that today represents the Ancient Craft in Canada.

During the year 1857, special convocations were held at Montreal, London, and Toronto. Judge William Mercer Wilson, the first Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Canada, having firmly established Craft Masonry, on a solid foundation, assumed his duties as Grand Z., with a determination to organize and develop the Royal Craft so that it might take its rightful place as the sequence to Symbolic Masonry. At this period, the revival of interest in Freemasonry, in all its ramifications, was most encouraging. During the regime of Wilson, several chapters, working under foreign jurisdictions, transferred their allegiance to the newly established Grand Chapter, and at the close of 1859, the following Chapters were operating under warrants of the Grand Chapter of Canada:

The Hiram Chapter, Hamilton, Ont.; St. John's Chapter, London, Ont.; St. John's Chapter, Hamilton, Ont.; St. George's Chapter, London, Ont.; King Solomon's Chapter, Toronto, Ont.; Moira Chapter, Belleville, Ont.; Ancient Frontenac, Kingston, Ont.; St. Andrew's Chapter, Toronto, Ont.

February 16, 1859, Thompson Wilson, having been elected Grand Z., was installed into office. Under his direction a request was made to all jurisdictions for recognition. Many responded favorably, including the Grand Chapters of Scotland and Ireland. The Mother Grand Chapter of England held aloof and withheld its recognition, stating that with every desire to be friendly and

maintain fraternal intercourse with Canadian Masons, it felt that they could not consistently entertain official relations with a body which holds as essential to admission within pale, the possession of degrees which were not recognized by either the Grand Lodge or Grand Chapter of England. The Grand First Principal of England was empowered to correspond with Canada with a view of finding a solution to this vexed question. After a lengthy correspondence, and with the elimination of the Past Master's degree from its system, the Grand Chapter of Canada was accorded full recognition by England.

Thomas Douglas Harington, of Quebec, was elected Grand Z. February 8, 1860, and, with the exception of the years 1861-62, ruled from that date until 1871. During his tenure of office many new chapters were warranted, and as a number of these were in the Province of Quebec, there was considerable discussion as to the advisability of forming a separate Grand Chapter in that Province. The chapters added to the roster of Grand Chapter during these eleven years were:

Wilson Chapter Windsor, Ont; Wawanosh Chapter, Sarnia, Ont.; Carleton Chapter, Ottawa, Ont.; Dorchester Chapter, Waterloo, Que.; Oxford Chapter Woodstock, Ont.; Mount Morish Chapter, St. Catharines, Ont.; Mount Horeb Chapter, Brantford, Ont.; Carnarvon Chapter, Montreal, Que.; Grenville Chapter, Prescott, Ont.; Ezra Chapter, Simcoe, Ont.; Tecumseh Chapter, Stratford, Ont.; Mount Horeb Chapter, Montreal, Que.; St. Mark Chapter, Trenton, Ont.; Keystone Chapter, Whitby, Ont.; Corinthian Chapter, Peterborough, Ont.; Victoria Chapter, Port Hope, Ont.; Seymour Chapter, Bradford, Ont.; Botsford Chapter, Moncton, N.B.; Guelph Chapter, Guelph, Ont.; Harris Chapter, Ingersoll, Ont.; Montreal Chapter, Montreal, Que.; Royal Albert Chapter, Montreal, Que.; Mount Sinai Chapter, Napance, Ont.; Excelsior Chapter, Colborne, Ont.; St. James Chapter, St. Mary's, Ont.; Wellington Chapter, Chatham, Ont.; Manitou Chapter, Collingwood, Ont.; Pentalpha Chapter, Oshawa, Ont.; McCallum Chapter, Dunnville, Ont.; Huron Chapter, Goderich, Ont.; Prince Edward Chapter, Picton, Ont. Waterloo Chapter, Galt, Ont.; Signet Chapter, Orilla, Ont.; St. John's Chapter, Cobourg, Ont.; Elora Chapter, Elora, Ont.; Saugeen Chapter Walkerton, Ont.; St. Charles Chapter, Point St. Charles, Que.; Prince Rupert's Chapter, Winnipeg, Man.; Bruce Chapter, Petrolia, Ont.

The ranks of Grand Chapter had thus increased to fifty Chapters, with a membership of 2,154. During the years 1861 and 1862, John Charles Franck ruled as Grand Z.

In 1872, the Mayor of the City of Toronto, Samuel B. Harmon, was elected and installed Grand Z. at a Convocation held in Kingston. During the year St. John's Chapter No. 209 surrendered its charter to the Grand Chapter of Ireland, and the membership was absorbed in St. John's Chapter No. 3 and St. George's Chapter No. 5, under the register of the Grand Chapter of Canada, both of these chapters being located at London, Ont.

The seventeenth annual convocation was held in Ottawa, October 14, 1874, with Charles Davis Macdonnell presiding. The untimely death of Thomas Bird Harris, Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge, and Grand Scribe E. of the Grand Chapter was recorded. His passing was a distinct shock and a severe loss to both these bodies. Warrants were issued to:

King Hiram Chapter, Port Colborne, Ont.; Pembroke Chapter, Pembroke, Ont.; Sussex Chapter, Brockville Ont.; Doric Chapter, Newmarket, Ont.; Granite Chapter, Perth, Ont.; York Chapter, Eglinton (now part of Toronto), Ont.; Havelock Chapter, Lucknow, Ont.

The eighteenth annual convocation was held in St. Catharines, August 11, 1875, with James Seymour in the chair of Grand Z. During this year the following chapters were warranted:

Willson Chapter, Welland, Ont.; Ontario Chapter, Yorkville, Ont.; Seaforth Chapter, Seaforth, Ont.; Enterprise Chapter, Harriston, Ont.; Maitland Chapter, Maitland, Ont.; Grimsby Chapter, Grimsby, Ont.

In 1875, Montreal was the place of meeting for the nineteenth annual convocation, while the twentieth was held in London in 1876. Lawrence H. Henderson presided on both occasions.

An emergent meeting was held in Toronto February 2, 1877, to consider a communication from chapters located in the Province of Quebec, advising that the Grand Chapter of Quebec had been formed. The procedure being in accordance with ancient custom, the Grand Chapter of Canada cordially and fraternally extended recognition and welcomed Quebec as a sister among the grand chapters of the world. In 1876 and 1877, warrants were issued to the following:

Grand River Chapter, Waterloo, Ont.; Prince of Wales Chapter, Amherstburg, Ont.; Keystone Chapter, St. Thomas, Ont.; Erie Chapter, Port Stanley, Ont.; Beaver Chapter, Strathroy, Ont.; Mount Nebo Chapter, Drummondville, Que.; Parkhill Chapter, Parkhill, Ont.; Orient Chapter, Toronto, Ont.; Ark Chapter, Windsor, Ont.; St. Mark's Chapter, St. Andrews, N.B.

During the term of Frederick Joseph Menet as Grand Z., 1877-78, the following additions were made to the roll of Chapters:

Shuniah Chapter, Prince Arthur's Landing, Ont. (now Fort Williams); Ionic Chapter, Orangeville, Ont.; Aylmer Chapter, Aylmer, Ont.; Lebanon Chapter, Wingham, Ont.; Exeter Chapter, Exeter, Ont.

Daniel Spry occupied the throne of Grand Z. during 1879-80, and during the latter year, Wentworth Chapter, of Dundas, was instituted.

July 14, 1882, Donald Ross was elected Grand Z. and held office until 1884. During his regime Grand Chapter passed a resolution authorizing Second and Third Principals to confer the degrees of Mark Master, Past Master, and Most Excellent Master under the direction of the First Principal, who should administer the obligations. Warrants were issued to-

McNab Chapter, Dresden; Woodstock Chapter, Woodstock, N.B.; Gold Royal Arch Chapter, Keewatin.

At this time it is noted that Grand Chapter exercised authority over seventy-eight chapters, with a membership of 3,537.

The twenty-seventh annual convocation was held in Toronto, July 11, 1884, with Henry, Macpherson presiding. At this convocation, Grand Chapter conferred its blessing on the newly formed Grand Chapter of Quebec. Warrants were issued to Parkdale Chapter, Toronto; Spry Chapter, Alliston, Ont.

July 16, 1886, a convocation was held in Windsor, under the direction of Thomas Sargent, who also presided at the thirtieth annual convocation held in Brockville, July 15, 1887. Up to this time, the Z. of a chapter must have been a Master or Past Master of a Craft lodge before being installed into the chair of First Principal in a chapter. By resolution, the Constitution was amended permitting a companion who had not acquired rank in his symbolic lodge to be elected and installed as Z. A warrant was issued in 1886 to Metropolitan Chapter, Melbourne, Australia, and, in 1887, to Midland Chapter, Lindsay, Ont.

The thirty-first annual convocation was held in Toronto, July 20, 1888, with Thomas Sargent officiating for Robert Henry, Jr., who was not in attendance. A communication from the Grand Chapter of England claiming jurisdiction in Australia was received, and a resolution was adopted claiming for Canada equal powers and prerogatives. Warrants were issued to Tuscan Chapter, Brampton, and Australasian Kilwinning Chapter, and City of Melbourne Chapter, both of Melbourne, Australia.

Richard B. Hungerford occupied the chair of Grand Z. during the years 1888-1889. During his tenure of office the following chapters were warranted:

St. Lawrence Chapter, Brockville, Ont.; St. Mark's Chapter, Trenton, Ont. Vancouver Chapter, Vancouver, B.C.; Keystone Chapter, Portage LaPrairie, Man.; Corinthian Chapter, Boissevain, N.W.T.

Little of moment is recorded in the years 1890 to 1900. During that decade Major James J. Mason, Judge John E. Harding, John Ross Robertson, Michael Walsh and William G. Reid reigned as Grand Z., each for a term of two years. During this time the following chapters were added to the rolls of Grand Chapter:

Algonquin Chapter, Sault Ste. Marie, Ont.; St. John's Chapter, North Bay, Ont.; Alberta Chapter, Calgary, Alta.; Citizens Chapter, Melbourne, Australia; White Oak Chapter, Oakville, Ont.; Signet Chapter, Winnipeg, Man.; United Wimmesa, Murton, Australia; Duke of Albany Chapter, Prallan, Australia; Warkworth Chapter, Warkworth, Ont.; Covenant Chapter, Farran's Point, Ont.; St. John's Chapter, Paris, Ont.; Bonnechere Chapter, Renfrew, Ont.; Zeredatha Chapter, Morden, Man.; Berlin Chapter, Berlin, Ont.; North Star Chapter, Edmonton, Alta.; Kim., Cyrus Chapter, Leamington, Ont.; Kootenay Chapter, Kasio, B.C.; Wascana Chapter, Regina, Sask.; Rossland Chapter, Rossland, B.C.

In the year 1891, the Grand Chapter of Victoria, in Australia, was formed, and, in 1897, the following extract from the proceedings of that date informs us that those Chapters in Australia

warranted by Canada surrendered their Canadian warrants and transferred their allegiance to the Grand Chapter of Victoria:

"As announced in the proceedings of last year, the Canadian Companions in the Colony of Victoria have thrown in their lot with the Companions of that Grand Chapter, and henceforth our jurisdiction is limited to the Pacific Coast. The union was effected under the happiest auspices, and I feel sure I but echo the sentiment entertained by the Companions generally of Canada when I express the hope the Grand Chapter of Victoria may grow in numbers and influence and for all time to come be a power for the dissemination of knowledge in our far-away sister colony."

The influence of Grand Chapter by this time had expanded to embrace one hundred chapters, with a membership of 6,215.

In 1901, Senator William Gibson became Grand Z., and continued in office in 1902. During his term warrants were issued to the following:

Chantry Chapter, Southampton, Ont.; Amabel Chapter, Wiarton, Ont.; Saugeen Chapter, Walkerton, Ont.

Abraham Shaw was installed as Grand Z. in 1903, and served two years. During this period fifteen new chapters came into being, all being located in the Province of Ontario, with the following exceptions:

King Edward Chapter, Neepawa, Man.; Crows Nest Chapter, Fernie, B.C.; Keystone Chapter, Brandon, Alan.; Cyrus Chapter, Cumberland, B.C.

William Roaf, of Toronto, became Grand Z. in 1905, and ruled until 1907. An attempt was made to restore the Past Master degree, but this was overwhelmingly, defeated. Six new chapters were warranted in Ontario, in addition to:

Klondike Chapter, Dawson City, Yukon; Okanagon Chapter, Vernon, B.C.

The jubilee of Grand Chapter was celebrated during the term of John Leslie as Grand Z; a souvenir medal was adopted to mark the occasion. This date of meeting, was changed from January to February, and five chapters instituted in Ontario:

Avondale Chapter, Hartney, Man.; Shekinah Chapter, Lethbridge, Alta.; Prince Albert Chapter, Prince Albert, Sask.; Golden West Chapter, High River Alta.

At the close of 1908, Grand Chapter controlled 133 Chapters, with a membership of 12,071. Many Chapters were added to the roster during 1909 and 1910, during which period George Moore ruled as Grand Z., the majority of these Chapters being located in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Alberta, and British Columbia.

At the completion of F. W. Harcourt, K.C.'s tenure of office as Grand First Principal, eleven additional chapters had been warranted, the largest number of these being in the Western Provinces.

From 1913 to 1915, judge Daniel F. MacWatt held the office of Grand Z. In 1914, he ruled that the newly formed Grand Chapter of Alberta was irregular and clandestine, and he promptly suspended all chapters and companions who supported the irregular organization. A grant of \$3,000.00 was voted by Grand Chapter to be divided between the Red Cross, Patriotic, and Belgian Relief Funds. During the 1913-14 period, fourteen new chapters were instituted. These, with two exceptions, were located in the Western Provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan, and British Columbia.

William S. R. Murch, Grand Z. in 1915-16, after a visit to the Grand Chapter of Alberta, announced the amicable settlement of the dispute with that body. Fraternal relationship was reestablished and, as a token of good-will, the Grand Chapter of Canada contributed \$1,000.00 to assist in defraying Alberta's preliminary expenses. Nine chapters were warranted in the years 1915-1916.

Dr. Arthur S. Gorrell presided as Grand Z. in 1917 and 1918. His address in 1918 was headed "The War is Over," and Grand Chapter, in common with the rest of the world, celebrated a glorious victory for the Allied Cause. Grand Chapter, in May 1918, suffered a severe loss through the passing of that brilliant journalist, John Ross Robertson. British Columbia sought approval of Grand Chapter for the formation of a Grand Chapter in that Province. The blessing of Grand Chapter was cheerfully given, and, in addition, a grant of \$1,000.00 was sent as evidence of good-will.

Colonel W. N. Ponton, K.C., reigned as Grand Z. during the years 1919-20-21. These were years of great progress. Membership increased by 3,000, fourteen new chapters were instituted, while investments increased to \$45,000.00.

Dr. Herbert S. Griffin's term of office as Grand Z. was brief. Installed in February, 1921, he died in July of the same year. R. H. Spencer occupied the chair of Grand Chapter in 1922-23. With the formation of the Grand Chapters of Manitoba and Saskatchewan, and the transferring of many chapters from the Mother Grand Chapter, a loss of 3,002 members was recorded. After removing these Western chapters from its roll, Grand Chapter had remaining, 149 chapters, with a membership of 24,547.

During the ten years following, Grand Chapter was ruled by Walter H. Davis, K.J. Dunstan, Edwin Smith, Dr. W. G. Price, and Dr. C.W. Haentschel, each of whom occupied the chair of Grand Z. for a period of two years. Little change took place in this ten-year period. Grand Chapter declined to sponsor the Order of DeMolay, adopted a revised ritual, and established a twenty-five and fifty year jewel to reward Past Principals for long Faithful service. Ten new Chapters came into being, bringing the number of Chapters to 159, with a membership of 25,224.

In 1934, Alexander Cowan was elected and installed Grand Z., while the following Companions filled the office of Grand Z. for periods as indicated:

George L. Gardiner 1935-1936; William Y. Mills, 1937-1938; L. F. Stephens, K.C., 1939-1940; John M. Empey, 1941; L. F. Stephens, K.C., 1942; John M. Burden, K.C., 1943-1944; Col. R. V. Conover 1945-1946; Frederick W. Dean, 1947-1948; Clarence MacL. Pitts, 1949-50; Alex. G.N. Bradshaw, 1951.

Down through the years Grand Chapter has endeavored to sponsor charitable activities, for which purpose substantial monetary grants have been made. A campaign to raise \$50,000.00 to augment the Benevolent Fund was planned by R. V. Conover to commemorate victory and the close of World War 11; the fund is known as the Victory Thanksgiving Fund. We should also mention the humanitarian work of The Principal's Association of the Toronto Districts. For years this Association has undertaken the task of transporting under-privileged children and their mothers to Fresh Air Camps at Bronte, on Lake Ontario, thirty-three miles west of Toronto, and Lake Simcoe, fifty-six miles north of Toronto. It is a common sight, twice each month, during July and August, to see a cavalcade of many motor cars, each bearing a marker with a triangle and the words Royal Arch Masons, leaving Toronto under police escort, and, after carrying the children to their destination, return the same evening with cars loaded to capacity with happy children returning to the city after a two weeks sojourn in these camps. This, perhaps, is the best known of the humanitarian activities of the Royal Craft, and has raised high the respect and esteem of the Mason and non-Mason alike.

## **Manitoba**

Masonry reached Manitoba by way of a dispensation issued by the Grand Master of Minnesota for Northern Lights Lodge U.D., located at Pembina, Dakota Territory. Several residents of Fort Garry, then called the Red River Settlement, petitioned for and received the degrees. In 1864, permission was asked to transfer the lodge to Fort Garry, which was granted. The lodge met in a room over the trading store of A.G.B. Ballantyne. The cost of fitting out the Lodge was given in the sterling money of that day:

tables, 1/19/6; inner door, 15/; altar, 19/6; wall paper, 39/; 24 black beads, 1.5; 24 white beads, 1; 100 copies of the by-laws, 40/. There was a set of working tools used by every up-to-date Lodge; 15 tin plates; 15 iron tablespoons; 15 tea spoons; 12 cups and saucers; 1 tin pan; 4 cans of pickled oysters; 1 pound of butter; 1 pound of coffee; 2 pounds of sugar.

With these necessary articles the Lodge was prepared for any emergency. The lodge commenced work in November, 1865. John Schultz was the first Master; A.G.B. Ballantyne, Senior Warden; William Inkster, Junior Warden. The charter was granted in 1867, as No. 68. No report had been received, but the committee reported:

Fort Garry is situated on the northern confines of the state, several hundred miles from St. Paul, and far outside the usual mail or transportation facilities, the mails being carried by dog trains through the intervening wilderness, at long intervals and often lost in transit. Transportation is

mostly confined to the spring months. These facts may reasonably account for the non-representation of the lodge and the non-receipt of the records and receipts of the lodge.

The committee had the fullest assurance from responsible sources that the brethren comprising Northern Lights Lodge U.D. are men of excellent character and good Masonic attainments, and of undoubted ability to carry on the work of the order. Considering these facts, the committee recommended the issuance of the charter.

The Lodge was never constituted under charter because of the serious acts of violence that occurred between the French and the English and Scotch settlers. During 1868-69, negotiations were in progress which eventually caused the Hudson Bay Company to surrender its authority over the country and return it to the British Crown. November 11, 1870, the Grand Lodge of Canada issued a dispensation for Winnipeg Lodge, but, by permission of the Grand Lodge, the name was changed to Prince Rupert's Lodge. This Lodge was located in Winnipeg, and received its charter July 13, 1871. In 1870, Fort Garry, or Winnipeg as it was named in 1873, had only 215 civil inhabitants.

Another dispensation was issued April 19, 1871, for International Lodge, at North Pembina, but the dispensation was never used. The same year another Lodge was formed by dispensation from Canada, named Manitoba Lodge, at lower Fort Garry, but the name was changed to Lisgar Lodge. The next year, 1872, Ancient Landmark Lodge was instituted at Winnipeg. These three lodges, with a membership of 210, formed the Grand Lodge in 1875.

These early brethren were not content with the lodge degrees, but desired to complete their Masonic education by having the chapter degrees. The Grand Chapter of Canada was petitioned for a dispensation to form a Chapter of Royal Arch Masons. In response to the request, a dispensation was issued August 10, 1872, for Prince Rupert Chapter. This was the only Chapter, until Keystone Chapter was formed July 19, 1889. The railroad was built to Winnipeg in 1878, the city rapidly increased in population, and the surrounding country began to have considerable settlements. Keystone Chapter, was located at Portage la Prairie.

In 1890, Corinthian Chapter was formed at Boissevain, July 18. July 22, 1892, Signet Chapter, in Winnipeg, was instituted. This chapter united with Prince Rupert Chapter in 1899. King Edward Chapter was chartered at Neepawa, January 25, 1905; Keystone Chapter, at Brandon, was chartered January 25, 1905; the original Keystone Chapter returned its charter in 1896, and it was restored January 17, 1907. On January 22, 1908, Avondale Chapter was chartered, at Hartney; February, 23, 1910, came Rabboni Chapter, at Dauphin; February 26, 1913, Mount Sinai Chapter was chartered at Rivers; Connaught Chapter was chartered the same year, at Winnipeg. Kildonan Chapter, at East Kildonan, and Prince of Wales Chapter, in Winnipeg, received dispensations February 28, 1923, but were chartered by the newly formed Grand Chapter.

At the sixty-fifth annual Convocation of the Grand Chapter of Canada:

Requests were received for the formation of a Grand Chapter in each of the Provinces of Manitoba and Saskatchewan, and the Most Excellent, the Grand Z., appointed a special

committee of Most Ex. Comp. E.T. Malone, Chairman; R.Ex. Comps. Edwin Smith, E.W. Pickford, W.G. Price and Alex Cowan to consider their petitions. Their report being presented, a resolution was adopted that the request of the Chapters of Manitoba and Saskatchewan to form Grand Chapters in their respective Provinces be acceded to by this Grand Body, and that upon receipt of the formal notice of formation a contribution of \$1,500.00 be made to each of their Grand Chapters. The Grand Chapter of Manitoba was organized in April, 1923, and the Grand Chapter of Saskatchewan in June, 1923. Most Excellent Companion Ponton, in eloquent and appropriate terms, extended to the Grand Chapters, just formed, the warm and sincere congratulations of the Grand Chapter of Canada. 'The Old Mother Grand Chapter had merely undergone the triumphant pangs of childbirth and had given to the Royal Craft, twins'.

The Manitoba chapters met March 30, 1923, in Winnipeg, and a motion was passed "that a Grand Chapter be formed." The chairman, A.H. McLeod, Grand Superintendent of District No. 15, of the Grand Chapter of Canada, then declared that "This is now a Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Manitoba." He ordered the 62 Companions present, representing nine Chapters, to register. The meeting then proceeded with the election of officers, and the following were elected to the three Principal's chairs: W.D. Lawrence, Grand First Principal; F. L. Newman, Grand Second Principal; W. Geo. Fraser, Grand Third Principal.

The meeting adjourned until April 18, 1923, on which date the officers, elected and appointed, were duly installed and invested by F.D. Cameron, District Deputy of District No. 1, of the Grand Chapter of North Dakota, who had been empowered to carry out this duty by Walter L. Stockwell, Grand High Priest of the Grand Chapter of North Dakota. This gracious act by our companions of North Dakota was the first link in a bond of friendship which increases in cordiality and strength with the passing years.

An outstanding event took place at the annual Convocation February 10, 1943, when it was resolved, unanimously, to accept the invitation of the General Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of the United States of America to affiliate with that body. Manitoba was the first Canadian jurisdiction to take this action. General Grand High Priest Ray V. Denslow was present on the occasion of our affiliation. At the forty- sixth Triennial Convocation of General Grand Chapter, R.A.M. of the U.S.A., held in Winnipeg, September 1-5, 1946, the name of that body was changed to "The General Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons."

When Grand Chapter was organized in 1923, the membership was 1499; December 1, 1929, they had 1820 members; membership decreased to 1250 by 1941, but on December 31, 1950, they had 1890 members. The annual Convocation transacted routine business only, and, while these convocations were of much interest to the members, there was little to attract the attention of Freemasons in general. However, there was one event that is reminiscent of pioneer days; it was the story of events leading up to the forming of Pre-Cambrian Chapter at Flin Flon. The story is best told by Frank E. Simmons, who was largely responsible for this Chapter:

Turn, if you will, to your atlas showing the Province of Manitoba, Canada. In the upper left-hand corner of the Province you will discover a small dot marking the location of the town of Flin Flon, three hundred miles north, and two hundred miles west of the Capital City of Winnipeg; it

is due west of Hudson Bay; and at the Pas, a town fifty miles south of Flin Flon, is a cairn marking the fact that here, in 1691, Henry Kelsey, of the Hudson Bay Company, carried on his exploration and the fur trade. The town receives its name from a copper and zinc mine of that name, which is nearby, and which has been developed in recent years by the Whitney interests of New York, generally known as the Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting Company. Mine production from this field is very extensive.

Among the early arrivals were several Freemasons who organized a lodge. Not satisfied with this, they wanted to petition for a chapter. There were too few Royal Arch Masons to sign a petition for a dispensation, so some interested Companions in Winnipeg signed, and the dispensation was issued in 1933. When time came to constitute the chapter, seventy-five companions from Winnipeg and surrounding territory chartered a special railroad car and made the five hundred mile journey, each paying his own expenses and taking a week away from his business. The constitution of a new chapter is not an event that deserves special mention, but the fact that so many Companions made the long journey to confer the first degrees and start the new Chapter on a firm basis shows an unusual interest in Capitular Masonry.

Our members have also made several fraternal visits south of the border; particularly to Kansas City, Mo., Des Moines, Iowa, and Columbus, Ohio, where they conferred the Royal Arch degree before large audiences. These visits have been of much benefit to those participating to show that Masonry united men of different countries in one common cause for the uplift of humanity.

## **Nova Scotia**

Nova Scotia is the Vinland of Leif, son of Eric, the Red, 1000 A.D., the Cathay of John Cabot, 1497; the Acadia of Champlain, 1604, of Evangeline, 1755; the Nova Scotia of Sir William Alexander, 1621; a land of pleasant valleys with food in abundance.

The first Masonic activity was in Annapolis Royal, believed to have been sometime between 1721 and 1727. The first duly constituted lodge was at Annapolis Royal in 1738, by warrant from Henry Price of Massachusetts.

Halifax was founded in 1749. It was the headquarters for the British Army and Navy in North America; here nearly every regiment of foot of the British Army has been stationed at one time or another, bringing with them the Masonic lodges attached to them, and these lodges were largely responsible for the spread of Freemasonry in Canada.

The first Royal Arch degree was conferred in Halifax in 1760, probably as early as 1757 or 1758.

In 1765 the 14th Regiment arrived in Halifax; attached to it was Lodge No. 58 (Ancients). The next year, the 29th Regiment, with Lodge No. 322 (Irish) arrived. These lodges, and other regiments, were transferred to Boston in 1768-69, and while there conferred the Royal Arch and Knight Templar degrees. While in Halifax during the previous three years, they conferred these degrees on Halifax brethren. The Royal Arch degree may have been conferred before the 14th and 29th Regiments arrived. The 35th Regiment of Foot participated in the capture of Louisberg, in

1758; the lodge attached to this regiment was warranted by Ireland in 1749- 50. The banner of the old lodge is now in possession of Brother Wm. Tait, of Belfast, Ireland, having been owned by a lodge at Moy, County Tyrone, Ireland, originally composed of brethren of the Army Lodge, when the regiment left there in 1790. The banner very clearly depicts the emblems of the various degrees from the Entered Apprentice to the Royal Arch and Knight Templar, showing that the Lodge in the 35th (as did all other Irish Lodges of that day) conferred, under their craft warrant, all the degrees of Freemasonry with which they had any acquaintance.

In Canada, the oldest Chapter is Royal Union Chapter No. 1, Halifax, dating at least from 1780, when it worked under the warrant of St. John's Lodge No. 211 (now No. 2). It undoubtedly had a previous existence, possibly as far back as 1766-67, under the warrant of St. Andrew's Lodge No. 155 (Ancients), now No. 1. It was known as the General Royal Arch Chapter from 1787, and as the General Grand Royal Arch Chapter from 1797, and served all the lodges in Halifax. Every member paid two shillings, six-pence each quarter towards the Charity Fund:

Sec. 5 - No brother shall be made a R.A.M. but such as have presided as Master of some regular warranted lodge for the space of six months except where it can be dispensed with agreeably to the Constitutions of Masonry or the resolution of the Grand Lodge.

Sec. 7 - Fee for degree, three pounds, ten shillings towards the Charity Fund, five shillings to the Tyler and pay his proportion of the night's expenses. At a special shall pay all the night's expenses in addition to the other fees. Only two candidates a night.

September 15, 1782, there were fifteen names signed to the by-laws. The minutes show that all candidates petition for -

Further light and knowledge in the secret and hidden mysteries of Freemasonry and they on strict trial and due examination, being found worthy, were by us Installed and instituted into the Sublime Secrets of Royal Arch Masonry. After which, all Assembly or Encampment of Sir Knights Templar being formed, the said Brothers were Instituted and Dubbed Knights of the Most Noble and Right Worshipful Order of the Most Noble and Right Worshipful Order of Sir Knight Templars. And the Lodge was closed in peace and harmony.

December 11, 1782:

A motion was made and agreed unaniniously to, that those Brethren who have passed the Arch in a way different from the Mode of this Chapter, and have formerly worked under the warrant No. 211, may, in case they choose, to apply for it, be made in this Chapter, upon the moderate terms of paying the expenses of the meeting.

"December 18, 1782 - Titles of officers were H.P. & C.Gen'l., 1st K. & 1st G.W., 2nd G.W., S., 1 R.A., Capt., 2 R.A. Capt., Treas."

These old By-Laws are interesting because they show the procedure used in early times.

In 1839, members of Thistle Lodge No. 322 formed St. Andrew's Chapter No. 55 (now No. 2, G.N.S.), by authority of the Supreme Grand Lodge of Scotland. This caused renewed activity in the first Chapter then working under authority of St. Andrew's Lodge No. 118 (England).

In 1863, Alexandra Chapter No. 100 (Scotland) was formed at Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, and is now No. 11 (N.S.); Shannon Chapter No. 579 (England) was founded at St. John's, Newfoundland, in 1864, and is now No. 9; Union Chapter No. 108 (Scotland), at Yarmouth, in 1865, now No. 7 (N.S.); St. John's Chapter No. 130 (Scotland), at Pictou, in 1869, now No. 8; Hiram Chapter No. 33 (Canada), at Goldenville, in 1869, now No. 3, at Windsor.

### Formation of Grand Chapter

The Grand Chapter of Nova Scotia was formed October 14, 1869. In September a joint committee of members of Union Chapter (England), St. Andrew's Chapter (Scotland), and Joseph Conway Brown, first Principal of Hiram Chapter (Canada), who was present by request, met in Halifax and passed the following resolution:

Whereas, It is the opinion of this committee, that for the better government of Royal Arch Masonry in this Province a Grand Chapter should be established.

Therefore Resolved, That a Convention of Royal Arch Masons be invited to meet at Masonic Hall in the City of Halifax on Tuesday evening, October 14th, for the purpose of establishing a Grand Chapter for the Province of Nova Scotia, electing officers, and adopting a Constitution for the government of the same.

The October 14 record reads:

Pursuant to notice a Convention of Royal Arch Masons of the Province of Nova Scotia, was held this evening at which the following were present.

Then follows the names of twenty-four members of Royal Union Chapter No. 118, R.E.; eighteen members of St. Andrew's Chapter No. 55, R.S; two members of Hiram Chapter No. 33, R.C; and one of St. John's Chapter No. 130, R.S; Union Chapter, Yarmouth, did not participate on account of the expense, and St. John's, at Pictou, only to the extent of sending a delegate, who was instructed by his chapter to express their unwillingness to "enter into the contemplated movement at present." The other two chapters, at St. John's, Newfoundland, and at Charlottetown, joined in 1876.

The Grand Master of Masons, Hon. Alexander Keith, was elected first Grand High Priest, in 1869.

### Earliest Record of Mark Degree

The earliest record of the Mark degree is dated February 27, 1784, consisting of the Minutes of a Mark Lodge opened at Halifax by Adam Fife, Master of Lodge No. 213 (Ancients), in the 4th

Battalion of Royal Artillery, warranted while in New York in 1781; these minutes are within six months of the Mark Lodge Minutes dated September 5, 1783, in the records of the Royal Arch Chapter at Middletown, Conn. The Halifax records continue with some regularity under the warrants of various Halifax Lodges.

### Adopts Ritual

Three members guided the early ritual to success. They were Hon. Alexander Keith, seventy-four years old (Scotchman and brewer), Stephen Roland Sircorn (dry goods merchant), thirty-three years old, and Joseph Conway Brown, a Welshman (mining engineer), thirty-one years old. Of these, Brown had most to do with writing a standard ritual; he was also the committee on correspondence. When the Grand Chapter of Nova Scotia was formed, it decided not to adopt either the English or Scottish work, in use in several of the chapters, but to use the York Rite, as worked by all the chapters in the United States, probably because of the constant commercial intercourse between Nova Scotia and the American jurisdictions, there being no satisfactory means of communication with the rest of Canada.

The esoteric work was only in manuscript, and was loaned only to the High Priest of each chapter, under considerable restriction. From the records of Keith Chapter No. 4, we learn that the work was known as "The Locked Book," because it was furnished with a lock and key. The Grand Chapter of Nova Scotia has jurisdiction over the Mark, Past, Most Excellent, and Royal Arch degrees.

In 1906, a duplicate ritual was furnished each chapter, and, in 1924, the present ritual was adopted and printed, and each chapter received five copies. It was revised in 1947, and reprinted in 1948. In 1927, Grand Chapter was asked to adopt the ritual used by all other Grand Chapters in Canada, but, after careful consideration, it was determined that no sufficient reason could be found to justify a change.

### Order of High Priesthood

June 17, 1870, Alexander Keith, Stephen R. Sircom, and J. Conway Brown, met and "they being all duly anointed High Priests and the only ones, in the jurisdiction, formed and organized the Grand Council of High Priests." Companion Keith was elected President, Sircom, Vice-President; Brown, Recorder. In 1922, the Order was made compulsory for all elected high priests. This was a far cry from the opinion of Companion Brown, in 1870, who claimed.

Election and installation of the High Priest was not of itself sufficient qualification to warrant anointment.

In 1869, Grand Chapter had a membership of 143; in 1923, the membership was 2,754.

### An Unusual Ceremony

In 1925, the Grand Chapter was the first Grand Body to meet in new Masonic Temple. The occasion was celebrated by placing -

With due ceremony, in its position at the entrance to the Chapter room, the Keystone from Solomon's Quarries, presented to this Grand Chapter at our last annual Convocation by R.E. Companion R. V. Harris.

Previous to the ceremony the Grand High Priest delivered a historical address, in which he said:

We have assembled this afternoon to participate in the ceremonies of placing the final keystone in the principal arch of this beautiful Masonic Temple erected by the members of the Craft in Halifax, and to dedicate their Chapter Room to the high principles and purposes of Royal Arch Masonry.

The Keystone to be used in these ceremonies was presented to this Grand Chapter at its last annual Convocation, and is a beautiful block of white limestone obtained from the quarries in Palestine from which King Solomon obtained the stone for that magnificent Temple at Jerusalem, with whose history all Masons are familiar. These quarries were discovered in 1853, and since then the opinions of the learned archaeologists of the world agree in regarding them as the principal source of the stone used by the builders of the Temple.

It is fitting that the last stone to be placed in this fine Masonic Temple, should be obtained from that source of so much of the inspiration for our Masonic ceremonies, and that the arch in which it is to be placed unites the old remodelled building with the new structure, together forming a beautiful, perfect and complete whole.

An elaborate program was carried out. The program consisted of finding the rejected Keystone by, the overseers, and the solemn procession that brought it to its appointed place, where the Grand High Priest placed it in its proper position with due ceremonies. The whole program was very familiar, and would be recognized readily by any member of the Capitular Craft. The chapter room was then formally dedicated.