



REGULARITY AND THE GRAND LODGE OF ALL ENGLAND AT YORK

On the 6th February 2007, at the invitation of The Conference of Grand Master of Masons of North America, The Commission on Information for Recognition, a detailed submission was supplied by The Grand Lodge of All England which included the following:-

Preamble:-

"The Grand Lodge of All England, at York is the Ancient and Honourable Society and Fraternity of Freemasons Meeting Since Time Immemorial in The City of York, known variously as The Grand Lodge at York and The Old Grand Lodge at York.

The Grand Lodge of All England, at York is the governing body of Freemasonry in England, Wales, The Channel Islands and its Districts and Lodges Overseas working under the authority, and acting in conformity with The Old York Constitutions of A.D. 1600-1704 inclusive.

That the City of York was fixed as the Seat of The Grand Master of all Masons following a congress called by King Athelston is an acknowledged historical fact. (*REFERENCES: Anderson - Book of Constitutions Grand Lodge at London 1723; William Preston - Illustrations of Masonry, London 1812; Lodge of Antiquity - Manifesto 1778*).

It is beyond contention that The Grand Lodge of All England, at York, was reponed according to Ancient practice, and in full compliance with Masonic procedural law. The Grand Lodge of All England, at York has deliberately and energetically stood as a Grand Lodge exemplifying the Masonic Virtues of Legitimacy, Adherence to all the Ancient Landmarks, and Regularity in its conduct, ritual, and practice. (*REFERENCE: Book of Constitutions - Grand Lodge of All England*).

The Grand Lodge of All England, in order to avoid any possibility of error, requests the Commission to affirm its previously stated view (*REFERENCE: Copy of an email from the Commission dated 27 Oct 2006 15:09:32 EDT, clearly acknowledging legitimacy in its first paragraph, and further stating that Legitimacy of Origin and Adherence to the Ancient Landmarks - specifically, A Belief in God, the Volume of the Sacred Law, an indispensable part of the furniture of the Lodge, and the prohibition of the discussion of politics and religion "... are not in question".*) that The Grand Lodge of All England is a regular Grand Lodge, notwithstanding the indisputable fact that the legitimacy and authority of The Grand

Lodge of All England is beyond the jurisdiction of The Commission on Information for Recognition.

It is acknowledged by The Grand Lodge of All England that The Conference of Grand Masters of Masons of North America has the onerous task of making recommendations on standards of recognition and suggestions on whether Grand Lodges in North America should or should not recognise foreign Grand Lodges. (*REFERENCE: The Manifesto of The Lodge of Antiquity 1778, and the email from The Commission dated Fri, 27 Oct 2006 15:09:32 EDT*).

Notwithstanding the responsibilities of The Conference, The Grand Lodge of All England, whilst it acknowledges the right of The Conference of Grand Masters of Masons amongst themselves to consider and determine upon matters of recognition, this right must not impinge upon The Grand Lodge of All England to any extent, and must not cause loss or difficulty to The Grand Lodge of All England. In this, The Grand Lodge of All England believes the tenets of Freemasonry must be observed. (*REFERENCE: Long established Masonic Convention that one regular Grand Lodge does not comment upon the internal affairs of another regular Grand Lodge which inevitably brings Freemasonry into disrepute*)."

Copies of correspondence between The Grand Lodge of All England and The Commission was supplied together with the following statement:-

"The Grand Lodge of All England recognises The United Grand Lodge of England as a regular Grand Lodge. It also expects reciprocation from The United Grand Lodge of England in conformity with those Fraternal and Brotherly Masonic conventions universally observed amongst Freemasons and most particularly Grand Lodge to Grand Lodge."

In terms of the question of "Legitimacy", The Grand Lodge at York stated its position as follows:-

"It is conceded that in 1738, with the publication of Anderson's second Book of Constitutions, the then Grand Lodge at London by a process of self-proclamation laid claim to English Freemasonry outside of: *"... the Lodges in and about London and Westminster"*, its previously claimed territorial jurisdiction. However, this action in no way supplanted the pre-existing jurisdiction of The Grand Lodge of All England. Indeed, The Grand Lodge of All England continued to be the authority for Freemasonry in the terms which had existed since time immemorial.

On Friday 23rd December 2005, The Assembly of Masons met at Mason's Loft, York Minster, where the Master Masons of York and all England according to the authority originally granted by King Athelston to Assemble at York, reclaimed English Freemasonry on behalf of its rightful custodians.

On Monday, 20th February 2006, The Assembly of Masons at York met at Jacob's Well, Micklegate in the City of York and set a date for The Grand Lodge of All England, at York, the premier Grand Lodge of All England, to reconvene according to Ancient custom.

On Monday the 12th June 2006, at Jacob's Well, Micklegate in the City of York, at Convocation of The Grand Lodge of All England, a Grand-Master Mason pro tempore, Most Worshipful Brother John Gordon Graves, was duly elected and proclaimed. The Draft Book of Constitutions was subsequently ratified by those Master Masons of All England called together in Assembly and representing St John's Lodge at York and the members of the 10

Old Time Immemorial Lodges, namely: Talbot Lodge, Halifax 1738; French Prisoners Lodge, Stonegate, York 1762; Three Tuns Lodge, Scarborough 1762; Royal Oak Lodge, Ripon 1769; Crown Lodge, Knaresborough 1769; Duke of Devonshire's Flying Childers Lodge, Macclesfield 1770; Hovingham Lodge, North Yorkshire 1773; Druidical Lodge, Rotherham 1778; New Inn Lodge, Snainton, North Yorkshire 1778; Fortitude Lodge, Hollinwood 1790.

The Act of Reponement of The Grand Lodge of All England and the reclamation of its subordinate Lodges were duly accomplished, executed and comprehensive Notice given internationally by way of divers means of communication."

In respect of "Adherence to The Ancient Landmarks":-

"The Grand Lodge of All England is aware that its Ancient Landmarks are acknowledged by regular Grand Lodges, although it notes that not all Grand Lodges publish and proclaim identical lists of our Landmarks, a fact which is regretted by The Grand Lodge of All England that wishes to see a declaration of full compliance by all regular Grand Lodges. (REFERENCE: *"The lists of Landmarks vary in number from author to author. Albert Mackey presented 25 Landmarks, but others reduced the list to 7 or even 5 principle Landmarks, which incorporate Mackey's twenty other Landmarks as subdivisions."* - Athena Stafyla, *The Masonic Landmarks, Pietre Stones Review of Freemasonry* <http://www.freemasons-freemasonry.com/athena1.html>)

The Grand Lodge of All England proclaims all the Landmarks identified since time immemorial i.e. The Old York Constitutions A.D. 1600-1704. These Landmarks are elaborated and referred to in its Book of Constitutions, and promulgated upon the website. (REFERENCE: www.grandlodgeofallengland.org)."

In terms of "Regularity":-

"The Grand Lodge of All England from time immemorial through to the present has been wholly regular. It is consistent in its full compliance with those unchangeable and Ancient Landmarks originally identified by this Grand Lodge, and calls upon all Grand Lodges throughout the world to recognise and act upon this doctrine which is so fundamental to Freemasonry."

And finally, in respect of "Exclusive Territorial Jurisdiction":-

The Grand Lodge of All England is aware of the doctrine of Exclusive Territorial Jurisdiction but notes that The United Grand Lodge of England has never enjoyed exclusive territorial jurisdiction, that the doctrine represents a rule only in connection with North America, especially The United States of America, and that the doctrine is consistent only in respect of the inconsistent manner in which it has been applied. The Grand Lodge of All England, at York is disinterested in this entire concept which it regards as being profoundly un-Masonic."

Signed under the seals of Prince Edwin - A.D.926 by M.W. Bro. John Gordon Graves, Grand Master of Masons and under the seals of Grand Lodge by V.W. Bro. Peter Joseph Clatworthy, Grand Secretary.

STATEMENT ISSUED AT YORK - SATURDAY 21st DECEMBER 2007

It is to be regretted that The Commission on Information of The Conference of Grand Masters of Masons of North America, far from entering into any form of an exchange of fraternal courtesies has seen fit to publish a response on open public websites without extending the most perfunctory of mannerly replies, or even an acknowledgement to The Grand Lodge of All England at York, despite the courtesies and considerations amply extended by the Grand Lodge of All England to The Commission.

Furthermore, The Commission's most recent statement purports to be an integral part of its 2007 report which was published in April 2007 when, in fact, it was added to their website, a full 7 months after the publication of their 2007 report (November). The suggestion that documentation in support of our submission has not been supplied is clearly false and misleading.

This statement is published by The Grand Lodge of All England as a result of the obstructive conduct of The Commission and the Commission's failure to act fairly in this important matter.

Grand Lodge of All England At York