Prince Hall and His Followers

George W. Crawford



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American Freemasons



Prince Hall, Grand Master. Frontispiece of the 1914 edition.

Prince Hall and His Followers

Being a Monograph on the Legitimacy of Negro Masonry

George W. Crawford, 32°

Behold, I have set before thee a door opened, which no one can shut.
—The Scriptures

With an introduction by
John V. Piccone

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American Freemasons

Prince Hall and His Followers: Being a Monograph on the Legitimacy of Negro Masonry
George W. Crawford, 32°

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General Editor: John V. Piccone

To

The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge

of Free and Accepted Masons

of Connecticut

this Volume is dedicated

by the Author.

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Editor's Introduction

George Williamson Crawford (1877–1972) was a New Haven lawyer and one of the best-trained Black attorneys of his generation. Born in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, he studied at Tuskegee Institute and Talladega College and in 1903 graduated from the Yale Law School, its second Black graduate, winning the Townsend Prize for oratory. He became clerk of the New Haven Probate Court the same year and practiced law in the city for half a century. He was active in the Niagara Movement and a founding member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. On the title page of this book he signs himself "Chairman on Jurisprudence, Grand Lodge of Connecticut": the grand lodge of Black Masons in that state, the body known today as the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Connecticut, to which he dedicated the book.

Prince Hall and His Followers was published in 1914 by The Crisis, the monthly magazine of the NAACP, from its office at 70 Fifth Avenue, New York. The Foreword is dated at New Haven on July 15, 1914, and in the spring of 1915 the magazine advertised the book at one dollar as "a carefully argued defense of the legitimacy of Negro Masonry in the United States, with notes and documents." Crawford explains his purpose plainly. William H. Upton, Grand Master of Masons in Washington, had already written the case for Prince Hall Masonry from the side of a white grand lodge. Crawford wished to state it "from the viewpoint of the Negro Mason himself," as "a brief on the law and the facts," free of any assumption that the worth of Prince Hall Masonry depended on white approval.

The book is built like a lawyer's brief. After a short life of Prince Hall and an account of how Freemasonry was planted in the American colonies, Crawford answers in turn the objections then made against the Masonry descended from African Lodge No. 459 of Boston: that the formation of African Grand Lodge was irregular; that the doctrine of

exclusive territorial jurisdiction made it clandestine once a grand lodge of Massachusetts existed; that its erasure from the English roll in 1813 ended its life; and that early Black lodges altered the "free-born" qualification. His method is to test each objection against the Masonic usage of the eighteenth century rather than the rules of his own day, and to show that the same objection, fairly applied, would condemn the earliest white grand lodges of America and Europe. The last two chapters turn from law to conduct. Crawford argues that recognition by white American grand lodges is not to be sought on any terms short of full equality, and he advises his brethren how to treat white Masons, as bodies and as men.

Some cautions are needed. Crawford's chapter on Prince Hall follows the account published by William H. Grimshaw in 1903, and much of it is not supported by the surviving records: the birth in Barbados, the voyage to Boston in 1765, the English father, and the ministry. The earliest record usually tied to Prince Hall is a certificate of freedom given by William Hall of Boston on April 9, 1770. Prince Hall and fourteen others were made Masons on March 6, 1775, in Lodge No. 441, a military lodge under the Grand Lodge of Ireland, not of England. Crawford dates African Grand Lodge to 1791 and calls Prince Hall a Provincial Grand Master; no copy of such a patent has been found, and the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Massachusetts itself dates the formation of African Grand Lodge to December 1808. These points are taken up in the Notes. Crawford also writes in the language of 1914. "Negro" was then the respectful term, used by the NAACP itself; a racial slur appears once in a phrase he quotes, and Albert Pike's letter of 1875 is printed in full. They are given here as he printed them.

Much has changed since 1914. The Grand Lodge of Washington's acknowledgment of Prince Hall Masonry in 1897, under Upton's leadership, had already been withdrawn; the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts acknowledged the legitimate origin of its Prince Hall counterpart in 1947 and rescinded the vote in 1949. In 1989 the Grand Lodge of Connecticut and the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Connecticut, Crawford's own grand lodge, agreed to mutual recognition, the first such agreement in the United States. In December 1994 the United Grand Lodge of England recognized the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, the successor of the African Lodge it had warranted in 1784. Most mainstream

grand lodges in the United States now recognize the Prince Hall Affiliated grand lodge of their state, though not all. Crawford did not live to see these agreements; he died in 1972. His book remains the clearest statement of the case as Prince Hall Masons made it for themselves.

This edition gives the complete text of 1914, newly typeset, with the frontispiece portrait, the author's notes at the foot of the page, and his bibliography. The editor's notes at the back correct and explain without adding anything to Crawford's pages.

John V. Piccone
General Editor, the American Freemasons Library

Sources for the introduction. George W. Crawford, *Prince Hall and His Followers* (New York: The Crisis, 1914), Foreword and chapters I–VIII; advertisement in *The Crisis* 9, no. 6 (April 1915); Yale University Library, "Early Black Yale Students: George Williamson Crawford"; *Encyclopedia of Alabama*, "George Williamson Crawford"; Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, "African Lodge 459"; Grand Lodge of British Columbia and Yukon, "Prince Hall"; John B. Williams, "Recognition of Prince Hall Grand Lodges in America" (Phylaxis Society, 1993); Grand Lodge of Connecticut, "20 Years of Mutual Recognition," reprinted by Phoenixmasonry; Masonic Digital Trust, Bessel Archive, "Exclusive Territorial Jurisdiction."

Foreword

A STATEMENT of the case for the legitimacy of Negro Masonry, from the viewpoint of the Negro Mason himself, is the principal object of this little book. The right of the followers of Prince Hall to practice "The Royal Art" has been thrashed out in printed volumes before. William H. Upton, sometime Grand Master of Washington, and the truest white friend who ever espoused the cause of Negro Masonry, has written a very important book on the subject. The object of that book, however, was to vindicate the action of a white Grand Lodge in declaring Negro Masons descended from Prince Hall Grand Lodge to be regular, and, inferentially, to prove that such Negro Masons are entitled to ultimate recognition from their white brethren. It is not surprising that a white Mason is not able to conceive of the vindication of Negro Masonry without coupling it with "recognition" by white members of the Fraternity.

Reward as the justly earned approbation of the superior white race is the unconscious mental attitude from which scarcely any white man can escape. That is the offence which our sincerest white friends sometimes quite innocently commit against us and to whom our intolerance of the same is understandable only as self-consciousness.

The Negro Mason is not interested in the vindication of his legitimacy merely as a means of justifying a claim to recognition by the white Masons of America. A man would be interested in removing the stigma of bastardy, not so much because it might bar his reception into polite society, but to vindicate himself in the eyes of his own self respect. To demonstrate the groundlessness of the claims of the white opponents of Negro Masonry, with a view of influencing a renunciation of their untenable position, is a peculiarly appropriate task for a white man of the ability and high mindedness of Grand Master Upton. For such a purpose his book is admirably conceived and done. A book stressed to such an end,

however, can not be appropriated by Negro Masons as the official statement of their case without a resulting misinterpretation of the true inwardness of Negro Masonry. There are both place and occasion for such a book as the one in question, but it can never obviate the demand for a book which, while stating strongly the case for Prince Hall Masonry, shall be free from any assumption, conscious or unconscious, of the inevitableness of white patronage.

In addition to serving the purpose outlined, the author cherishes the ambition that this little volume will help to remove the handicap under which the average Negro Mason labors when called upon to defend the regularity of his standing—the handicap of unfamiliarity with his own case. A book designed for this purpose should present, succinctly, the salient points only, with emphasis properly placed, and should not bulk beyond the interest of the general run of Masonic laymen: a brief on the law and the facts. Such a book I have striven to produce.

The character of the subject has made it difficult to hold this volume to a few pages except through the somewhat free use of technical language. To offset this, however, frequent resort has been made to phraseology current and generally understood among members of the Fraternity. At the same time, I have not lost sight of a large number of readers other than Masons to whom a subject of such profound interest should appeal.

I have not attempted a history of Negro Masonry. That has already been done satisfactorily. Only so much of uncontrovertible historical data as is necessary to a clear presentation of the case has been used; and for such data the author has frankly drawn on the standard sources, as will appear from the ample bibliography appended. Again, no attempt has been made to elaborate upon every possible question of Masonic Jurisprudence which may be involved. A treatise could hardly serve the purpose intended.

I take this occasion to acknowledge my gratitude to those certain close Masonic friends and colleagues whose constant encouragement, more than anything else, is responsible for this little book.

New Haven, Conn., July 15, 1914. GEORGE WILLIAMSON CRAWFORD.

CHAPTER I

Prince Hall

On an uncertain day of March in the year 1765, an immigrant boy, seventeen years of age, landed at Boston from a British trading vessel on which he had worked a passage from Bridgetown, the capital of the Island of Barbadoes. His name was Prince Hall and he was the son of an English white man and a mulatto woman. His mixed lineage assured to him sufficient Negro blood to identify him with that race. Not that our subject would have had it otherwise; for his unceasing demurrer to the treatment he received was always based on the unrighteousness of such treatment as applied to the Negro people, and never because it arbitrarily thrust upon him the disabilities of a class to which he did not properly belong.

Young Hall at once attached himself to the little group of free blacks who lived in and about Boston but who were utterly detached from the life of their community. In matters of public concern these people received little or no recognition and for the most part were left to their own devices. Such employment as no one else cared for was open to them at the scantiest of wages. No adequate provision was made for their education and not even a missionary interest was taken in their religious welfare. Colored people were not even welcome in places of public worship. In no less place than Boston, in the colony of Massachusetts, originated the famous phrase "Nigger Heaven." It was the popular designation of that part of the high rear galleries to which Negro worshippers were invariably consigned.

The same attitude which denied to colored folk spiritual edification on a level with white followers of Jesus, within the church houses, was manifested without in the form of utter indifference to the religious needs of these people. The pitiable neglect of the spiritual welfare of free Negroes made so profound an impression upon our young West Indian

immigrant that early in his American career he determined to prepare himself to become a religious teacher and leader among them. Applying himself with characteristic assiduity, he soon acquired an astounding grasp of the English Bible. He began anew the rudimentary studies which had been put aside for a skilled trade in his island home. Such was his progress that five years after his decision young Hall was ordained as a Methodist minister.

The church has always been a center of Negro life and the Negro minister has always been an influential factor in the leadership of his race. It is an interesting coincidence that the first two Negro Grand Masters in this country, Prince Hall in Massachusetts and Absalom Jones in Pennsylvania, were both ministers of the Gospel.

Besides affording him the chance to display his unusual gifts as a priest, the ministry gave Prince Hall an opportunity for the larger public activities which made him the recognized leader and spokesman for his people. Physically he had few of the characteristics which are popularly associated with leadership. He was small of stature and his features, excepting his steel-gray eyes, were almost effeminate. His physical insignificance made his achievements all the more remarkable as a testimony to the personal force of the man. In those days, even more than in these, it took extraordinary ability to get an ordinary hearing for a Negro. For although it was about this time that Thomas Jefferson wrote his nice piece to justify the American rebellion in the eyes of the world, yet the lot of the ordinary man of color was not that which accorded with his merits—"self evident truths" to the contrary notwithstanding.

The position of Prince Hall on most of the questions vitally affecting the Negro people placed him far ahead of his times; so far, in fact, that he would be classed with the radicals even in this day. The abolition of slavery; participation in the government by black men upon terms and under conditions applicable alike to every other class of citizens; equality before the law; resistance to every form of encroachment upon the rights of black men; the education of Negro children; the right to be let alone; the iniquity of public insult: such was the platform of this Negro prophet who was born a whole century before Appomattox. And yet there are Negro leaders who, a half century after "the surrender," are not ashamed to preach contentment with less.

To be a Freemason in the latter part of the 18th century was accounted a rare distinction. The order was universally patronized by men of high

degree. The most powerful princes in Europe considered it no derogation to their dignity to "level themselves with the fraternity." It is not surprising therefore that any effort to obtain for the humble freed blacks of Boston admission to an order of such standing should have seemed to the white craftsmen of Massachusetts to be the veriest presumption. One can almost imagine the popularity of the phrase "a white man's order" as epitomizing the attitude of the outraged Colonial Masons towards the petition of Prince Hall and his fellow blacks.

Yet our little champion steadfastly refused to read into the sublime principles of Masonry any implication of race proscription. With characteristic persistence he took his case to the broad minded British who administered the affairs of the Mother Grand Lodge. These same British whose villainies Jefferson immortalized in the "Declaration" showed themselves to be freer from pettiness and race contempt than the liberty-loving colonists.

After unsuccessful efforts to obtain recognition from any of the American Masonic bodies then existing in and about Boston, Prince Hall and his fourteen black brothers who had been duly made in a British Army lodge stationed near Bunker Hill, and given a dispensation after the manner of the day, petitioned the Mother Grand Lodge of England for a warrant. The petition was granted and a warrant issued September 29th, 1784. A few years following the reception of this warrant were enough to show that this African Lodge as a subordinate body would sooner or later find itself in a precarious situation, and that the very door of Masonry might be closed to Negro Americans. The general movement towards independent Masonic government for America was fast gaining ground; and always the Negro Masons were ignored in any plans projected. Therefore, to perpetuate the high privileges which had come to his people with the Constitution of African Lodge No. 459, Prince Hall, taking the needful steps, duly erected the Mother Lodge in a Grand Body, having the sanction and recognition of England in so doing.

The granting of the Charter to African Lodge No. 459, Free and Accepted Masons, in 1784, is one of the great events in the history of the colored American. Freemasonry gave the Negro in this country his first opportunity to find himself; it discovered to his enfeebled race consciousness the power of a common cause; it started him on the road to self-hood.

Any estimate of the marvelous influence for good which the fraternal organization has exercised upon the life of the Negro people must necessarily be a tribute to the handiwork of Father Prince Hall, who opened for them the door to the greatest and most ancient of all secret societies.

After a period of labor all too brief, the first Grand Master of Negro Masons passed out at the South Gate, December 7th, 1807. Like the illustrious Temple Builder of old, he left us the legacy of unsullied integrity.

The things for which the early Negro leaders fought and strove may sometimes seem ordinary when measured by present day ideas of what a man ought to have. The sheer capacity not alone to enjoy, but to demand more, in our day, is proof positive that the world moves on. But with all of our enhanced capacity to enjoy and to demand, the example of this upstanding man of color comes across one hundred changing years to the Negro Mason of this day as a challenge, seeming to say: "Crave to be called of no man 'brother' if his life and attitude belie his faith in the significance of that sacred appellation—even though he proclaim himself a Mason." Next after a vow of fidelity to our high calling, may we Negro Masons vow a loyalty to our self respect—"so help us God and halidom."

CHAPTER II

The Masonic Colonization of America

The beginnings of Masonry in America bear a strikingly close resemblance to the early political history of the country. Masonically speaking, America was as truly colonized by the English as it was politically. Just as here and there English settlers planted isolated communities which gradually grew and expanded into a nationality compounded of various adaptations of English institutions and ideals, so also did the early pioneers of the craft erect in the widely scattered colonies Masonic bodies in one form or another which eventuated into the standardized American institution with which we are familiar.

The first Masonic bodies set up, whether they were private lodges or whether they were that Masonic anomaly known as Provincial Grand Lodges, were all instituted as subordinates of the Grand Lodge of England, from whom they derived their authority and to whom they yielded unquestioning obedience until England and her American colonies became politically separate. The early American Freemason did his work with as little thought of ultimate Masonic independence of the mother country as the early colonist had of ultimate political independence. At the same time he evinced the same readiness to adapt his Masonry to the new land as he did his politics.[†] The result is that early Masonic usages in our country were accommodated to the exigencies which the early brethren confronted, and beyond bare essentials they did not concern themselves over much about what we choose to call regularity. This they

[†] "When men undertake to establish a frame of government for an association as well as for a nation, they are inevitably controlled by the views of governments which they have acquired by the circumstances in which they are placed; and, except in cases of revolution, their ideas are generally in accord with the civil government under which they live. This has been often illustrated in the organization of governing bodies in the Masonic Fraternity."— *Josiah H. Drummond, Monograph on Masonic Jurisprudence.*

could do with small chance of offence because most of what now constitutes the body of accepted Masonic dogma had not been settled in those days.

The first Masonic establishment in this country based upon legal authority was probably St. John's Lodge of Boston, which was organized July 30th, 1733, under the direction of Henry Price whom, it is claimed, Grand Master Lord Viscount Montague had made a Provincial Grand Master in April of the same year.

Freemasonry, however, had preceded any deputation to Henry Price, to this country, if one was really issued to him at the time mentioned. Undoubtedly many of the earliest of the colonists were members of the craft. There is credible historical evidence that there were Masons in the American colonies who held Masonic intercourse, more or less informally to be sure, even before the establishment of the Grand Lodge of England in 1717. Commentators and historians are accustomed, nevertheless, to ignore the sporadic efforts before the revival of 1717 and to view the American Rite as beginning with the Deputation to Daniel Coxe of New Jersey and Henry Price of Boston. The former was appointed Provincial Grand Master by the Duke of Norfolk on June 5th, 1730; the latter was probably appointed to a like office by Lord Viscount Montague on April 30th, 1733. The jurisdiction of Daniel Coxe comprised the Provinces of New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, while Henry Price was deputized for New England.

A third deputation was issued about the same time to James Graeme over a jurisdiction comprised of the southern colonies. It is generally supposed that these deputations were issued in an effort to make the division of Masonic authority in America accord with the scheme of King James and Queen Anne to organize the colonies into three viceroyalties, with territorial jurisdiction as above outlined. The partiality of the several colonies each to its own local institutions and the hostility to any outside interference with their own local self government as they had worked it out for themselves, especially by other colonies, resulted early in a tendency towards individuality which made coalescence into any such larger units as mentioned an impossibility. The same tendency towards political separateness was naturally reflected in Masonic matters. The efforts at the establishment of these Masonic vice-royalties contemplated in the appointment of Coxe, Price and Graeme utterly failed. The provincial Grand Masters commanded no great influence with the

colonist who would be amenable to no high Masonic authority except in England. The offices soon lost any well defined purpose with the English Grand Masters, who began to issue deputations promiscuously, and without regard to territorial apportionment.

The following is the complete list of Provincial Grand Masters whose appointments can be substantiated:

Date.	Name.	Jurisdiction.
1730	Daniel Coxe	New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania.
1732	James Graeme	South Carolina.
1736	Robert Tomlinson	New England.
1736	John Hamilton	South Carolina.
1737	Richard Riggs	New York.
1742	Thomas Oxnard	North America.
1747	Francis Goelet	New York.
1752	George Harrison	New York.
1754	Edgerton Leigh	South Carolina.
1755	Jeremiah Gridley	North America.
1757	Grey Ellicott	Georgia.
1770*	Henry Price	North America.
1770	Noble Jones	Georgia.
1771	Peyton Randolph	Virginia.
1791	Prince Hall	North America.

The separation from the mother country brought home to the craft the necessity for a "more perfect union," Masonically quite as forcibly as politically. Appropriating the lessons of our early attempts at forming a nation politically, the colonial Masons began to set their house in order. The state of mind of the colonists towards England after the Revolution made Masonic separation from the mother country inevitable. The efforts to erect the several states into one nation politically naturally suggested a basis of American Masonic organization. It was proposed immediately after the close of the war to form a National Grand Lodge by uniting all the Provincial Grand bodies, with George Washington, the most distinguished Mason in America, as Grand Master. Many of the same obstacles which beset the makers of the Constitution stood in the way of this plan;

* It is claimed that Henry Price was deputized in 1733 but there is no record of this.

and in addition was the fact of the existence of many bodies owing fealty to as many as four different mother lodges in the old world. The plan fell through and a chaotic condition of things prevailed for some years. Just as the "grinding necessity" of some vital compact which should save the liberated colonies from anarchy and political chaos alone made the ratification of the Constitution possible, so the utter confusion resulting from clashing jurisdictions and bitter rivalries finally forced the various Masonic elements to compose their differences and adopt a uniform plan of Masonic government. The union of the "Ancients" and "Moderns" which followed soon after the Revolution removed the last obstacle in the way of complete harmonious action by the American bodies. Again profiting by their political experience in forming the new American nation, the Masons evolved the unique but obviously practical plan of making Masonic jurisdiction co-extensive with political jurisdiction, and thenceforward began the development of the American doctrine that the jurisdiction of a Grand Lodge located in a state is defined by the boundaries of that state and immune to invasion by all other Masonic sovereigns. This doctrine, hit upon as a happy expedient in the effort to consolidate various Masonic bodies directly after the War of Independence, was received with instant favor because it afforded a sound working basis for intercourse between the Grand bodies; and also a satisfactory basis for the Masonic conquest of the unsettled portions of the new country. The doctrine of exclusive territorial jurisdiction was widely observed in the development of the American Rite, particularly after the complete separation from England, and is today uniformly observed in this country.

Just when the Provincial Grand bodies of America became absolutely independent of the authority of the Mother Grand Lodge is open to controversy. Many such bodies declared their independence directly after the end of the Revolutionary War. Still others took their independence as a matter of course and as a logical consequence of the political separation of the colonies from England. Such independence, however, could not have been legally acquired by the ex parte action of the colonial bodies themselves. Concurrence on the part of the parent organization was absolutely indispensable. It may be confidently asserted that most of these quasi Grand Lodges, or, if you prefer, Provincial Grand Lodges, did not actually and legally become sovereign bodies until they, or in many instances the subordinate lodges on which they were originally

predicated, were stricken from the English roll at the time of the Masonic union in 1813. Prior to legal separation the American Grand bodies, so-called, were really in the nature of vice-royalties, with the largest possible autonomy. Nevertheless, they were entirely amenable to the laws promulgated and bound by the decisions made by the Grand Lodges of England, and of course subject to the Common Law of Masonry as declared and expounded by the sovereign bodies in the mother country.

CHAPTER III

Right and Title

The test of the legitimacy of a Masonic body is this: Is the authority by which it assumes to practice and exemplify Masonic principles derived from the proper source and did the manner of the derivation of such authority conform to the accepted Masonic usage for the time being? Tried by this test, the Negro Masonry of the United States, which is in direct line of succession from Prince Hall Grand Lodge, can make out as good a case for the legitimacy of its existence as any Masonry in the western hemisphere. In fact an impartial examination of creditable historical data will show that the organization of the parent body of Negro Masonry in this country was, in many respects, freer from technical irregularities than those early bodies upon which the Masonry of our white brothers is founded. For it is certain that if our white brethren were compelled to rely upon the regularity of the early work of Daniel Coxe and Henry Price, through whom they largely derived their Masonic being, they would certainly find themselves in a precarious situation.

From no authentic Masonic records (e. g., The Records of the Grand Lodge of England) can it be proven that Daniel Coxe ever acted specifically upon his deputation as Provincial Grand Master. No more can it be shown from any authentic source just what Henry Price did under his deputation. Indeed there is no record in the annals of the Mother Grand Lodge that any deputation as Provincial Grand Master was ever issued to Henry Price until Lord Petre became Grand Master, which was quite some time after the "formation" of St. John's Grand Lodge.[†] By the

[†] "Nowhere can it be found on the English records that a deputation was granted to Henry Price until Lord Petre became Grand Master. We believe, however, that such a deputation as heretofore recited was granted by Lord Montague; but it will require authentic documents to satisfy an impartial reader that any further and different deputation was subsequently granted, increasing his territorial jurisdiction."—*Meyer's Monograph on "The American Rite," "History of Freemasonry and Concordant Orders," Stillson, et al., p.* 225.

year when it appears from the English records that Henry Price was really deputized (1770), St. John's Grand Lodge, so-called, had warranted over thirty subordinate lodges throughout the several colonies. Neither did Price comply with the terms of the deputation ascribed to him, which strictly enjoined that he should make annual returns to the Grand Lodge of England of lodges constituted, names of members, etc.* The early history of parent Masonry among our white brethren is involved in such uncertainties that even so eminent an historian as Gould avers in his "History of Freemasonry" that the "foundation of authority on which the early Masonic history of Massachusetts reposes" is "very precarious."† For any semblance of historical proof of the authority of the acts of Daniel Coxe and Henry Price, and indeed of the acts themselves, our white brethren are forced to rely for the most part upon contemporaneous hearsay from profane sources. One thing alone saves the situation for them historically, and that is recognition in England. For there can be no doubt but that at sundry times both Coxe and Price were officially recognized as Provincial Grand Masters. But official recognition could not operate as a "healing act" to cure all manner of Masonic irregularities already practiced. No more could a deputation to Coxe or Price reciting specific powers operate as a Masonic carte blanche. Consequently, the case of our white brethren is by no means made out as soon as they have

* "He, the said Mr. Henry Price, taking especial care that all and every Member of any Lodge or Lodges so to be Constituted have been or shall be made Regular Masons, and that they do cause all and every the Regulations Contain'd in the Printed Book of Constitutions (except so far as they have been altered by the Grand Lodge at their Quarterly meetings), to be kept and Observ'd, and also all such other Rules and Instructions as shall from time to time be Transmitted to him by us or by Thomas Batson, Esq., Our Deputy Grand Master, or the Grand Master or his Deputy for the time being, and that He the said Mr. Henry Price or his Deputy do send to us Our Deputy Grand Master and to the Grand Master of England or his Deputy for the time being Annually, an Acc't in Writing of the number of Lodges so Constituted with the Names of the several Members of each Particular Lodge, together with such other Matter & things as he or they shall think fit to Communicate for the Prosperity of the Craft."—*From Deputation to Henry Price ascribed to Lord Montague.*

† "The very precarious foundation of authority on which the early Masonic history of Massachusetts reposes. The actual records of the Provincial Grand Lodge—by which I mean a contemporaneous account of its proceedings—date from 1751. There are also what appear to be transcripts of brief memoranda describing the important incidents in the history of that body between 1733-1750; or they may have been made up from the recollection of brethren who had been active among the Craft during these seventeen years." —*Gould's "History of Freemasonry."*

shown the reasonable probabilities to be on the side of the regular appointment of Coxe and Price as Provincial Grand Masters and of their recognition as such. But in addition to this is the burden to prove that all those things Masonically needful were done by them in their pioneer efforts to establish the Order on this Continent.

(a) african lodge

In conspicuous contrast to the early gropings of Daniel Coxe and Henry Price is the clean cut and orderly work of Prince Hall, Provincial Grand Master and the father of Negro Masonry in America. Concerning the constitution of African Lodge No. 459, F. and A. M. (subsequently No. 370) and the establishment of all that is in Masonic sequence thereto, there is not the slightest difficulty in determining what was done and upon what authority. There it all is as plain as daylight itself, and chronicled so faithfully in records so authentic that the severest critic can find no historical flaw. In 1775, in an Army Lodge holding a warrant under the Grand Lodge of England, and attached to one of the Regiments at Bunker Hill, Prince Hall and fourteen other men of African descent were duly initiated, passed and raised. Nine years later almost to a day these fifteen Negro Masons applied to the Grand Lodge of England to be set apart as a regular lodge. Their application was granted and a warrant issued to them September 29th, 1784, authorizing them to be constituted into a regular lodge under the designation as African Lodge No. 459.* This

* ::: {.centered} "Warrant of African Lodge, No. 459.
Warrant of Constitution: A. G. M.
To All And Every: :::

"Our right worshipful and loving brethren:—We, Thomas Howard, Earl of Effingham, Lord Howard, etc., Acting Grand Master, under the authority of his Royal Highness, Henry Frederick, Duke of Cumberland, etc., Grand Master of the Most Ancient and Honorable Society of Free and Accepted Masons, send greeting:

"Know ye that we, at the humble petition of our Right Trusty and well beloved brethren, Prince Hall, Boston Smith, Thomas Sanderson, and several other brethren residing in Boston, New England, in North America, do hereby constitute the said brethren into a regular Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons, under the title or denomination of the African Lodge, to be opened in Boston, aforesaid, and do further, at their said petition and of the great trust and confidence reposed in every of the said above-named brethren, hereby appoint the said Prince Hall to be Master; Boston Smith, Senior Warden; and Thomas Sanderson, Junior Warden, for opening the said Lodge, and for such further time only as shall be thought by the brethren thereof, it being our will that this, our appointment of

warrant was delivered to them three years later, i. e. May 2, 1787, and the lodge was duly organized four days after that date, with Prince Hall as its Master. In the same year African Lodge was formerly entered upon the English Registry along with other colonial Masonic bodies. This lodge continued as a subordinate lodge, exercising all the prerogatives of a regular Masonic body, until June 24th, 1791, when it was superceded by African Grand Lodge which was organized in Boston, Massachusetts, on that date.

(B) COLONIAL GRAND LODGES IN GENERAL

It is now accepted as a well established principle of American Masonic Jurisprudence that the formation of a Grand Lodge can be accomplished only by the uniting of three regular lodges in free Masonic territory for the purpose. This principle is the outgrowth of the exigencies of Masonic government during the last one hundred years. The mother Grand Lodge was not formed in this way. It is common to refer to the formation of the original Grand Lodge in 1717 as having been accomplished by the four London Lodges. This is not entirely accurate. The four lodges

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the above officers, shall in no wise affect any future election of officers of said Lodge, but that such election shall be regulated, agreeable to such By-Laws of the said Lodge as shall be consistent with the Grand Laws of the society, contained in the Book of Constitutions; and we hereby will, and require of you, the said Prince Hall, to take special care that all and every, the said brethren, are to have been regularly made Masons, and that they do observe, perform and keep all the rules and orders contained in the Book of Constitutions; and, further, that you do from time to time cause to be entered, in a book kept for that purpose, an account of your proceedings in the Lodge, together with all such Rules, Orders, and Regulations as shall be made for the good government of the same, that in no wise you omit once in every year to send to us, or our successors, Grand Masters, or Rowland Holt, Esq., our Deputy Grand Master, for the time being, an account of your said proceedings, and copies of all such Rules, Orders and Regulations as shall be made as aforesaid, together with the list of the members of the Lodge, and such sum of money as may suit the circumstances of the Lodge, and reasonably be expected toward the Grand Charity.

"Moreover, we will, and require of you, the said Prince Hall, as soon as conveniently may be, to send an account in writing of what may be done by virtue of these presents.

"Given at London, under our hand and seal of Masonry, this 29th day of September, A. L. 5784, A. D. 1784, by the Grand Master's command.

R. HOLT, *Deputy Grand Master.*

Attest: WILLIAM WHITE, *Grand Secretary.*"

in question were the only Lodges in all of South England. These lodges, however, were by no means the units of representation in the famous meeting at the "Apple-tree Tavern." This meeting was of the comprised membership in these four lodges. It was in the nature of a General Assembly of the Craft.* The promiscuous and unwieldy character of these general assemblies, together with the need of a more compact and efficient governing body, probably led to the provision in the Charges of 1722 which defined the Grand Lodge as consisting of "the Master and Wardens of the regular particular lodges upon record, with the Grand Master at their head." So that while the Grand Lodge was at first purely a democratic body, it gradually became representative in character, undoubtedly for reasons of convenience as before stated. Just as gradually and for like reasons, the lodge at length became the unit of representation in the Grand body. By the middle of the 18th century when the institution began to emigrate to new lands, this idea of the lodge as the unit was beginning to take root. When, therefore, the development of the Order in new countries demanded a definite principle to control the organization of Grand Masonic bodies, the subordinate lodge eventually became the organizing unit and the number was arbitrarily fixed at three.† But it was well along into the 19th century before this principle had acquired any

* "When the Grand Lodge was re-organized in 1717, all the members of the four Lodges then in existence had a right to be present at all the communications of the Grand Lodge; but when new Lodges were formed, this privilege was restricted to their Masters and Wardens, though it seems that at the Grand Feast, which took the place of the Annual General Assembly, Fellow Crafts and Entered Apprentices were still permitted to appear and express their opinions.

"The members of the four old Lodges, having first secured their inherent rights by the adoption of a resolution in the Grand Lodge that no law should ever be passed which would infringe their immemorial privileges, thought it no longer necessary that they should attend the communications of the Grand Lodge; and they too, like the other Lodges, trusted implicitly to their Masters and Wardens as their representatives in the Grand Lodge, so that soon after 1717, and before the year 1721, the quarterly communications of the Grand Lodge were composed only of the Masters and Wardens of the subordinate Lodges, with the Grand Master and his officers."—*Masonic Jurisprudence, Albert G. Mackey, p.* 416.

† It is literally true that the manner of fixing the number of lodges requisite to the formation of a Grand Lodge was *arbitrary.* I mean that the principle was deduced from no Masonic tradition, nor does it rest upon the authority of any of the Ancient Constitutions or Landmarks. Dr. Mackey, always ingenious, ascribes its origin to the analogous requirements of the civil law that at least three persons are necessary to form a corporate body. This may or may not be so. Dermott, whose comprehensive Masonic scholarship cannot be

general acceptation. At no time during the 18th century was there any accepted form of constituting a Grand Lodge. Especially was this true of early American Grand bodies. Scarcely any two of these were formed in the same way. Some were organized by Provincial Grand Masters, acting under deputations from England; others by self assumption of Grand Lodge powers; still others by union of lodges in near localities. And in all, many things which in these times are deemed essential to regularity were absolutely ignored. In fact the American colonial Grand Lodges, judged by 20th century standards, would be considered as the veriest Masonic anomalies. For instance, a Masonic doctrine which is now universally acknowledged as a landmark is that a Grand Lodge is the peer of every other regular Grand Lodge. This means, of course, that each Grand Lodge is an independent sovereignty, a separate entity, unrestricted except by the ancient landmarks and, accountable to no other Masonic authority. And yet every one of the Provincial "Grand Lodges" so-called were organically connected with the Grand Lodge of England, being subject and accountable to the mother Grand body. The status of these colonial bodies may be accurately described as that of quasi Grand Lodges, i. e. they were possessed of the prerogatives of a Grand Lodge only in part. It was some years after the achievement of American independence before these provincial bodies were totally emancipated by the English Grand Lodge; for, as already pointed out, they *were* all carried upon the English registry until 1813 when the "Ancients" and "Moderns" agreed upon terms of peace and became united.

The foregoing shows clearly that there is no analogy between Masonic conditions of the 18th century and those of today and that 20th century practices are no test of 18th century regularity. The propriety of Masonic procedure in those times can only be determined by reference to the then recognized standards. In the last analysis, we are forced to rely upon the view taken by competent Masonic authority in the day and time of the acts under consideration. If a given procedure, whether it be the appointment of a "Provincial Grand Master," or the constitution of a "Provincial Grand Lodge," was recognized as regular in the highest Masonic circles

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questioned, whatever other unfavorable opinion may be entertained of this fierce controversialist, declared that the constitutional number of lodges to form a Grand Body is five. We take no special stock in this assertion but cite it by way of illustration. Our own notion is that the principle is attributable to some chance practice which became so generally and customarily observed as to become a part of the common law of masonry.

of the times, then the matter is a closed issue so far as we are concerned. It is as the lawyers say, res judicata.

The 18th century was the formative period of Masonic Jurisprudence. Many regulations which are now accepted as matters of course were by no means settled at that time. As has been already stated, there was at no time during the 18th century any definite and generally recognized rule for the formation of Grand Lodges. About the only requirement which seems to have been considered as essential was that those engaged in the undertakings must themselves have been regularly accredited Masons. After that the recognition of their handiwork was based more on its prosperity than on its modus.

(c) african grand lodge in particular

African Grand Lodge was formed at Boston, Massachusetts, on St. John's (The Baptist) Day, 1791. The meeting was presided over by Provincial Grand Master Prince Hall, and participated in by many of the members of the craft who had been made in African Lodge No. 459. Concerning the historical fact there is, or can be, no dispute. As to the capacity in which they who formed African Grand Lodge met, there has been some considerable controversy. It has been variously held, first, that African Grand Lodge was formed by African Lodge by abrogating its subordinate charter and solemnly assuming the powers and prerogatives of a Grand Masonic body. Second, that African Grand Lodge was formed by a general assembly of the craft convoked for the solemn purpose. Third, that African Grand Lodge was formed by Prince Hall acting under the powers expressed and implied in his deputation as Provincial Grand Master, which he had received some months previously from the Grand Master in England. Grand Master Upton and some other writers, mistaking the reorganization and change of name in 1808, after the death of Prince Hall, refer to that as the date of the constitution of the parent Grand body of Negro Masonry. The mistake is of no vital consequence since the action of 1808 is legally dependent upon the preceding incidents.

The first serious objection urged against the legitimacy of Negro Masonry is the alleged irregularity of the formation of African Grand Lodge, or Prince Hall Grand Lodge, which is the source of all Negro Masonry

in the United States. It is argued that, no matter which of the three methods was employed, the objection is valid; because each fails to meet the essential requirements. As has been before suggested, if the test to be met is the standard of the Masonic practices of today, then not alone would Prince Hall Grand Lodge be found essentially deficient, but a like condition would confront almost every colonial Grand body formed on this Continent. Indeed the application of such test would result in the impeachment of most of the Grand bodies constituted in the 18th century, including most of the historic Grand Lodges of Continental Europe. Those who would ignore the differing conditions of two centuries, and seek to apply the rigid tests of the 20th century to the immature Masonic practices of the 18th century, must inevitably find themselves involved in manifest absurdity. Masonic Jurisprudence is not an inspired thing that has been handed down complete and perfected. Rather it has been an elastic thing, which, like many another body of regulations governing the conduct of selected groups of men, has been constantly growing and more or less influenced by the changing mores of the people as a whole.

The badge of recognition alone would be a complete answer to the critics of African Grand Lodge for in countless ways the treatment accorded African Grand Lodge and Prince Hall Grand Lodge in England shows conclusively that they were considered by the Mother Grand Lodge to be higher than subordinate bodies in dignity. African Grand Lodge does not have to rely upon English recognition, however, for no matter which of the three procedures outlined above was followed, there are numerous and weighty precedents in favor of its regularity. Let it be supposed, for instance, that African Grand Lodge was formed by African subordinate lodge in due course deciding, without external authority, to assume the powers and prerogatives of a Grand body. Such a procedure is not unique in Masonic history.

The Grand National Mother Lodge of "The Three Globes" (Grosse National Mutterloge "zu den drei Weltkugeln") in Germany was formed in 1744 by the assumption of this title by a subordinate lodge in Berlin called the "Three Globes." This subordinate lodge had been organized in 1740 by Baron Bielifeld. Frederick the Great, who had been made a Mason on August 15th, 1738, joined this lodge soon after its formation, and upon its erection into a Grand body, that illustrious monarch became its first Grand Master, which office he held until 1747.

Old Kilwinning Lodge, the first Masonic body to exist in Scotland, early in its history assumed the title of "Mother" and thenceforward began to warrant "daughter" lodges subordinate to itself, and to exercise other Grand Masonic prerogatives. The name of Robert Bruce, afterwards King Robert I. of Scotland, was in the list of its Grand Masters. The system of private lodges assuming the prerogatives and powers of a Grand Lodge is said by some Masonic historians to have originated in France. If this is so, it is worthy of notice that, in spite of the checkered history of Masonry in that country, the practice in question never acquired for French Masonry the contempt of the rest of the Masonic world. There surely could have been no stigma attached to such practice, for this thing was done at York, the very cradle of Masonry and the birthplace of Prince Edwin. In 1725, the lodge at York, which had previously been known as St. John's Lodge, enlarged itself into a Grand Lodge and elected Charles Bathurst as Grand Master, at the same time styling itself as the "Grand Lodge of all England," with the evident intent of asserting its rights to precedence over the Grand Lodge of England organized some years previously, by the four lodges of London.*

In like manner the "Royal York zu Freundschaft" became a Grand body in 1788, having first separated itself from what was then known as the Grand Lodge of Germany. The action of this lodge was especially significant because it was already connected with a recognized Grand body. It is noteworthy that although it styled itself the "Mother Lodge," thereby asserting a claim of superiority over the body from which it separated, there was no serious challenge of its authority and the regularity of the procedure seems to have been accepted as a matter of course.

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* Albert G. Mackey, the father of the American doctrine of Exclusive Territorial Jurisdiction of Grand Lodges, with whom "regularity," according to modern precepts, was a veritable obsession, evolved a unique theory concerning this bit of Masonic history. Confronted with the fact that a Grand Lodge was formed at York itself, by a private lodge simply assuming Grand Lodge prerogatives as a "Mother Lodge," the eminent Masonic Scholar, restrained by his due reverence for things done in the "Cradle of Masonry," attempted to explain away the effect of this action upon his own most cherished theories by "distinguishing" between a "Mother Lodge" and a Grand Lodge. (See "A History of Freemasonry," p. 1055—Mackey and Singleton). Nothing could better show how essentially litigious in character was the mind of this great writer, and how utterly lacking he was in the judicial poise which stamps the true historian. This monumental work— "A History of Freemasonry"—is defective as a history mainly on account of the mental bias of its principal co-laborator.

These illustrious examples by no means exhaust the list of the Grand Lodges which in the 18th century were formed by self-exaltation to Grand Lodge dignities. And, excepting the case of African Grand Lodge, there is no notable instance of a protest against the regularity of a Grand Body, based on the fact that it was formed in the manner described.

But again, let it be supposed that African Grand Lodge was formed by a General Assembly of the Craft for the purpose. What then? Is its regularity thereby impeached? Assuredly not. The formation of the first Grand Lodge was accomplished by a General Assembly of the Craft.* Those participating were present in no representative capacity. There was no thought of the four London lodges as the constituent parts of the organization formed. It was literally a Grand Lodge of Masons. As has been before pointed out, the representative feature was an after development. It is always to be borne in mind that the Grand Lodge was simply a device hit upon as an administrative convenience. It was, moreover, a creature of granted powers, very like our own Federal Government, and its powers were expressly limited and defined in the Thirty-nine Regulations. All powers not granted were reserved to the craft. It will be seen, therefore, that the organization of a Grand Lodge by a General Assembly of the Craft has on its side the weightiest of all precedents—the precedent of the first Grand Lodge ever formed.

America at the time of the organization of African Grand Lodge was virgin soil, fettered by no established Masonic usage save the old constitutions and landmarks and the very few administrative usages which had grown up with the development of Masonic government by Grand Lodges. He must be fastidious indeed, therefore, who would find fault with the Negro Masonic pioneers because they followed the one best Masonic precedent.

The deputations issued to Provincial Grand Masters in colonial times carried either by their express terms, or by necessary implication, the power to organize Provincial Grand Lodges. No better example could

* "1717. The four lodges in London determined to elect a new Grand Master, and form a Grand Lodge. They, therefore, convened a *general assembly of the Masons in London and its vicinity,* and constituted a central authority under the title of 'The Grand Lodge of England,' recognizing only the three symbolic degrees. George Payne, elected Grand Master, got together a great quantity of ancient manuscripts, charts, rituals, and documents on the usages of the Fraternity, which, added to those in possession of St. Paul's Lodge, were to form a code of laws and doctrines, certain of which were to be published."—*Macoy's History and Encyclopedia of Freemasonry, p. 27.*

be cited than that of Henry Price who formed St. John's Grand Lodge (Massachusetts) under such circumstances. If African Grand Lodge was formed therefore by Prince Hall by virtue of his authority as Provincial Grand Master, derived from his deputation as such, surely no extended defence of its regularity will be needed; for such Masonic practice was too common in those days to admit of serious question.* That Prince Hall was a Provincial Grand Master can not be reasonably doubted.† While the English records do not conclusively show his deputation, the record of the official correspondence with him, both by content and style of address, proves conclusively that Prince Hall was recognized and honored as a Provincial Grand Master by the mother Grand Lodge.‡

* "Provincial Grand Master. The appointment of this officer, for counties and for large populous districts, is a prerogative of the Grand Master, by whom, or, in his absence, by his deputy, a patent may be granted, during pleasure, to such brother of eminence and ability in the Craft as may be thought worthy of the appointment. By this patent he is invested with a rank and power, in his particular district, similar to those possessed by the Grand Master himself.—Constitutions."—*Quoted in Oliver's Dictionary of Symbolical Masonry, p.* 630.

† Our opponents have sought to make capital out of the fact that the office of Provincial Grand Master continued only during the pleasure of the Grand Master who created it. From the temporary character and uncertainty of the tenure of a Provincial Grand Mastership, it argued that the "Grand Bodies" which they created died with the office of their creators. Hence they claim, feebly enough, that if African Grand Lodge was created by Prince Hall under a deputation as Provincial Grand Master it was not a permanent body, and so had no further right to exist after the death of Prince Hall. This is predicated on the theory that African Grand Lodge was a "Provincial" body, in the ordinary sense, which is not the fact. It is true that one theory is that the assembly which organized the parent Negro body was convoked by Prince Hall as Provincial Grand Master. Nevertheless, there is sufficient evidence to satisfy any fair and open mind, that African Grand Lodge did not rest alone upon the *color of authority* of Prince Hall's deputation. A body permanent in character and possessed of Grand Lodge authority was organized with both the sanction and recognition of the Mother Grand Lodge of England.

How will they who challenge the regularity of African Grand Lodge on the grounds stated ever be able to consistently defend the legitimacy of "St. John's Grand Lodge," the handiwork of Henry Price, the Patron and Patriarch of White Masonry in America?

‡ The following correspondence, invariably referred to by writers on this subject, is a brief in itself. Certain things about these letters are at once plain even to the casual Masonic student. First the style of address employed by the Grand Secretary shows that the addressee, Prince Hall, was a Masonic dignitary higher than a Past Master; for even in those early days of loose Masonic usage, the title "Right Worshipful" was scarcely ever given to any but Grand Officers. Again, the mission outlined was one that would not have been entrusted to an ordinary Master Mason, or even a Past Master, and the fact that Prince Hall was a colored man makes such a mission to any one less than a high Masonic officer an additional improbability.

Incidentally, the Lodge referred to in New Haven, Connecticut, is said to be the present Hiram Lodge No. 1 of the White Grand Lodge of Connecticut.

Letter from the Secretary of the Grand Lodge of England to Prince Hall:

"London, August 20th, 1792.

"Right Worshipful Brother: I have the pleasure of sending inclosed the printed proceedings of the Grand Lodge by which you will perceive the flourishing state of our society; and in the account of the 24th of November, 1787, you will find accredited your donation to the charity fund, ten dollars sent by Captain Scott; and that of the 18th of April last, your donation of one guinea. I am much obliged to you for the sermon you sent me, which I think very well written, and very appropriate for the occasion.

"When next you write to me, I should be obliged to you if you would let me know if the lodges in the inclosed list, which were constituted by the Grand Lodge of England, are yet in being, as we have never heard from them since the commencement of the late war in America, or indeed, long before; and in case they have ceased to meet, which I rather apprehend, they ought to be erased from our list of lodges.

"I am much obliged to you for the account you give respecting your own Lodge, to which I sincerely wish success, as I should be happy to have it in my power to contribute thereto.

"Inclosed I send you one of the calendars for the present year, of which I beg your acceptance.

I remain, with fraternal regard,
Right Worshipful Brother,
Your obedient servant and brother,
(Signed.) WILLIAM WHITE."

"To the Grand Secretary, London, Freemasons St.

"Worshipful Brother:—I received yours of the 20th of August last, together with the printed accounts of the state of the Grand Lodge; and am happy to see the flourishing state of the Society, and I am very sorry to see so many Lodges whose behaviour hath been such as to put the Grand Lodge to so disagreeable a task as to erase them from so honorable a society. I have made inquiry about the Lodges you wrote to me about, the Lodge No. 42, which used to meet at the Royal Exchange, and kept at the Assembly House, at the head of Orange Tree Lane, has kept a regular Lodge, and was joined last year by one or two more Lodges. Their present Grand Master is John Cutler, chosen last year, and walked to Trinity Church, where a sermon was delivered by Rev. Walter, D.D., June 25th. The Lodge No. 88 hath joined the above Lodge ever since the death of their Grand Master, Henry Price, Esq., for he is long since dead—a worthy Mason. As for the Marblehead Lodge No. 91, I cannot give any information of it, whether it keeps or not; but I believe they don't, for if they did, I should have heard from her. As for the Lodge No. 93, in New Haven, Connecticut, I hear they keep a regular Lodge, and I have reason to believe it. The Lodge No. 142 do keep the same, as some of them hath visited our Lodge, and heard it from their own mouths.

"I am happy that you approve of the sermon. I have sent you a charge I delivered at Charlestown, on the 25th of June last. I have sent one to your Royal Grand Master, his Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales, and another to his Deputy, and three for the Grand Lodge, which I hope will meet your approval.

(Signed.) Prince Hall."

CHAPTER IV

The Territorial Argument

In what is generally accepted among white Masons as the most authoritative and comprehensive history of Freemasonry in America, there is appended to a page giving a list of Massachusetts lodges to be found on the early English Registry, the following gratuitous footnote:

> "African Lodge had no inherent rights, had no authority to grant dispensations or warrants to others, and its erasure wiped it and all its so-called offspring out of existence; and from the time of the union of the two Grand Lodges of Massachusetts, if it was then in existence, it became clandestine."

This petty squib, apart from the historical ignorance implied in its assumptions, is remarkable as a summary of the time worn arguments against Negro Masonry. Otherwise stated, this is the argument: If no flaws can be picked in the early practices of African Lodge, and if its erasure from the English Registry (at the same time with all other subordinate lodges in the United States) did not afford grounds for objection, then surely the fact that it was not a party to the compact uniting "the two Grand Lodges to form the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts"

rendered it thenceforward a clandestine body; because, it is argued, the formation of the Massachusetts Grand Lodge, ipso facto, conferred upon that body exclusive Masonic jurisdiction throughout the whole state of Massachusetts.

Here is the ancient ruse of making a straw man to knock down. Of course African Lodge, by virtue of its incontestable warrant from England, had all the rights which under the ancient landmarks and old constitutions inhere in any regular lodge of Masons. The authority to grant warrants and dispensations, while it was a subordinate lodge, has never been claimed for African Lodge, although there were strong American

precedents even for that; nor can it be shown that any such were ever granted until it had been duly erected into a Grand body. Concerning the erasure of African Lodge from the English Registry, more will be said hereafter in these pages. However, it may be well to note here one very interesting fact in that connection. The same work above referred to is authority for the statement that African Lodge was not erased from the English Registry until 1813; and that the Massachusetts Grand Lodge, as a result of the union, was formed March 5th, 1792. Consequently if our facetious historian is correct in his premises, the Mother Grand Lodge of England was guilty of the highly reprehensible offence of keeping upon its roll and affiliating with a clandestine lodge of Negro Masons for twenty-one years. The insecurity of his position must have begun to dawn upon our writer, for he did not dare to rest his case without tacking on the inevitable Territorial argument. This is the common experience of all detractors of Negro Masonry. The more they go into the early history of Masonry in America, critically, the more they come to realize that the only alleged objection to the legitimacy of Prince Hall Masons which they can state with a straight face is the one based on the argument of exclusive territorial jurisdiction. And even that has barely the semblance of plausibility.

What is this doctrine of exclusive territorial jurisdiction? There is perhaps no better statement of it than is contained in the famous "Twelve Tables" issued by the Grand Master of Quebec (1883) in relation to the now celebrated controversy with the Grand Lodge of England.*

The following three of the twelve give the substance of the doctrine:

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* Two years after the proclamation of the "British North America Act, 1867," by which Canada was divided into the two provinces of Ontario and Quebec, twenty-one lodges of varying allegiance, located in the latter province, met in a representative body and formed the "Grand Lodge of Quebec." At once ensued a bitter controversy between the new Grand Lodge and the "Grand Lodge of Canada," who challenged the right of the craft to form the new body. This controversy was soon overshadowed, however, by the more serious dispute which soon arose between the "Grand Lodge of Quebec" and the Grand Lodge of England because of the efforts of the former to impose its authority upon three Lodges in the City of Montreal which held warrants directly from England. The claims of the Grand Lodge of Quebec were set forth as follows:

"The principle of coincidence or coterminousness, of political and Masonic boundaries, is an acknowledged law of the constitutions of the Grand Lodges of England, Ireland and Scotland.

"The jurisdiction of each of these Grand Lodges is exclusive within its geographical limits.

"Each of these Grand Lodges claims to be, and is, absolutely sovereign, and may and does enforce its territorial, exclusive, sovereign authority, by the most extreme Masonic penalties, against all lodges not of its registry, existing within its boundaries, in contravention thereto or in violation thereof, even if said lodge (or lodges) were of 'institution' anterior to that of said Grand Lodge.

"The doctrine of *exclusive* Grand Lodge jurisdiction cannot, therefore, with propriety, be called an American doctrine only; but it is a doctrine of the Ancient Constitutions of Freemasonry, as expressed in the constitutions of the premier of modern Grand Lodges.

"Moreover, the Province of Quebec is a federal Province of the Dominion of Canada, and has a political autonomy with legislative, judicial, and executive powers, which are not possessed by England, Scotland, or Ireland, as parts of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland; and hence the Grand Lodge of Quebec is as much (and, *a fortiori*, more), entitled to have and to exercise exclusive Masonic authority within her territorial limits, as is either of the Grand Lodges of the United Kingdom within its geographical boundaries."

These claims were repudiated *in toto* by the Grand Lodge of England who refused, unequivocally, to subscribe to the same as sound Masonic law. In furtherance of his arguments on the subject, the Grand Master of Quebec, at the annual communication of his Grand Lodge in 1883, promulgated his famous "Twelve Tables" which in turn, were also repudiated in so far as they involved the doctrine of exclusive territorial jurisdiction. To show how sharply the English authorities took issue on this doctrine we subjoin in full these so-called "Tables," to which they refused assent:

"The Twelve Tables.—I. At least three duly represented private lodges must unite in the establishment of a Grand Lodge, and the number of lodges thus co-operating should constitute a majority of all the regular private lodges existing within the territory for which the sovereign Grand body is formed. The union and co-operation of all the lodges so situated is supremely desirable, when practicable.

II. It is the duty of every private lodge situated within the territorial jurisdiction of a regularly formed Grand Lodge, but which, through any cause, was not represented at its organization, to become, at an early day thereafter, of allegiance to the new Grand body, and be enrolled on its Registry; or, upon its refusal it may be deemed and declared to be an irregular lodge in not submitting to the lawfully constituted Masonic sovereignty of the country.

III. At the formation of a Grand Lodge, it is not required to issue new warrants to the lodges which united in its establishment, or to those which subsequently become of its allegiance; but an endorsement of the transference of allegiance may be made on the margin of the charter of the adhering lodge or lodges.

IV. At the formation of a Grand Lodge, in the absence of a Grand Master, or Past Grand Master of another Grand Lodge, the oldest Past Master of a private lodge present may install the Grand Master-elect.

V. From its formation, every regularly constituted Grand Lodge, as to its privileges, prerogatives, and duties, and as to whatever else of right appertains to a Grand Lodge of

TABLE V. From its formation, every regularly constituted Grand Lodge, as to its privileges, prerogatives, and duties, and as to whatever else of right appertains to a Grand Lodge of Free Masons, is the peer of every other regular Grand

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Freemasons, is the peer of every other regular Grand Lodge, and no other Grand body can lawfully exercise Masonic Craft authority within its territorial jurisdiction.

VI. Upon the consensus of a majority of sister Grand Lodges as to the right of existence, and the regularity of the formation of a new Grand Lodge, the remaining regular Grand Lodges should deem themselves to be bound by the award, duly pronounced, of their sister Masonic sovereignties, and seek the establishment of interjurisdictional relations with the new territorially supreme Grand body.

VII. Any Grand Lodge may charter private lodges in any territory unoccupied by a local sovereign Grand Lodge; but the exercise of this right is with propriety restricted to unoccupied territories belonging to the country within whose domain the chartering Grand Lodge is situated, or to exterior countries within whose limits a Grand Lodge does not exist.

VIII. A Grand Lodge cannot rightfully constitute a new lodge, or continue to exercise jurisdiction over any lodge formerly chartered by it, after the regular formation of a Grand Lodge within the territory in which said private lodge is situated.

IX. A Grand Lodge cannot rightfully extend to, or receive from, another Grand Lodge qualified or conditional recognition, or lawfully establish interjurisdictional relations based thereon.

X. A Grand Lodge violating any of the essential Landmarks of the Order should be deemed and declared to be an irregular body as long as such violation of the Constitutions of the Fraternity is persisted in.

XI. Any order or organization allied to Ancient Craft Masonry, by requiring candidates for admission thereto to be Freemasons, should be deemed and declared to have forfeited said alliance, should they wilfully violate or endeavor to annul, the Landmarks, Laws, and Constitutions of Ancient Freemasonry.

XII. The several federal Provinces constituting the Dominion of Canada, and the Colonies throughout the British Empire, having local constitutional governments, are severally as much entitled to form and to have Grand Lodges, possessing and exercising exclusive sovereign jurisdiction within their respective geographical and legislative boundaries, as are England, Scotland, and Ireland, as component parts of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland; or as are the several federal States and organized Territories of the United States of America; or as are any separate and distinct kingdoms, or the like."

With an air of finality the Quebec Grand Master cited as "precedents" a long list of Grand Lodges which had accepted the territorial principle. It is interesting that every Grand Lodge in the list is an American body; thus affirming the contention of the English leaders that the territorial doctrine is an "American doctrine," purely local in its origin and application, and dependent upon voluntary assent for whatever authority it possesses.

> Lodge, and no other Grand body can lawfully exercise Masonic Craft authority within its territorial jurisdiction.
>
> Table VII. Any Grand Lodge may charter private lodges in any territory unoccupied by a local sovereign Grand Lodge; but the exercise of this right is with propriety restricted to unoccupied territories belonging to the country within whose domain the chartering Grand Lodge is situated, or to exterior countries within whose limits a Grand Lodge does not exist.
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> Table VIII. A Grand Lodge can not rightfully constitute a new lodge, or continue to exercise jurisdiction over any lodge formerly chartered by it, after the regular formation of a Grand Lodge within the territory in which said private lodge is situated.

The idea of Masonic jurisdiction being coterminous with political boundaries grew up with the peculiar development of colonial America. It is an American doctrine pure and simple and was so characterized by the English authorities in the Quebec controversy already referred to. In the final compromise effected between the disputants in that case, the English were at pains to assert that the concessions granted by them in the interest of peace and harmony by no means implied their acceptance of the doctrine in question. All of this occurred, be it understood, as late as 1883.

In many of the countries and principalities of Europe, there were, for the larger part of the last century, oftentimes several Grand Lodges existing at the same time and exercising co-extensive jurisdiction.* Indeed in some parts of Europe that condition obtains even to this day. It is

* The examples of the three leading Masonic countries of Europe in the Eighteenth Century will bear out this statement:

In England. For years the "Grand Lodge of England" and the "Grand Lodge of All England" existed side by side. There were controversies between these two bodies; but conflict of *territorial* jurisdiction was never the subject of any of them. Indeed the long and bitter fight between the Grand Lodge of England ("Moderns") and Athol Grand Lodge ("Ancients") had to do with other questions of regularity; and territorial encroachment is a point never seriously raised by the Grand Lodge of England against Dermott and his followers.

noteworthy, moreover that the most notable consolidations have been effected for reasons of governmental and administrative convenience, with never any thought of clashing jurisdiction. The impression is abroad in this country that in a given territory it is indispensable that there be one, and only one, Masonic sovereign. But this is not so. To have one sovereign in a given political division undoubtedly simplifies Masonic administration, and hence leaves less chance for confusion and is therefore a desirable consummation; but reasons more potent than that are necessary to make a ruling Masonic precedent. Masonry is universal, is adaptable to all peoples of all lands, for all times. Because, under our peculiar republican "states rights" states, it is convenient to have one Grand Lodge for each state of the Union, it does not follow that our German brethren, for instance, must similarly organize. That is why the Grand Lodge of Hamburg considered it no invasion of pre-empted territory when it began in 1851 to warrant lodges of its own in the state of New York, in spite of the vehement protests of the Grand Lodge of that state.

There is no disposition here to question the general acceptation of the territorial doctrine and the recognition of its binding force by practically all Grand Lodges of the United States. That must be conceded. But how can that fact be invoked to impeach the regularity of Masonic acts which are older than the doctrine itself? It is much like invoking the terms of some newfangled eugenic marriage statute to impeach the legitimacy of the offspring of parents regularly joined in wedlock under the old fashioned matrimonial dispensation of a half century ago. Not alone that. Suppose a group of Grand Lodges, politically and geographically affiliated, have reached a binding understanding to each refrain from exercising jurisdiction in the territory where the other is located, by what process of reasoning, and upon what recognized principle of Masonic Jurisprudence, can it be claimed that any precedent binding upon Masonic bodies not parties to such agreement results therefrom?

In Germany. In this country where the fraternity has been patronized by the elite of the land even to a greater extent than in England, it is notoriously true that at various times throughout the history of the Order there have been numerous Grand Masonic Bodies with coterminous jurisdiction. Besides the "Three Globes" above cited, there were at one time during the latter part of the Eighteenth Century co-existing in Germany: "The National Grand Lodge of Germany," "The Grand Lodge York of Friendship," "The Grand Lodge of Hamburg" and "The Grand Lodge of The Sun."

In Scotland. In this country "Mother Kilwinning" and "The Grand Lodge of Scotland" worked side by side for many years.

In their intercourse with one another, Grand Lodges are bound only by the old constitutions,* so-called; by the ancient and well recognized landmarks;† and by those rules of conduct necessarily deducible from

* The Ancient Constitutions binding in their force upon all Masonic bodies, are held by Masonic Jurists to include the various general enactments from the "Old York Constitutions" (926) to and including "The General Regulations of 1721." No one will contend, however, that Masonic bodies of our day are held to a literal observance of these early enactments. The best canon for construing our obligations to obey these ancient decrees, we take it, is to make a rational application of them to Masonic conditions as they exist this day, having in mind the changed civilization of the twentieth century, but never doing violence to the true spirit. Of course, what is said here has no application to the Ancient Landmarks, for they are to be literally followed.

† "Of the nature of the landmarks of Masonry there has been some diversity of opinion; yet the conviction has become settled that the true principles constituting landmarks are those universal customs of the order which have gradually grown into permanent rules of action, and originally established by competent authority, at a period so remote that no account of their origin is to be found in the records of Masonic history, and which were considered essential to the preservation and integrity of the institution, to preserve its purity and prevent innovation."—*Macoy's "History and Encyclopedia of Freemasonry," p.* 216.

Readers not members of the Fraternity might be interested in a statement of the Ancient Landmarks. We give here the list as made by Lockwood in his "Masonic Law and Practice," which commends itself by its simplicity and brevity of statement—although we challenge the accuracy of No. "10." It is true that some of the ancient legal manuscripts contained the requirement that a candidate for initiation must be "free-born." Nevertheless, there is no authority for a claim that the "free-born" qualification is a *Landmark.*

The Landmarks, according to Lockwood, are as follows:

"1. Belief in the existence of a Supreme Being, in some revelation of his will, in the resurrection of the body and in the immortality of the soul.

2. The obligations and modes of recognition, and the legend of the third degree.

3. The inculcation of the moral virtues, of benevolence and of the doctrines of natural religion, by means of symbols derived from the Temple of King Solomon and its tradition, and from the usages and customs observed, and from the implements and materials used in its construction.

4. That Masons must obey the moral law and the government of the country in which they live.

5. That the Grand Master is the head of the Craft.

6. That the Master is head of the Lodge.

7. That the Grand Lodge is the supreme governing body within its territorial jurisdiction.

8. That every Lodge has an inherent right to be represented in Grand Lodge by its first three officers, or their proxies.

the nature of the institution of Freemasonry. Obedience to any other rules or regulations is purely voluntary. It could not be otherwise; for all Grand Lodges being equal in dignity and authority, there is no external power by which other rules and regulations can be superimposed. That any doctrine could be asserted contrary to so self-evident a proposition simply illustrates how much confusion may result from an attempt to invest a Masonic Grand Lodge with all the attributes of sovereignty which belong to a political state. The analogy between the two breaks down long before we reach any such point.

In America where conflicting sovereignty has always been a vital question in our political history as a result of our dual government, it is not surprising that we find it hard to understand the feasibility and Masonic propriety of two or more sovereign Grand bodies having co-extensive jurisdiction in the same territory. And yet it has been and is being amply demonstrated that the thing can be done, and that too without untoward consequences. And so it is that the doctrine of territorial exclusiveness, asserted on this continent with so much assurance, is justly characterized as an American doctrine. That characterization could only mean a lack of universal acceptation. To impeach the regularity of African Grand Lodge, it is manifest that there must be shown a violation of some vital

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9. That every Lodge has power to make Masons, and to administer its own private affairs.

10. That every candidate must be a man, of lawful age, born of free parents, under no restraint of liberty, and hale and sound, as a man ought to be.

11. That no candidate can be received except by unanimous ballot, after due notice of his application, and due inquiry as to his qualifications.

12. That the ballot is inviolably secret.

13. That all Masons, as such, are peers.

14. That all Lodges are peers.

15. That all Grand Lodges are peers.

16. That no person can be installed Master of a Lodge unless he be a Past Warden, except by Dispensation of the Grand Master.

17. That the obligations, means of recognition, and the forms and ceremonies observed in conferring degrees are secret.

18. That no innovation can be made upon the body of Masonry.

19. That the Ancient Landmarks are the Supreme Law, and cannot be changed or abrogated."

principle of Freemasonry universally recognized. A definition of interjurisdictional relationship of a particular number of Grand Lodges, dictated by local convenience, can be invoked to the discredit of no Masonic body which is not voluntarily a party to the compact. Masonic principles are not a matter of geography.

Besides being merely local in its origin and acceptation, this doctrine owes whatever authority it possesses to Masonic comity, and clearly to that alone. It is observed by American Grand Lodges as a sort of entente. But if it was as universally accepted and as binding as one of the ancient landmarks, there is still a fatal obstacle in the way of its being used as a means of outlawing Negro Masonry. To the American principle that a Grand Lodge once formed in a given territory by the united action of the majority and at least three of the lodges therein acquires exclusive jurisdiction in each territory, there is this corollary: all lodges in that territory which refuse to come under the Grand Lodge thus formed thereafter become clandestine. Notice that to become outlawed under the circumstances stated, a lodge must refuse subordination to the newly formed Grand body. A refusal implies, of course, the opportunity to affiliate. There is no record, nor has it ever been claimed, that African Lodge No. 459 was ever afforded an opportunity to attach itself to any of the several supposed Grand bodies existing or organized in Massachusetts while it was a subordinate lodge—although the regularity of its existence as such was not questioned in those times. On their own theory, therefore, the descendents of these very consolidating bodies which formed the so-called Grand Lodge of Massachusetts are estopped from denying the continued regularity of any subordinate lodge which their forebears ignored in their plan of organization; for that in itself was a gross irregularity. It is as though the maker of a feast should purposely exclude one from his list of invited guests and then afterward castigate him for non-attendance.

The final answer to the territorial argument is the action of the Mother Grand Lodge in warranting African Lodge in the first place. When on the 29th day of September, 1784, the English Grand Lodge granted a warrant in due Masonic form to African Lodge No. 459, located in Boston, St. John's Grand Lodge was over sixty-one years old, and St. Andrew's Grand Lodge, which later united with St. John's to form the "Grand Lodge of Massachusetts," had been in existence nearly a quarter of a century. So that a territory wherein there were already two co-existing

Grand Lodges was thus invaded. Yet, if the right of the English Grand Lodge to warrant African Lodge No. 459 was ever challenged in the day and time of this action, there is no record of the same. This action of the mother Grand Lodge could only mean one of two things—either that there was existing in Massachusetts, at the time in question, no Masonic body of sufficient dignity to entitle it to the right of exclusive territorial jurisdiction; or else that this right did not inure to such a Grand body if one was in existence. Nineteenth century controversies have shown that the latter was the real English position, although it may be seriously questioned whether in 1792, after the "union" in Massachusetts, there was legally any independent and sovereign Grand body in that state.

To have their latter day doctrine of territorial jurisdiction reach back and accomplish what is desired, our white American brethren are reduced to the necessity of repudiating the source of their own authority and of ignoring precedents established by their own creator. How can they legally do this?

CHAPTER V

The Erasure of African Lodge from the English Roll

Passing the question of the right of African Lodge to be, the next contention of the opposition is that from the date of the erasure of African Lodge from the English roll it had no right to continue. For, it is argued, being considered as a dependent and subordinate body, which is evidenced by its being carried on the roll at all, it follows that cutting it off the roll set it adrift and thereby revoked its right to further existence, as there can not any longer be such a thing in Masonry as a subordinate lodge accountable and attached to no Grand body. This argument like the others is faulty in its premise and overlooks essential historical facts.

First of all it absolutely ignores the circumstances of the erasure and the reason for it. African Lodge was not singled out and made the subject of special action in this regard, but was treated precisely like all American lodges then remaining upon the rolls either of the English Grand Lodge or of the Athol Grand Lodge. As an incident to the union of these two bodies in 1813 there was a revision of their respective rolls, as a result of which all American lodges, whether alive or defunct, were stricken from the rolls. Careful students of Masonic history are agreed that this action was largely influenced by the fact of the political separateness of the two countries which came as a result of the Revolution. The strained relations which naturally followed the independence of the colonies made subordination to English authority in any form irksome to Americans. The action taken by the two Grand Lodges was a happy solution of the matter so far as the fraternity was concerned. Those lodges which were already defunct of course deserved such a fate; those which were alive were thus released from their English bonds and freed to affiliation with

the appropriate American branches of the order, which privilege practically all such lodges availed themselves of. The existence of prosperous and numerous American Grand bodies to which these lodges might attach themselves made it easy for the English mother lodges to cut off their American offspring. The interesting fact is that African Lodge alone became a foundling.

The erasure of African Lodge in 1813 in no way affected its status; for long before that time it had already become a Grand Body and owed no especial consideration to its English Grand Lodge, save only that deference which the full grown child owes to the parent to whose authority he as a minor was subjected. At the time of erasure African Lodge had been superceded by African Grand Lodge and in turn by Prince Hall Grand Lodge, and of course being a Grand Lodge, it did not need to attach itself to any other Grand body, as would have been the case if it had at that time still been a private or subordinate lodge.

One really wonders how an argument so easily refutable could be urged with any seriousness. To say that to strike one Grand Lodge from the list of those owing allegiance to another Grand Lodge in no way affects the independent status of the former is to state a principle so elementary as to make ridiculous any argument which depends for its force upon a contrary proposition. And yet that is precisely the position of the man who would seek to make capital out of the fact that African Lodge was dropped from the English Registry in 1813, unless he has first conclusively proven that African Lodge had not previously been duly erected into a Grand Masonic body. That the attempt to do such a thing should be made demonstrates to what extent the opposition relies upon popular ignorance of the history of early Masonry in America.

Much has been made out of the fact that in 1824 African Lodge applied to the English Grand Lodge for authority to work the higher degrees. It is argued that the mere fact of the petition shows that African lodge did not itself consider that it was an independent, sovereign Grand body. Of all conclusions which might be drawn from the act, that, in the light of the circumstances, is the least justifiable. Upton says that the probabilities are that when the petition was made African Lodge was still unaware of its erasure from the English Registry. In the light of the experience of other lodges erased at the same time, that is an entirely reasonable supposition. However, there are good reasons to suppose that the petition was traceable to other causes.

It will be recalled that one of the serious contentions between the "Ancients" and "Moderns" during the long and bitter fight covering nearly one whole century related to the right to confer the Royal Arch degrees. The "Moderns" in the early part of the conflict were firm in their opposition to the higher degrees which were stigmatized as an innovation. But the "Ancients," under the inspiration of the resourceful and intrepid Dermott, were quick to see in the capitular degrees an effective weapon in their warfare for prestige; and so well was it used as such, that the "Moderns" or regulars were forced to abandon their former attitude of implacability toward these degrees. This they did gracefully, however, for though a Royal Arch Chapter was formed in 1765, as a defensive measure to arrest the defections of "Moderns" to the "Ancients," for exaltation, yet the Grand Lodge of England took no official notice of its existence. Nevertheless, when the union was affected in 1813, while it was declared that masonry consisted of the three symbolic degrees, the "Holy Royal Arch" was specifically and legally recognized.* Remembering the controversy that had been waged concerning the Royal Arch degrees, and that their regularity as a constituent part of Masonry had been persistently challenged by the very Grand body from which it sprang, it is but natural that Prince Hall Grand Lodge should have had misgivings about the matter. It is true that this controversy had terminated eleven years before, but in those days of slow communication there is evidence that some Masonic bodies in closer touch with England than Prince Hall could ever have been were at the time in question still ignorant even of

* "*The Royal Arch Degree.*—The Moderns, or as more justly styled, the Constitutional Grand Lodge, did not recognize the Royal Arch Degree, nor introduce it into their system, until some thirty years later than did the Ancients. In 1758 the Grand Secretary declared, 'Our Society is neither Arch, Royal Arch, nor Ancient.' About the year 1770 this Grand Lodge authorized Thomas Dunckerley to inaugurate a new system of lectures, in doing which he 'fabricated the Royal Arch for the Modern Masons.' This met with much opposition, but his popularity and the influence of the Grand Master prevailed to introduce the Royal Arch Degree into the system of the Moderns, at a period, as Dr. Oliver thinks, not earlier than the dedication of Freemasons' Hall in 1776.

"From what has been heretofore said, it appears that during 1738-40 the Royal Arch Degree was adopted into the system of the 'Grand Lodge of England according to the Old Constitutions,' otherwise called the 'Ancients,' and later, the 'Athol Grand Lodge.' In 1776 a similar degree was adopted by the 'Constitutional Grand Lodge,' or the 'Moderns'; and in 1813 it was formally recognized as a part of the York Rite by the United Grand Lodge of England."—*Chapman, The Capitular Degrees.*

the articles of the union effected in 1813. Moreover, what is more reasonable than that a supposed enlargement of powers should have been sought from the same source whence came the powers originally? It is also to be remembered that the authority of Royal Arch bodies, as such, was not at that time recognized as distinct and separate and independent of the blue lodge to the extent that it is today. Finally, it must be pointed out that in 1824 the American Grand Lodges had not entirely shaken off the parental authority of the English Grand Lodge. While not submitting directly to its authority they were still under its influence.

With these circumstances in mind it is apparent to what extent the language of the petition of 1824 must be tortured to obtain any such meaning or significance as our opponents would give it.

CHAPTER VI

Argument of the "Free-Born" Qualification

Among the points brought to the surface by the fine-tooth comb of the opposition is an alleged ritualistic defect involving the qualification of candidates. It is contended that early Negro lodges struck from the Masonic Ritual the words "free-born" and substituted therefor the word "free" in describing the requisites for initiation. They who unearthed this objection must have had access to historical data not usually available; for a most exhaustive bibliography has failed to yield to the writer any information on which it may be stated as a certainty that early Negro lodges made any such substitution. The author can furthermore testify out of extensive and intimate knowledge that Negro lodges today universally use the word "free-born." The contrary statement is unquestionably the outgrowth of the assumption that owing to the existence of slavery such a qualification must have been required, because very few Negroes in the United States had been born free. But an assumption, however reasonable, is after all only an assumption and not a proven fact.

But suppose the first Negro lodges in this country did change the Ritual to the extent in question. What then? Does it follow that such action vitiates the entire Masonic regularity of those making such a change? By no means. How far are Masonic Grand bodies bound in the matter of particular ritualistic formula and statement? This far: No Grand Lodge may change in any respect the ancient modes of recognition. This is a landmark. No Grand Lodge may so tamper with the Ritual as to destroy in any essential particular the ancient legend of the Temple Builder—this

is likewise a landmark.* The division of symbolic Masonry into three degrees must be observed, and the object of all ritualistic practice must be to lead the neophyte to the true "word" by means of the well recognized symbolism, and more particularly by use of the ancient legend already mentioned. Any Masonic ritual which substantially conforms to these requirements is above just reproach.

The Masonic Ritual is claimed to have been handed down from one generation to another, by word of mouth. The commitment of the Ritual to any sort of written form, even in characters not generally intelligible to the profane, is not in strict accord with the Masonic vows. Indeed, many white Grand Lodges, in order to preserve the fiction of oral transmission, shut their eyes to the prevalent practice of using "cipher work," and disavow in their Ordinances their recognition of any written Masonic Ritual. Now if it is true that recognition is to be accorded alone to what has been received into the "listening ear," how absurd at once becomes the claim of any Ritual to verbal infallibility. Moreover, what credible white witness is there to testify that the ancient questions orally propounded to candidates, within Negro lodges, contained the alteration claimed?

We advert to our original position. A mere change of ritualistic detail, unless it involves a violation of the fundamental laws of Masonry, as before declared in these pages, can not impeach the regularity of the Grand body making such a change. Here is a case in point. Many Grand Lodges of today prohibit from membership in the order any man engaged in the sale of spirituous and intoxicating liquors, yet there was no ancient rule to that effect. Must we say, therefore, that because the ancient Halliwell Poem contained no bar against tavern keepers modern Grand Lodges

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* "The Temple legend, however, must be retained as a part of the ritual as long as the present system of Speculative Freemasonry exists, and the legendary and allegorical narrative must be repeated by the Master of the Lodge on the occasion of every initiation into the mysteries of the Third Degree, because, though it is no longer to be accepted as an historical statement, yet the events which it records are still recognized as a myth containing within itself, and independent of all questions of probability, a symbolical significance of the highest importance.

"This mythical legend of the Temple, and of the Temple Builder, must ever remain an inseparable part of the Masonic ritual, and the narrative must be repeated on all appropriate occasions, because, without this legend, Speculative Masonry would lose its identity and would abandon the very object of its original institution. On this legend, whether true or false, whether a history or a myth, is the most vital portion of the symbolism of Freemasonry founded."—*Mackey-Singleton, "History of Freemasonry," p.* 965.

have no right to make the prohibition referred to? There are as ancient and as strong Masonic precedents for requiring that candidates for the mysteries of Masonry shall be "free" as there are that they shall be "free-born." And Grand bodies making such requirement are better within their rights than are those American Grand Lodges who add "white" to their list of qualifications for initiation. If Negro lodges ever used the word "free" instead of "free-born" they can point to the authority of the Ancient Regius manuscript, and to the action of the English Grand Lodge in the early part of the last century; but our white friends will find neither landmark, nor sound usage, nor ancient precedent to sustain them in basing Masonic eligibility upon race.* Surely that were a ritualistic innovation odious enough to impugn the Masonry of its sponsors—if such be possible.

The reason behind the ancient rule requiring that initiates should be free was that if a slave, an apprentice, a minor, or any other person not sui juris, were made a Mason, his master would have a right under the civil law to invade the privacy of a lodge in pursuit of his slave or ward, and to prevent such an invasion all Masons were solemnly bound. To obviate the possibility of any clash between Masonic and civil authority, therefore, the rule was made. For in spite of the claim of ignorant persons to the contrary, it has always been the design of the Masonic institution to teach its votaries to yield ready and loyal obedience to the civil authority.† If the foregoing is the true reason behind the rule, it is at once apparent that it matters little whether a candidate for the mysteries was born free, or not, so long as he is free when he presents himself for

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* ::: {.centered} "2. Behaviour After The Lodge is Over and the Brethren Not Gone. :::

"You may enjoy yourselves with innocent Mirth, treating one another according to Ability, but avoiding all Excess, or forcing any Brother to eat or drink beyond his Inclination, or hindering him from going when his Occasions call him, or doing or saying any thing offensive, or that may forbid an easy and free Conversation; for that would blast our Harmony, and defeat our laudable Purposes. Therefore no private Piques or Quarrels must be brought within the Door of the Lodge far less any Quarrels about Religion, or Nations, or State Policy, we being only, as Masons, of the Catholick Religion above-mention'd; *we are also of all Nations, Tongues, Kindreds, and Languages,* and are resolv'd against all Politicks, as what never yet conduc'd to the Welfare of the Lodge, nor ever will. This Charge has been always strictly enjoin'd and observ'd; but especially ever since the Reformation in Britain, or the Dissent and Secession of these Nations from the Communion of Rome." —*Charges of A Freemason, Edition of* 1723.

(The italics are mine.)

† ::: {.centered} "II. Of the Civil Magistrate supreme and subordinate. :::

initiation. Masonry is interested primarily in the qualifications of a man at the time when he seeks admission into the order. If he had previous and involuntary disabilities from which he had been manumitted, he is Masonically acceptable if possessed of the other necessary qualifications. Any contrary principle is utterly at variance with the very genius of the institution.

"A Mason is a peaceable Subject to the Civil Powers, wherever he resides or works, and is never to be concern'd in Plots and Conspiracies against the Peace and Welfare of the Nation, nor to behave himself undutifully to inferior Magistrates; for as Masonry hath been always injured by War, Bloodshed, and Confusion, so ancient Kings and Princes have been much dispos'd to encourage the Craftsmen, because of their Peaceableness and Loyalty, whereby they practically answer'd the Cavils of their Adversaries, and promoted the Honour of the Fraternity, who ever flourished in Times of Peace. So that if a Brother should be a Rebel against the State, he is not to be countenanc'd in his Rebellion, however he may be pitied as an unhappy Man; and, if convicted of no other Crime, though the loyal Brotherhood must and ought to disown his Rebellion, and give no Umbrage or Ground of political Jealousy to the Government for the time being; they cannot expel him from the Lodge, and his Relation to it remains indefeasible."— *Charges of a Freemason, Ed.* 1723.

This point is well made by Grand Master Upton in his book, in which connection he quotes from the Ancient Regius Poem as follows:

"Gef yn logge he were y-take,
Muche desese hyt mygth ther make.
* * *
For alle the masonus that ben there
Wol stonde togedur hol y-fere."

Besides the reasons here suggested, this qualification is undoubtedly a relic of the era of Operative Masonry, and is among the few useless requirements which escaped the discard after the Institution became purely speculative in character. While we owe nearly all that is vital in our symbolism to our inheritance from Operative Masonry, still we are not obliged to a blind adherence to points which our changed society renders no longer material, however much they have been insisted upon by our ancient brothers who made up the guilds of architects and builders.

CHAPTER VII

As to Recognition

"I do not love thee, Doctor Fell,
The reason why I can not tell;
But this alone I know full well,
I do not love thee, Doctor Fell."

How well do these famous old lines epitomize the unreasonableness of prejudice. That same unreasonable and unreasoning prejudice is alone responsible for the invention of the alleged reasons against the legitimacy of Negro Masonry. To the uninitiated it is not readily apparent as to why white American Masons should trouble themselves to invent such reasons. Powerful motives are usually behind persistent distortion of facts and persistent misinterpretation of history. To those who are familiar with the true inwardness of the Masonic institution, it is all plain enough. Masonry is entirely different from all other fraternal organizations. In other fraternal bodies if one element in its membership is offended because of the presence of another element, the disgruntled ones usually settle the difficulty by withdrawing and setting up for themselves an "Independent" or "Improved" branch of the same order. In Masonry such things can not be done. Secession is impossible, and any designation intended to indicate separation or distinction carries upon its face its own impeachment. The same thing under another title is the ruse which has been successfully employed by white Americans in other "ancient" orders to escape affiliation with Negroes. But no such things can avail them in Masonry. For every regular Mason is possessed of certain inalienable rights which must be recognized and respected by every other Mason everywhere. One could not deliberately make a catalog which would be more offensive to your white Americans than are the inherent rights and corresponding obligations of an individual Mason, as a basis of fraternal contact with a Negro, whatever might be the merits of

the latter. Here is the source of all the trouble. To adapt a famous figure, if in all things Masonic the white and black Americans could be one, and yet in matters social be as separate as the fingers of the hand, then no one would ever hear impugned the Masonry of Prince Hall and his followers. Unfortunately, Masonry knows no caste. The badge of a Mason to its worthy possessor is an honor which is equal to any which he could ever receive from kings or potentates. To a true Mason an admission of his inferiority to any man is a disavowal of his Masonry.

It is clear therefore that the only consistent course open to the white Mason in this country who desires to avoid his obligations to his Negro brethren is to refuse them recognition. That he can justify only by challenging the legitimacy of Negro Masonry. The interesting thing about it is that the sufficiency of the grounds of the challenge is not apt to affect their attitude. If these pages had been written to demonstrate the intellectual and moral obliquity of the average white American wherever the race question is involved, and especially to shame him out of his untenable position on Negro Masonry, the writer would have had his efforts for his pains. Logic and ethical consistency are no obstacles in the way of American prejudice. One black face is moral pandemonium. White Masons of America would invent many more absurdities than these with which they now charge Prince Hall before they would admit the truth as to why they deny recognition to Negro Masons. Moreover, there are very few among them who have the courage of their illustrious General Albert Pike, who said, "Prince Hall Lodge was as regular a lodge as any lodge created by competent authority, and had a perfect right (as other lodges in Europe did) to establish other lodges, making itself a mother lodge." And yet this also: "I took my obligation to white men, not to Negroes. When I have to accept Negroes as brothers or leave Masonry, I shall leave it."* Point out, if you will, the faulty reasoning of this man

* The letter of General Albert Pike, Sovereign Grand Commander, A. & A. Scottish Rite, containing these remarkable sentiments—remarkable for a Mason—has become so famous a part of the documentary history of Negro Masonry, that we hardly dare omit it.

"ALEXANDRIA, VA., 13th September, 1875.

"My Dear Friend and Brother.—I can see as plainly as you that the Negro question is going to make trouble. There are plenty of *regular* Negro Masons and Negro lodges in South America and the West Indies, and our folks only *stave off* the question by saying that Negro Masons here are clandestine. Prince Hall Lodge was as regular a Lodge as any

lodge created by competent authority, and had a perfect right (as other lodges in Europe did) to establish other lodges, making itself a Mother Lodge. That's the way the Berlin lodges, Three Globes and Royal York, became Grand Lodges.

"The Grand Orient of Hayti is as regular as any other. So is the Grand Orient of the Dominican Republic, which, I dare say, has Negroes in it and Negro lodges under it.

"Again, if the Negro lodges are *not* regular they can easily get regularized. If our Grand Lodges won't recognize Negro lodges, they have the right to go elsewhere. The Grand Lodge can't say to eight or more Masons, black or white, we will not give you a charter because you are Negroes, or because you wish to work the Scottish Rite, and you shall not go elsewhere to get one. That latter part is *bosh.*

"Hamburg recognizes the Grand Lodges. Yes, and so the German Grand Lodge Confederation is going to do, and so will the Grand Orient of France before long.

"Of course, if negrophily continues to be the religion established by law of your States, there will be before long *somewhere* a beginning of recognition of Negro bodies. Then the Royal Arch and Templar bodies of Negroes must be taken in, and Masonry go down to their level. Will your plan work? I think not. I think there is no middle ground between rigid exclusion of Negroes or recognition, and affiliation with the whole mass.

"If they are not Masons, how protect them as such or at all? If they *are* Masons, how deny them affiliation or have two supreme powers in one jurisdiction.

"I am not inclined to meddle in the matter. I took my obligations to white men, not to Negroes. When I have to accept Negroes as *brothers* or leave Masonry, I shall leave it.

"I am interested to keep the Ancient and Accepted Rite uncontaminated, in *our* country at least, by the leprosy of Negro association. Our Supreme Council can defend its jurisdiction, and it is the law-maker. There can not be a lawful body of that Rite in our jurisdiction unless it is created by us.

"I am not so sure but that, what with immensity of numbers, want of a purpose worth laboring for, general indifference to obligations, pitiful charity and large expenses, fuss, feathers and fandango, big temples and large debts, Masonry is become a great helpless, inert mass that will some day, before long, topple over, and go under. If you wish it should, I think you can hasten the catastrophe by urging a protectorate of the Negroes. Better let the thing drift. *Apres nous le deluge.*

"Truly yours,
Albert Pike."

(Ill. Comp. John D. Caldwell.)

Shamelessly has this bold man unmasked the whole miserable pretence. It is not from the spectre of *Irregularity* that they shrink. It is not their abhorrence of a clandestine body having no right to practice Masonry, that draws them apart from Prince Hall and his followers. It is their own inability to grasp the true essence of the Fraternity. They can not be converted to the "established religion" of "negrophily." They can not be converted to the religion of universal Brotherhood, which is Masonry.

in that he considers the binding force of a vow to depend upon the person who happens to administer it, rather than upon its content. Still the manly frankness of his attitude is in conspicuous contrast with that of the average of his fellows.

The completest possible vindication of Negro Masonry would not bring to it the recognition of the white Masons of the United States. This is no calamity. Quite the contrary. So far from considering ultimate white recognition as an indispensable end to be sought, the writer believes that it is not even an end to be desired, unless it is preceded by a complete reversal of the attitude of white folk on many points in the race question usually deemed by them to be most vital—a consummation which will scarcely be witnessed by any person living at the time of the publication of this book. But after all what does it matter to Negro Masonry whether it is "recognized" by the white Masons of the United States? Consider what non-"recognition" really means. It means first that the white Masons consider themselves bound to Negro Masons by none of those engagements which every regular Mason must undertake toward his brothers and fellows. In the second place, non-"recognition" means a refusal to observe the customary amenities of Masonic intercourse. Thus defined we again ask, how can it matter to Negro Masonry that men who take their Masonic vows with mental reservations refuse to "recognize" other men who subscribe unequivocally to the sacred engagements of the fraternity?*

So far from lamenting the absolute disassociation of Negro Masonry from the white Masonry of this country, our attitude towards that fact

* Let it be remembered that Masonic regularity is not dependent upon "Recognition." The whole list of human frailties may stand behind a refusal of one set of Masons to "recognize" another. One could safely wager, I believe, that far more than half of the white Masons of the United States who would refuse to accord to their Negro brothers Masonic fellowship, have never heard of African Lodge, or of Prince Hall, and a still larger number know little or nothing of the merits of the case for Negro Masonry. In their bigoted ignorance they cannot conceive of a Negro Masonry on their own level. I recall an appropriate parable: A Scotch sea captain was nearing a trading port where favorable wharfage was of very great value. Suddenly there hove in sight the vessel of his dearest rival. There at once ensued a bitter race to make the place of best advantage. Seeing himself completely out-distanced, our Scotch friend in utter desperation, fell upon his knees and lifting his eyes heavenward, thus prayed, with emphasis as indicated: "Oh *my* Father! sittest Thou in peace on Thy throne and beholdest yon out-lander about to make port ahead of *one of Thine own children?"* The application is obvious.

should be that of serene indifference. Because of what it is meant to imply, and because of its usual accompaniment of degradation, the Negro people frequently find themselves compelled to oppose the separation of the races. This fact is often seized upon by detractors, both within and without the ranks, as evidence of our lack of proper racial self-esteem. More is the reason, therefore, that on those occasions when it does no hurt to be by ourselves, we ought to be conspicuous in our contentment to have it so.

The followers of Prince Hall are regular Masons. Why should they crave "recognition" from those whose Masonic divestment has left them still clothed in all the pettiness and prejudice of the profane; and to whom the word brother is a designation of a social status rather than of the universal kinship of men?

The followers of Prince Hall believe in the universality of Masonry. Shall they feel aggrieved at being denied affiliation with those whose Masonry is of such sort that they halt the worthy candidate at the porch of the Temple to inquire if he be Aryan, or Finn, or Hottentot?

The followers of Prince Hall are proud of their Masonry. Shall they therefore aspire to assume Masonic offices for those who would deem it a condescension to accept the same? Or shall they desire to take their distress to those who would consider any proffered relief not the charity of a Mason but the alms of a profane?

The only recognition which Negro Masons could ever accept without self-stultification would be recognition coupled with union with them under the wide baldachin of universal Masonry, from which the white brethren have drawn themselves apart. As to recognition on any other basis—a fig!

CHAPTER VIII

How Shall Negro Masons Treat White American Masons?

Two very troublesome questions have been a constant source of perplexity to Negro Masons: the first is, what should be the official attitude of Negro Masonry towards white American Masonry?

The difficulty in answering this question is the difficulty of deciding how to treat these regular Masons in the manner which their own un-Masonic attitude deserves, and yet be consistent and true to Masonic vows. Some few Negro Masonic bodies have adopted the easy course of paying the white Masons back in kind, i. e., challenging the legitimacy of their Masonry. These bodies, in the language of Grand Master Prince Hall, are "chargeable with the inconsistency of acting, themselves, the part which they condemn and oppose in others." Of all courses it ill becomes us most to emulate that in our opponents which we ourselves most severely criticize. We are driven to no such extremes. We need not follow the white Masons into any hair-splitting subtleties to get them off our Masonic conscience. They have themselves made the task much more simple. When a man says to you that you are not a Mason, he at once absolves you from all Masonic obligations towards him. And to justify your conduct in treating him accordingly it is not necessary for you to show that he himself is not a regular Mason. When one Mason stigmatizes another as clandestine, he thereby severs the fraternal cord which binds him to that other.

Every rule of self respect requires that Negro Masonry should officially hold itself aloof from white Masonry wherever it is the policy of the latter to deny the regularity of Prince Hall Masons.

The second question presents a more difficult problem. The attitude of one organization towards another organization can be easily determined. An organization is impersonal. Man to man contact is altogether

another matter. How shall the individual Negro Mason treat the individual white Mason who is inclined to disregard the inhibitions of his own Grand Lodges and to hold Masonic intercourse with Negro Masons? Let us say at once that whenever such men evince a willingness to meet their black brethren on the level of Masonic equality, we can afford to be as generous as they. So long as the conduct of the individual white Mason whom we meet in no way offends the strict proprieties of Masonic intercourse, we are entirely justified in fraternizing with him; for if in the high Masonic sense he treats us as a brother, we need not concern ourselves overmuch about the fact that he disregards the local ordinances of his own Grand Lodge. That is his matter. Of course by fraternizing under the circumstances here recited is not meant official participation in Masonic labors; but rather the ordinary amenities of informal personal contact.

In meeting white men who are inclined to be Masonically cordial, however, the Negro Mason should always be punctiliously insistent that he be treated absolutely as a Masonic equal. It would seem that that would go without saying. But the simple truth is, the Negro has been so much mistreated by the other race, that he is all but inclined to put a premium upon ordinary decent behaviour towards him. The writer recalls the enthusiasm of a recital by one of the oldest Past Masters of his own lodge, how during his incumbency in the chair certain prominent white Masons had been admitted to his lodge to witness the conferring of the Master's degree; and how his visitors gave vent to their utter astonishment at the proficiency of their Negro brethren in the Masonic Ritual, avowing that the "work" could not have been better done by white Masons themselves. This questionable compliment is cherished with pride by the brother in question to this day, although he was denied the return of the courtesy of visitation by these same white Masons.

The writer has actually witnessed the spectacle of a white Mason in distress soliciting relief from a Negro Mason, and then receiving the same with a patronizing air like the beggar Prince who exacted that his peasant benefactor do obeisance while bestowing upon him a much required charity.

Your average white American is so subtle and insidious in his condescension that most of the time the Negro finds himself dealing with him on a basis of implied inferiority without knowing how it all came about. Indeed, if by the time the Negro American reaches his majority, he has

not acquired a consciousness of race inferiority it certainly is not because his education to that end has been neglected. For from the time when he first begins to read about the white face children in the picture books, until he is finally laid away in a segregated corner of the burying ground, his whole training and experience have been well calculated to impress upon him that he is not supposed to belong on the same level with his fellow humans about him.

We venture to picture the appropriate personal attitude of a Negro Mason towards Masons of the white race whom he may meet: Those who approach him with a morbid curiosity simply to learn what a Negro may make out of the Institution of Freemasonry, he will treat with deserved contempt. Those who bear themselves towards him with supercilious condescension, he will Masonically ignore. Such as treat him precisely as though the differences of race do not stand before the claims of brotherhood, he will accord unreserved communication. He will evince no anxiety to "talk Masonry" with every white man who may happen to wear the square and compasses in the lapel of his coat. Toward the rare exception, the member of the other race who is sincere in his Masonic advances, he will be quiet-mannered and modest, receiving any proffered Masonic attention as a matter of course, and not as a rare distinction conferred. Should he be hailed by one of the votaries of the perverted Masonry described in this book, in distress, in spite of the absence of any claim upon his charity, the true son of Prince Hall will probably emulate the example of the neighborly man on the Jericho road—even though the Jews and the Samaritans have no dealings one with the other.

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Summary and Analysis

The plan of the book

The Foreword states the purpose: to set out the case for the legitimacy of Prince Hall Masonry as its own members understood it, briefly enough for the ordinary Mason who must defend his standing. Chapter I gives a life of Prince Hall and the story of the warrant of 1784. Chapter II describes how Freemasonry came to the colonies under English deputations, how the provincial bodies gave way to independent state grand lodges after the Revolution, and how the rule that a state may have only one grand lodge grew out of that settlement.

Chapter III is the center of the book. It sets a test of legitimacy, that a body's authority come from a proper source by the accepted usage of its time, and applies it first to the white grand lodges, whose early records Crawford finds uncertain, and then to African Lodge, whose warrant and correspondence survive. It then argues that African Grand Lodge was regular whichever of three accounts of its formation is accepted. Chapters IV to VI answer the objections from territorial jurisdiction, from the erasure of 1813, and from the "free-born" qualification. Chapters VII and VIII turn to recognition and to the conduct a Prince Hall Mason owes to white Masons.

Crawford's method

Crawford argues as a lawyer before a court. He states his opponents' case fairly, often in their own words, and answers it on their ground, from the Old Charges, Anderson's Constitutions, and the standard white Masonic writers of his day: Mackey, Gould, Macoy, Lockwood, and the Mackey-Singleton history. His favorite argument is the precedent. If the Grand Lodge of England was itself formed by a general assembly of Masons,

if the Three Globes in Berlin and the lodge at York raised themselves to grand lodges, and if England warranted African Lodge in a state that already had two grand lodges, then no rule of later date can be used to condemn what Prince Hall did. He draws on legal ideas throughout: *res judicata*, estoppel, the difference between a landmark and a local regulation, and the principle that a rule must be judged by the law in force when the act was done.

THE BOOK IN ITS TIME

Crawford wrote in the years when the NAACP was young and The Crisis, under W. E. B. Du Bois, was arguing that Black Americans should claim their rights rather than ask for favor. His book carries that temper into Masonry. Its sharpest pages are not about the eighteenth century but about recognition: Crawford refuses to treat white approval as the reward of Black Masonry, holds that recognition without equality would be worthless, and quotes Albert Pike's letter of 1875, which conceded the regularity of Prince Hall's lodge while refusing on grounds of race to accept its members, as the plain statement of what lay behind the legal objections. The book also served Prince Hall Masons within their own ranks, as a handbook for members who had to answer the charge that they were clandestine.

READING IT TODAY

The legal argument has worn well; much of the biography has not. Readers should take the life of Prince Hall in Chapter I as the tradition of 1914, not as established fact, and should read the dates of 1787 and 1791 with the Notes. The book's judgment on recognition belongs to its time as well. Since 1989 most mainstream grand lodges in the United States have entered into recognition with the Prince Hall Affiliated grand lodges of their states, and the United Grand Lodge of England has recognized the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Massachusetts. Crawford's insistence that such recognition mean equality, and that Prince Hall Masons owe no apology for their origin, remains the clearest statement of the principle on which those agreements were reached.

Sources: as for the Editor's Introduction.

About the Author

George Williamson Crawford was born at Tuscaloosa, Alabama, on October 21, 1877, the son of William and Charlotte Oliver Crawford, and grew up in Birmingham. He studied at Tuskegee Institute and graduated from Talladega College, a college he went on to serve for fifty years, before entering the Yale Law School. He graduated in 1903, the school's second Black graduate, and won the Townsend Prize for oratory.

Crawford was appointed clerk of the New Haven Probate Court in 1903 and entered private practice in New Haven in 1907. He took part in the Niagara Movement, was a founding member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, served on its board until 1933, and helped found its New Haven branch. He was a friend and correspondent of W. E. B. Du Bois. In 1954 he became corporation counsel of the City of New Haven, the first Black lawyer to hold the office, and served until 1962. A residence for the elderly in New Haven, Crawford Manor, was named for him in 1966, and Connecticut's association of Black lawyers, founded in 1976, bears his name.

Crawford was a Prince Hall Mason throughout his adult life. In 1914 he was Chairman on Jurisprudence of the Prince Hall grand lodge of Connecticut. He later served for many years as Sovereign Grand Commander of the United Supreme Council, Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, Northern Jurisdiction, Prince Hall Affiliation; the Council lists his term as 1949 to 1965, the second longest in its history, though correspondence of the 1940s already gives him the title. He wrote *The Prince Hall Counsellor* (1965), a guide for grand lodges combating clandestine Masonry. He died at New Haven in August 1972; sources differ on the day.

Chronology

1877	Born October 21 at Tuscaloosa, Alabama.
1903	Graduates from the Yale Law School, winning the Townsend Prize; appointed clerk of the New Haven Probate Court.
1907	Enters private practice in New Haven.
1914	*Prince Hall and His Followers* published by The Crisis, New York; the Foreword is dated July 15.
1933	Leaves the board of the NAACP, on which he had served since its founding years.
1949	Begins his long service as Sovereign Grand Commander of the United Supreme Council, Northern Jurisdiction, Prince Hall Affiliation, by the Council's own reckoning.
1954	Appointed corporation counsel of the City of New Haven, the first Black lawyer to hold the office; serves until 1962.
1965	*The Prince Hall Counsellor* published by the Prince Hall Grand Masters' Conference.
1966	Crawford Manor, a residence for the elderly in New Haven, is dedicated in his name.
1972	Dies at New Haven in August.

Sources for About the Author and the Chronology: Yale University Library, "Early Black Yale Students: George Williamson Crawford"; *Encyclopedia of Alabama*, "George Williamson Crawford"; *The Crisis* 9, no. 6 (April 1915); United Supreme Council, Northern Jurisdiction, Prince Hall Affiliation, "Dr. George W. Crawford, 33°"; Scottish Rite Masonic Museum and Library, archival records of correspondence with George W. Crawford, 1944–1956; George W. Crawford Black Bar Association, "History and Mission."

A Note on This Edition

This edition follows the text of the first edition, issued in New York by The Crisis in 1914, from the copy in the University of Illinois Library digitized by the Internet Archive. The text was read twice by independent optical character recognition, the two readings were compared word by word, and every disagreement was settled against the page images. A few obvious misprints have been corrected, among them "initiation" for "initiation" and "authorty" for "authority"; each is listed in the edition's record of corrections. Spelling, capitalization, and punctuation otherwise follow the source, including the author's forms of names such as "Bielifeld" and period spellings such as "superceded" and "descendents."

The author's notes, marked with asterisks on each page in the source, are printed at the foot of the page and marked with symbols that begin again on each page. Several of them run over many pages in 1914, among them the warrant of African Lodge, the correspondence of 1792, the Quebec "Twelve Tables," and Albert Pike's letter of 1875; they are given in full. The list of Provincial Grand Masters in Chapter II and the bibliography are reset as tables. The frontispiece portrait of Prince Hall is reproduced from the 1914 volume, which does not say who drew it or from what source.

The 1914 volume has no index. The index in this edition is new: it covers the names, works, places, and Masonic terms in the author's text and notes, and each entry has been matched to its passage so that it gives the page of this edition. The editor's notes that follow are keyed to the page and to the word or phrase they explain. Nothing else has been added to Crawford's pages. In the ebook, the notes and index link to the text, and the pages of the printed edition are marked.

Notes

Notes are keyed to the page and to the word or phrase they explain. Dates and facts that the author gives differently are corrected here, not in his text.

xiii *William H. Upton* William Henry Upton was Grand Master of Masons in Washington in 1898. He wrote the committee report on "Negro Masonry" adopted by the Grand Lodge of Washington in 1897 and the book *Light on a Dark Subject* (Seattle, 1899); the "very important book" Crawford has in mind may be either that or Upton's *Negro Masonry* (1902), which is in his bibliography.

1 *Bridgetown ... Barbadoes* The birth in Barbados, the voyage of 1765, and the English father come from William H. Grimshaw's *Official History of Freemasonry among the Colored People in North America* (1903). No record of them has been found. The earliest document usually tied to Prince Hall is a certificate of freedom given by William Hall of Boston on April 9, 1770, though there were several men of the name in Boston. His age at death, given as seventy-two, points to a birth about 1735.

1 *the famous phrase* This edition has not found a source for Crawford's statement that the phrase, a racial slur, originated in Boston. It is printed as in 1914.

2 *Methodist minister* No record of Prince Hall's ordination has been found; the claim also comes from Grimshaw.

2 *Absalom Jones* Absalom Jones (1746–1818) was ordained a priest of the Episcopal Church in 1802, the first Black priest of that church. He was the first Master of African Lodge at Philadelphia, constituted under the authority of African Lodge of Boston in 1797, and in 1815 the first Grand Master of the African Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania.

2 *his nice piece* The Declaration of Independence (1776), drafted by Thomas Jefferson; the "self evident truths" of the next line are from its second paragraph.

2 *Appomattox* Robert E. Lee surrendered the Army of Northern Virginia at Appomattox Court House, Virginia, on April 9, 1865.

4 *December 7th, 1807* Prince Hall died on December 4, 1807. December 7 is the date of the notice of his death in the *Boston Gazette* and the date cut on his headstone at Copp's Hill Burying Ground.

4 *halidom* An old word for a holy thing or sanctuary; "by my halidom" was a solemn oath.

6 *Lord Viscount Montague* Anthony Browne, seventh Viscount Montagu, Grand Master of England from 1732 to 1733.

6 *Duke of Norfolk* Thomas Howard, eighth Duke of Norfolk, Grand Master of England in 1730, issued the deputation to Daniel Coxe as Provincial Grand Master of New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania.

12 *Gould* Robert Freke Gould, *The History of Freemasonry*, published in London from 1882 to 1887, the standard English history in Crawford's day.

13 *an Army Lodge ... Grand Lodge of England* The lodge was No. 441, warranted by the Grand Lodge of Ireland and attached to the 38th Regiment of Foot, then stationed at Castle William in Boston Harbor. Its Master was Sergeant John Batt. The date usually given is March 6, 1775; some recent researchers argue for a later year.

14 *May 2, 1787* Crawford follows Upton's report of 1897. The warrant, dated September 29, 1784, reached Boston on April 29, 1787, and African Lodge was organized under it on May 6.

14 *June 24th, 1791* The Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Massachusetts dates Prince Hall's appointment as Provincial Grand Master to 1791, but no copy of the patent has been found. The same grand lodge dates the formation of African Grand Lodge, by the lodges at Boston, Philadelphia, and Providence, to December 1808. It declared its independence of England in 1827 and took the name Prince Hall Grand Lodge in 1847.

15 *Apple-tree Tavern* According to Anderson's *Constitutions* of 1738, the four London lodges met at the Apple-Tree Tavern in 1716 to prepare the formation of the Grand Lodge, which was constituted at the Goose and Gridiron alehouse on St. John the Baptist's Day, June 24, 1717.

17 *res judicata* Latin, "a matter judged": a question already decided, which may not be raised again.

17 *modus* Latin, "manner": the way in which it was done.

17 *reorganization ... in 1808* Upton dated African Grand Lodge to 1808. That is also the date given today by the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Massachusetts (see the note on "June 24th, 1791").

18 *Baron Bielifeld* Jakob Friedrich von Bielfeld, a friend of Frederick the Great; the name is usually spelled Bielfeld.

19 *Robert Bruce* The tradition that Robert Bruce was a Grand Master of Kilwinning rests on no record.

19 *Prince Edwin* The Old Charges tell of an assembly of masons held at York in 926 under Edwin, a son or brother of King Athelstan. It is a legend; Crawford's "Old York Constitutions" of 926, in a note to Chapter IV, rest on the same story.

33 *over sixty-one years old* St. John's Grand Lodge was formed in 1733 and so was about fifty-one years old in 1784.

37 *Dermott* Laurence Dermott (1720–1791), Grand Secretary of the "Ancients" Grand Lodge of England and author of its book of constitutions, *Ahiman Rezon* (1756).

40 *Halliwell Poem* The Regius Poem, the oldest of the Old Charges, written about 1390 and now in the British Library. It was first printed by James O. Halliwell in 1840, hence the name; Crawford calls the same manuscript the "Ancient Regius manuscript" a few lines below.

41 *sui juris* Latin, "of his own right": legally competent to act for himself.

44 *General Albert Pike* Albert Pike (1809–1891), Sovereign Grand Commander of the Supreme Council of the Scottish Rite, Southern Jurisdiction, from 1859 until his death, and a brigadier general in the Confederate army. Upton quoted from his letter of 1875 in the Washington report of 1897; this edition has not traced the full text Crawford prints to its first printing.

47 *Hottentot* A period name, now considered offensive, for the Khoikhoi people of southern Africa.

47 *baldachin* A canopy of state.

51 *the Jericho road* The parable of the Good Samaritan, Luke 10:30–37; "the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans" is from John 4:9.

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