

THE ORIGINS AND GROWTH OF FREEMASONRY IN SOUTH AFRICA,

1772 - 1876

A THESIS PRESENTED FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

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by

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PREFACE

This thesis sets out to examine the historical growth of Freemasonry at the Cape and its expansion eastwards and northwards. It covers the period from the beginnings of Freemasonry in Cape Town in 1772 until 1876 when English and Dutch branches of the Craft had become involved in the political issues of that time. In doing so it tries to examine the effect of social, economic and political events in South Africa on Dutch and English Freemasonry, making the somewhat bold claim that this masonic movement acted often as a mirror to these events.

The study confines itself to the historical aspects of freemasonry and does not endeavour to portray esoteric changes that took place within the Craft. Specifically it details the start of Freemasonry on the continent of Africa by Abraham Chiron and the founding of the first lodge, De Goede Hoop, a Netherlandic lodge, its decline and resurgence during the Dutch, British and Batavian occupations and the beginnings of English Freemasonry under the final British occupation. From then it sets out the expansion and changes in organisation brought about by several masonic personalities, many of whom were leading figures in the society of their time.

The "masonic missionary", Sir Christoffel Joseph Brand, Deputy Grand Master National for the

Dutch lodges from 1847 to 1874, could be singled out as the man who made the greatest impact on South African Freemasonry during this period. The establishment of Dutch branches of the Craft in the Free State Republic and the South African Republic and the expansion of the English Constitution eastwards as a result of political and economic events, are traced, followed by the "rebellion" of English eastern lodges, the resultant division of English masonic authority and the decline of Dutch lodges. Finally the start of the movement to form a single united grand lodge for South Africa is described; this is still an issue among masons. These events portray the often wide breaches of opinion between English and Dutch masons during the period. It must be noted that reference to English and Dutch lodges does not imply all members of those lodges were Dutch or English-speaking. This may have applied in the early years of De Goede Hoop but by the 1860s this language division was determined mainly by geographical position, that is, ceremonies in lodges in the Republics were mainly in Dutch and those in the Cape mainly in English.

Several masonic writers have published works on one or the other branch of the Craft. O.H.Bate's Lodge De Goede Hoop (Cape Town 1972) gives a chronological survey of that lodge's events from 1772 to 1962. Revised and edited by T. Cranstoun-Day, this book was drawn from lodge records which are fortunately almost complete. However it is mainly

confined to that lodge's history and Dutch Freemasonry, while it is evident that Bate did not have access to Brand's records which have been discovered among other unlisted material in the Cape Archives.

Cranstoun-Day's book, the British Lodge No. 334 and English Freemasonry at the Cape of Good Hope 1795 - 1936 (Cape Town 1936) deals primarily with that lodge's history but with a wider look at masonic events resulting from his research into records in the archives of Free Masons Hall, London. It is more comprehensive than Bate's book.

Colin Graham Botha, once Chief Archivist of the Union, was the author of several articles on early Freemasonry, but perhaps his most important masonic academic achievement was the collection and storage of Dutch lodge records in the Cape Archives. Mention must be made too of Paul Butterfield's recent book, Centenary, the First 100 years of English Freemasonry in the Transvaal 1878 - 1978 (Denver, 1978) which deals succinctly with the beginnings of Freemasonry in the Cape, but concentrates on the growth of the English branch in the Transvaal. He expresses the hope that some day a writer may attempt to compile a major work treating the spread of Freemasonry throughout the Republic as an entity. This thesis, begun a year before Butterfield published his work, attempts to take the first step - to combine the histories of the two main stems of Freemasonry - English and Dutch - from 1772 to 1876

making use of published works, lodge minutes and previously undiscovered records.

In December 1977 I circularised every English, Scottish, Irish and Southern African lodge and chapter in the Cape and South West Africa asking for copies of early minutes, lodge histories and other information. Some 300 circulars were sent out, with 150 reminders following three months later. A 40,65 per cent return of replies was obtained and much valuable information was supplied. Several hundred individual letters were sent by me to lodges for further information.

I was kindly given full access to provincial and district grand lodge records. Where possible, I personally examined lodge records in the Western Cape. I also researched in Free Masons Hall, London, in the N.G.K. Archives, Cape Town, in the Cape Archives and in the Roman Catholic Diocesan Archives, Cape Town.

In the Cape Archives I was fortunate to be given first access to a great deal of unlisted masonic material, dealing primarily with Dutch lodges. Of particular importance were the complete masonic records of Brand from 1847 to 1874. I was also given access to unlisted material from Lodge De Goede Hoop kept in the South African Library, Cape Town.

The chapters in this thesis run in chronological sequence with divisions designed to indicate significant historical phases. Running through them is the major theme - rivalry between English and Dutch,

which waxed and waned according to political, social and economic events. The secondary theme - opposition from the Dutch and Roman Catholic churches, is dealt with in brief form. A further chapter outlines the social life and public role of the mason in Cape Town while the conclusion summarises the trends in masonic growth to 1876. The period from 1876 touched on briefly in Chapter VI merits further study for a great deal of the recently discovered unlisted masonic material in the Cape Archives refers to it. The writer hopes to embark on this project at a later date.

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I would like to thank Professor A.M. Davey of the Department of History who, as my supervisor, gave invaluable advice and constructive criticism during the writing of this thesis.

I am grateful to the South African Library and to the Cape Archives for allowing me access to unlisted masonic material in their possession. The co-operation of the Free Masons Hall archivists and librarians in my research in London was particularly appreciated as was that received from the N.G. Kerk Archives, Cape Town and the Roman Catholic Diocesan Archives, Cape Town.

Without the permission of the masonic authorities and the assistance of the many lodges which answered my circulars, this thesis could never have been written. I am most grateful to my masonic brethren for their help.

Particular thanks are due to my wife, May Cooper, for her encouragement and patience in typing this thesis.

ABBREVIATIONS

CA	Cape Archives
DGL	District Grand Lodge
DGM	District Grand Master
DGMN	Deputy Grand Master National Netherlands Constitution.
FMH	Free Masons Hall, London
PGL	Provincial Grand Lodge
PGM	Provincial Grand Master
SAL	South African Library
UL	Unlisted Material

GLOSSARY

CHAPTER: A masonic body set up for the practice of the so-called side or "high" degrees.

DEGREES: There are three degrees in Craft Freemasonry: entered apprentice, fellowcraft and master mason. They indicate the level of development as a mason. A candidate is initiated into the first degree, "passed" to the second and "raised" to the third.

DEPUTY GRAND MASTER NATIONAL: The official deputed by the Netherlandic Grand Lodge to run masonic affairs in South Africa. This title was later changed to Deputy Grand Master. He outranked provincial grand masters in his area.

ENTERED APPRENTICE: A mason having been initiated into the first degree.

ERASED: Lodges were erased or struck off Grand Lodge rolls after becoming defunct or for misbehaviour.

FELLOWCRAFT: A mason having been passed to the second degree.

GRAND LODGE: The supreme authority for a group of lodges, in this instance, based either in England, Scotland, Ireland or the Netherlands. It devolved some of its authority to provincial or district lodges which were governed by provincial or district

grand masters.

MASTER: A mason elected to administer a lodge for a stated period, usually a year.

MASTER MASON: A mason having been raised to the third degree.

WARRANTED: On its petition being accepted, a new lodge received a warrant, sometimes called a charter, from its Grand Lodge certifying its legality.

WARDEN,
DEACON,
ORATOR,
CHAPLAIN,
DIRECTOR OF CEREMONIES,
TYLER: Officers of a lodge.

WORKINGS: The masonic activities of a lodge as opposed to its social side.

INTRODUCTION

Freemasonry owes its origins to the trade of stone masons and its underlying philosophy to the 18th century Enlightenment. Freemasonry in the days of operative stone masons was both protective and instructive. It ensured that a trained mason could obtain work at fair value and that apprentices and fellows would be taught the required skills. The present 'Accepted' and 'Speculative' Freemasonry, which has not for two centuries been connected with the art of building, has continued along this dual path - benevolence and instruction; it has ensured financial protection of its members and their families on the one hand and, on the other, pursued the course of 'teaching' of higher moral values by ritual.

A masonic historian, E. Smith, has written:

"Masonry is a system of morality based on a belief in the existence of God, the immortality of the soul, and the brotherhood of man: therefore, no atheist can be made a mason. It strives to teach a man the duty he owes to God, to his country, to his family, to his neighbour and to himself. It inculcates the practice of every virtue and makes an extensive use of symbolism in its teachings. It interferes with neither religion nor politics but strives only after light and truth, endeavouring always to bring out the highest and noblest qualities of men".¹

¹ Grand Lodge of Scotland Year Book, 1976, p.98.

The historical origins of Freemasonry can be traced to the development of the trade of stonemasons in Britain from the 11th century. Two paths can be defined - the guild and the lodge organisation.

Guild Organisation.

Harry Carr writes that "the social, economic and industrial history of England from the 11th to the 16th century is largely interwoven with the rise of development of gild (guild) organisations".² The guilds in England and in Europe generally began as voluntary associations of people in a particular locality joined together for their common good. Primarily they were based on a strong fraternity element and in their earliest forms they usually embraced some special objective - religious, social, benevolent or defensive.

Religious guilds began to predominate in England by the end of the 14th century, primarily as charitable institutions. From these arose the craft guilds, associations of men engaged in a particular craft or trade for the protection of mutual interests and for obtaining the rights of self-government in regulating their trade or craft.

Rapidly rising to positions of influence and power, the craft guilds were able to protect their own trade 'secrets' usually termed 'mysteries' and win 'freedom' from local authorities to enable them

2

Freemasonry Before Grand Lodge: Grand Lodge 1717-1967,
p.3.

to negotiate their own terms within their calling. By the end of the 14th century the craft organisations in England dominated local government in the towns, so much so that craft regulations came to be imposed through municipal regulations.³ For example, in 1356, following disputes between the 'mason hewers' and the 'mason layers or setters' in London, thirteen skilled masters representing both branches of the craft, came before the Mayor and Aldermen at Guildhall and, with the sanction of the municipal authorities, drew up a simple code of trade regulations. These laid down that no unskilled man might 'work at any work touching the trade', that the minimum apprenticeship be for seven years, master craftsmen should be chosen as overseers, penalties for 'disobedient rebels' should include imprisonment and other punishments.⁴

In Scotland records of guild or operative masonry organisation are more complete, particularly in Edinburgh. The guild system in that city arose in the 1400s when the individual craft organisations, called Incorporations, were granted powers of self-government and right to control members under municipal charters or 'Seals of Cause'. The 'Masons and Wrights' in Edinburgh who petitioned jointly in 1475 were eventually

3

L. Vibert: A Lodge in the 14th Century, p.254.
(Transactions Quatuor Coronati Lodge,
Vol. 89, 1976).

4

H.Carr: Freemasonry Before Grand Lodge; Grand Lodge
1717-1967, pp. 5 - 6.

granted a 'Seal of Cause'. By the end of the 15th century practically all the Edinburgh crafts were similarly incorporated.

During the 16th century the Masonic Incorporation evolved to become the organ of the Scottish craft guild in its external relationship with the towns while the operative lodges dealt with internal affairs - the entry of apprentices, the passing of fellows, the punishment of offenders and the protection of the trade from the intrusion of 'cowans' - foreign and itinerant labour.⁵

Lodge Organisation

In England, there is evidence of some sort of lodge development before the 16th century, in this case among the itinerant masons working at every building of note outside the towns. Operative masonry as a skilled trade developed during the early years of the 11th century when the Saxons began to build a number of churches. It was given great impetus in the period following the Norman Conquest when some 5000 churches were built in England. The similarity in size, proportion and general layout of those still existing suggests the existence of the extensive use of some common knowledge of building, perhaps passed on by the movement of itinerant masons from one site to another.

5
Carr: Freemasonry Before Grand Lodge, Grand Lodge
1717 - 1967, pp. 8 - 10.

It is assumed the mason was his own designer and architect but later, about 1350, clerics took on the task of design. As a result of this intensive building activity, masonic customs emerged, centred around the lodge. The word 'lodge', which appears in documents of the 13th century, described the workshop or hut found on all sizeable building works in which the masons worked, stored their tools, ate their meals and slept.⁶

Two features of the craft at that time are believed to have led to the introduction of an esoteric element. Firstly, as masons moved from one job to another, they had to prove to a 'lodge' of strangers they were genuine. While their ability at work could be tested by their employer, they had to show to their fellow stonemasons by some secret sign they were familiar with the 'secret' skills of a mason. Secondly, the body of masons at an isolated building site often formed a community distinct from the townspeople. This isolation cemented their loyalty to their trade and their lodge and encouraged this secretiveness, the use of passwords and signs and the teaching of rudimentary moral instruction.⁷

At places where building was continuously in progress, the lodge acquired a more permanent nature and authority. This continuity of employment in one place

⁶ F.L. Pick and G.N. Knight: Pocket History of Freemasonry, pp. 22, 25.

⁷ Pick and Knight: Pocket History of Freemasonry, pp. 23, 24.

eventually gave the meaning to a 'lodge' not of a hut but of a group of masons attached to a building.

Unlike their Scottish counterparts these operative lodges in England were still wholly under the control of the authorities they served. They exercised no trade controls. They were governed, not governing bodies, ruled by royal, noble or clerical masters. Gradually, however, these lodges in both town and district became permanent independent associations of working masons. Both English and Scottish lodges performed simple ceremonies to initiate new apprentices and to pass them later, on reaching a higher stage of efficiency in the trade, as 'fellows' or 'fellowcraftsmen'. The two stages or 'degrees' remained for some years until a third - the master mason was introduced. Lodges were particularly distinct from craft guilds in that members shared a secret mark of recognition which was communicated to them in ceremonies under oaths of secrecy.⁸

Accepted Masons

The point at which operative or working masonry became non-operative or 'accepted' is disputed among masonic historians. L. Vibert argues that operative masons at a very early stage allowed persons who were not working men to participate in their 'mysteries' or

⁸ Carr: *Freemasonry Before Grand Lodge; Grand Lodge 1717 - 1967*, pp. 12 - 19.

secrets. These non-operatives were excused the term of apprenticeship and the test, if any, imposed on the would-be fellow. They were spoken of as 'accepted'.⁹ Pick and Knight however write that there are "records of individuals connected with the craft of masonry but not themselves practising it" from about 1600 only. The operative craft of 1600 finally gave way to the 'accepted' or 'speculative' side by the middle of the 18th century, they add.¹⁰

Two factors were at work to create the situation in the late 17th century where 'accepted' or non-operative masons began to predominate in lodges. Firstly a decrease in building activity resulted in a drop in the number of working masons. Secondly, masonic lodges acquired a popularity among the middle and upper classes.

Dr. Robert Plot, in his Natural History of Staffordshire in 1686 wrote: "...the Customs relating to the County ... of admitting men into the Society of Free Masons ... though I find the Custom spread more or less over the Nation for here I found persons of the most eminent quality that did not disdain to be of this Fellowship".¹¹

Initially these 'accepted' lodges were social

⁹ A Lodge in the 14th Century, p.256. (Transactions of Quatuor Coronati Lodge, Vol.89, 1976).

¹⁰ Pocket History of Freemasonry, p.50.

¹¹ Carr: Freemasonry Before Grand Lodge; Grand Lodge 1717 - 1967, p.26. (Quoting Plot).

meeting places but there is evidence of some ritual working in them and some element of moral instruction given. There was little attempt to create any overall organisation until 1716 when four London lodges met to establish themselves under a Grand Master so that regular joint meetings could be held. This meeting was at the Apple Tree Tavern in Covent Garden. The masons decided to constitute themselves a Grand Lodge the following year and resolved to hold an annual assembly and feast every St. John the Baptist's Day on 24 June. Next year the Grand Lodge was duly formed on that day and Anthony Sayer was made Grand Master.¹² Two years later the Grand Lodge of Ireland was instituted and that of Scotland in 1736 and close contact between all three was established. Their influence spread rapidly throughout these countries and eventually across to the Continent.¹³

Freemasonry enjoyed a remarkable growth in the 18th Century. Its members, mainly middle and upper class, were rationalists and deists, products of the philosophies of the Enlightenment then sweeping Europe. They sought in lodges new closed institutions where they could enjoy religious toleration and practise the application of reason to a mathematically ordered universe. These same views encouraged the growth

¹² Pick and Knight: Pocket History of Freemasonry, pp. 78 - 79.

¹³ T.O. Haunch: The Formation 1717 - 1751; Grand Lodge 1717 - 1967, p.82.

of the 'speculative' or the element of moral instruction in Freemasonry which was represented eventually through the creation of elaborate rituals drawn from the early operative ceremonies. Because of its emphasis on equality within a lodge Freemasonry often became the vehicle for revolutionary movements. In the British North American colony Benjamin Franklin, George Washington and Paul Revere were leading American masons. "The independence of the U.S. owes quite a lot to Freemasonry", write Pick and Knight.¹⁴ Freemasonry appeared in various revolutionary guises in the Spanish South American colonies.¹⁵ In Europe as a secret organisation practising equality and deism Freemasonry suffered church and state opposition and frequently acted as a cloak for radical movements. In some countries, France in particular, it took paths not intended by its founders, creating unrecognised orders in the so-called high degrees.¹⁶

With the increase in lodges in England, the Premier Grand Lodge extended its sphere of influence and authority from London. By 1725 its jurisdiction extended over 64 lodges in England. Within the next two years the first oversea lodges were constituted in Bengal,

¹⁴ Pocket History of Freemasonry, pp. 303 - 305.

¹⁵ Pick and Knight: Pocket History of Freemasonry, pp. 322 - 327.

¹⁶ Pick and Knight: Pocket History of Freemasonry, pp. 287 - 288; E.B. Jones: Freemasons Guide and Compendium, pp. 502,548.

Gibraltar and Madrid, mainly by military lodges. By 1732 there were 102 lodges under the Grand Lodge.¹⁷ As Freemasonry grew in Britain it attracted interest through its public processions and press notices. This brought a profusion of broadsheets, pamphlets and newspaper articles on masons and Freemasonry, some favourable but the majority hostile. Exposures pretending to reveal the secrets or 'mysteries' of the craft were published while another problem for Grand Lodge was the increase in the 'irregular' making of masons by unrecognised ritual. The concern of Grand Lodge increased so much so that, by the end of the 1730s, it took "its gravest step of all in the matter and one which had the most far-reaching consequences".¹⁸ To confuse these masonic imposters, it transposed modes of recognition, specifically the ritual passwords used to identify one mason to another.

This change in ritual became one of the main issues in the schism between the Premier Grand Lodge and a rival Grand Lodge formed in 1751, later to be called the 'Antients' - claiming to be traditionalists who had banded together to defend the 'antient' practices. On 14 Sept. 1752, representatives of nine lodges met to form a Grand Committee of Antient Masons and in Dec. 1753, a Grand Master, Robert Turner, was chosen. By the next year there were 36 lodges on the Antients'

¹⁷ Pick and Knight: Pocket History of Freemasonry, p. 96.

¹⁸ Haunch: The Formation 1717 - 1751; Grand Lodge 1717 - 1967, pp. 77 - 78.

register with 1014 members. Seventeen years later there were 74 Antient lodges in London, 83 country lodges and 43 in overseas countries. In that same year, 1771, the 'Moderns' or the original Premier Grand Lodge, had 157 lodges in London, 164 country and 100 overseas lodges.¹⁹

The hostility between the two Grand Lodges lasted for nearly half a century. Finally, after several unsuccessful attempts at reconciliation, the 'Moderns' and 'Antients' settled their differences which had been mainly over ritual, in 1813 to form a United Grand Lodge of England.²⁰ There are today more than 9000 lodges in all parts of the world under the jurisdictions of the Grand Lodges of England, Ireland and Scotland. In addition there are many lodges under the control of independent grand lodges in Europe and the Americas.²¹ These grand lodges control the fundamental three degrees - apprentice, fellowcraft and master mason but there has also arisen a large number of side or high degrees within Freemasonry and several quasi-masonic bodies not recognised by the Grand Lodges.

¹⁹ Pick and Knight: Pocket History of Freemasonry,
pp. 102 - 106.

²⁰ P.R. James: The Union and After, Grand Lodge
1717 - 1967, p. 129.

²¹ G.P. Jones: Freemasonry, Encyclopaedia Britannica,
Vol. IX 1973 ed., pp. 842 - 845

CHAPTER I

FREEMASONRY IN SOUTH AFRICA

Freemasonry came to the continent of Africa via the Cape. The first Masonic lodge in Africa, Lodge De Goede Hoop, was formed in 1772 in Cape Town. It owed its existence to a chain of events that began in London with the formation in 1717 of Premier Grand Lodge, which was to become the central energising force in the emergent system of organised Freemasonry in England. Membership of the now 'speculative' Craft suddenly became fashionable and sought after in Britain, comments T.O. Haunch.¹ It offered the middle and upper classes a vehicle to practise the ideas of equality and religious tolerance that were abroad.

From England, Freemasonry spread to Holland in 1731 and eventually, through officials of the Dutch East India Company, to the Cape and other areas of the Company's influence. This masonic expansion was facilitated by the appointment by the Dutch central body, the Grand East of the Netherlands, of Deputy Grand Masters with roving commissions. One of these plenipotentiaries, a senior merchant in the Dutch East India Company, Jacobus Cornelius Mattheus Rademacher, touched at the Cape of Good Hope on his return to Europe. He was impressed with the possibilities for Freemasonry in the new settlement and informed the Grand Master, Baron

¹ Formation 1717 - 1751: Grand Lodge 1717 - 1967, p.57.

de Boetzelaar. Later, a sea captain in the East India Service, George Steendekker was similarly given a roving commission as Deputy Grand Master Abroad and authority to grant lodge warrants subject to ratification. He sailed from Holland in 1769 for the Cape but it does not appear that he used his authority which was perhaps questioned by masons already working for the Company at the Cape.²

To eliminate this doubt, the Grand Lodge of the Netherlands sent another sea captain, again armed with full authority to set up lodges. Describing himself as a second Deputy Grand Master, Captain Abraham van der Wëyde (or Weijde) arrived at the Cape on 24 Apr. 1772 and convoked a meeting on 2 May, 1772 when ten masons assembled under his presidency and the master and officers were elected. Two days later he issued a provisional warrant of authority subject to Holland's approval and the Lodge De Goede Hoop came into being. The next day, 5 May, 1772, a formal petition for the final warrant or charter was drawn up by the ten founder members and in September of that year Grand Master Baron de Boetzelaar issued a charter which was not, however, received at the Cape until April 1773.³

² C.G. Botha: Historical Review of Lodge De Goede Hoop, p.3.

³ O.H. Bate: Lodge De Goede Hoop, p. xix; Botha: Historical Review of Lodge De Goede Hoop, pp. 2 - 3.

The Cape In The 1770s.

Cape Town in the latter half of the 18th century was a commercial centre, the local headquarters of the Dutch East India Company, a port of call under careful control because of the Company's rigid monopoly of imports and exports. Already there were indications that the Company's rule was to end. Its decline was prodded by three factors - the changing balance of world trade, the new trends of liberalism emerging in Europe against the Ancien Regime, and the inability of the Company at the Cape to rule wisely, undermined by deep-seated official corruption while "there was much talk in Holland of freedom, of natural law, of the popular will".⁴ These sentiments eventually spread to the Cape through visitors and Company ships' crews and created disturbing influences within the small highly stratified society of Cape Town of 1767 which consisted then of 7569 whites and 7877 slaves.⁵ There were two broad classes among the whites - the Company official and the free burgher. Company servants were not allowed to trade themselves nor to own land until they were released from their contracts, allowed to settle in the Cape and become free burghers. Similarly the Company imposed rigid but profitable controls on free burghers engaged in trades or agriculture.

⁴ E.A. Walker: History of Southern Africa, 3rd ed., pp. 100 - 101.

⁵ D. Moodie: S.A. Annals 1652 - 1795, p. 15.

Company restrictions also extended to social life for, in 1755, Governor Ryk Tulbagh had set out strict orders for social standing and etiquette. At the three levels - political, economic and social, the Company thus maintained its authority with the force of its law.

A young man, Abraham Chiron, a Company servant sent from Holland for his five years' service, joined this stultified society in 1769. The year after his arrival, on 23 Sept. 1770, he married Marie Philippine Roger of Sedan, presumably with the intention of living permanently in the Cape and they later had four children.⁶ Born in Frankfurt-on-Main Chiron had become a member of the Zur Einigkeit masonic lodge there in 1765 and was later to become the first master of the first lodge in Africa, De Goede Hoop in Cape Town when it was founded in 1772.

As with other Company officials who had joined Freemasonry in Europe, Chiron brought with him the current ideas of equality among masons regardless of rank outside a lodge and an aversion to church dogma and orthodoxy. Taking up his position as assistant bookkeeper at the pay office Soldey-Negoce/Comptoir he earned, as did his fellow five clerks, 20 florins and eight rix dollars a month.⁷

⁶ J. Hoge: Personalia of the Germans at the Cape 1652 - 1806, p. 58.

⁷ O.F. Mentzel: Geographical and Topographical description of the Famous and (all things considered) Remarkable African Cape of Good Hope, Part I, p.30; Bate: De Goede Hoop, p.1.

During the years prior to 1772 Chiron met masons from Holland arriving in company ships and other masons touching at the Cape in foreign vessels. It is believed that the few masons among the residents of the Cape, including Company servants and free burghers, met regularly before the arrival of Captain van der Weyde and the formation of Lodge De Goede Hoop in 1772. Chiron, who was listed in the Company rolls as Schiron in 1769 and Schieron in 1771, was moved in 1775 to the Department of Secretary for Justice and remained there for some years. His field of work was changed in 1782 when he was given responsibility for 'equipage' accounts - that is, for supplies to ships. Chiron's name disappears from the Company lists after 1784, when he returned to Holland.⁸

Lodge De Goede Hoop - 1772.

The petition to form Lodge De Goede Hoop was signed by eight founder members, all Company servants - Abraham Chiron as master, J.A.L.A. Febre as senior warden, P.R. Soermans as junior warden, J.C. Gie secretary, Christoffel Brand treasurer and Pietrus Johannes De Wit, J.A. Schoor and O. G. De Wet. It was addressed to the "Most Reverend Grand Master National Isaac Van Teylingen together with the Very Reverend Grand Officers of the Grand Lodge in The Hague constituting the Grand

⁸ V C 8/1 Generale Monsterollen V.O.C. 1763-1771,
1775 - 1781, 1782 - 1789.

Mastership of the Netherlands".⁹

The petitioners requested Captain van der Wëyde "your very exalted Reverend's and Worshipful's second deputy (now sojourning here) to support us in this great work". A sum of 100 ducats was given to van der Wëyde to pay for the lodge's charter in Holland while the petition informed the Netherlands Grand Lodge of the appointment of officers. It also specified that the seal of the lodge would be represented "by a maiden leaning on an anchor at the foot of a mountain on the summit whereof the sun shines and whereto the figure endeavours to ascend" with the legend "Spes Vincit Omnia Impedimenta". The petition was dated "Cape of Good Hope the 5th of May in the Year of Light 5772".

In the following April the charter was received at the Cape dated "the first day of the ninth month of the year of light 5772" (1 Sept. 1772). On it another two names appeared - B.H. Van Rhee de van Oudtshoorn and J. Snyders, to make, in all, ten founder members.¹⁰

No record exists of any formal constitution or consecration of the lodge, nor of any installation of the first master. The first entry in the first minute book held by the lodge is a meeting held on 9 May, 1772 under the master Chiron. The original minute book, if

⁹ O.H. Bate: Lodge De Goede Hoop, Appendix III, pp. 184 - 185.

¹⁰ Bate: Lodge De Goede Hoop, pp. 2 - 3, pp. 184 - 185
Masonic chronology dates events from 4000 years before the birth of Christ. The date then would be 5 May, 1772.

there was one, is lost. Particulars of the early transactions are due to the efforts of Christoffel Joseph Brand, grandson of one of the founders, who was lodge secretary in 1835 and who found rough minutes and memoranda of the first years of the lodge and transcribed them into a minute book. No trace of these rough minutes can be found now. On that evening in May 1772 three candidates were proposed and balloted and later that same evening, a master mason was elected a member. The Dutch custom of hiring serving members - those who perform duties as permanent officials or caterers - began at that meeting with the initiation of J.H. Stammer "gratis to serve the lodge and it was agreed to pay him 2 rix dollars monthly".

On 21 May a code of by-laws was adopted. Fees for entry of candidates were laid down. The initiate should pay ten ducats, fellowcraft or second degree six ducats and master mason or third degree eight ducats. The ceremonial working of these three degrees as practised in Europe was thus adopted from the beginning. By July the fees had risen to 25, 12 and 18 rix dollars respectively for the three degrees. There is no record of where the new lodge met though in July 1772 Chiron pointed to the inadequacy and inconvenience of the building. He said that a Mr. Lodewyk Pichtener was prepared to erect a new building for hire or purchase and it was later agreed to lease this building at 18 rix

dollars a month.¹¹

A large number of initiates joined the lodge in the first years while many more took 2nd or 3rd degrees. The majority were sailors from ships calling at the Cape and records show they were from Britain, France, Holland and even Mauritius. Theal wrote that in 1772 there was a sudden and great increase in foreign shipping that put into South African ports. This did not decrease until nine years later with the start of the war with England. During these nine years, 1772 - 1780, 418 Dutch ships, 159 English, 192 French, 41 Danish, 7 Swedish, 16 Spanish and 9 Portuguese put into Table Bay. At Simon's Town 47 Dutch, 85 English, 46 French, 17 Danish, 1 Austrian and 6 Swedish ships sailed in during those years. On an average, 52 Dutch and 65 of other nationalities touched yearly at the two ports.¹²

Though the lodge minute books show a gap from July 1772 to 21 Jan. 1774, the lodge did not cease work during that period for two masons applied for duplicate certificates of acceptance during that time while new officers' names and new members appeared when minutes resumed. In that January it was decided the

¹¹ Bate: De Goede Hoop, pp. 4 - 5, p. 16. The value of the ducat at that time at the Cape was 72 stuivers or 1½ rix dollars, the equivalent of 60 cents.

¹² History of South Africa before 1795, Vol.IV, p.166.

lodge should meet the first and third Friday in each month to cope with the influx of visitors and higher fees were agreed for "the reception of apprentice and fellowcraft for friends from ships at 30 rix dollars ... and that of master at 18 rix dollars, the same for friends from ships as for the inhabitants of the Cape".¹³ Taking advantage of its popularity among visitors the lodge set out to build up funds from these increased fees to finance its own building.

In its role as a masonic centre in Cape Town for visiting seafaring brethren Lodge De Goede Hoop was active in the first half of 1774 meeting 13 times.¹⁴ Most of the candidates for workings were visitors who moved on, for the membership list sent to the Grand East of the Netherlands in June 1774 - the first recorded - listed only 15 effective members and two serving brethren concerned with catering and maintenance. Chiron pointed out in an accompanying letter that the return did not give a full picture of the lodge's condition. He gave two reasons for the lodge's lack of progress in attracting resident members. Both related to conditions within the community at the time, particularly the social and religious mores.

¹³ Bate: De Goede Hoop, p.6.

¹⁴ Bate: De Goede Hoop, p.6.

Firstly, Chiron said that 'warnings from the pulpit' had caused wives to persuade their husbands to hold aloof from Freemasonry. The second concerned the importance placed on rank among the community.¹⁵ The 'warnings' from the pulpit were the first of many attacks by the Dutch Reformed Church on Freemasonry. By 1745 there were five Dutch Reformed congregations in the Cape - Cape Town, Stellenbosch, Drakenstein Rodezand (now Tulbagh) and Zwartland (now Malmesbury) with Cape Town being the largest.¹⁶ The clergymen in the Cape saw masonry not only as a threat to their authority over the male section of their congregation, those who could become masons, but somewhat mistakenly viewed it as a rival religious body which indoctrinated its members in the principles of deism and induced them to forswear the established church under oaths of secrecy.

Lodge De Goede Hoop was further condemned for its application of the principles of equality among members meeting within the lodge, as Chiron pointed out in his letter to the Grand East of the Netherlands.

In Lodge De Goede Hoop, Company officials of different rank and free burghers were meeting in secrecy to practise those "Enlightened" principles

¹⁵ Bate: De Goede Hoop, p.7.

¹⁶ Theal: History of South Africa Before 1795, Vol.IV, p. 375.

which could then be seen as a danger to the stratified society at the Cape. "Since people in the Indies set great store by rank", wrote Bate, "men were urged not to join an order that put forward equality as one of its maxims lest it should injure their standing in the estimation of others".¹⁷ Apparently the wives of the few resident masons took exception to this masonic teaching which conflicted with the company's rigid rules of social precedence. In this class-conscious society, disputes constantly arose as to whom should receive the highest military salute and whose wife should occupy the foremost seat in the church and whose carriage was to keep to the crown of the hill. Masonic equality was obviously a threat to this established order.

This continual war over precedence and wifely distaste for these masonic teachings were to damage the newly-found lodge over the next few years rather more than the "warnings from the pulpit". Apparently not all masons practised the maxims of equality they were taught in lodge.

In 1774 Chiron was elected master for the third time and in August initiated the first two South African born candidates who were passed to the second degree the same evening.¹⁸ But attendances grew smaller because of church and social pressures. In an attempt to

¹⁷ De Goede Hoop, p.7; Botha: Historical Review De Goede Hoop, p.4.

¹⁸ Bate: De Goede Hoop, p.7.

discourage slackness, a resolution was passed imposing fines: "That any Brother absent from the lodge without excuse shall for the first time pay a fine of one rix dollar; for the second time a fine of one ducat; for the third time forfeit his right of membership and his share of the property of the Lodge".¹⁹ This "share of the property of the lodge" referred to the right lodge members had to a share of the lodge property, furniture and other possessions.

Though fines for non-attendance were imposed support dwindled further. The 1775 returns to Grand Lodge in the Netherlands showed 12 members and two serving brethren. Only three of the founders still remained. The lodge's life depended more than ever on visitors. At the first meeting, on 14 Feb. 1775, Chiron vacated the chair in favour of "The French Grand Master", Mace De Vallons, presumably a master of a French lodge, who initiated a fellow Frenchman, both being visiting sailors. That same evening Chiron initiated four other candidates, one of them a French Canadian.²⁰ Later that month a French official, Andreas Christoph Louise Pierron de Morlat, Registrar and Chief of the Company Council of Pondicherry, applied for and was given the third degree.²¹ At one lodge meeting the visitors were

¹⁹ Bate: De Goede Hoop, p.7.

²⁰ Bate: De Goede Hoop, pp. 7 -8.

²¹ Bate: De Goede Hoop, p.9.

English, French and Dutch, indicative of the passing sea traffic. But resident members attending often fell to ten even though the lodge conferred 53 degrees in 1775. The next year's returns were apparently better for they listed 16 members and serving brethren but two members were sea captains, one was a temporary resident and two others joined the lodge but never attended afterwards, perhaps because of the continuing outside pressures.²²

From the start, the installation of new masters took place on St. John's Day, 24 June and on that day in 1776 Chiron was re-elected master for the fourth time. By now the number of members had dwindled to twelve though 29 meetings had been held and 33 degrees conferred that year.²³ Chiron ended his mastership a year later to give way to the senior warden, Jan Coenraad Gie, but was called back to the chair in November 1776 to conduct the ceremony for the first time in English as Gie was not conversant with that language. At that meeting two candidates from the sloop H.M.S. Swallow, William Jarrat of Chatham and John Dolbel of Hersey, were initiated on the recommendation of John Buchan, a surgeon on the sloop. On four further occasions degrees were conferred in English and on each occasion Chiron presided. But the year 1777 was significant in marking the slow decline of the lodge which met only

²² Bate: De Goede Hoop, p.10.

²³ Bate: De Goede Hoop, p.11.

18 times and conferred only 16 degrees.²⁴

Some renewal of life came in 1778 when two members were accepted. One of them a "French candidate", Captain Francois Reynier Duminy, was to lead the revival of the lodge in the 1790s after its decease.²⁵

Discontent in Colony and Lodge.

On St. John's Day, 1778, Daniel Brand, Senior Surgeon at False Bay, became lodge master. December was particularly busy with five meetings and the conferring of 16 degrees but no new resident members came forward. In all, 1778 saw 27 meetings and the granting of 59 degrees, again to visitors.²⁶ But the lodge's resident strength was weakening further, so much so that Brand in January 1779 delivered an oration, 'complaining bitterly of the present lamentable state of the lodge and expressing the fear that through the fault of certain evil-thinking brethren the institution might be ruined'.²⁷ This time it was not only the problem of social precedence or church opposition. Brand urged members to end disputes over rank and not bring such disputes into the lodge. More significantly he asked members not to introduce ill-feeling towards others in the lodge.

²⁴ Bate: De Goede Hoop, p.11.

²⁵ Bate: De Goede Hoop, p.12.

²⁶ Bate: De Goede Hoop, p.12.

²⁷ Bate: De Goede Hoop, p.13.

He presumably referred to an issue current in the community at that time - the relationship between Company and free burgher. Past Masters Chiron and Gie, both Company servants, had previously pointed out these undercurrents of hostility to Brand.²⁸

The lodge's problems were in miniature those of the colony. Since Joachim Van Plettenberg had been installed as Governor in 1774, there had been a feeling of discontent among the free burghers in the colony over the Company's iron control.²⁹ It came to a head in 1779, when a secret meeting of burghers in Cape Town empowered four men to go to Amsterdam as their representatives to lay their grievances before the Company's ruling executive, to protest about the Company's restrictive rule, the lack of a direct voice in the central government, and corruption among officials.³⁰

Van Plettenberg's free use of the power of deportation had hardened this dissent. The Company had a legal right to recall free burghers to its service and send them where it chose without trial and the Governor, in less than eight years, had sent away 18.³¹ The deportation of Carel Hendrik Buitendag on 20 Jan.

²⁸ Bate: De Goede Hoop, p.13.

²⁹ Theal: History of South Africa Before 1795, Vol.IV, p. 176.

³⁰ Walker: History of Southern Africa, 3rd ed., p.101.

³¹ Theal: History of South Africa Before 1795, Vol.IV, p. 177.

of that year, 1779 aroused the 'fiercest passions of the burghers'.³² A violent drunkard, he had ill-treated his wife and Hottentot servants. On his arrival in Holland, he was acquitted by a court but his deportation brought demonstrations in the Colony and eventually led to this secret meeting of burghers determined to put their case to the Netherlands. 'Times were very bad in the Cape, nerves were frayed; the air was charged with the electricity of revolution'. writes Walker, for the American Revolution had begun and news filtered through to the colony of colonists elsewhere resisting their rulers.³³

This political issue between Company servants and burghers was reflected in De Goede Hoop lodge and reduced attendances further. In April, 1779, only the master and five members were present while five absentees were recorded, bringing the total resident strength to 11. From that month until January, 1780 there is no record of meetings. Significantly, the founder master, Chiron, only attended lodge when his services were needed. His earlier dream of a masonic lodge where all men could meet in harmony and abstain from political and religious issues was disappearing.

The year 1780 brought some renewal of interest in the lodge, principally due to the war between Britain and the Bourbon Powers. The Netherlands had been drawn

³² Theal: History of South Africa Before 1795, Vol.IV
p. 178.

³³ History of Southern Africa, 3rd ed., p. 101.

in on the side of France and Spain and it became a question of strategy as to whether France or Britain would occupy the Cape, the halfway house to India. Attendances at Lodge De Goede Hoop reflected, firstly, the renewed Dutch and French seafaring interest in the Cape. In February 1780, the minutes recorded that a mason, Samuel Hendrik Gerard de Veye, a Dutch military captain, 'notified that he had on the desolate waves of the sea acted as Grand Master' and had conferred degrees of apprentice and fellow craft on members of his crew. The lodge thanked him, received with gratitude 93 rix dollars as fees for the degrees and granted certificates to the masons. Later that month, three candidates all French visitors, were initiated and passed by a visiting French mason who took the chair. Three days later the three were raised to master masons by the same 'Grand Master'.³⁴

With the increasing visits of Dutch and French men-of-war to the Cape, visitors again outnumbered members of the lodge and were often called upon to fill offices. By 1781 the French had won the race for the Cape. 'The French virtually occupied Cape Town for three years', writes Walker. With the arrival of French and mercenary regiments, the prices of house property, slaves and horses rose 50 to 100 per cent in value while the demand for produce forced the Company to fix maximum prices.³⁵

³⁴ Bate: De Goede Hoop, pp. 13 - 14.

³⁵ History of Southern Africa, 3rd ed., p. 104.

The 'occupation' was a mixed blessing for the lodge, now with a resident membership of 10. It met in January 1781 and four times in February and conferred seventeen degrees in those two months. But the situation deteriorated in March when only five members, with one visitor and a former founder member, Gie, met to discuss the future of the lodge following the sudden death of its master, Daniel Brand. Chiron, who was asked to preside, put the question - whether to suspend the lodge in view of the small membership and poor finances or to appoint another mason as master. He was unanimously elected to carry on the lodge's work.³⁶ It was typical of this man, the first masonic master in Africa, that he immediately set out new guidelines to bring new life to the lodge and prevent a recurrence of dispute. To achieve this, he assumed almost dictatorial powers. All the master's commands were to be strictly obeyed; no-one should be absent without informing the master; no-one should use unreasonable or unbecoming language, while every regulation decided by the lodge should be observed on pain of loss of membership. More particularly no controversial discussion was to be allowed at meetings.

Chiron energetically got to work. On 13 Mar. that year he initiated two French officers from visiting warships, passed them to the second degree and raised five others to the third. The lodge met on 23 and 26 Mar. and

³⁶ Bate: De Goede Hoop, p. 16.

3, 17 and 24 Apr. conferring degrees, again mainly on French sailors.³⁷ But this new-found activity did not last, particularly when ships ceased to call at the Cape because of the war between England and the Netherlands, thus depriving the lodge of its major work in conferring degrees on visitors. The minutes of April, 1781, the last to be recorded in the first minute book transcribed by C.J. Brand in 1835, give the names of candidates only. With a membership of eight, the lodge could not continue, particularly as it had lost a staunch member, Francois Duminy, who had been sent by the Company to India to carry the news of the outbreak of war between England and the Netherlands.³⁸

Lodge De Goede Hoop went into recess from April 1781.³⁹ The minute book ends on 24 Apr. 1781 with the remark "Temporary suspension owing to paucity of members".⁴⁰ Four of the ten original founders remained in the lodge, according to the lodge register, while a further 41 had become members during its nine years of existence from 1772 to 1781. In that time nearly 400 degrees were conferred, mainly on visitors - 186 initiates, 133 fellowcrafts and 75 master masons. The Cape was rarely given as the birthplace of candidates. Only five members, apart from some of the founders, were

³⁷ Bate: De Goede Hoop, p. 16; Botha: Historical Review De Goede Hoop, p. 4.

³⁸ Bate: De Goede Hoop, p.17.

³⁹ Bate: De Goede Hoop, p. 17.

⁴⁰ Lodge De Goede Hoop: Letter Book 1877 - 1888, Record of Archives.

South African born and no South African-born candidates had appeared in the last six years. The lodge warrant was taken back to Holland by Chiron who left for Europe in 1784. On 16 Oct. 1785, the Grand Lodge of the Netherlands formally struck the Lodge De Goede Hoop off its roll. "Nevertheless during its nine years of existence, the lodge had fulfilled the object for which it had been established. It had given hospitality to hundreds of brethren travelling between Europe and the East. It had disseminated a knowledge of masonic teaching to seafaring masons who had carried its principles far and wide", writes Bate.⁴¹

Lodge De Goede Hoop - Its Resuscitation, 1794

One of the original members, Francois Reynier Duminy, founder of the South African branch of the family, became the key figure in promoting the revival of Lodge De Goede Hoop. Visiting Europe in 1783 he took further masonic degrees and was appointed 'Inspector-General', a senior post awarded in the high degrees.⁴² This, he assumed, empowered him to regulate, establish and reform abuses in the working of all lodges including issuing a warrant to Lodge De Goede Hoop but there is no evidence Duminy exercised his authority on his return to

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Botha: Historical Review, p. 90; De Goede Hoop, pp. 16 - 17.

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Bate records that Duminy while in Europe in 1783 was appointed Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the Lion of Limbourg and the Order of St. Philippe and is

the Cape until about 1790 when he styled himself the founder of the Craft Lodge De Goede Hoop and permitted the acceptance of candidates for the next two years. There was however indifferent success to this revival.⁴³

However, on 24 June 1794 the original Lodge De Goede Hoop was re-established on St. John's Day, and Duminy was listed in the minutes of that meeting as the 'Venerable' or master, with ten other founder members. Among them was architect Louis Michel Thibault, who was designated as 'Architecte'. Seven of the 11 founders had been members of the previous lodge or had taken degrees in it before 1781. Each founder contributed 50 rix dollars to start the new lodge funds.

referred to in De Goede Hoop minutes as Chevalier Duminy or 'De Ridder Duminy'. (Bate: De Goede Hoop, p. 18.) He was made 'equipagemeester' (master of supplies) at the Cape in 1786 on appointment by the Council of Policy but lost the post the next year. However he stayed in company service as a captain and in 1793 became harbour master of False Bay until the British occupation in 1795. Under the Batavian Republic he was appointed harbour master of Simon's Bay but lost the post again with the British return in 1806. (P.A. Duminy: Dictionary of S.A. Biography, Vol.III, p. 245.

⁴³ C.J. Brand: Centenary Jubilee Address De Goede Hoop, 1 Nov. 1873, p. 5.; Botha: Historical Review De Goede Hoop, p.4.

As the lodge was illegal without its warrant which had been taken back to Holland by Chiron in 1784, it sought a new one but war had again broken out in Europe and for some years the Grand Lodge of Holland was partially dormant. To rectify this illegality Duminy issued a provisional warrant on his own responsibility, but in masonic law this was illegal.⁴⁴

Despite its questionable formation Lodge De Goede Hoop began its new existence with vigour, initiating many new masons and this time most of them were South African born, in contrast to the absence of local candidates during the last six years of the first Lodge. More permanent residents had come to the Cape bringing some measure of stability to the lodge which also attracted many local people. Bate points out that, in that first year, 1794, one of the most notable initiates was Johannes Andreas Truter, afterwards Chief Justice Sir J. Truter, who served the lodge for 50 years, and became Deputy Grand Master for South Africa.⁴⁵

As the lodge stabilised, it put its affairs into order, learning from the past and passing strict by-laws which echoed Chiron's earlier stern injunctions. Active lodge membership was to be limited to 24 while the time interval between the 2nd and 3rd degrees was extended. Fines were to be levied for non-attendance, unpunctuality,

⁴⁴ Bate: De Goede Hoop, pp. 19 - 20.

⁴⁵ De Goede Hoop, p. 21.

ridiculing another mason, using profane or threatening language, for levity in lodge or neglect of duty. No member could move from his seat in lodge until the master gave him permission or he was prepared to pay the fine. However, in accordance with its policy of supporting charities, two-thirds of the fines went to the Dutch Reformed Church and the Lutheran community and the balance towards helping indigent masons, to the deacon of the poor. On all occasions the poor masons were assisted.⁴⁶

The revived lodge now met in premises hired from a member, Abraham de Smidt on the site of the old Union Hotel in Plein Street, next to where Barclays Bank stands today. Finally it bought the rooms in 1799. As its new-found stability allowed for expansion it also introduced a new facility - 'Society Rooms' attached to the lodge where masons could meet to play billiards, skittles and a kind of golf, though no games of chance were allowed. The management of the lodge and society rooms were vested in Commissioners appointed from members.⁴⁷ The lodge appeared to be well on the road to recovery but political events occurred to disturb its course.

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Bate: De Goede Hoop, pp. 21 - 22.

47

Botha: Historical Review, p. 4.

The British Occupation, 1795

The Cape Colony in 1795 invited invasion for its internal government was weakened by bankruptcy and burgher revolts. The credit of the Dutch East India Company was exhausted. Owing £10 million, it had declared itself unable to meet the interest on its loans and in such a condition was unable to pay a garrison capable of defending the colony from foreign attack. Internal trade except by barter had almost ceased while few foreign ships called because of the continuing European conflict. The Company also faced a struggle along the northern border with the Bushmen while war with the Xhosas on the eastern frontier continued. 'The great majority of the people were incensed with the Company ... and were freely discussing the rights of man', professing allegiance to the States General of Netherlands but not to the Company, wrote Theal.⁴⁸

The burghers of Graaff-Reinet, angry over the depreciated paper money, stagnation of trade, heavy taxes and the lack of Company assistance in their continual struggles with Xhosa and Bushmen, were insisting on a measure of self-government while those of Swellendam later threw off Company rule, both movements attracting sympathy in Cape Town.

In June 1795 nine British warships under Admiral Sir George Keith Elphinstone cast anchor in Simon's Town Bay. On them were some 1600 troops commanded by

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History of South Africa Before 1795, Vol.IV, pp.

Major-General James Henry Craig. By now half of Europe was at war with the French Republic. Britain feared the Cape would fall to the French and thus endanger the sea route to India. Following the overthrow of the Dutch Stadtholder's government by the French, the British fleet had made rapid passage to the Cape where Elphinstone hoped the Commissioner-General of the colony, Abraham Josias Sluysken would admit his forces to peaceful occupation. First contact was through the Resident at Simon's Town, Christoffel Brand, a founder member of Lodge De Goede Hoop. Sluysken called the Council of Policy together which resolved to "cause the signals of alarm to be made" summoning the burghers of the district to Cape Town.⁴⁹ Months of negotiation followed. Finally the British declared, incorrectly that the Netherlands had been absorbed by France and that Britain would not allow the Cape, now under French allegiance, to fall into French hands. In retaliation the Council of Policy stopped the supply of provisions to the fleet and at the same time the burghers of the Cape and Stellenbosch declared themselves ready to assist in the defence of the colony. Anti-English feeling was rampant.⁵⁰ However, Elphinstone was anxious to sail for India before the onset of the monsoon and he sent his forces ashore to march on Muizenberg from Simon's Town whilst his

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Theal: History of South Africa Before 1795, Vol.IV,
p. 315.

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Theal: History of South Africa Before 1795, Vol.IV,
p. 321.

ships provided covering fire.

Amidst this political uncertainty the Lodge De Goede Hoop foundered, an incident in this skirmish providing the major cause of division. One of its members, Lt. Col. De Lille, in charge of the Cape Infantry, was to have made a stand against the English behind Sandvlei by commanding the road from Muizenberg. But, at the first sign of conflict, he retreated in confusion to Lochner's farm at Diep River without knowing what had happened to the supporting artillerymen or burgher forces. The next morning De Lille returned with some infantrymen but again 'fled precipitately' as the English advanced.⁵¹ Burgher officers claimed De Lille was a traitor in opening up the road to Cape Town and he was imprisoned at the Castle. Later acquitted of treason, he was kept in confinement to ensure his safety as public fury against him was so great. Eventually he joined the British service and on 27 Oct. was appointed barrack master in Cape Town 'professing devotion to the English'.⁵² His suspect military career - whether he was an English spy or not - was to have an unfortunate effect on the masonic lodge. He became unacceptable to lodge members whose loyalty was in the main to the

⁵¹ Theal: History of South Africa Before 1795, Vo. IV,
p. 334.

⁵² Theal: History of South Africa Before 1795, Vol. IV,
p. 335.

Netherlands, but he continued to attend and only through pressure did he resign - but not until December, four months after his controversial retreat.⁵³

By 16 Sept. 1795, the British reached the Castle in Cape Town and the Dutch laid down their arms. The change in political control - and the clash of nationalisms, severely tested the lodge's insistence that no political or religious views of members should be aired to disrupt lodge harmony. But the security of the lodge itself obviously came first. A month after the British occupation, a deputation invited masons among the British, among them being Rear Admiral Elphinstone and Craig, to attend the lodge. Though Elphinstone was too busy, General Craig did come and the master Francois Duminy, tendering him his gavel of authority, solicited his protection of the lodge as Governor of the Colony.⁵⁴ Craig, referred to in minutes as 'Ill. Protector' again attended lodge the next month, November. John Malcolm, ADC to Major-General James Henry Clarke, was initiated then while the secretary to the Admiral, John Jackson, was initiated later. The lodge ensured these newcomers paid considerably higher fees than those laid down in the by-laws, presumably to 'make hay while the sun shone', comments Bate.⁵⁵

⁵³ Bate: De Goede Hoop, p. 23.

⁵⁴ Bate: De Goede Hoop, p. 23.

⁵⁵ De Goede Hoop, p. 23.

Duminy's strong control as master of the resuscitated Lodge De Goede Hoop and his diplomatic enlistment of the protection of highly-placed masons among the British occupying forces enabled it to weather the first strains of the occupation. His policy was to continue with changes in governorship for he was quick to solicit the protection of Lord Macartney a month after the latter had assumed governorship in May 1797. At the same time close masonic ties were soon established with the British regimental lodges which had arrived with the occupying forces.⁵⁶

New Lodges : 1797 - 1801

The arrival of military lodges eventually introduced English Freemasonry, owing allegiance to either of the two Grand Lodges in England, the "Antients" or "Moderns", on a permanent basis in Southern Africa. They also brought new interest in the Craft, encouraging civilians, both English and Dutch, either to apply for admission or, if masons, to try to continue their masonic activities. The civilians were restricted as the regimental lodges were for military candidates only. At the same time some masons in regiments without lodges also wished to form new groups.

Apparently the new regime regarded Freemasonry as a sign of respectability, particularly as British royalty had begun to take an interest in the craft, and also as an instrument to restore social harmony. To be

⁵⁶ Bate: De Goede Hoop, p. 24.

a member marked one for promotion or at least made him a member of a select social group, in this instance, the new rulers. Membership of the Craft could be regarded in this transitional period as a means to overcome social barriers or to ensure some favour with the authorities.

However, the action of Lodge De Goede Hoop, in soliciting the protection of the British authorities, did not find favour among some members, created conflict and led to further attempts to form new lodges. Lodge De Goede Hoop in June 1797 received a letter from a mason, J.G.F. Von Backstrom stating that L'Incorruptible - a mixed civilian-military lodge - had been formed and that it hoped to obtain a warrant from England. Both English and Dutch masons - some members of De Goede Hoop - had become members of this new lodge. However, the mother lodge decided that L'Incorruptible would be considered irregular until its warrant was granted, and it could not be recognised. Baron H.C.C. Von Prophalow, a leading Freemason who was to surrender Cape Town to the British in 1806, visited the Cape in 1798 and personally granted a warrant to the new lodge, but this was still not acknowledged by De Goede Hoop. The official warrant from England never arrived and L'Incorruptible, about which little is known, ceased to exist from lack of support about 1800.⁵⁷

Several attempts were also made to form new military lodges among British regiments. These English

⁵⁷ Bate: De Goede Hoop, p. 25.

soldier-masons looked to De Goede Hoop, as the first established lodge in South Africa, as having powers to grant dispensation to create new lodges. It received an address on 16 Oct. 1797 from "Free and Accepted Masons of His Majesty's 86th and Scotch Bregades (sic) Regiments asking for authority from De Goede Hoop to be able to meet and transact all lawful things in the Masonick line".⁵⁸ They claimed the same authority had been given to the 98th Regiment by De Goede Hoop. Both the 86th and the Scots Brigade had arrived in September that year and both left for India a few months later. Consideration of their request was postponed pending inquiries, but they had moved away before any action could be taken. No mention can be found of any earlier authority granted to the 98th Regiment but a petition signed by 17 masons and dated 8 Jan. 1798 from soldiers of the same regiment and civilians to form a new lodge called Africa No.1. or De Afrikaan, was sent to De Goede Hoop which gave permission on 29 Jan. for them "to assemble and exercise the Royal Art but not to hold receptions or make proselytes until they shall have obtained a constitution".⁵⁹

Carrying on Duminy's diplomacy, Lodge De Goede Hoop sought the protection of the 'Illustrious Protector', Lord Macartney and General Dundas for this

⁵⁸ Bate: De Goede Hoop, p. 26.

⁵⁹ T.N. Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge and English Freemasonry at the Cape of Good Hope 1795 - 1936, p. 3.

proposed new military lodge. This having been given, Africa No. 1. began conducting initiations, presuming that its application to the Antients Grand Lodge in England, the then rival Grand Lodge in England, would be successful.⁶⁰ Eventually the Antients Grand Lodge granted a warrant on 27 Aug. 1800, authorising the constituting of the lodge "as No. 1. at the Cape of Good Hope aforesaid and No. 321 on the Registry of the Grand Lodge of England". By that time the mother lodge had already protested at Africa No. 1's illegal workings, reiterating its earlier declaration that no degrees should be conferred until the official warrant had been received from England.⁶¹

The Atholl Grand Lodge Register records that from 27 Aug. 1800, 125 members were made or became joining members of Africa No. 1. which ceased to work in South Africa after the British regiments left in 1803

⁶⁰ Bate: De Goede Hoop, p.27; The Antients Grand Lodge had been formed in 1751 in protest mainly at the Premier (Moderns) Grand Lodge's revision of ritual. The Antients Grand Lodge was often called the Atholl Grand Lodge after the Duke of Atholl who became its Grand Master in 1771 during the period of rivalry between the two Grand Lodges which lasted until Union in 1813.

⁶¹ Bate: De Goede Hoop, p. 27.

and was finally erased from the register in 1828.⁶² But its existence was a catalyst to yet another, and permanent, lodge. Before the regiments left, masons from Africa No. 1. broke away to form Lodge De Goede Verwagting, being dissatisfied with the mode of working and conduct of members and the fact that Africa No. 1. had no warrant. On three occasions this breakaway group unsuccessfully asked Lodge De Goede Hoop for recognition until, in desperation, it produced a counterfeit warrant. It changed its illegal lodge's name to Lodge Jan De Goede Trouw and again sought authority from De Goede Hoop on 19 May, 1800 confident that the Dutch mother lodge would protect its Dutch offspring.⁶³

The mother lodge was concerned about division of its authority and its delicate position with the British rulers but eventually it agreed, granting De Goede Trouw a provisional warrant which was eventually ratified by Deputy Grand Master National Abraham De Mist in 1803. Lodge De Goede Trouw was constituted on 8 Nov. 1800. To curb the new lodge heavy restrictions were imposed by the warrant. De Goede Trouw was only allowed to operate as a daughter lodge, De Goede Hoop was to sanction the election of its master and two of De Goede Hoop members were to be appointed to sit on either side

⁶² Cranstoun-Day : British Lodge, p.4.

⁶³ C.L. Silberbauer: Brief Review of History of
Nederlandic Freemasonry in South Africa
(Masonic Journal, May, 1932), p. 6; Bate:
De Goede Hoop, pp. 27 and 32.



RICHARD BLAKE

First English Provincial Grand Master for South Africa

1801 - 1804 Active (Inactive to 1826)

From a painting reproduced in T.N. Cranstoun-Day's book
The British Lodge No. 334 and English Freemasonry at
the Cape of Good Hope.

apart from the founders of the newly resuscitated De Goede Hoop, 95 names appear on De Goede Hoop register. Of these 80 were initiates, four received further degrees, five were joining members and six, including General Craig and four of his officers, were made honorary members. One of the new members was the Rev. J.A. Heinrich Von Manger, the first Minister of the Dutch Reformed Church at Swellendam and later of De Groote Kerk.⁶⁶

The Royal York Lodge and Richard Blake

The foundations, somewhat illegal, of English Freemasonry in the Cape were laid by Richard Blake, private secretary to Sir George Yonge who was appointed Governor of the Cape on 10 Dec. 1799. Blake's wife was Yonge's niece. Through his manipulation of Yonge, Blake and his colleagues were able to create a ring of corruption in the colonial administration and, to further their ends, establish the Royal York Lodge - on a stolen warrant. Yonge was not a man of great ability and his administration was marked by lack of judgement and tact.⁶⁷ He quarrelled with the Lieutenant-Governor, the military commander, Major-General Francis Dundas, very early in his short spell of duty and offended colonists by raising taxes. Because of his ineptitude he left most of the colony's

⁶⁶ ACC 731,5/1 Register of Members; Bate: De Goede Hoop, pp. 28 - 29.

⁶⁷ Dr. M. Arkin: Sir George Yonge, Dictionary of S.A. Biography, Vol.II, pp. 866-867.

affairs in the hands of Blake and his principal ADC Lt. Col. James Cockburn, both founder members of York Lodge. These two were to manipulate events to such an extent to their own benefit that eventually the British Government summarily recalled Yonge.

Yonge early set about raising monies through new and increased taxes. The most detested among the Cape inhabitants was his increase of brandy duties from 3 rix dollars to 6 for every leaguer of brandy coming to town. On the same day he imposed the increased duty, he appointed Blake as "Chief Taster and Examiner of all wines and brandies made or imported with powers to enter in, taste and examine same and destroy it if improper quality and to stop all waggons with wine and brandy coming to town and taste them".⁶⁸ For this Blake was paid £500 a year. He was already receiving £1200 a year from his appointment as Under Secretary of the Colony. Both these appointments were severely criticised by the War Office in letters to Yonge.⁶⁹

Eventually so many complaints of maladministration reached England that Lord Henry Dundas of the Foreign Office wrote on 14 Jan. 1801, calling on Yonge to resign immediately and hand over to Major-General Dundas.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Theal: Records of Cape Colony, 1799 - 180, Vol.III, p. 211.

⁶⁹ Theal: Records of Cape Colony, 1799 - 1801, Vol.III, p. 199.

⁷⁰ Theal: Records of Cape Colony, 1799 - 1801, Vol.III, p. 408.

A commission of inquiry was set up at the Cape to inquire into the variety of abuses under Yonge's governorship. It was alleged he had imposed and increased taxes without authority, placed new taxes on grain and spirits and "granted to improper persons the most injudicious and oppressive monopolies". He had used government slaves for his private use and had been lavish with public monies and stores. In their report on 16 Mar. 1802, the commissioners found substance in most of these charges. They found that Blake and Cockburn "were in the habit of exacting a part of the profits from individuals who had obtained through their means certain privileges". Blake was accused of having concerted a plan to "get into his hands exclusive vending of wines for, as the Taster, he can pass off any sort of trash". As Yonge had ordered all business be transacted through Blake and Cockburn, the commissioners found Yonge "was indirectly concerned with the profits". And these profits were large. Evidence was given by accused traders that they had given bills of money to Blake at different times to the value of £3000 to £4000 and also bought goods at £2500 and shipped these to Blake's account in England. Blake received one-third of these benefits. Presumably Yonge and Cockburn received their share.⁷¹

Blake was equally lacking in honesty in his dealings with Freemasonry. He had been active in English Freemasonry taking part in the foundation of

⁷¹ Theal: Records of Cape Colony, Vol.IV, pp. 221 - 273.

the Royal York Lodge (Moderns) No. 546 in Bristol in 1789, becoming its master in 1791. This lodge lapsed about 1793, ruined by extravagance, and its furniture was seized by the keeper of the inn where it met and was sold. However, Blake managed to retain the lodge books and, most important, the lodge warrant which he brought with him to the Cape in 1799. It should not have been removed from England.⁷² Shortly after his arrival Blake met with some high officers of the garrison and business and professional men, and on 24 June 1800, the Royal York Lodge was formed on the strength of the English warrant Blake had removed illegally. Among the founder members were Cockburn, Brigadier General Henry Fraser, Lt. Col. John Stratford Saunders, Major George Dodsworth, the Rev. Thomas Trigham and Dr. Isaac Wilson.

Cranstoun-Day suggests that Blake and the others formed Royal York wishing to uphold the prestige of the Premier Grand Lodge - the 'Moderns' - the first Grand Lodge, knowing that a warrant for Africa No.1. lodge was likely to be granted by the Atholl Grand Lodge in England.⁷³ It would appear that the Premier Grand Lodge seemed determined not to allow its rival, Atholl Grand Lodge - the 'Antients' to dominate the Cape. There is no proof of this but on his own request Blake was

⁷² Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, p. 6.

⁷³ British Lodge, p. 7.

appointed Provincial Grand Master by the 'Moderns' to found lodges in the Cape. However he only had one - his own Royal York - to control, for his early removal - with Governor Yonge in 1801 - prevented him from establishing others.

Nevertheless, during his 18 months in the Cape, he set out to establish Royal York firmly. In September 1800 as lodge master, he negotiated the purchase of some of Lodge De Goede Hoop's property in Plein Street - ground with a house and store - for £1075 (12,900 gulden cash and 30,000 gulden on bonds). But his masonic venture collapsed. When Blake left he took the Royal York warrant with him and as a result the lodge died. Later Lodge De Goede Trouw, the "daughter lodge" of De Goede Hoop, took over the Plein Street property for the original price of £1075.⁷⁴

Undeterred by the birth and death of Royal York Lodge, Lodge De Goede Hoop had already begun arrangements for building a permanent home on the portion it had bought of the Garden Domburg in 1800 from Mr. George Muller, adjacent to the Government Gardens. The lodge was fortunate to have competent members to undertake the task. Louis Thibault, who was "architecte" of the lodge from 1794 to 1809, drew the plans. Thibault was responsible for many early Cape buildings. A Frenchman, he came to the Cape as an engineer in the Swiss Regiment De Meuron. The lodge entered into a contract with another member, Herman Schutte, an architect and builder

⁷⁴ Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, p. 7.

from Bremen, to erect the temple for R12,000 on his estimate while Brother Anton Anreith was commissioned to carry out the sculpture within the temple.⁷⁵

The foundation stone of the new temple was to have been laid on 5 Feb. 1801 but was postponed. The lodge minutes do not record the exact date but it was later in the same month. However the detailed arrangements are preserved. "His Excellency the Protector" Major-General Dundas who was then the acting Governor, Admiral Sir George Curtis, members of the Court of Justice and of the Burgher Council were to be invited as were the masters and wardens of the two of the three lodges in the Cape at that time, Lodge De Goede Trouw and Royal York. Africa No. 1. members were presumably not invited as they were registered with the Atholl Grand Lodge (Antients), a rival to the Premier Grand Lodge (Moderns) which was represented by the Royal York.⁷⁶

De Goede Hoop's temple on Bouquet Street was completed and consecrated on 7 Jul. 1803 but was partially destroyed by fire on 21 Feb. 1892. The vestibule, antechamber, Master's Chamber and the underground section were saved. Rebuilt later, it has since been declared a national monument.

De Goede Hoop lodge met on 25 Oct. 1802 to receive a warrant of constitution granted to it by

⁷⁵ Bate: De Goede Hoop, pp. 35 - 36; Botha: Historical Review De Goede Hoop, p. 6.

⁷⁶ Bate: De Goede Hoop, pp. 36 - 37.

"Inspector General" Francois Duminy. Dated 24 June 1802 for some reason, it seemed irrelevant as the mother lodge had not only been meeting for some years without an official warrant but had never had its standing questioned.⁷⁷

Occupation by the Batavian Republic - Abraham De Mist

Under the Treaty of Amiens of 1802, the British were to hand over the colony to the Batavian Republic. With the collapse of the Dutch East India Company in 1798, a Council for Asiatic Possessions had been entrusted to rule over its territories and a remarkable man and Freemason, "a determined though mild revolutionary", Jacob Abraham De Mist was appointed Commissioner-General with the task of taking over the colony and installing Lt.-General Jan Willem Janssens as Governor.⁷⁸ De Mist's appointment followed his critical review of administration and economic conditions at the Cape under company rule, drawn up at the Council's request while he was still in the Netherlands. His suggestions for changes made him the obvious person for the task but he was to bring to the Cape reforms far ahead of the times. In 1795 he had become a member of the National Assembly of the United Provinces and had supported the sovereignty of the provinces, opposing the tyranny of a centralised state. Human rights, he made

⁷⁷ ACC 731,1/1/1 Lodge De Goede Hoop Minutes, 25 Oct.1802.

⁷⁸ Walker: History of Southern Africa 3rd ed., p. 133.



JACOB ABRAHAM DE MIST

First Deputy Grand Master National Netherlandic
Constitution for South Africa, 1803 - 1804.

clear in his writings, were dependent on individual moral and rational behaviour and had to be earned while individual liberties, however, must be cherished.

Professor A.H. Murray in his work *Political Philosophy of J.A. De Mist* observes: "De Mist preached the freedom of law and order. Liberty, equality and fraternity were for him not political institutions but moral duties incumbent on man". Of De Mist, the Freemason, Murray added: "We find the fullest expression of the personal outlook in life and of the values cherished by this reserved statesman and administrator in some statements De Mist made in connection with his services as a Freemason. It says much for his integrity and strength of character that the principles of these statements were consistently maintained in his policy and administration".

Initiated mason as a young man, De Mist was appointed Deputy Grand Master in Holland in 1800. When he arrived at the Cape on board the warship De Bato on 23 Dec. 1802 he had a two-fold task - to take over the colony and also to investigate conditions in the masonic lodges, set them to order and end division.

De Mist took possession of the Cape on 1 Mar. 1803 and installed Janssens as Governor the same day. British rule had brought some return to prosperity but few burghers preferred British rule to their new overlords.⁷⁹

⁷⁹ Walker: *History of Southern Africa* 3rd ed., pp. 126 - 127

As a result, De Mist found a framework for change and, in his 18-month duty, instituted many reforms "which he admitted were far in advance of public opinion".⁸⁰ He reorganised the central government, removed the High Court from executive control and laid down guidelines for more effective local government. He reformed the legal system and brought necessary changes to the complicated land tenure system. Perhaps his greatest impact was on the embryonic educational system where he tried to ensure education would be directed by the state and not the church.

He found time for his masonic mission despite his heavy official duties. Lodge De Goede Hoop minutes record that Francois Duminy and the Rev. J.H. Von Manger were deputed to greet De Mist on his arrival in the Cape while A. De Smidt represented the second Dutch Lodge, De Goede Trouw.⁸¹ De Mist also found many masons among his officials and on the Burgher Senate. They included key figures such as the President of the Court of Justice, Olaff Godlieb De Wet, one of the original De Goede Hoop founders, Christoffel Brand, by then collector of tithes and wine taxes and the newly-appointed secretary to the Council of the Governor and Council of Policy, Johannes Henoch Neethling, who was also a member of De Goede Hoop Lodge.⁸² Neethling was later first master of the English

⁸⁰ Walker: History of Southern Africa, 3rd ed., p. 134.

⁸¹ ACC 731,1/1/1 Lodge De Goede Hoop Minutes, 21 Feb.1803.

⁸² Theal: Records of Cape Colony, Vol.V., p. 118.

Hope Lodge formed by De Goede Hoop members in 1821.

Soon to become one of De Mist's closest friends, Johannes Andreas Truter, later Sir John Truter, was master of De Goede Hoop Lodge from 1799 to 1804. Truter had served under company rule as Secretary of the Council of Justice and later as Public Prosecutor and was to rise to high office under the Batavian rule.

Aware that he had to re-establish the Dutch presence in the Cape De Mist took every opportunity to do so and one of the avenues was through Freemasonry. As the first Deputy Grand Master for South Africa his first important masonic function was to consecrate the newly completed De Goede Hoop temple on 7 Jul. 1803. Its final cost was about R20,800 (£10,000).⁸³ The lodge invited all masons known to them in the colony and placed an advertisement in De Kaapsche Courant to notify others. This, the first masonic advertisement published in South Africa, set a precedent for Cape lodges using the Press to announce special occasions.

The brethren were requested to wear black clothes and three-cornered hats for the ceremony and to assemble at the temple of De Goede Trouw, then in Plein Street. The masons were to march to the new building for the consecration ceremony. Unfortunately the Lodge De Goede Hoop secretary did not report it even though he left blank pages for this purpose.⁸⁴ The only

⁸³ Bate: De Goede Hoop, p.44; Botha: Historical Review De Goede Hoop, p.7.

⁸⁴ ACC 731,1/1/1 Lodge De Goede Hoop Minutes, Blank Pages, 7 Jul. 1803

account of the ceremony is to be found in a report to the Netherlands Grand Lodge given by De Mist on his return on the state of the Craft in the Cape. He records that more than 200 Brethren of every rank and nationality, together with nearly 100 'sisters' - wives or relatives, attended while the government provided a military guard to preserve order outside the building.

After De Mist had consecrated the temple, he received the Master Truter and his officers, grouped round a lighted altar in the middle of the temple, "where on behalf of themselves and their fellow members, they solemnly renewed their vows of fidelity and submission to the Batavian Grand Master with all patriotic and fraternal love". It was a vow of allegiance that was both political and masonic.

De Mist also restored to the lodge the original warrant, brought from Holland, which was endorsed to the effect that the lodge was reinstated in its previous standing as from 1772, thus giving official sanction to all acts by the lodge while without a charter - legalising the initiations, passing and raising of masons and the granting of warrants to new lodges since Chiron took the charter back to Holland in 1784.⁸⁵

Lodge De Goede Trouw was then released from the heavy restrictions imposed on it by the mother lodge, set out in its original charter. De Mist confirmed the De Goede Trouw charter by separate deed dated 20 June, 1804 and

⁸⁵ Bate: De Goede Hoop, pp. 40 - 41.

his son, A.L. De Mist, his private secretary, that year signed the actual working charter.⁸⁶

On his return, in his Masonic Epistle to the Netherlandic Grand Lodge, De Mist said he was much impressed by the zeal and fidelity of De Goede Hoop members, referring to Truter, the master at that time, as estimable and learned, an opinion formed by his acquaintance both in government and masonic affairs. His high regard for Truter convinced De Mist before leaving the Cape to appoint him Secretary to the Governor's Council of Policy, (Raad van Politie) to replace Neethling who had been made Judge of the High Court. Later De Mist chose Truter as "Deputy Grand Master National over all the lodges in the Batavian Colony at the South Point of Africa" issuing letters patent dated 14. Aug. 1804 and investing him with his own masonic apron to confirm his rank. Eventually the word "National" was dropped and the office and its responsibilities came to resemble those of a Deputy Grand Master of England who may simultaneously rule as Provincial Grand Master and is usually resident in the area. De Mist, in his dual capacity as Commissioner-General and Deputy Grand Master National, was shrewd enough to realise the importance of his latter post during the reoccupation of the Cape for in his epistle to the Dutch Grand Lodge he pointed to the usefulness of Freemasonry in the Cape in the prevention of schisms.⁸⁷

⁸⁶ Griesbach: De Goede Trouw, p. 10.

⁸⁷ Silberbauer: Brief Review, p. 7; Bate: De Goede Hoop



SIR JOHANNES ANDREAS TRUTER

Second Deputy Grand Master National Netherlandic
Constitution for South Africa, 1804 - 1845; Second
English Provincial Grand Master for South Africa,
1826 - 1833.

During De Mist's term of office, the masonic population in the Cape consisted only of two Dutch lodges - De Goede Hoop with about 130 members and De Goede Trouw. The English "Atholl" Lodge Africa No. 1. or No. 321, constituted on 27 Dec. 1800 had ceased to operate after the English evacuation in 1803, when British military lodges departed with their regiments, while as already mentioned the Royal York (Moderns) had collapsed, when its founder, Blake, returned to Britain with Yonge in 1801. Only civilians as individuals represented English Freemasonry, but were welcomed in the two Dutch Lodges.

Second British Occupation

De Mist formally resigned as Commissioner-General on 25 Sept. 1804 to allow Governor Janssens to act more freely and place the colony in condition for defence. Britain and France were again at war and the Batavian Republic was allied to France. As the majority of the Cape garrison had been ordered to Java to protect it from the English, Janssens only had 1500 to 1600 regular troops, who were weakened by disease, to meet the expected attack. This materialised when an English fleet anchored in Table Bay on 4 Jan. 1806. Aboard, Major-General David Baird, also a mason, commanded 6654 troops. On first contact, some of Janssens' mercenaries retreated and on 10 Jan. Lt. Col Von Propalow, a leading mason, signed articles of capitulation for

the surrender of the Castle.⁸⁸ However Janssens fought on in the Hottentot Hollands Mountains for some time, only agreeing to surrender after he had asked Truter, secretary of the Governor's Council of Policy, to visit him and confirm the dominant position of the British.⁸⁹

Because of this political uncertainty lodges did not meet regularly and there are long gaps in De Goede Hoop minutes between April 1804 and September 1805 and again between 14 June 1806 and 17 Feb. 1807.⁹⁰

On the Colony becoming a British possession again, English masonic lodges returned with the regiments. Africa No. 1. or No. 321, with the 91st Regiment, came in January 1806, for a short while before leaving the Cape in the same year. The Prince of Wales Lodge No. 92, with the 71st Foot, afterwards the Highland Light Infantry, also arrived as part of the invading force but left the Cape in June that year. An Irish lodge, No. 441, originally constituted in 1768 in the 38th Foot, joined its brothers in the Cape in 1806,

88 Theal: Records of Cape Colony, Vol.V., p. 45.

89 Theal: Records of Cape Colony, Vol.V., p. 148.

90 ACC 731,1/1/2 Lodge De Goede Hoop Minutes. Pages have been removed from between 14 June 1806 to 17 Feb. 1807 while the 1807 minutes are sketchy, presumably in Brand's handwriting.

eventually left and was reopened in Cape Town in 1819.⁹¹

The Commander-in-Chief, Major-General David Baird, Colonel of the 24th Regiment, brought with him also the regimental Lodge No. 233. An ardent Freemason, Baird who had been in the Colony in the first British occupation, made contact with Lodge De Goede Hoop and, on 24 Jan. 1806, a few days after the capitulation, ensured that his secretary, T. Palmer, Lt. Col. Henry Fox Brownrigg and Mortimer Drummond were initiated at the Dutch lodge.⁹²

Obviously Baird agreed with De Mist's appreciation of Freemasonry as a unifying force among the various groups of residents. Obviously, too, Truter, the new Deputy Grand Master National of the Netherlandic constitution, took heed, for, on his re-election to the chair of De Goede Hoop in 1806, he ensured through exact and detailed instructions for the reception of the "Brother Protector Major-General Sir David Baird", or in his absence, his deputy. On his entry into lodge, Baird, as representative of the King, was always to be accorded the highest rank.⁹³

The difficult periods of transfer of power during the occupations may have been eased at higher levels by

⁹¹ Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, p. 9.

⁹² ACC 731,1/1/2 Lodge De Goede Hoop Minutes, 24 Jan.1806.

⁹³ Bate: De Goede Hoop, pp. 44 - 45

the fact that most of the leaders were Freemasons. But the cleavages - between country and country and between social class and social class, were not always easily solved. Dutch and English masonic lodges came more strongly into conflict from the second British occupation not only with each other but within themselves, over differing allegiances and, more particularly, languages. The early 19th century was a period of stress for the Craft.

CHAPTER II1806 - 1830 : ENGLISH FREEMASONRYBritish Lodge

Under the acting Governor, Major-General David Baird, the Colony was to begin a period of tranquillity and a return to near prosperity. Following the decisive naval battle of Trafalgar on 21 Oct. 1805, which gave England command of the seas, the new Tory rulers introduced a system, "despotic in form though tempered by moderation and a disposition to promote the interests of the community",¹ making what laws they chose unrestrained by a council. Their autocracy was a reaction to the bloody events in revolutionary France and brought to an end the Batavian liberal experiment which had spread to the Cape under De Mist. It also bred resentment against the British occupying forces by the majority of the Dutch colonists who numbered by then some 30,000.² Some of the Dutch, however, chiefly in Cape Town, chose to support the government and were selected to fill vacant official posts or retained in top posts. Among them were several leading members of De Goede Hoop Lodge, particularly the Deputy Grand Master National, Truter, who now held the position of Fiscal, and Olaff Godlieb de Wet, President of the Court of Justice. They and other officials were

¹ G.M. Theal: History of South Africa since 1795, Vol.V, p.219.

² Theal: History of South Africa since 1795, Vol.V, p.210.

willing to take an oath of allegiance to the English King as Baird requested.

Controversy over this shift of allegiance spread to the Lodge De Goede Hoop causing dissension among members and Truter was called in 1807 to become lodge master with unlimited executive powers to end this schism. On 27 Feb. 1808 he was able to declare in open lodge that differences between members had for the time been resolved.³ Despite his claim, the minutes of 1808 showed poor attendances. Only 10 out of 36 members attended one meeting while in October that year a large number of members were excluded for non-attendance and non-payment of dues.⁴ The strains of occupation continued between those for and against the new rulers, in effect, broadly between Dutch and English members. The influx of English-speaking members following the occupation brought added tensions. The English group came to be in the majority among the Children of the Lodge, those without legislative power by virtue of restrictions on full membership. Before business was transacted in the lodge, honorary members - among them senior British officers, and Children of the Lodge were escorted out, being denied a voice in the election of master and officers and in the financial transactions of the lodge.

³ Sir C.J. Brand: Address Centenary Jubilee De Goede Hoop 1873, p. 6.

⁴ ACC 731,1/1/2 Minutes De Goede Hoop, 31.Oct. 1808;
O.H. Bate: De Goede Hoop, p. 45

Both civilian and military new members resented their secondary status within the lodge particularly with the Colony now under English control. Finally some English-speaking members of De Goede Hoop initiated a move to start a new lodge under the Grand Lodge of England (Moderns) encouraged by the growth of English Freemasonry in the Cape following the arrival of several military lodges from 1806. These included the 91st Regiment with its English lodge; the 71st Foot, afterwards the Highland Light Infantry with its Scottish Lodge, the Prince of Wales; the 38th Foot with its Irish Lodge; the 24th Regiment with its English Lodge; the 20th Light Dragoons with an Irish Lodge; all of which took part in the occupation.⁵

The De Goede Hoop breakaway group drew up a petition dated 26 Apr. 1811 which was sent to George Augustus Frederick, Prince of Wales, Grand Master. The petition declared the petitioners' "ardent desire not only to accommodate the resident Brethren but also those in His Majesty's Army and Navy and the Honourable East India Company's service touching at this settlement and respectfully solicit your Royal Highness may be pleased to grant us a warrant for the purpose of establishing a lodge here under the title of The [First - crossed out] British Lodge [of Africa - crossed out] under the Constitution of England". It was signed by R.Wrankmore, master; Charles McKenzie, senior warden;

⁵ Bate: Lodge De Goede Hoop, p. 46; Cranstoun-Day:

Timothy O'Brien, junior warden; H. Murphy, treasurer; John Pemberton-Batten, secretary; George Mount and James Dick.⁶

Wrankmore, McKenzie, O'Brien, Murphy, Batten and Mount were honorary members of, or had been initiated in De Goede Hoop lodge, but none had become a full or Effective Member and hence were not entitled to take full part in the management of De Goede Hoop lodge. This perhaps added to their wish to be full members of another lodge. All were active citizens of Cape Town. Wrankmore was a merchant of 29 Langemarket Str., McKenzie a saddler of 9 Berg St., O'Brien a deputy wine taster of Tuinwyk, Murphy was Chief Clerk in the Fiscal's Office, Batten a clerk in the Transport Office, Mount was a clerk in the dockyard and Dick was an hotel-keeper of 16 Heeregragt. Their occupations suggest that the breakaway move was a result not only of language conflict between English and Dutch but of social tensions. De Goede Hoop's older members, Truter, De Wet and Brand, all of Dutch origin, were highly placed within the British

⁶ Free Masons Hall: File SN 1584, British Lodge Petition.

The petition to form British Lodge went undiscovered for many years in the FMH Archives, London. In research during Oct/Nov. 1978 by chance I found it and recorded its wording for the first time - at least for South Africa. Unfortunately it later again disappeared but following a further visit by me to FMH, London

administration while all the honorary members belonged to the British civil and military ruling elite.

Wrangmore, as it were, led a group of less socially favoured men into a separate establishment.⁷

The warrant constituting the authority to start the new lodge was granted on 9 Aug. 1811, by the Moderns or Premier Grand Lodge. Wrangmore convened the first meeting of petitioners on 11 Jan. 1812 and produced the warrant. Initially the lodge was to be called the First British Lodge of Africa but later the words 'First' and 'of Africa' were dropped. It was numbered 629 on the roll of the Grand Lodge of England (Moderns).⁸ Wrangmore, its first Master, lost no time in beginning work. At that first meeting he initiated a Richard Stone, a merchant of 8 Berg St., and passed him to the second degree and six days later, the lodge met again and admitted three joining members. Premises in Blesser's Garden, Roeland Street, had been obtained for that meeting. At the next, on 7 Feb., W.G. Mason, Purser of HMS President, was initiated and passed and 12 days later four more of the President's crew were initiated while the Chaplain to the Forces, the Rev. Marcus Aurelius Parker, was given the three degrees in one

in July, 1979 and a search by Mr.
T.O. Haunch, Librarian and Curator,
the petition was rediscovered.

⁷ Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, pp. 12 - 13.

⁸ FMH: File SN 1584, British Lodge.

evening in March. In all 70 degrees were conferred in the lodge's first year in 33 meetings and at the end it recorded 36 members, 16 of whom had been initiated in the lodge.⁹ Despite this activity, the lodge still had to be consecrated and on 9 May, 1812, the Cape Town Gazette and African Advertiser carried an advertisement announcing this would be carried out on 16 May.

The advertisement read:

"Under sanction of His Excellency the Governor and Commander-in-Chief: The Master of the British Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons under the Constitution of Great Britain, makes known to the Brethren, that the Consecration of the above Lodge will take place on Saturday the 16th inst., at 12 o'clock precisely; after which the Brethren will proceed to Church in procession, where Divine Service will be performed, and an appropriate Sermon preached by the Reverend Brother Parker, Grand Chaplain to the Lodge".

The ceremony of consecration was performed by the Rev. Parker while the Provincial Grand Master under the Netherlandic Constitution, Truter, officiated and installed Wrangmore as Master "after which the brothers proceeded to church in procession under sanction of His Excellency the Governor, Bro. Sir John Francis Cradock". The master of De Goede Hoop, Gerrit Buyskes and eight members, with officers of De Goede Trouw and a large assembly "of other respectable brethren"

⁹ Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, pp. 13 - 14, p. 19.

attended.¹⁰

The new lodge's spirit of independence was fostered by its master Wrankmore who was determined to cement its ties with the English Grand Lodge and assert its authority in the Colony against that of the two Dutch lodges. This rivalry led to a suggestion from De Goede Hoop that, for the promotion of harmony, a permanent commission be set up of leading members of both Lodges to discuss common matters.¹¹ But British Lodge avoided the offer and, instead, Wrankmore curtly replied that he was expecting the appointment of a Provincial Grand Master for South Africa to represent the Grand Lodge of England. Once that was done, the two Provincial Grand Masters - Dutch and English - would be able to meet.¹²

As mentioned in Chapter I Richard Blake, secretary to the then Governor, Sir George Yonge, had been appointed English Provincial Grand Master in the Cape in 1800 and on his return to England had retained the title until 1804, but there had been no appointment necessary afterwards since there had been no permanent English lodge operating in the Cape. Wrankmore realised that the status of British Lodge and those of future English Lodges would be promoted by the presence of a Provincial

¹⁰ Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, pp. 14 - 15.

¹¹ ACC 731,2/3 Annexures to Minutes; De Goede Hoop to British Lodge, 2. Oct. 1812.

¹² ACC 731,2/3 Annexures to Minutes, De Goede Hoop; Wrankmore to De Goede Hoop, 10 Nov. 1812.

Grand Master in South Africa but his hopes were not fulfilled for another fourteen years. While English-Dutch rivalry simmered, the competition between the two Grand Lodges existing in England at that time - the Premier Grand Lodge of 1717 (Moderns) and the Grand Lodge of 1753 (Antients) also known as Atholl - emerged again briefly in the Cape in 1812 when a military lodge was formed. The 10th Battalion of the Royal Artillery, stationed in Cape Town, applied and obtained a charter or warrant of authority from the Antients Grand Lodge on 12 Aug. 1812. They were recommended by masons in the 21st Light Dragoons.

The lodge, named the Cape of Good Hope Lodge No. 354, is referred to in the minutes of British Lodge (a Moderns Lodge) as the "Artillery Lodge" and "Scotch Lodge", the latter arising from the name Atholl, the Duke of Atholl, a Grand Master of the Antients. Of the 23 petitioners 15 were Irish masons. George Wolfe, a sergeant in the Royal Artillery, was its master for its first four years, but in 1817 the military leadership of the lodge gave way to civilian when an auctioneer, John Blore, became master. The lodge was renamed Union in 1818 and used premises on Plein Street until it closed down in 1848.¹³

All lodges operating in Cape Town, as was the custom, sought the protection of the Governor. Installed as Governor in 1811, Lt. General Sir John Francis Cradock, a mason, was always invited on special occasions.

¹³ Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, pp. 15 - 16.

In December, 1812, De Goede Hoop invited him to attend the St. John's Festival, 24 June, on the occasion of the installation of a new master and he replied: "Sir John embraces this opportunity to assure the Lodge of his highest respect and as a zealous brother will always be happy to afford them every protection and assistance in his power".¹⁴

Differences frequently arose between lodges over property. Now attracting numerous masons, mainly of the new merchant and trade classes, British Lodge sought a permanent home and in October 1812 it was proposed that a building be bought. Eventually a portion of Garden Uitvlugt, part of Garden Domburg, a block of property between Bouquet St., St. John St. and Wandel St. and the Avenue, was purchased for £1250. It adjoined the De Goede Hoop property which comprised then the temple, enclosed garden, the Society House with servants' quarters and stabling and putting and bowling greens. Nearby were the buildings of the other Dutch Lodge, De Goede Trouw. From 1813 three principal lodges thus had properties close to one another on St. John St., a situation that often lead to disagreement.

In November that year British Lodge and De Goede Hoop negotiated an agreement about a stream that affected both properties. It was found that De Goede Trouw and the proprietor of Concordia Gardens nearby also had to give consent to any decision. Differences

¹⁴ ACC 731,2/3 Annexures to Minutes De Goede Hoop:

arose and De Goede Hoop set up a committee unsuccessfully to try to reconcile its arguments with British Lodge and De Goede Trouw.¹⁵ These were accentuated by the existing rivalry between the Dutch and English lodges. For instance a member of British Lodge, George Ross, in December 1812 had been reprimanded for remaining within Lodge De Goede Trouw at its meeting while a colleague, a joining member of British Lodge, had been refused admission because he was unable to produce his certificate of initiation. Ross' conduct, according to the lengthy minutes of British Lodge, was termed "reprehensible" De Goede Trouw's refusal to admit the visitor was regarded by British Lodge as derogatory to its dignity.¹⁶ There are several instances of conflict of this nature at this period.

British Lodge Weakens: De Goede Hoop Forms an English Lodge

The 1820s brought a decline in the fortunes of British Lodge and, as a result brought the unusual step by De Goede Hoop of launching another English lodge and later a lodge under the Grand Orient of France.

British Lodge in its first known return to Grand Lodge of England for 16 Mar. to 31 Oct. 1815, recorded 59 members who included "gentlemen", cabinet makers, merchants, farmers, clerks, officers of Cape regiments and a ship's captain. It was apparently still

¹⁵ Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge pp. 18 - 20; ACC 731,2/3

Annexures to Minutes De Goede Hoop:

British Lodge to De Goede Hoop, 10

Nov. 1813; De Goede Hoop to British

Lodge, 18 Nov. 1813

¹⁶ Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, p. 19.

attracting members of the English middle-class but was suffering from the lack of numbers of that class as yet resident in the Cape. Though it enjoyed the Governor's protection, it apparently did not appeal to top-ranking British officials nor to the Dutch element. The next lodge return, for the period 1 Jan. to 31 Dec. 1820 reflected only 15 paid members.¹⁷ Obviously it had suffered setbacks in those five years, and even from the start, for at its July meeting in 1815, only 10 members were present while there were not sufficient attending to open the lodge in August and October. The next year saw attendances drop to eight or ten at meetings although the lodge returned 32 members with six in the country districts. This apathy among members led to 14 of them being fined 5 rix dollars in January 1817 for non-attendance but this did not apparently produce results for that year particularly was stagnant with nine meetings from July to December but no dispensing of degrees and very low attendance. The following year again brought no candidates and even poorer attendance.¹⁸

Despite a move in February 1818 by the lodge from the Garden Uitvlugt to a tavern at 15 B Plein Street, the situation worsened so much so that in that year it was decided not to celebrate the Festival of St. John on 24 June, when the new master was traditionally enthroned. Instead the lodge - 12

¹⁷ FMH: Returns 1815, 1820 British Lodge.

¹⁸ Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, pp. 22 - 24.

attending in all - met on 27 Dec. to install George William Simpson as master but as no pastmasters were present to perform the ceremony, Simpson presumably assumed the chair. The loss of senior members, through death or neglect as well as the absence of candidates, had seriously weakened the lodge and at the end of 1818 only three of the founder members remained - Tait, Dick and Wrangmore. The latter, the guiding founder of the lodge, was then living at Stellenbosch and too far away to attend.¹⁹

In some desperation the lodge took the unusual step of issuing civil summonses against members in arrears of subscriptions and on 20 Mar. 1819 the minutes record that a member had been summonsed for non-payment of 60 rix dollars. He pleaded in defence that he had not attended lodge for some time but the treasurer and secretary were instructed to attend the court to produce the minute book to show he had not resigned and was therefore liable for subscription. This did not add to the lodge's popularity.²⁰

The lodge's problems were again accentuated by its accommodation difficulties. The tavern on Plein Street owned by a mason, Mallinson, had been sold and the lodge moved again in 1820 to an apartment behind the Castle rented from the same member. In June the

¹⁹ Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, pp. 25 - 27.

²⁰ Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, p. 27.

lodge moved to two rooms in the house of founder member J. Dick, at 31 Berg Street, afterwards St. Georges St., at a rental of 16 rix dollars a month. In August yet another move was made, this time to the Swan Tavern, 14 Zieke Dwars St., later Barrack St. hired for 15 rix dollars a month.²¹

From July 1820 to January 1821 there were no candidates and attendance fell to six or eight. The weakened state of the lodge was put in a letter to Grand Lodge of England by John Allsopp, acting secretary, in making returns for 1820. He apologised for the few members - 15 paid up - because the lodge funds "have been plundered, their archives either withheld or wantonly destroyed for invidious purposes; whilst numerous desertions have taken place like the movement of Rats from a supposed falling Fabric, leaving the remnant to sustain the reiterated attacks levelled at the existence of the lodge. The Brethren are therefore few in number but continue firm in Masonic principles". He added that these few had paid for refreshments and other expenses by voluntary subscriptions, including the rent of the lodge room, and hoped the lodge would surmount its difficulties.²²

Heading the 15 members was James Howell the master, a librarian by profession. Other members were carpenters, clerks, saddlers, cabinet-makers and others of less socially prominent occupations. In the class-conscious

²¹ Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, pp. 28 - 29.

²² FMH: File SN 1584, British Lodge, Allsopp to Grand Lodge, 13 Sept. 1820; Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, p. 39.

Cape society British Lodge appeared to have become a home for tradesmen and in August, 1820, social pressures led to those of superior status seeking other outlets for their masonic ambitions. Lodge De Goede Hoop recorded in that month that apparently English-speaking candidates were going elsewhere for initiation, to a military lodge then working in Cape Town, No. 441 under the Grand Lodge of Ireland or to British Lodge. Several officers of the 38th Regiment of Foot which had arrived in Cape Town in 1818 had written to British Lodge in August 1819 asking if No. 441, its regimental lodge, could hold meetings in its apartments. Rental at 20 rix dollars was agreed but the next month No. 441 moved to another venue in Cape Town and in 1820 and 1821 initiated 27 new members. It ceased work in 1822.²³

Concerned about this drain of English candidates De Goede Hoop suggested to the Netherlandic Deputy Grand Master, Truter, that application should be made to the Grand Lodge of England for an English warrant to start a new lodge, or take over the weakened British Lodge. It was eventually decided to apply through nine of De Goede Hoop's members to London for a warrant for a new lodge.²⁴ J.H. Neethling, master of De Goede Hoop from 1813 to 1825 and from 1827 to 1830, J. Zorn, E. Bergh,

²³ Bate: De Goede Hoop, pp. 58 - 59; Cranstoun-Day:
British Lodge, p. 28.

²⁴ ACC 731,2/5 Annexures to Minutes De Goede Hoop:
Neethling to De Goede Hoop, 21 Aug. 1820;
Bate: De Goede Hoop, p. 59.

G.H. Maasdorp, M. Van Brèda, P.B. Borchers, H. Ross, H. Murphy, who was a founder member of British Lodge and J. Nisbet signed the petition, dated 30 Aug. 1820 which was recommended by Truter who later became a member of the new lodge.

The Grand Lodge of England, formed from the union of the Antients and Moderns in 1813, issued a warrant on 26 Feb. 1821, for the new lodge, which was to be called The Good Hope Lodge No. 727. It changed its name to The Hope in 1830.²⁵ Its warrant was produced in Lodge De Goede Hoop on 17 Jul. 1821 and committed to Truter's care while Neethling was elected master designate of the new lodge and Murphy and Nisbet wardens.²⁶ De Goede Hoop decided to keep its English daughter in bounds as it had done with its earlier progeny, De Goede Trouw. It was resolved that any member of De Goede Hoop could claim membership of The Hope and vice versa and the control of The Hope should be in the hands of at least two thirds of members of its mother lodge. The new lodge was to meet at De Goede Hoop temple and both would use the same regalia. All revenue of The Hope, after payment of expenses, was to go into the funds of De Goede Hoop, one half as its own property and the other half as a permanent loan. The new lodge was to work according to the by-laws of De Goede Hoop and the

²⁵ FMH: File SN 1730, The Hope Lodge, Petition,

30 Aug. 1820.

²⁶ ACC 731,1/1/5 De Goede Hoop Minute Book, 17 Jul.1821.

constitution of the United Grand Lodge of England and, when these were in conflict, the two lodges were to discuss a compromise.

As a retaliatory measure presumably aimed at No. 441 military lodge, it was resolved not to confer degrees on any military officer belonging to the garrison so long as the military lodge refused to do so for civilians.

The long list of resolutions ended with the decision that, as soon as the Hope Lodge was formally established, it was to apply to the Grand Lodge of England to appoint Truter to the same position under it as he held in the Netherlands Constitution - Provincial Grand Master- so he might establish an English Provincial Grand Lodge in South Africa.²⁷ It was an ironic comment on the early hopes of the first master of British Lodge, Wrankmore, recorded in 1812, that a Dutch-founded lodge should ask for the appointment of an English Provincial Grand Master and not an English lodge. This condition might be construed as a desire by De Goede Hoop to ensure control of the fledgling English Freemasonry in the Cape.

The Hope was formally constituted on 29 Dec. 1821, by Truter after which a procession, joined by all lodges in Cape Town, marched through De Goede Hoop grounds. In its first returns to London, for 1821, The

²⁷ ACC 731,2/8 Annexures Minutes De Goede Hoop:
Preliminary Meeting Hope Lodge, 24 Jul.
1821.

Hope recorded 27 members, 18 being from De Goede Hoop, one from British Lodge and one from the 98th Regiment. Among them was Truter, Michiel Van Breda, member of the Burgher Senate and the Rev. George Hough, Colonial Chaplain and Chaplain to De Goede Hoop.²⁸ Neethling was its first master while being master of the Dutch lodge at the same time, an unusual but convenient situation, at least for De Goede Hoop.

Cranstoun-Day questions whether the establishment of another English lodge was justified at a time when British Lodge was struggling for existence. He suggests The Hope was established for class reasons, "the English professional and merchant elements desiring to have a lodge of their own". He adds that The Hope for many years took the lead socially in the restricted Cape Town society with the majority of its members from both official and military classes "and of the Anglo-Indians who used to make the Cape a sanatorium. When the flow of these tropical health seekers ceased, the lodge gradually declined to its final end". It ceased work in the late 60s, was revived briefly in 1871 before being erased in 1878.²⁹

The formation of The Hope Lodge occurred under the governorship of Sir Charles Henry Somerset, a son of an English Grand Master but who was never active

²⁸ FMH: File SN 1730, The Hope Lodge, Returns 31 Dec. 1821.

²⁹ British Lodge, p. 33; Bate: De Goede Hoop, p. 66.

in the Craft at the Cape.³⁰ An aristocrat in every manner Somerset must have welcomed this start of an upper class refuge for English-speaking masons particularly as many of his senior officials were members though he remained on friendly terms with the older De Goede Hoop and De Goede Trouw who, as in the past, solicited his protection. His policy of bringing English to the status of the official language of the colony obviously was not directed at the use of Dutch in the two Dutch lodges - De Goede Hoop and De Goede Trouw. Not until 1870 were minutes kept in English at De Goede Hoop and in 1875 at De Goede Trouw though there were workings in English occasionally before those years.³¹ This determination to maintain Dutch as the language of masonic ceremonies in those two lodges reflected in fact the conservatism of the older members. Nevertheless the language question was to lead to dissension within these lodges and between English and Dutch lodges in the 1830s and 1840s.

Cranstoun-Day's claim that The Hope was an upper class refuge has some foundation. The first master, Johannes Henoch Neethling, who occupied the chair for eight years, was then a judge, a member of the Council of Justice. He was in good company for Truter, who joined in 1821, had been appointed Chief Justice of the Colony in 1815 and knighted in 1820, the first South African to receive this honour. Neethling's successor,

³⁰ Dr. A.F. Hattersley: DSAB, Vol.II, p. 686.

³¹ Bate: De Goede Hoop, p. 96; Griesbach: Lodge De Goede Trouw, p.40.

Clerke Burton, was master for four years. Later to become English Provincial Grand Master, he was Master of the Supreme Court. John Bardwell Ebdon, a member of the first Cape Legislative Council, was the lodge's fourth master from 1834 to 1836 while Major General Sir Benjamin D'Urban, Governor of the Cape from 1834 to 1838, joined in 1834 and was honorary master from 1837 to 1838. Another founder member, Michiel Van Breda, became President of the Burgher Senate in 1820, while P.B. Borchers and John Henry Brand were members of the Council of Justice. Other later notable members included Charles Aken Fairbridge and Richard Southey who were to become English Provincial Grand Masters and the Rev. Fearon Fallows, Astronomer Royal at the Cape, who arrived in 1821 when the first observatory was established.³²

According to Grand Lodge returns, The Hope Lodge had 35 members as at 31 Dec. 1827 and 59, including 11 joining members by 1830.³³

The bonds tying The Hope to De Goede Hoop were soon to chafe despite the fact Neethling was master of both lodges for some years while at the same time the British and The Hope lodges became alienated. The other Dutch lodge, De Goede Trouw, remained out of this controversy. A letter from The Hope secretary to Grand

³² Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, p.33.

³³ FMH: File SN 1730, The Hope Lodge, Returns 1827, 1830.

Lodge, London dated 10 June, 1826, spoke of "the constraint" between The Hope and De Goede Hoop.³⁴ The Hope had become inactive in that year as the new master elect, H. Murphy, a founder member, originally of British Lodge, had refused to call the lodge together for his installation as master, declining to be instructed by De Goede Hoop as the original agreement laid down. London was told that English masons might petition for a new lodge to end this stalemate which was only ended a year later when Neethling, master of the mother lodge, was reappointed to The Hope's chair and quickly revised the by-laws to lessen The Hope's subservience to De Goede Hoop.³⁵ By then The Hope and British lodges had severed relations. Neethling as The Hope master in a letter to Grand Lodge of England on 22 Dec. 1827, informed it of the argument between the two lodges arising from the fact that a Hope Lodge member had joined British Lodge in defiance of the original undertakings between The Hope and De Goede Hoop. The Hope lodge resented this "poaching". Nine days later Neethling wrote again to London to say that, because of the differences between British and The Hope he had advised Hope members to "abstain from official communication" in order not to enlarge the wound

³⁴ FMH: File SN 1730, The Hope Lodge, 10 June 1826, The Hope to Grand Lodge; ACC 731, 1/1/6
De Goede Hoop Minutes, 12 June, 1826

³⁵ ACC 731, 2/7 Annexures Minutes De Goede Hoop:
Neethling to De Goede Hoop, 12 Jul. 1827.

further.³⁶ This breach between De Goede Hoop and The Hope on one side and the British Lodge on the other lasted until March, 1829. Neethling in his later letter mentioned the unfortunate state not only of Freemasonry in the Cape but of the "poor and forlorn situation of the unfortunate Cape through depreciation of the currency, high taxes and too high salaries of Government officers". He referred to the fall in the purchasing power of the paper rix dollar in the Cape from 3s. 6d. to 1s. 6.1/4d. because of the overprinting of currency to meet the requirements of the British occupation forces from 1806. In 1825 the 4s. paper rix dollar was fixed at 1s. 6d. in silver and Britain lent the Colony over £92,000 without interest to wipe out the paper money glut. Creditors were hit hard as banks stopped paying interest on deposits. A further blow in this period from 1826 to 1835 was the sudden drop in revenue of the Colony. The real value of land revenue fell with the fall of the rix dollar while the adoption of English methods of business cut proceeds from the earlier Dutch East India Company's system of auction duty. Heavier taxes failed to fill the gap. Lord Charles Somerset, the Governor, borrowed all he could but, after his retirement, the Imperial Government slashed official salaries and retrenched public works.³⁷

³⁶ FMH: File SN 1730, The Hope Lodge, Neethling to Grand Lodge, 22 Dec. 1827, 31 Dec. 1827.

³⁷ Walker: History of Southern Africa, 3rd ed., pp. 158-160.

A French Lodge

Freemasonry is primarily concerned with the Craft ceremonies, that is, the three basic degrees. The masonic authorities, the Grand Lodges, recognise these three Craft degrees and in some cases "side"degrees - Royal Arch, Mark Masons and Mark Mariners. However there exist the so-called "high" degrees, principally the Rose Croix which is specifically for Christian masons in contrast to the Craft and side degrees which are open to all faiths.

The history of the "high" degrees in South Africa is involved and documentation is scarce. There is some confusion about the origin and legality of most "high" degree chapters, as they are called, in the late 18th and early 19th centuries in South Africa as several groups of masons, particularly those of De Goede Hoop, took it upon themselves to launch new chapters without proper authority while often Craft lodges conferred these high degrees themselves.

In the 1820s De Goede Hoop members numbering about 200 wished to start a "high" degree chapter of Rose Croix Freemasonry. Unwilling to approach either England or Holland, they petitioned the French Grand Lodge, Grand Orient of France, for a charter to be told that France would only grant it on condition it would be issued for a French Craft lodge to which the chapter would be attached. Usually a "high" degree chapter was attached to a Craft lodge. The Calendar of the Grand Orient of France records that warrants were issued on 10 Nov. 1824

for a French Craft lodge, a Rose Croix Chapter and a Council Kadosh, a further "high" degree lodge, to work in Cape Town and all were to be named L'Esperance. While the Council Kadosh was constituted on 12 Apr. 1826 with Truter as master, the Rose Croix Chapter was not assembled until 20 May, 1827.³⁸ The indefatigable Neethling became the first master of the new Craft Lodge L'Esperance, and thus was master at the same time of three Craft lodges - De Goede Hoop of the Netherlandic Constitution, The Hope of the English and L'Esperance of the French, a situation that was never to arise again in Cape Freemasonry. Cranstoun-Day comments that Neethling's "memory must have been wonderful if the ritualistic differences of the three lodges were maintained as at present".³⁹

The new French Craft lodge, L'Esperance, was put under the same limitations as those placed on The Hope lodge, for De Goede Hoop hoped to remain the guiding influence in these two new ventures. As the Dutch Deputy Grand Master National, Truter ratified on 27 Sept. 1827, terms of affiliation of the three lodges, De Goede Hoop, The Hope and L'Esperance. Drawn up in May that year, these laid down that the warrants, or authorities, of the three lodges were to remain the property of the Effective, or full, members of De Goede Hoop while the board of management was to be the same for all three

³⁸ Brand: Address Centenary Jubilee 1873, p.6; Bate:
De Goede Hoop, pp. 61 - 62.

³⁹ Bate: De Goede Hoop, pp. 61-63;
British Lodge, p. 51.



JOHANNES HENOCH NEETHLING

First Master of The Hope Lodge, 1821 - 1828;
English Deputy Provincial Grand Master for South
Africa, 1829 - 1838.

elected by all the members. Minutes were to be kept in the language of the respective Grand Lodge - Dutch, English or French. If a candidate applied in French he would be admitted to L'Esperance, if in Dutch De Goede Hoop and if in English, The Hope. All revenue was to go into a general treasury from which expenses of all three lodges would be settled.⁴⁰ But De Goede Hoop's hopes of complete control soon faded for this agreement was not to last long. The Hope applied for its revision 13 months after it came into operation and the constraint between The Hope and De Goede Hoop, reflected in 1826, worsened. Members of The Hope stated bluntly they would not accept another member of De Goede Hoop as successor to Neethling while there were also irreconcilable differences in the working of the different constitutions.

De Goede Hoop in its minutes of 17 Jan. 1829, recorded that it was finally decided to dissolve the affiliation and wrote to The Hope that month, somewhat sorrowfully, to say that the lodges separated in friendship and harmony as they had not been able to devise a scheme to allow them to work on identical lines and yet obey the laws of the two Grand Lodges since these were irreconcilable. It also remarked that in its early years The Hope had not prospered as greatly as its founders had hoped.⁴¹ The Hope lodge thus became

⁴⁰ ACC 731,2/7 Annexures to Minutes De Goede Hoop, Contract between De Goede Hoop, L'Esperance and The Hope, 30 May, 1827.

⁴¹ ACC 731,1/1/7 Minutes De Goede Hoop 17 Jan. 1829; ACC 731,2/8 Annexures to Minutes De Goede Hoop, De Goede Hoop to The Hope, 22 Jan. 1829.

entirely independent of De Goede Hoop, ending this unique experiment in which a Dutch lodge founded and tried to keep within its bounds an English lodge. Later the French experiment failed in a more drastic fashion when L'Esperance Craft lodge ceased to exist about 1841. It had gained a certain amount of liberty shortly after The Hope lodge won emancipation and from 1829 was allowed to elect its own master and officers, with the exception of the treasurer who was still appointed by De Goede Hoop. It thus did not have control of its finances nor did it have full authority over the choice of its candidates. It gradually declined as did its Rose Croix chapter. Their warrants were finally surrendered to Sir Christoffel Brand, then Deputy Grand Master National, by De Goede Hoop on 28 June, 1851.⁴²

An English Provincial Grand Master

English Freemasons at the Cape since the formation of British Lodge in 1811, had wanted their own resident Provincial Grand Master, to provide not only guidance but to give a status equivalent to the Dutch lodges which had enjoyed the leadership of a Deputy Grand Master National since the arrival of De Mist in 1802 and later under De Mist's successor from 1804, Truter, who was to represent the Netherlands Grand Lodge until his death in 1845.

As mentioned, following the formation of British Lodge in 1811, Wrankmore, its first master, had

⁴² Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, p.51; Bate: De Goede Hoop, pp. 66 - 67.

approached the English Grand Lodge in 1812 to ask for the appointment of a Provincial Grand Master. Later I. Harris of the lodge wrote in 1815 to London to ask for information about this matter but the Grand Secretary noted on his letter that he knew nothing of such application.⁴³ However, British Lodge did not persevere greatly in pressing for such an appointment, perhaps because of its weakened state. The then master, John Strachan, wrote to Grand Lodge, London on 12 Nov. 1825, giving a graphic account of the state of the lodge: "The imbecility under which the British Lodge has laboured for many years past, the desertion of its members, the want of fit and proper officers to govern and more especially the inattention of our late master, Peter Laing and the late secretary, James Howell to whom we are painfully compelled to attribute many irregularities, are circumstances that we trust will not in any way affect the present members ... the lodge is again beginning to flourish".⁴⁴

A definite move to persuade England to appoint a Provincial Grand Master finally came from the then three-year-old English lodge, The Hope. Its agreement with its mother lodge, De Goede Hoop, specified that, as

⁴³ FMH: File SN 1584, British Lodge, Harris to Grand Lodge, 7 Jan. 1815

⁴⁴ FMH: File SN 1584, British Lodge, Strachan to Grand Lodge, 12 Nov. 1825.

soon as it formally established, it was to apply to the United Grand Lodge of England to nominate Truter, then head of the Dutch lodges, as English Provincial Grand Master in South Africa and it fulfilled its obligation by sending under cover of a letter of 7 Jul. 1824 a petition from its members nominating Truter "a very intelligent man" as Provincial Grand Master.⁴⁵ But Grand Lodge moved cautiously and only two years later, the Grand Master, The Duke of Sussex, appointed Truter by a Patent dated 28 Jan. 1826. De Goede Hoop minutes on 17 Jul. 1828 record that its master Neethling notified members that he had received a letter from the English Grand Lodge dated 18 Mar. 1826 enclosing the Patent. No explanation was given for the two year delay between the date of the Patent and its arrival at the Cape.⁴⁶

Truter was then in the unique position of being Provincial Grand Master for both Netherlandic and English constitutions in South Africa. Proceedings of the English Grand Lodge 41 years later - in March and June 1867, indicate that his appointment to rule English masonry in South Africa was to emphasise the fraternal relations existing between the two constitutions and

⁴⁵ FMH: The Hope Lodge letter file; Petition The Hope to Grand Lodge, 7 Jul. 1824.

⁴⁶ ACC 731,1/1/6 De Goede Hoop Minutes, 17 Jul. 1828.

incidentally, to confirm the right of the Netherlands Grand Lodge to exercise masonic jurisdiction in South Africa, notwithstanding the Convention of 1770 between the two Grand Lodges.⁴⁷ This convention which in effect restricted a Grand Lodge from encroaching on another's territory, was the cause of a split between masonic constitutions in South Africa in the 1880s, more serious than the rivalry emerging in the early 1800s between English and Dutch lodges which had its roots in the change of civil authority in the Cape and in language and class differences.

Truter's appointment was an attempt by England to smooth over cracks in the masonic edifice in South Africa and to ensure that English Freemasonry would not be subordinate in standing to its Dutch rival. Holding the offices of provincial grand master for both constitutions until 1833, Truter administered the English Craft lodges without assistance until 1829 when an English Provincial Grand Lodge was constituted on 12 Jan. that year.⁴⁸ Truter then tried several times to resign his English appointment and finally in April 1831 wrote to Edward Harper, Grand Secretary United Grand Lodge of England, protesting that he was sick. He offered his resignation, nominating Clerke Burton as his successor and Neethling as his deputy. Clerke Burton was

47 Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, p. 40.

48 Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, p. 43.

eventually appointed by letters Patent dated 7 Sept. 1833 to govern "the masonic community of the Cape of Good Hope and its dependencies in South Africa", while, though in ill-health, Truter continued to rule over the Dutch lodges.⁴⁹ There were three English lodges in Cape Town at the time, British, Union and The Hope, with Albany at Grahamstown, the first in the Eastern Province. Significantly Truter in 1829 appointed fellow members of De Goede Hoop in the main as officers of the first English Provincial Grand Lodge. Neethling, master of De Goede Hoop and The Hope lodges, became his deputy and Clerke Burton, an honorary member of De Goede Hoop, as Provincial Secretary.⁵⁰

Following the formation of an English Provincial Grand Lodge, the two Dutch lodges felt they, too, should have a provincial grand lodge to support Truter, who had asked them in 1828 to submit names of senior masons from whom he would select officers when the provincial grand lodge was constituted. For some reason, only a provincial grand secretary, J.F. Wensch, was appointed. De Goede Hoop again suggested the matter in 1836 but it

⁴⁹ Provincial Grand Master English Constitution
South Africa: Letters Received and Sent,
1821 - 1844, Truter to United Grand Lodge,
England 10 Aug. 1829, 15 Apr. 1831; Clerke
Burton to United Grand Lodge, 7 Sept. 1833.

⁵⁰ Bate: De Goede Hoop, p. 73.

took two years more for Truter provisionally to constitute a Dutch provincial grand lodge and invest its officers - on 18 Aug. 1838.⁵¹ Both provincial grand lodges lapsed in 1848.

First Lodge in the Eastern Province

The decision by the British Government to send to South Africa some of its surplus population led to the establishment of the first lodges in the Eastern Province by members of the 1820 settlers. From many parts of the British Isles, nearly 5000 newcomers became residents of the Colony between March 1820 and May 1821.⁵² Some settled in the Cape Town area and others in the Albany district. Among those who arrived at Algoa Bay in 1820 was Thos. Phillips, a master mason of Lodge No. 59 Hwillford Lodge, Haverfordwest in Pembrokeshire, Wales. Head of the Pembrokeshire party, he landed with his wife, seven children and three female servants. A banker by profession, then aged 44, he settled at Glendour. But he and others soon moved from the homesteads allocated to them by the Government, driven away by failure of crops, droughts, floods and the border raids.

Phillips eventually settled in Grahamstown where he contacted other newcomers who were masons, among them Dr. Peter Campbell, born in Ireland, who had arrived as a member of Sephton's Salem party with his wife, two daughters and a servant. Campbell was a member of an

⁵¹ Bate: De Goede Hoop, p. 73, p.81.

⁵² Theal: History of South Africa since 1795, Vol.V, p.358.

Irish Lodge, No. 461 Moy Co. Tyrone. Another mason, Robert Matson Whitnall had been secretary of the Union Lodge in Cape Town in 1825. Union Lodge was originally a military lodge, Cape of Good Hope No. 354 (Moderns) founded by the 10th Battalion of Royal Artillery in 1812. It changed its name to Union in 1818. Whitnall, aged 38 in 1827, was a clerk in the Royal Engineers in Grahamstown. Other masons in early Grahamstown were John Mandy, James Divine, A. Mackenzie, Robert Emslie, W. Kidson, John Willis and Dr. John Atherstone.⁵³

Phillips soon became a leader of his community. Sir Rufane Donkin, the Governor, issued a proclamation on 15 Sept. 1820 appointing special Heemraden with considerable authority to maintain law and order in the new settlement. One of the three new Heemraden was Phillips.

The first record of the proposed lodge was a letter from William Deale as secretary of Society House, to the Landdrost of Albany, Capt. W.B. Dundas on 9 Apr. 1827. It read: "Sir, a Committee of Freemasons having been appointed in this town for the purpose of obtaining a warrant from the Grand Lodge of England: I am desired by the same committee respectfully to request your permission to hold Masonic meetings until this object shall be accomplished". It was necessary to obtain permission for meetings as the area was under military rule because of the Xhosa raids.⁵⁴

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T.W.Greenwood: Early Freemasonry in Eastern Cape.

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Dr. G. Drury: Records of Albany Lodge, p. 9.

The original petition to the United Grand Lodge of England for authority to start a lodge, which is preserved in the archives at Freemasons Hall, London, bears no date. It nominates Phillips as master, Campbell as senior warden, Whitnall junior warden and twelve in all signed it. Four of them were from Union Lodge, Cape Town - Whitnall, R.B. Green, T. Fynn, W. Deale, two - W. Ogilvie and C. Stone from British Lodge, Cape Town, one from Durham and three from London lodges, one 'Modern' and two 'Antient'. Guarantors were the officers of Union and British Lodges.⁵⁵ The Grahamstown masons found immediate support for their venture, particularly from British Lodge, for the then British lodge master, Morris Sloman, a watchmaker in Cape Town, had also been an 1820 Settler, spending five years farming in the Albany district before moving to Cape Town to become master of British Lodge on 25 Dec. 1825. But the enthusiastic group of masons in Grahamstown had to wait several months for their warrant of authority to arrive, as communications were slow. A mail boat took four months to reach Cape Town and from Cape Town the overland mail, carried on a single horse through Swellendam, George, Uitenhage and on to Grahamstown, took two to three weeks.

The first meeting of the new Albany lodge was informally held on "This twentyeth day of September 1828" at a "room of W. Wathall", and the minutes proclaim:

⁵⁵ Drury: Albany Lodge, p. 10.

1829 - saw the inauguration of the first English Provincial Grand Lodge in South Africa at Cape Town with Truter as Provincial Grand Master. On the same day Albany Lodge held a "Lodge of Emergency" to consider the "propriety of Brethren of The Albany Lodge offering a congratulatory address to Bro. John Andreas (Johannes Andreas) Truter on his installation as Provincial Grand Master of South Africa". They considered it carefully and finally approved it on 6 Feb. This courtesy over, Albany received in September a letter from the Provincial Grand Lodge asking for statistics of members and a contribution to a local fund and it was resolved to send a list of members and a copy of the by-laws but apparently no contribution.⁵⁸

In its petition Albany had applied direct to Grand Lodge and obtained its warrant from England and, as a result, contributed a portion of its dues overseas and not to a local provincial grand lodge. Not wishing to break this relationship, it embarked on several years of conflict with the Cape Town authorities, refusing to acknowledge them. Albany Lodge only accepted the local rule of the District Grand Lodge of the Eastern Division from 1878 onwards.

⁵⁸ Drury: Albany Lodge, p.28 - 36.

CHAPTER III

UNEASY YEARS 1828 - 1850

The years 1828 to 1850 were uneasy times for the Cape Colony and for the Craft. The continuing frontier conflicts and the exodus of thousands of farmers in the Great Trek, the political unrest arising from the introduction of humanitarian legislation giving Hottentots equal status with Whites, the abolition of slavery and the inadequate compensation and the continuing Anglicisation of the administration accentuated tensions between the Dutch burghers and the British authorities and within these communities.

During this period there was general economic stagnation in the Colony brought about by several factors, principally the legacy of the devalued paper rix dollars left by the Batavian Government. To restore the Colony's finances, Britain fixed the 4s paper rix dollar at 1s.6d. in silver and British silver and copper specie were provided to replace these. The process of wiping out the paper money continued for nearly 20 years from 1825, hitting creditors hard and reducing money in circulation. At the same time the revenues of the Colony fell in real terms. Until 1843 the Colony had an inelastic revenue while a heavy public debt prevented public works, assisted immigration, and proper policing of frontiers. The colony faced "public poverty and private discontent".¹

C.G.W. Schumann determines that from 1829 to 1834, the colony's economy suffered a recession and moderate

¹ E.A. Walker: History of Southern Africa, 3rd ed.,
pp. 158 - 160

depression but with a minor improvement in 1832 - 1834 and a recession again in 1834. The cycle continued with marked prosperity from 1834 to 1838 but with a return to depression from 1838 to 1841. This was followed by some revival of prosperity to 1846 and again the pendulum swung back to a moderate recession and depression from 1847 to 1849.² Factors affecting the period 1836 to 1849 were a slow increase of population, a marked decrease in the rate of growth of foreign trade but an increase in government revenue and agricultural production. But "the period on the whole appears to have been one of relative stagnation", he adds, agreeing with Walker.³

British Lodge

Economic and political tensions in the Cape society were reflected within and between masonic lodges. To the continuing English-Dutch rivalry and class divisions was added the problem of resignations of many masons finding themselves unable to pay their dues because of the general state of trade. In his returns to Grand Lodge, London, in 1830 for the year 1829, the secretary of British Lodge summed up the position: "Due to the stagnated state of business in general, masonry has become dull, though there are hopes of improvement".⁴

² Structural Changes and Business Cycles in S.A.,
1806 - 1936, p. 71.

³ Structural Changes, p. 104.

⁴ FMH: File SN 1584, British Lodge Returns, 1830.

This lodge recorded 25 members for the year with six initiations and five joining members. Yet it had had 59 members in 1815. During 1834 only one candidate was initiated while a mason, Waldeck, who had only been made a master mason in June 1834, was appointed junior warden in December, indicating that the weakened lodge - at its lowest ebb from 1833 to 1838 - must have found difficulty in appointing experienced officers because of resignations.

The minute books showed the lodge's problems, particularly the disagreements which were reflected in choice of candidates. Each candidate was voted for by ballotage. Members put in a bag 'white balls for' and 'black balls against' as is still the custom. One, two or three black balls excluded a would-be candidate. Lodges were often split into cliques which blocked, through blackballing, candidates put up by opponents and apparently British Lodge was no exception. At the 1837 March meeting of British Lodge the master was absent and pastmaster Morris Sloman took the chair. He withdrew the name of a candidate because of rumours of blackballing. Sloman then faced a complaint by a member that he had acted tyrannically. The rebel was called to order but said he was not going to be bullied. Ordered out of the lodge, he added he did not care for the master nor the lodge. At that meeting only eleven were present. An investigation into the erring member's conduct took place and at an emergency meeting the offender retracted and apologised.

But the lodge continued to be split into warring factions.

Under these circumstances, membership did not show a great increase but by September 1839 the lodge resolved: "that in consideration of the increasing numbers and respectability of the lodge, it is desirable to secure ground and erect a building".⁵ A building committee was appointed and a fund was to be raised by the issue of 150 shares of £10 each and in 1842 No. 49 St. John St., part of Concordia Gardens, was purchased for £200 and alterations of £228 made. The building adjoined the premises of Lodge De Goede Trouw. The cornerstone was laid the next year. But this purchase and renovations put the lodge in financial difficulties which were aggravated by non-payment of dues by members, so much so that, in 1844, a list of defaulting members was prepared so they might be summoned before the committee.

A resigning member wrote in 1844 that he understood the lodge was "happily in the path of advancement". He was a little optimistic. The next year - 1845 - the master, Benjamin Norden, after being absent for four meetings, resigned as he felt he could not "consistently and masonically" fill the office of master. It was proposed and seconded and carried unanimously: "That the Brethren, perfectly agreeing with him, accept his

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T.N. Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, pp. 50 - 53.

resignation", not only as master but as a member.⁶

Norden, a British settler of 1820, was a prominent member of the Cape Town Jewish community, being a founder member of the Society of the Jewish Community of Cape Town formed to maintain its religion. He was a member of the Board of Commissioners for the Cape Town Municipality.⁷

Originally a member of Albany Lodge, Grahamstown, he had joined British Lodge on 16 May, 1838. The reason for his resignation is not clear from records but it was apparently not as a result of anti-semitic attitudes for British Lodge had had several Jewish officers, particularly Morris Sloman, a watchmaker, who had been master from 1829 to 1831 and again became master in 1846 - 1847. As the lodge was experiencing difficulty in finding members willing to take on the chair, Norden, a pastmaster of Albany lodge, had agreed to stand, perhaps as a 'neutral' alternative to choices of warring factions. But his public duties must have left him little time to carry out his masonic duties correctly and he resigned. However, his resignation opened the way for a serious rift in the lodge that lasted for three years with two cliques in conflict. Charles Frederick Paschoud, the town gaoler, was installed on 24 June, 1845 as master before 18 members. His election quickly brought about further division for two members wrote to the English

⁶ Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, pp. 56 - 57.

⁷ R. Musiker: DSAB, Vol. I, p. 594.

Provincial Grand Master Clerke Burton who succeeded Sir John Truter in 1833 claiming Paschoud's election and installation were unconstitutional. Tactfully, Clerke Burton asked a pastmaster, B.J. van de Sandt, head of the Government printing office, to take the chair at the next meeting and seek a compromise between the two factions. At it, the minutes of 24 June concerning Paschoud's installation meeting were neither read nor confirmed but, after a protest, they were eventually read at the August meeting. However, all reference to the installation and investing of Paschoud and his officers was omitted. This brought further protests and Van de Sandt closed the lodge meeting arbitrarily. In September, it was decided to confirm certain parts of the minutes but not those relating to Paschoud. A neutral third party, John Miles Taylor, a ship chandler, was proposed as master in October but his nomination was rejected 7 to 4.

In the absence of a master, the divided lodge decided that no refreshments would be provided after meetings until the vacancy was filled. A further attempt was made in December to put a pastmaster James Bruce, a tailor by occupation, in the chair, but Paschoud reiterated again that he had been duly elected and installed. The dispute continued at the January 1846 meeting when Bruce's nomination was rejected. The situation deteriorated further in February, when Van de Sandt would not allow the lodge to be opened nor would he open it himself and the seven other members present complained to the Provincial Grand Master, Clerke

Burton. Paschoud finally took the chair in March and his installation minutes finally were approved, but in April, when 14 attended, it was Bruce's turn to protest. Another 'neutral' candidate, J.H. Taylor was elected master in May but a month later he declined office and, in desperation, the members elected a pastmaster, Morris Sloman to the chair. Clerke Burton decreed that Sloman could be installed by Paschoud who would be acknowledged as a pastmaster and added he hoped the lodge would work in harmony thereafter.⁸ He was too optimistic for in the next two years - 1846 and 1847 that Sloman remained as master, the lodge was still troubled through blackballing of candidates put up by rival groups. This time Sloman could not turn to the Provincial Grand Master for Clerke Burton died on 9 Apr. 1848 and the English Provincial Grand Lodge ceased to exist. When Sloman died in 1849, Van de Sandt again became master to be followed by Paschoud who ruled in 1849 and 1850 but the lodge languished, still torn by faction disputes.⁹

The Hope Lodge

The other English lodge in Cape Town, The Hope, formed by De Goede Hoop, showed greater strength and less tendency to divide than the British Lodge. In 1827 it returned a membership of 35 and 59 in 1832, continuing to attract the elite of the army, navy and government

⁸ Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, pp. 57 - 58.

⁹ Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, p. 60.

service and professional men and merchants.¹⁰

After its inauguration in 1821 and a busy start The Hope lodge became dormant after a few years but Clerke Burton, then Master of the Cape Supreme Court, took over as master in 1829 and revived it. The S.A. Commercial Advertiser of 11 Mar. 1829 announced:

"It will doubtless be gratifying to every well-wisher of this excellent and antient institution to learn that the warrant of the English lodge The Hope has been revived under the most favourable auspices by the spirited exertions of its present master, Bro. Clerke Burton; with an accession of a very considerable number of Brethren of such rank and importance in the Colony as cannot fail to ensure the best results to the laudable objects of the institution". At first The Hope lodge met in the African Society House, Heerengracht, but on 31 Mar. 1832, Clerk Burton wrote to Grand Lodge, England: "Merchants of this town are erecting a lodge for me in the buildings of the Commercial Exchange - the lodge in the left wing and Banquet Room in the right".¹¹ The "merchants" included John Bardwell Ebden, a member of The Hope, who was a founder and chairman of the Commercial Exchange from 1834 to 1835. Ebden was nominated to an unofficial seat in the first Legislative

¹⁰ FMH: File SN 1730, The Hope Lodge Returns 1827 and 1832.

¹¹ S.A. Commercial Advertiser, 11 Mar. 1829; FMH: File SN 1730, The Hope Lodge, Clerke Burton to Grand Lodge, 31 Mar. 1832.

Council of the Cape in 1834. In the same year he became master of The Hope and his two-year reign was marked for his firm and energetic handling of lodge affairs.¹² Prominent among The Hope's 59 members at that time were Anglo-Indians who used to make the Cape a sanitorium. This "Indian" link is illustrated by a letter on 5 Mar. 1833 from The Hope Lodge to Grand Lodge asking for lectures on Royal Arch Freemasonry. It added: "We have such frequent intercourse with the Indians [sic] who take a lively interest in Masonry that these lectures would diffuse Freemasonry through India".¹³

The Hope was active from June 1833 to June 1834 conferring 28 degrees.¹⁴ As the minute books of the lodge are lost few details of the ensuing years can be found but the lodge began to decline in numbers because of masters less energetic than Ebden. These included James Bance, William Gadney and Pieter van Breda. A letter from the lodge secretary to Grand Lodge, England, in 1844 states that "Masonic business diminished". However, when Dr. H. Bickersteth, district surgeon at Somerset Hospital, took the chair in 1850 "business" improved and it continued to attract the Cape elite for the next ten years until it suspended work in the late 1860s and was erased by the English Grand Lodge in 1878.¹⁵

¹² Dr. A.F. Hattersley: DSAB, Vol.II, pp. 212-213;
Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, p. 196.

¹³ FMH: File 21/A/1, Grand Lodge Hist.Corr., The Hope to
Grand Lodge, 5 Mar. 1833.

¹⁴ FMH: File SN 1730, The Hope Lodge Returns 1834.

¹⁵ FMH: File SN 1730, The Hope Lodge, Hope to Grand Lodge,
1 Apr. 1844; Bate: De Goede Hoop, pp. 65 - 66.

An English and a French lodge were also to succumb in this period - the Union and L'Esperance. The Cape of Good Hope Lodge, formed by members of the 10th Battalion Royal Artillery stationed in Cape Town in 1812, had gradually lost its military aspect and come under civilian control. It changed its name to Union Lodge in 1818. Though the lodge's last official returns to Grand Lodge of England were made in 1826 it continued to operate under John Townsend, a jeweller in the Heerengracht, who was master from 1837 to 1842. His efforts to revive interest failed and the lodge became dormant and was finally erased by the English Grand Lodge in 1851.¹⁶

L'Esperance, constituted in Cape Town in 1824 under the Grand Orient of France, had a brief life despite the efforts of its and only known master, the indefatigable J.H. Neethling. Only records of two meetings exist - in 1832 and 1833. At the first there were seven members and at the second 12 and after 1841 no mention of it is found in records of other lodges, presumably as it had ceased to exist. As recorded, its warrant and that of the French Rose Croix Chapter attached to it were surrendered to Sir Christoffel Brand, Deputy Grand Master National of the Dutch lodges on 28 June 1851. A copy of the "Letters Capitulaires" or Warrant for the Chapter dated 21 Aug. 1826 was made by Brand for his

¹⁶ Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, p. 16.

files and is now in the Cape Archives.¹⁷

Dutch Lodges

De Goede Trouw

Lodge De Goede Trouw nearly joined its moribund brother lodges for it was seriously split by internal dissension in the 1830s and 1840s. For 15 years from 1828 there were only six initiations of new members, with no degrees conferred from 1828 to 1830 and from 1831 to 1844. The master, G.A. Heise at the consecration ceremony of the new temple building in 1853, referred to these "evil times" in his historical account of the founding of his lodge. The lodge increased its members in the 1830s, he said but "discord arose ... which prevented unanimity; the building shook but the pillars and foundations of the lodge remained firm. In 1837 it was found proper to sell the buildings ... but the spark of brotherly love was not extinguished".¹⁸ The lodge's constant moving from meeting place to meeting place after selling its premises, added to the "evil times" which had befallen it. Its continuing weakness was illustrated by its membership returns to Holland, copies of which were kept by Sir Christoffel Brand. On 1 Apr. 1847, it had 18 contributing members only, whereas De Goede Hoop had 36. Though interest revived in 1849 with De Goede Trouw returning 39 members and De Goede Hoop

¹⁷ Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, p.51; DGMN Netherlandic Constitution Letters Received 1845 - 1847 , Copy L'Esperance Chapter warrant from Grand Orient of France dated 21.Aug. 1826.

¹⁸ F. Griesbach: History of De Goede Trouw, p. 33.

55 members, De Goede Trouw was unable to attract new members or to retain present members because of its uncertain venues. In Apr. 1850 it had 23 members, in 1851 25 members and it reached a low ebb in 1852 with 14 members. During that year 10 had resigned and one died.¹⁹

De Goede Hoop

De Goede Hoop Lodge had been fortunate in enjoying the strong leadership lasting 17 years (1813 - 1825, 1827 - 1830) of its master, J.H. Neethling. Through age and ill-health he finally declined to continue and installed Michiel Van Breda as master on 25 June 1831, though he acted as master of Lodge L'Esperance, the French lodge, and as Deputy Provincial Grand Master under the English constitution until his death on 4 June, 1838.²⁰

Van Breda held office for six successive years - from 1831 to 1836, but his tenure of it was precarious for he allowed clique rivalry to flourish. Three times he was elected master only on a second ballot, twice after another member had received an equal number of votes and on a sixth occasion only when Neethling declined to return as master. During his mastership, he faced discord not only within the lodge but in the Society Rooms, the external

¹⁹ DGMN Letters Received 1845 - 1847, 1849 - 1852,

Returns De Goede Trouw, De Goede Hoop 1847 - 1852.

²⁰ Bate: De Goede Hoop, pp. 74 - 75.

wing of the lodge providing refreshment and sport for members. The Society was upset by undesirable members and eventually its Board of Management was replaced by four commissioners, but even a firmer control failed to bring order and in June 1834 the lodge decided to dissolve the society "as the bond of brotherly unanimity which had existed for years to the honour of the Society and the Worshipful order, had given place to a spirit of discord, dissension and animosity".²¹ However a month later, the Society Rooms were reopened but under stricter regulations. Games of chance and dice playing were banned and no games at all were permitted while the lodge met. Servants and slaves were not to be brought further than the entrance hall where they had to wait for their masters and escort them home by lantern.²²

There was still discord within the lodge for the installation on St. John's Day, 24 June in 1834 was deferred to 9 Aug. and then performed privately with no visitors allowed. But the next year, De Goede Hoop rallied to give a special celebration to mark several anniversaries. The most important, the "50 years jubilee" of the lodge, was presumably made up of the nine years from 1772 to 1781 and the 41 from 1794 to 1835, taking into account its period of recession. The lodge also celebrated the 30 years' Deputy Grand Mastership of Sir John Truter

²¹ ACC 731,2/9 De Goede Hoop Annexures to Minutes,
Resolution dissolving Society, 16 June, 1834.

²² ACC 731,2/9 Draft Regulations for Society, 26 June,

coupled with his 40 years effective membership of the lodge, the 20 years' service and long mastership of J.H. Neethling and the 20 years' service of the treasurer, J.D. Piton. The master and officers of De Goede Trouw, Union, British and The Hope, the English Provincial Grand Master, Clerke Burton and his officers and the Netherlandic Deputy Grand Master National, Sir John Truter attended the ceremony. The newly appointed Orator of De Goede Hoop, Christoffel Joseph Brand, gave an outline of the history of Freemasonry in South Africa.²³ Brand succeeded Van Breda as master on 24 June 1837. A grandson of one of the lodge founders, Christoffel Brand and a son of Johannes Henricus Brand, he was initiated at Lodge La Vertu in 1815 while studying law at Leyden University, Holland. Qualifying as an advocate he returned to South Africa and in January 1823 joined De Goede Hoop. After twelve years experience as secretary and in other offices, he served as master from 1837 to 1839 and from 1844 to 1847 and during his terms of office eradicated differences within the lodge and led it to stability.

He was also foremost in trying to establish a Dutch provincial grand lodge whose formation had been suggested first in 1828. Truter, the then Deputy Grand Master, had moved slowly presumably because of illness and it was not until 18 Aug. 1838 that a full provincial grand lodge was constituted with Michiel Van

²³ ACC 731, 1/1/8 De Goede Hoop Minutes, 24 June, 1835.



SIR CHRISTOFFEL JOSEPH BRAND

Third Deputy Grand Master National Netherlands
Constitution for South Africa, 1847 - 1874.

Cape Archives

might attract more members. At the end of 1842 non-masons were allowed to become members of the Society provided they retired when any masonic function was held. Later the lodge made admission to the Society an easy way to obtaining initiation in the lodge and of 43 who joined the Society as a result, 18 were later initiated as masons. But because of members' conservatism the experiment was stopped later. Despite these moves the lodge's effective membership was on an average about 35, a sad reflection on its earlier strength - about 200 at the turn of the century.

When Brand was re-elected to the chair on 22 June 1844 one of his important duties during his term of office was to preside at a Lodge of Sorrow on 18 June 1845 to the memory of Truter who had been a member for 50 years as well as the holder of the two posts of Deputy Grand Master National of the Netherlandic Constitution in South Africa and Provincial Grand Master of the English Constitution in South Africa. Truter died on 5 June, 1845.²⁵

Outside Cape Town

Brand was not only responsible for reviving the fortunes of De Goede Hoop Lodge but for encouraging the first Dutch lodge, De Vereeniging, to be formed outside Cape Town - at Graaff-Reinet. This lodge had

²⁵ Bate: De Goede Hoop, pp. 81 - 83; DGMN Letters Received, Returns 1845 - 1847, 1849 - 1852.

received a provisional warrant dated 1 Oct. 1834 from Truter but had faltered until Brand, then Orator of De Goede Hoop Lodge, had visited the area in 1836 and put it on a sound footing. At the same time he also visited the English lodge Albany at Grahamstown. His two visits are recorded in De Goede Hoop minutes, the first mention of lodges outside Cape Town. They were the first he was to make of several masonic missionary tours into the eastern and northern areas.²⁶

Albany Lodge

The only English lodge outside the Cape, The Albany, formed in 1828 in the then frontier town of Grahamstown, was weakened not only through the general economic depression but because of the almost continuous wars of the times in that area - the 6th Frontier war of 1834 to 1835, the 7th from 1845 to 1847 and the 8th from 1850 to 1853.²⁷ Meetings were irregular and there were large gaps in the minutes. From 14 June 1843 there is a gap of 4½ years while again from 1850 no meetings took place "owing to the existing Caffre War and the consequent dispersion of some of the members of the lodge".²⁸ The officers were asked to continue their duties for the next year and minutes recommenced from 21 June 1851. To these troubles was added the lodge's constant search for a

²⁶ ACC 731,1/1/8: De Goede Hoop Minutes 1835 - 1840,
3 Aug. 1837.

²⁷ L. Marquard: Story of South Africa, pp. 123, 163-164.

²⁸ C.G. Drury: Records of Albany Lodge, p. 22.

permanent home and the feeling among members of being isolated from the mainstream of masonic affairs in Cape Town and disillusion with the shortlived English Provincial Grand Lodge which lapsed in 1848.

The first sign of The Albany lodge's discontent with Cape Town is contained in the minutes of November, 1831 when a lodge of emergency was called "for the purpose of taking into consideration the propriety of remitting the amount of dues either to the Grand Lodge or to the Provincial Grand Lodge". Lodges were expected to contribute towards costs of a provincial grand lodge, but Albany had on its formation drawn its authority direct from the English Grand Lodge. Two years later, on 23 Feb. 1833 Albany "declared war" on its Cape Town rulers, resolving "that in consequence of the repeated neglect of the Provincial Grand Lodge towards The Albany Lodge in not affording them that protection and information to which they are entitled, The Albany lodge suspend their communication with the Provincial Grand Lodge until such time as a reply shall have been received from the Grand Lodge of England for their future guidance". In May it decided that "all further communications be with Grand Lodge in England" and not with Cape Town.²⁹

The struggling English Provincial Grand Lodge, trying to assert its authority, was aided by William Mills Edge, who had joined The Albany lodge in July 1836

²⁹ Drury: Albany, pp. 29-30.

from The Hope Lodge, Cape Town, and had been elected to the chair in the month he joined. Edey's conciliatory attempts to heal the breach eventually brought the first recorded visit of officials of the English Provincial Grand Lodge to Grahamstown. The Provincial Grand Registrar, Charles Aken Fairbridge, a lawyer of Cape Town and a member of The Hope Lodge, arrived on Apr. 1848 and produced a letter authorising him to receive and examine the minute books and accounts of The Albany lodge. He proved to the lodge that it had previously subscribed to the Benevolent Fund of Provincial Grand Lodge and urged it should continue to do so. While admitting its liability the recalcitrant lodge asked for arrears to be waived. However it was not yet ready to submit and turned to Grand Lodge, London. A letter of 8 Jan. 1849, written in London by A. Capel, a member of The Albany, revealed that he had had an interview with the Secretary of the Grand Lodge, England who had told him that, in the case of the appointment of a new Provincial Grand Master at Cape Town "his authority should not extend to The Albany lodge".³⁰

With a membership of about sixteen between 1830 and 1840 Albany struggled to exist but courageously bought ground for a lodge and schoolroom in 1837 and planned to build at a cost of £600. The Government was to use the schoolroom. However the lodge had to sell the half-finished building as a ruin in 1854 because of lack of

³⁰ Drury: Albany Lodge, p.30; FMH: Albany Lodge File

Capel to Grand Lodge, 8 Jan. 1849

support. Nevertheless, this attempt to create a home for the lodge - its second attempt - "proved a strong masonic instinct for education", comparable to De Goede Hoop's establishment of a school in Cape Town.³¹

While building was continuing The Albany Lodge met in the store of Thompson Bros. and Co. in May 1837, at Beales Hotel in June and at the Ordnance Store in November. In May 1838, it moved to the Commercial Hall, afterwards the Eastern Districts Court House, then to its own illfated Masonic Hall, its second temple, built in Hill Street. It appeared in another tavern in 1847, MacMasters Hotel in Bathurst Street, but moved on to Orsmond's Hotel. It hired St. George's School room in Huntly Street in 1850 but attendance fell off because of this "cheerless part of town" with its insecure muddy streets and precipitous river bank. Gradually interest returned and the lodge began to attract new members. Minutes contain thirty new names after the 4½ year gap in minutes from June 1843 to 1848.³²

Though few in numbers, the lodge did not fail to observe masonic traditions. On St. John's Day, 24 June 1840, the traditional installation dinner was attended by the Lieut.-Governor of the Eastern Districts, Sir Andries Stockenström while the band of the 91st Regiment played for the diners. Stockenström had been

³¹ Drury: Albany, pp. 17 - 18.

³² Drury: Albany, pp. 18 - 19, p. 39.

initiated at De Goede Hoop and is also recorded as being present at the Goede Hoop Lodge installation meeting in that year.³³

These indefatigable masons resolved in June 1842 to give a masonic ball, the first of many such functions, at the Albany Hall "to the ladies of Grahamstown". It was supported by the military stationed at the outpost.³⁴

Members of The Albany did not forget their masonic charity. On 13 May 1829 they donated funds to help the "sufferers of the French ship Eole wrecked on the coast of Caffraria" and in 1830 they assisted a brother mason "confined to the District prison for Debt, which he is totally unable to discharge ..."³⁵

The continuous wars had their effect on meetings. From 14 Dec. 1850 to May 1851 because of the 8th Frontier War no meetings were held while a member, William Gray was killed in action by "rebel Hottentots" at Theopolis in 1851 and other masons, Lieut.-Col. John Fordyce and Lieut. Hirzel Carey of the 74th Regiment were killed "at the Water Kloof near Fort Beaufort" on 6 Nov. in the same year. A request was made by The Albany Lodge to give these military brethren a masonic funeral and the officers of the 74th Regiment approved

³³ Bate: De Goede Hoop, p. 81; Drury: Albany, p. 38.

³⁴ Drury: Albany Lodge, p.40.

³⁵ Drury: Albany Lodge, p. 37.

this desire "of such a numerous and respectable body of gentlemen". A convoy brought the remains from Post Retief to the Mess House at the Drostdy in three days and on 9 May, 1852, Fordyce and Carey were buried in the presence of 63 masons. Lodges were asked to contribute to the removal and re-interment of the bodies and the Fordyce Funeral Fund raised in all £160 of which De Goede Hoop gave £31.5.³⁶

The lodge had survived the "military thirties, the trading forties" and the start of the "speculative wool-growing fifties". Political and economic pressures were uppermost and perhaps because of their close proximity to the frontier, members took care to avoid division of the lodge into cliques, the disastrous effect of which had been seen in British Lodge in Cape Town. The lodge had begun promisingly with 56 proposals for new candidates in the first six years from 1828 to 1834, resulting in 39 initiations and 11 joining members. But the threat of blackballing had emerged and eventually in 1837 a solemn declaration against blackballing, otherwise than on masonic principles, was signed by sixteen members, obviously effectively preventing the activities of cliques. Despite their paucity of members, perhaps their antipathy towards being ruled by Cape Town and their involvement in a war-troubled zone produced a closer sense of unity than shown by many of their Cape Town colleagues.³⁷

³⁶ Drury: Albany Lodge, p.41; DGMN: Letters Received 1849 - 1852; Albany to DGH 7 Oct. 1852.

³⁷ Drury: Albany Lodge, pp. 24, 36 - 38.

Relations Between Lodges

The consolidation of British rule in the colony and official attempts to subordinate the culture and language of the Dutch community through social and educational reforms did little to improve group harmony while the moves by the trekkers on the northern frontiers towards independence similarly intensified ethnic feelings.

This tension was reflected in strained relations between English and Dutch lodges in the 1840s. After a two-year break between De Goede Hoop and British Lodge resulting from "poaching" of members, De Goede Hoop in 1841 offered to make peace by inviting British Lodge to visit its ceremonies and British Lodge agreed.³⁸ But in 1843 a storm blew up between the two lodges which resulted in a further split lasting ten years while English-Dutch partisanship previously kept within bounds in lodges by the ban on political and religious discussion, was to come into the public view.

The division began when the Cape Town Mail reported on 21 Jan. 1843 that a dinner had been held on 14 Jan. by Dutch masons and friends at De Goede Hoop Society Rooms which had been opened to the public from the year before. The party had hosted officers from the visiting Dutch frigate Palembang. A toast to the Dutch king was given and later the Hanseatic Consul, a member of De Goede Hoop. M. Thalwitzer proposed a toast to the British Queen. The Mail claimed that the "Afrikaners"

³⁸ ACC 731,2/11 De Goede Hoop Annexures to Minutes:
British Lodge to DGH, 23 Jul. 1841; DGH to
British Lodge, 29. Jul. 1841.

there shouted "No, no" and turned their glasses upside down to show their disapproval of the toast. Shocked, Thalwitzer exclaimed "This is too bad" and left. The Mail claimed that Michiel Van Breda, MLC, who was a member of De Goede Hoop, presided and commented that "men eating the bread of official employment may thus in presence of a foreign uniform insult their sovereign and proclaim their hatred of British authority". This incident was "an almost incredible manifestation of disloyal and anti-British feeling".³⁹

Two days later three men at that dinner, C.L. Herman, W.F. Hertzog and Pieter Van Breda, all members of De Goede Hoop Lodge, presented a memorial to the governor, Sir George Napier, which put the facts straight. The dinner had been a private function to celebrate a golf tournament held in the Society Room's grounds and a member of the Cape Legislative Council, Van Breda had indeed presided at the start but had left early before toasts were drunk.

Thalwitzer was asked to speak, principally because his speeches invited "mirth and hilarity". In fact, to the diners, he was a figure of fun. Two Dutch midshipmen were present and one proposed a toast to the Dutch Royal family, professing his allegiance to it and not to the Batavian Republic. Gradually diners left but eventually a loyal toast to the British Queen was given and received with all standing except a drunken

³⁹ Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, p. 55; Cape Town Mail and Mirror of Court and Council, 21 Jan. 1843.

Dutch officer. The memorialists denied that anyone refused to drink to the British Queen or that anyone turned his glass upside down. They hoped that the Governor would accept this explanation and condemn The Mail report "to allay the strong feeling thus wickedly raised against us and those in whose names we address ourselves and which, instead of promoting that union and amalgamation so highly desirable and so essentially necessary for the prosperity and welfare of this colony, must excite fresh discord and disunion".⁴⁰ Napier replied, clearing the diners of the charge of disloyalty and anti-British feelings.⁴¹

In its next issue, 28 Jan. 1843, The Mail revealed that it had received claims for damages from four men at that dinner for a total of £2500: In explanation it added that a casual visitor had asked "Had we heard of the dinner and that the company refused to drink the health of the Queen proposed by Mr. Thalwitzer? This report was in everyone's mouth". The Mail then interviewed Mr. Thalwitzer who had confirmed the rumour and added it was dangerous to have such anti-British talk when "the political machine is surcharged with dangerous sympathies".⁴² In a sequel, The Mail was sued by Van Breda, and two of the other diners for £1000. The trial lasted two days

⁴⁰ CO 4017: Memorials Received F-K, No. 287, C.L.Herman W.P. Hertzog and P. Van Breda to Governor Sir George Napier, 23 Jan. 1843.

⁴¹ CO 5306 No. 287, Napier to Memorialists, 27.Jan.1843.

⁴² Cape Town Mail, 28 Jan. 1843.

and The Mail was fined £20 on each count.⁴³ However the plaintiffs waived the damages.⁴⁴

Among those at the dinner was the "moderate constitutionalist", Christoffel Joseph Brand, a pastmaster of De Goede Hoop, who constantly worked for the preservation of his language and customs yet at the same insisting on co-operation between the English and Dutch communities.⁴⁵ Airing his views as editor of the influential De Zuid Afrikaan he put them into practice in Freemasonry, working to cement relations between English and Dutch lodges though nevertheless endeavouring to ensure that Dutch Freemasonry was not submerged by the English and Dutch was not replaced entirely in masonic ceremonies. Despite his standing in public life as a leader of the Dutch colonists in that year, 1843, his masonic influence was not strong enough to prevent repercussions to the beefsteak dinner rumour which spread throughout Cape Town and was accepted by sections of the English non-masonic community as evidence of anti-British feeling nurtured among Dutch masons secretly meeting at De Goede Hoop.

There had been continuous argument about the use of English or Dutch in lodges since the British occupation and disagreement over rituals and the status of masons

⁴³ Cape Town Mail, 4 Mar. 1843.

⁴⁴ ACC 731,2/12 De Goede Hoop Annexures to Minutes, 1843-1848, Buchanan of the Mail to Van Breda, Hertzog, P. Van Breda and C.L. Herman, 7 Mar. 1843; Cape Town Mail, 11 Mar. 1843

⁴⁵ A.K. Fryer: Govt. of Cape of Good Hope 1845-1854, Chapter I, p. 64.

in the "high degrees" under the different constitutions. Yet Dutch lodges had English members and vice versa. For instance Michiel Van Breda, Brand and others while belonging to De Goede Hoop were also members of the English lodge, The Hope, formed by De Goede Hoop. Thalwitzer's admitted action in alleging anti-British feelings were expressed by Dutch masons at that dinner was too much for De Goede Hoop and he was "secluded" or suspended on 9 Mar.⁴⁶ In fact he had resigned on 3 Mar.⁴⁷ Applying to the British Lodge he was admitted and immediately De Goede Hoop protested and broke off contact for ten years.⁴⁸ While Thalwitzer was not condemned by De Goede Hoop for the substance of his rumour but for unmasonic conduct, British Lodge readily found a home for him, perhaps seeing him as a victim of Dutch hostility.

The Thalwitzer incident was not resolved until 1854 when, through the peacemaking efforts of The Hope lodge, the two lodges were brought together when Thalwitzer resigned from British Lodge. In his letter of resignation he said: "Having observed that the brethren

⁴⁶ ACC 731, 1/1/9 De Goede Hoop Minutes 1840 - 1843, 9 Mar. 1843; ACC 731, 2/12 De Goede Hoop Annexures, Brand to DGH with statement by Thalwitzer, 2 Mar. 1843.

⁴⁷ ACC 731, 2/12 De Goede Hoop Annexures to Minutes 1843 - 1848, Thalwitzer to DGH, 3 Mar. 1843.

⁴⁸ Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, p.55.

of De Goede Hoop Lodge avoid for reasons of a very delicate nature to live with those of British Lodge ... and suspecting that I might be considered a bar to it, I consider it as a mason that no sacrifice can be too great for me when the general good can be promoted through it".⁴⁹

⁴⁹ Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, pp. 62 - 63.

CHAPTER IV

EXPANSION IN THE 1850s

The 1850s in the Cape "are usually considered as a period of exceptional ... prosperity", writes Schumann.¹ While there were several recessions during 1853 and 1854, foreign trade increased rapidly and Government revenue also rose. Agriculture still dominated in the economic structure but the emphasis was now on wool and cattle farming, switching away from the wine and wheat farming of the coastal regions. Significantly the population increased more in the fifties than in any decade since 1806.²

This period saw the continuation of the frontier wars, the recognition in 1852 of the Transvaal Republic and in 1854 the birth of the Orange Free State Republic while Natal two years later became a Crown Colony independent of the Cape.

Freemasonry, nurtured in the Cape, moved northwards for the first time not only spurred on by economic and political developments but by the beginnings of open rivalry between the English and Dutch branches. The English Constitution first spread outwards from Cape Town into Natal and northwards, while the Netherlandic Constitution, led by its newly-appointed Deputy Grand Master National, Sir Christoffel Joseph

¹ Structural Changes and Business Cycles of S.A. 1806 - 1936, p. 76.

² Schumann: Structural Changes, p. 105.

Brand who served from 1847 to 1874, entered the race later, eventually to outpace its English rivals.

At the start of the 1850s Cape Town lodges still languished. There were then four lodges in South Africa accepting authority of the United Grand Lodge of England - British, The Hope, Union, which was erased in 1851, in Cape Town and Albany in Grahamstown. The Dutch lodges were De Goede Hoop and De Goede Trouw of Cape Town. De Vereeniging, Graaff-Reinet had succumbed about 1844.³

While the Dutch lodges were more fortunate in having a higher authority - Brand - to turn to, English lodges had had no provincial or district grand master since the death of Clerke Burton on 9 Apr. 1848 after 15 years rule. Only in 1863 was a new English Provincial Grand Master chosen - Sir Richard Southey. While there are no records of the existence of an English Provincial Grand Lodge in the 1850s, from the correspondence of Sir Christoffel Brand it appears that Charles D. Bell, Master of Hope Lodge from 1852 - 1853 and 1855 - 1856, wrote to Brand on 4 Sept. 1852 to thank him for his letter of congratulation on being chosen Provincial Grand Master of the English Constitution and for Brand's recommendation.⁴ The English Provincial Grand Lodge thus may have functioned in that time and Bell, who was Surveyor-General of the Cape from 1848, may have then filled the two posts at once -

³ T.N. Cranstoun-Day: *British Lodge*, p. 16; O.H.Bate: *De Goede Hoop*, p. 78.

⁴ DGMN: *Letters Received 1849 - 1852*; Bell to Brand, 4 Sept. 1852.

Master of The Hope and Provincial Grand Master.

In 1847 the Dutch warship Zwaluw arrived at the Cape on exercises. It carried documents appointing Brand as Deputy Grand Master National for South Africa of the Netherlandic Constitution over the three Craft degrees and also the "High" degrees. De Goede Hoop Lodge expressed its gratitude for the warship's services by conferring the three Craft degrees by letter and without payment on the commanding officer and his two senior officers, a common practice by De Goede Hoop to signify its appreciation of services rendered.

Brand resigned as master of De Goede Hoop in November to take up his higher appointment and was installed as Deputy Grand Master National in December 1847 with officers of De Goede Hoop and De Goede Trouw participating. But not until 1864 did he reconstitute the Provincial Grand Lodge which had lapsed in 1838. An individualist, he ruled almost as a dictator from 1847 until 1864 to further the cause of Netherlandic Freemasonry.⁵ His strong direction enabled Dutch masons to reassert their influence on events while English lodges in the early 1850s struggled to exist, weakened by dissension and loss of members.

English Lodges

Typical of the English lodges' predicament was British Lodge's state in 1851. It recorded 31 members though that year it had initiated 34 candidates.

⁵ Bate: De Goede Hoop, pp. 87, 94.

Most of the resignations were by masons unable or refusing to pay their subscriptions. The lodge's new master, John King (1851 and 1854) who was Superintendent of Police in the Cape, used his organising ability to try to revive interest. One of the first of the new constabulary formed by Sir Robert Peel in Britain, he was sent out at the request of the Cape Government to reconstitute the local police. While he succeeded in that task his masonic efforts were slower to be realised. Only four members attended British lodge in February, 1852, not enough to open the lodge. There are no minutes for August and September. A further blow came in January 1853 when the secretary was suspended for misappropriating the funds of the lodge. In November and December that year the lodge was again not opened because of poor attendances.

Its relations with the two Dutch lodges in Cape Town were mixed - friendly to De Goede Trouw and hostile to De Goede Hoop. For some years British Lodge had lent its premises to De Goede Trouw which had been split by internal squabbles and which as a result had sold its own premises in 1837. To cement those links of friendship, the British Lodge master, W.F. Williams and several officers attended the consecration and opening in June 1853 of De Goede Trouw's new building in St. John St., the weakened state of both lodges providing a sympathetic bond between them.⁶

⁶ FMH: British Lodge Returns, 1851; Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, pp. 61 - 62, 73.

British Lodge was not so amicably disposed towards De Goede Hoop. The two lodges had from about 1841 refused to allow members to visit each other because of a dispute over the admittance of Thalwitzer into British Lodge. (Chapter III). The quarrel had been taken up with great determination by both sides with overtones of Dutch - English rivalry emerging strongly. Peace-making attempts in 1854 were made by Bell of Hope Lodge, presumably acting as English Provincial Grand Master, and, after lengthy negotiations, the source of contention - Thalwitzer - resigned from British Lodge. A lodge of reconciliation was held under the auspices of The Hope Lodge in June 1854 and, to emphasise the return of harmony, Brand, as head of the Dutch lodges, the masters of De Goede Hoop and De Goede Trouw paid an official visit to British Lodge. Thalwitzer was eventually admitted to De Goede Hoop as a member that same month with full privileges restored.⁷

Another incident at that time did not ease relations between British Lodge and De Goede Hoop. A De Goede Hoop member, Marthinus Van Reenen had been excluded for scandalous remarks made about another member, Oliviera, who was alleged to have brought girls into the lodge's Society Rooms where he had "treated them to champagne and gave them money". After Van Reenen's

⁷ ACC 731,1/1/11 De Goede Hoop Minutes 1853 - 1857, Hope Lodge to DGH, 25 May 1854; ACC 731,1/1/11 De Goede Hoop Minutes 1853 - 1857, 15 June 1854; Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, pp. 62 - 63.

a local band. About 128 masons attended the consecration ceremony.¹⁰

This move consolidated the general position of the lodge and increased its prestige. Later, though membership increased, it encountered new problems arising from the move - again relating to the lack of a higher authority for English lodges. In June 1856 a member, P.J. Stigants protested against the election of the master, T.F. Russell, claiming it was unconstitutional and announcing that he would stand for the post and, should he not be elected, he would leave the lodge and ask Grand Lodge to have British Lodge erased. He stood for election and was defeated. A board of seven master masons was chosen to hear his case and found him guilty of perjury and trying to intimidate younger members to vote for him. Stigants then complained the lodge was unconstitutional as it had moved to new premises in Roeland Street without the consent of the Provincial Grand Master. As there was apparently no English Provincial Grand Master at the time, the then master of British Lodge, Bell, had, however, approved the move, the lodge secretary, Rowe, informed London. Stigants was excluded for unmasonic conduct and censured but eventually became lodge master in 1874.¹¹

The year 1856 may be regarded as the start of the

¹⁰ Cape Monitor, 22 Mar. 1856.

¹¹ FMH: British Lodge Letter File; J.S. Rowe to Grand Lodge on Stigants, 14 June 1856; Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, pp. 66 - 67, 104.

renaissance of British Lodge with increasing membership and sounder finances. By 1858 it had 87 members and by 1860, 117. During this period it conducted a great many degree workings, the large majority of its candidates being seafarers from British, German, American and Danish ships who, having been initiated or taken 2nd and 3rd degrees, never joined the lodge as subscribing members. This influx resulted from the increasing shipping traffic calling at the Cape which was, in turn, indicative of the growing prosperity of the Colony. Membership returns suggest that British Lodge was still attracting the English middle class while The Hope Lodge, the other remaining English lodge in Cape Town, remained a home for those with higher social status. The latter's lack of candidates heralded its decline in 1861.¹²

New Lodges

In the absence of a provincial grand lodge to act as a central authority, British Lodge became adviser and supporter to the first new English lodges appearing east and north of Cape Town. The first was the Sovereignty warranted 2 Dec. 1851, in the Orange River Sovereignty. As it never paid dues or fees, its warrant was never sent from England and it was erased in 1862. The next lodges were formed by the military at outposts on the troubled Eastern Frontier. The Zetland was warranted at Fort Beaufort on 30 Nov. 1852 and the

¹² FMH: British Lodge Returns 1858 - 1860; FMH:
The Hope Lodge Returns 1858 - 1860.

Fordyce at King William's Town on 19 Nov. 1856. However the Fordyce never met as troops from the town were sent to reinforce garrisons in India on the outbreak of the Indian Mutiny. Its warrant was returned to British Lodge, still acting as an unofficial Provincial Grand Lodge with the message that, with the despatch of the troops, there were but three master masons left in the town and the lodge would not start.¹³

At Grahamstown military and civilians formed St. John's Lodge in 1860. The two lodges in the town, Albany and St. John's, shared the same meeting places for some years.¹⁴

The first open clash between English and Dutch constitutions in the east came in 1856 when masons in Port Elizabeth tried to obtain approval to start a lodge. Twenty years earlier they had petitioned British Lodge for permission to begin and nominated Captain J.M. Hill as the new master but no action had been taken by British Lodge. The group then addressed a memorial to Brand, head of the Dutch constitution, praying that a warrant be granted for a lodge to be called Elizabeth Union under the Grand East of the Netherlands. The 13 who signed the memorial were all English. Agreeing to recommend to Holland the granting of a warrant, Brand told them he would issue a warrant of dispensation -

¹³ Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, pp. 61, 69.

J ¹⁴ E.G. Drury: Records of Albany Lodge, pp. 20 - 21.

a provisional warrant - which he had powers to do, and even offered to translate the Dutch ritual of the three Craft degrees into English.¹⁵ But, in November 1856, he had second thoughts and wrote to British Lodge to say he had received a petition from Port Elizabeth which he could not grant as he was not a Provincial Grand Master under the English Constitution. British Lodge angrily replied, pointing out that Port Elizabeth brethren had originally applied to British Lodge for a provisional warrant in 1836 but were told then that, as British Lodge was only a private lodge it could not grant a warrant. However the Port Elizabeth enthusiasts were informed they could meet pending approval from the English Grand Lodge.

Unaware of the earlier application Brand, equally angrily asked the master elect, Hill, in Port Elizabeth for an explanation.¹⁶ In the meantime the British Lodge master, Thomas F. Russell, a hotelier, had found the first petition from Port Elizabeth. As it had been signed by 24 masons, mainly English, he felt the new lodge should be under English control. Under this pressure the Port Elizabeth masons met on 28 Mar. 1857 and decided to form Lodge of Goodwill at Port Elizabeth under the English Constitution and not the Dutch.

¹⁵ Cranstoun-Day: Lodge of Goodwill, 1857 - 1910, p.6.

¹⁶ DGMN: Letters Received and Sent, 1855 - 1857, British Lodge to Brand, 4 Nov. 1856; Brand to Hill, 6 Nov. 1856.

Matthew Woodifield and not Hill was elected master while its new petition to the English Grand Lodge was signed by 17 masons coming from Albany, De Goede Hoop, British, Union and lodges in England. Woodifield travelled to Cape Town by ship to bring the petition to Russell but several months later left for Europe and the Port Elizabeth masons had to chose yet another master - R. Orsmond, a pastmaster of Albany Lodge. The lodge's warrant was dated 30 Jul. 1857 but not until 24 June 1858 did the first installation take place because of delay in obtaining furniture and regalia. Beginning with 22 members, Goodwill flourished and by the end of 1859 had 100.¹⁷

Brand was more successful in winning over English support in a move to start a lodge in Burghersdorp. Ten masons, the majority English, petitioned him in 1856 to start a lodge. Cautiously, he approached Charles Aken Fairbridge, then master of The Hope Lodge, to see if he had any objection. Fairbridge agreed that a new Dutch lodge be formed there and was pleased "to see another masonic beacon lit in the darkness". Brand then informed British Lodge who also agreed. Its master, Russell, eager to encourage English Freemasonry in other parts, added patronisingly that Burghersdorp was not the only place in the Colony wanting to form a lodge. British Lodge had also received an application from King William's Town to set up the Fordyce lodge and had

¹⁷ Cranstoun-Day: Lodge Goodwill, p. 15.

had inquiries from Graaff-Reinet and other centres. Dutch masons at Graaff-Reinet had formed De Vereeniging in 1834 but the lodge had lapsed and the influx of English masons to the town had led to this new inquiry to form the Midland Lodge under the English Grand Lodge authority. It was warranted in 1861.¹⁸

With the declaration in 1856 of Natal as a Crown Colony, independent of the Cape, many masons from the Cape emigrated to Natal to take advantage of the commercial and trading possibilities. Some of these emigrants formed the first English lodge in Natal, the Port Natal in Durban warranted on 3 Mar. 1858.¹⁹

Dutch Lodges

The Dutch lodges in Cape Town as did the English lodges, enjoyed a period of stabilisation and growth but they were perhaps more fortunate to have the guidance of Brand. Their numbers slowly increased as annual returns show. De Goede Trouw from 31 members in 1855 gradually built up to 47 in 1857 and 65 in 1858 while De Goede Hoop membership increased from 53 in 1857 to 70 in 1860.²⁰

¹⁸ DGMN: Letters Received and Sent 1855 - 1857, Brand to Fairbridge 12 June 1856; Fairbridge to Brand, 4 Oct. 1856; Brand to British Lodge, 29 Sept. 1856; British Lodge to Brand, 4 Nov. 1856; Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, p. 61.

¹⁹ P.H. Butterfield: Centenary, pp. 30 - 31.

²⁰ DGMN: Letters Received 1855-1857, 1858-1860, 1861-1862; Returns 1855 to 1862.

The "high" degrees which Brand also controlled had smaller memberships, De Goede Trouw Chapter 11 in 1854 and 17 in 1860 and De Goede Hoop Chapter 15 in 1856 and 32 in 1860.²¹ From his appointment in 1847 Brand busily consolidated his own position, taking great pains, through a stream of letters and meetings, to ensure harmony with the English lodges. He was always ready to act at ceremonies, masonic and public, to this direction, particularly as he was the senior mason in South Africa at that time. He officiated at the cornerstone laying of the new De Goede Trouw temple on 8 Nov. 1854, at the consecration of the new British Lodge in 1856 and was prominent at the ceremony of laying the foundation stone of the New Somerset Hospital, Cape Town, on 18 Aug. 1859. On the visit of Queen Victoria's son, Prince Alfred, to the Cape in September 1860 Brand led masons of all constitutions at the ceremonies attended by the Prince - the foundation stone ceremony of the Sailors Home and at the inauguration of the harbour breakwater and the public library. In the ceremonial orders for these three occasions Brand was listed as the Masonic Chief and was supported by Masters of the British, De Goede Hoop, De Goede Trouw and the new Scottish constitution lodge, Southern Cross.²²

21

DGMN: High Degrees: Letters Received 1858 - 1868 - Returns 1858 - 1867.

22

Bate: De Goede Hoop, p. 90; Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, 68, 74, 77-78.

Elected Speaker of the first Cape Legislative Assembly in 1854 Brand was instrumental in finding a provisional home for the legislature in De Goede Hoop temple. The Assembly met for the first time in the hall of the temple on 30 June 1854 and hired lodge rooms until 1874 making alterations to the premises with a view to purchasing the building. De Goede Hoop eventually decided not to sell any part of the property though Legislative Assembly members were allowed to use the Society rooms attached to the temple.²³

Brand had to deal with many differences, particularly over language, that arose between the English and Dutch lodges and within those under his jurisdiction, always endeavouring to keep the peace but not always successfully. De Goede Trouw was split again in 1858 over a serious language difference and Brand had to work hard to settle it. At "Table Lodge", the meal after the ceremony, a member of De Goede Trouw, De Gier, complained that some masons had not stood up to drink to the health of a candidate - "as he was a Dutchman". The master, Kirsten, asked John Saunders, a visitor, if he had drunk the toast and Saunders claimed he had. De Gier jumped up, shouted "Verdomde Schande" and used abusive language. When Kirsten called him to order, De Gier replied "I'll see you damned first ... who are you?", and refused to leave. Another mason, Marting, the junior warden, began using insulting language to the English masons there. Brand called for

an inquiry, aware he was treading on delicate ground. Eventually the two men were suspended by the lodge but the incident only highlighted the continuing unease between the two language groups.²⁴

First Scottish Lodge

The language division appeared again within De Goede Hoop lodge to result in yet another breakaway movement by English-speaking members, the first of which had been the British Lodge nearly half a century earlier. This time the prime mover was John Saunders of the Table Lodge incident at De Goede Trouw, who had been initiated in De Goede Hoop in 1853 and had held various offices. All proceedings at De Goede Hoop lodge were in Dutch but, as an increasing number of applications for admission were then regularly being received from candidates with no knowledge of Dutch, Brand gave Saunders special dispensation to confer degrees in English upon English-speaking candidates. Certificates were still issued in Dutch, however, which created difficulties for members leaving the Colony, particularly naval and military. Saunders therefore proposed that a warrant be granted by the Grand Lodge of Scotland for the establishment of Lodge Southern Cross to operate in English and asked De Goede Hoop to recommend his application. He envisaged that the new lodge would work

²⁴ DGMN: Letters Received 1858 - 1860; Kirsten to Brand, 1 June 1858.

under the aegis of Lodge De Goede Hoop but would use English and not Dutch and issue certificates in English.²⁵

Saunders wrote to British Lodge in December 1859 for its support saying "all the petitioners are members of De Goede Hoop, the business of which is principally conducted in the Dutch language. We do not desire to sever our connection with a lodge not only the oldest but whose buildings and arrangements are so suited for masonic purposes but to keep up this time-honoured institution and to work in a language we all understand, is the reason we seek for your fraternal assistance". Of the 14 petitioners named in the warrant, 11 had been initiated in De Goede Hoop.²⁶

On hearing of this petition, Brand found his peacemaking role in the language question, which had bulked so large in public as well as masonic affairs, severely tested. He opposed the petition, fearing that the increase of English-speaking masons would cause the adoption of the English language in Dutch lodges under his jurisdiction as the older Dutch speaking masons died.²⁷ At that time in public affairs he was leading the opposition to the use of English in Dutch church services. In De Zuid Afrikaan, the newspaper he and others had founded to protect their culture and

²⁵ W.S. Bryant: Southern Cross, p. 1.

²⁶ Bryant: Southern Cross, p. 1; Bate: De Goede Hoop, p. 92.

²⁷ Bryant: Southern Cross, p. 1.

language, he had already published his arguments against preaching in English and in 1859 - the year of the Saunders petition - Brand had successfully headed a move to stop the N.G. Kerk in Cape Town being made available for English services when no other services were taking place.²⁸ His opposition to Saunder's petition finally led to the establishment, as an entirely separate entity and under its own charter, of Lodge Southern Cross No. 398 on the roll of the Grand Lodge of Scotland. The lodge was inaugurated at De Goede Hoop temple on 27 Jul. 1860 with Saunders as first master. Although Brand officiated at the ceremony and installed Saunders as master, he expressed his disapproval of Saunders' move by supporting De Goede Hoop Lodge in its refusal to allow Southern Cross to meet regularly at its temple. Indicative of the strength of language factions within De Goede Hoop at that time was the voting by the lodge committee on the application by Southern Cross to be a tenant. Eight were for and eight against with the master exercising his casting vote in favour of the opposition. The new lodge eventually found a home in the St. John St. building of the other Dutch lodge in Cape Town, De Goede Trouw, until it purchased a property, also in St. John Street, for £400.²⁹

²⁸ H.C. Botha: Sir C. Brand DSAB II, p. 82.

²⁹ Bryant: Southern Cross, pp. 4, 6; Griesbach: De Goede Trouw, p. 24.

The language division within the Mother Lodge emerged four months later when a proposal was accepted that, in future, the working of the lodge be in English, while preserving the Netherlandic ceremonies. It was decided to test the feeling of members by a circular but lodge minutes do not record the result and no change was made. Not until 1870 were lodge minutes written in English though there had been occasional workings in English.³⁰

This continuing pressure to introduce English in Dutch lodges and the relative numerical weakness of Dutch masons motivated Brand at the start of the 1860s to embark on his unique missionary travels to spread Dutch Freemasonry. He then had only two active Dutch lodges under his jurisdiction - De Goede Hoop and De Goede Trouw. They were falling behind in membership towards 1860 in relation to the established English lodges. De Goede Hoop returned an active membership of 70 in 1860 and De Goede Trouw 44.³¹ British Lodge had 117 members in that year and had thoughts about forming another lodge to be named Joppa.³² New English lodges had been formed at Port Elizabeth, Durban and Grahamstown and there were requests to British Lodge for

³⁰ Bate: De Goede Hoop, p.93.

³¹ DGMN: Letters Received - Returns 1858 - 1860.

³² FMH: British Lodge, Returns 1858 - 1860.

sanction and approval to start lodges in Knysna and other parts of the Eastern Province, a consequence of more settled conditions there. English Freemasonry thus entered 1860 in confidence. In contrast Dutch masons in the Cape were uneasy about the possible threat to their language and masonic ceremonial from their English rivals.

CHAPTER V

RENAISSANCE: 1861 - 1869.

Expansion of English Freemasonry

The expansion of English Freemasonry during the first years of the sixties can be related to the economic upturn and increased immigration to the Cape in 1861-1863.¹ As masons moved to north and east in Government or trade they took their enthusiasm with them to set up new lodges, while existing lodges sponsored new ones.

This relationship between prosperity and masonic growth falls away from 1865, which heralded a serious economic depression, particularly in the Eastern Province and Natal.² Despite this, lodges continued to be opened, often on shaky foundations, from that year. Their origin can be attributed to the competition now set English Freemasons by their Dutch counterparts as Brand, the Dutch leader, ventured on his "missionary" travels.

Sited mainly in the Eastern Province and Midlands nine English Lodges were warranted in the early 1860s.

They were:

St. Johns, Grahamstown	7 Aug. 1860;
British Kaffrarian, King William's	
	Town 12 Jan. 1861;
Sponsored by Zetland Lodge, Fort Beaufort,	
warranted 30 Nov. 1852. Several petitioners	

¹ Schumann: Structural Changes and Business Cycles in S.A. 1806 - 1936, pp. 79, 105.

² Schumann: Structural Changes, p. 81.

were ex-members of the British German Legion,
 German soldiers who had served with the British
 in the Crimean war and had been given land
 grants on the frontier.

Good Hope Lodge, Port Elizabeth 4 Apr. 1861;

Sponsored by Lodge of Goodwill, Port Elizabeth.

Joppa Lodge, Cape Town 4 Apr. 1861. Erased 1882;

Sponsored by British Lodge. Its members were
 mainly from British Lodge.

Midland Lodge, Graaff-Reinet 2 Oct. 1861;

Sponsored by British Lodge.

Union Lodge, Knysna 2 Oct. 1861. Erased 1883;

Sponsored by British Lodge.

Star in the East, Queenstown 5 Jul. 1862;

Sponsored by Zetland Lodge.

Prince Alfred Lodge, Durban 28 Mar. 1863;

Sponsored by Port Natal, Durban.

St. Pauls Lodge, Adelaide 23 Oct. 1863;

Sponsored by British Lodge.³

Butterfield illustrates how the Craft spread as
 a result of masons moving from one town to another. He
 describes the travels of William T. Liddle, a member of
 British Lodge, who moved to Albany Lodge, Grahamstown.
 From there he became a founder member of Zetland Lodge
 at Fort Beaufort, which sponsored British Kaffrarian
 Lodge, King William's Town and Star of the East,
 Adelaide. Liddle eventually settled in Adelaide.⁴

³ FMH: Records of warrants and petitions, South Africa.

⁴ Centenary. The First 100 years of English Freemasonry
 in the Transvaal 1878-1978, p.31.

While British Lodge had sponsored the majority of these new lodges, as the senior English lodge it also performed as an unofficial provincial grand lodge, giving advice to embryo lodges and acting as an agent in forwarding applications for warrants to the English Grand Lodge. As a result it steadfastly refused any suggestion that a new English Provincial Grand Master for South Africa should be appointed to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Clerke Burton in 1848. The Hope Lodge, in fulfilling its obligations to its mother lodge, De Goede Hoop, had several times in the early 1850s asked that the three English lodges then existing, British, The Hope and Albany, meet to chose Burton's successor but British Lodge always insisted that a provincial grand master was not necessary. Twelve years later, following the addition of several new lodges, English Freemasonry in the Cape sorely needed a central authority while its status as a constitution was suffering in comparison with that of the Netherlandic branch which had had its own head since Truter's appointment in 1804.

After several private appeals, English Grand Lodge eventually moved and decided to appoint a provincial grand master, allowing the choice to be made by the South African lodges. Representatives of British, The Hope, Joppa, Union and Midland met on 8 Jul. 1862 to petition Grand Lodge for a provincial grand master for South Africa and unanimously nominated Richard Southey, pastmaster of The Hope Lodge. Following this

meeting a memorial dated 5 Aug. 1862 to London drawn up by Charles Aken Fairbridge, secretary of the embryo Provincial Grand Lodge, pointed out that Southey was then Treasurer-General of the Colony and a member of the Cape Government's Executive Council. It added that the "knowledge and working of the Craft have been spreading over this intensive settlement to the marked success of Freemasonry in as much as there are now three lodges working in Cape Town, one at George, one at Fort Beaufort, two at Port Elizabeth and two at Grahamstown, besides others being formed. The Grand Lodge of Scotland was represented by one lodge and the Grand Lodge of Holland by two". Though somewhat inaccurate in his lodge roll call, Fairbridge made his main point later, adding that the Dutch lodges were supervised by Sir Christoffel Brand as Deputy Grand Master National for South Africa but "the more numerous and widely spread lodges under the English Constitution have been left without a head since the demise of Clerke Burton" in 1848. Without a leader, English lodges had to give precedence on all public occasions to Brand. "We think our position is an anomaly", he wrote, for the English Grand Master should be represented by a mason equal in rank to Brand.⁵

Southey was told by London by letter dated 5 Mar. 1863 he would be appointed Provincial Grand Master for the Cape of Good Hope with jurisdiction only over British, The Hope and Joppa in Cape Town.⁶ He immediately

⁵ FMH: File SN 1584 British Lodge; Fairbridge to Grand Master, Memorial 5 Aug. 1862.

⁶ ACC 611, Southey Papers, Vol.2; FMH: to Southey, 5 Mar. 1863.

complained that his territorial jurisdiction should include all English lodges in South Africa, not only the Cape. Brand's authority, he pointed out, encompassed all South Africa including the Orange Free State and Transvaal Republics. The Grand Master, Earl of Zetland refused, aware that the new Natal lodges would resist rule from Cape Town while there had already been rebellious murmurings from the eastern frontier lodges, particularly Albany, Grahamstown.⁷ Later Southey's area was enlarged to "Cape of Good Hope and Adjacent British Colonies" a move that eventually brought secessionist action and a division of the English Freemasonry into separate masonic districts.

Cape civil servant and politician, Richard Southey had been initiated in The Hope lodge in 1848 and became its master in 1861. He was also active in the Royal Arch, Rose Croix and Knights Templar "high" degrees. Arriving with his parents in South Africa as one of the youngest of the 1820 Settlers, he had at the age of 20 volunteered for military service and served with distinction in the frontier wars during 1834, 1835 and 1846. Beginning his civil service career as Magistrate of Adelaide in 1835 he rose quickly and became Treasurer-General of the Cape, presenting his first budget in 1861. He became Colonial Secretary in 1864 and served until 1872 when Responsible Government for the Cape was

⁷ FMH: File SN 1584, British Lodge, Southey to Zetland, 19 Aug. 1863.



SIR RICHARD SOUTHEY

Fourth English Provincial Grand Master for South Africa, 1863 - 1866; First District Grand Master for South Africa (Western Division), 1866 - 1879.

proclaimed. On his retirement in that year he was made Lieut-Governor of Griqualand West and in 1877 he became M.P. for Grahamstown and was knighted in 1879.⁸ A determined expansionist, always eager to extend British authority as Cape Colonial Secretary, he played a prominent part in advancing the colonial frontier. In like manner, under his guidance, English Freemasonry spread further outwards from Cape Town. But, in keeping with the careful approach of the civil servant, he first ensured he would be supported by a strong provincial grand lodge, unlike Brand who created a weak administration around him in September 1864, preferring to rule relatively unhindered. Southey's career, too, did not allow him time for masonic missions away from Cape Town similar to those of Brand, perhaps to the detriment of English Freemasonry at that time.

After being installed as the fourth English Provincial Grand Master in South Africa on 15 Apr. 1863, Southey's first move was to reconstitute the English provincial grand lodge on 15 Apr. 1864. He chose men whom he believed would support him and act for him while he was on Government business for, in July of that year, he had been appointed Cape Colonial Secretary. As his deputy he selected Sir Thomas Maclear, who had arrived in South Africa in 1834 as Royal Astronomer at the Cape and

⁸ J.J. Breitenbach: Sir Richard Southey, DSAB Vol.II, pp. 695 - 698; Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, pp. 134 - 135.

under whose management the Cape Observatory had become one of the most valuable of the colonial institutions. A member of The Hope lodge, Maclear served as Deputy Provincial Grand Master and Deputy District Grand Master from 1864 to 1876 and from 1877 to 1879. The title "Provincial Grand Lodge of South Africa" was changed to "District Grand Lodge of South Africa" by Grand Lodge in 1866.⁹

English Freemasonry now had a constitutional head in Southey who had authority to recommend applications from, and grant provisional warrants to, new lodges as the Dutch had been able to do since 1804. His appointment encouraged the formation of further lodges from 1864 but not without opposition from Dutch-speaking masons, particularly those in the Republics. The language divisions emerged more strongly as both English and Dutch constitutions moved northwards. Typical of this conflict was that over the start of a new English lodge, Rising Star which was warranted in Bloemfontein, Free State Republic on 31 May 1864, despite the activities of a Dutch mason, R. Blanch who wrote to his leader, Brand, in January 1863: "There is an attempt being made here by some of the English to get up an English Charter but I am quietly taking measures to prevent their success". He pointed out that there were only "25 willing masons", in the whole of the Free State with 14 of them in Bloemfontein, not enough for an English and Dutch lodge. But Blanch was in a quandary.

⁹ Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, pp. 90, 115, 193.

While he wanted a Dutch lodge "there is a feeling that, if a Dutch Charter is sought, the support of the English would be lost and vice versa. I think that in every respect the Dutch lodge is better than the English for the Dutch Republic". True to his word, Blanch took the measure of arranging a meeting of masons and persuaded Marthinus Wessels Pretorius, President of the Orange Free State from 1860 to 1863, to be chairman. Pretorius had been initiated in De Goede Hoop Lodge in 1861 and elected as Honorary Master of that lodge. "Pretorius gave much weighty reasons for preferring the Dutch lodge", writes Blanch, "he behaved like a brick".¹⁰ Finally Pretorius headed the list of petitioners for a Dutch lodge, Unie, in Bloemfontein, the petition being sent for approval to Brand in March 1863. Nevertheless, despite the few masons in Bloemfontein and the problems of filling offices, Southey saw his first new English lodge outside the Cape Colony - Rising Star- growing in strength. More followed. In June 1864, another English lodge, Namaqua in Springbokfontein was warranted but lasted only until 1870. In January 1867 Colesberg came into existence, again recommended to London by Southey. It was erased in 1872. His recruiting campaign stretched again into the Free State with the establishment of

¹⁰ DGMN: Letters Received Jan. 1863 - Dec. 1863;
Blanch to Brand, 14 Jan. 1863; Blanch to
Brand, 27 Feb. 1863.

Angel, Philippolis on 1 Feb. 1870. It was erased in 1904.¹¹

Dutch Expansion

From his installation in 1847 as Deputy Grand Master National up to 1862, Brand had had charge of only two Dutch lodges - De Goede Hoop and De Goede Trouw, but in that year, the first of many applications for new lodges arrived on his desk - from Rising Star at Burghersdorp "to work in English as there were several English and Scots masons in the town". The petition, written in Dutch, was sent on 9 June and a warrant granted provisionally on 18 Aug. 1862. However, because of the "heavy drought and great oppression in all branches of trade", the lodge postponed its work indefinitely.¹²

The next year several petitions for lodges came in. F.A. Swemmer headed one from George Town (George) for the proposed Star in the East. Its charter was granted on 10 Jan. 1863 and the master invested by Johan Gustaaf Aspelng, "Knight of the Sword", his rank referring to the Rose Croix degree.¹³

¹¹ DGMN: Letters Received Jan. 1863 - Dec. 1863;
Petition Unie Lodge to Brand, 10 Mar. 1863;
Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, p. 88.

¹² DGMN: Letters Received Jan. 1861 - Dec. 1862;
Burghersdorp Petition, 9 June 1862; Burghersdorp
Lodge to Brand, 15 Dec. 1862.

¹³ DGMN: Letters Received Jan. 1863 - Dec. 1863; George
Lodge to Brand, 12 Feb. 1863.

In Bloemfontein Unie Lodge was provisionally constituted in 1863 while L'Astre de L'Orient at Stellenbosch was also given a provisional warrant by Brand on 6 Mar. of that year. His eagerness to set up new lodges is illustrated by the dating of these provisional warrants which in most cases bear the same date as the petitions even though the latter took weeks to arrive by uncertain mails. These petitions arose from the first of his "missionary" tours when he set out in 1861 to encourage new lodges, first visiting the eastern frontier where the English Constitution was making great headway as a result of the prosperous economic conditions. Despite his obvious partiality to Netherlandic Freemasonry, on that tour he displayed his considerable humanity by attempting to solve the conflict existing at that time between the two English lodges in Grahamstown - Albany and St. John's. He urged their amalgamation while attending a special joint meeting called in his honour but his plan fell through even though he tried by letter again in 1864 to urge "union for greater moral power" of Freemasonry in the town.¹⁴

On his second trip in 1864 which produced further favourable results for Dutch Freemasonry, he travelled eastwards again and northwards but did not reach the Transvaal. Lodges in various towns arranged to transport him onwards by cart and horses. Willowmore, Cape, was the first fruit of that tour. A petition was received

¹⁴ G.E. Drury: Albany Lodge 1828 - 1928, p. 42; DGMN: Letters Received and Sent Jan. 1864 - Dec. 1865; Brand to St. John's. 3 June 1864.

by him and Lodge Excelsior was constituted on 18 Jan. 1865. Members of lodges in Burghersdorp, Fort Beaufort and Durban, the latter two English, petitioned Brand in that year to form Flaming Star in South Africa at Potchefstroom in the Transvaal Republic. Provisionally warranted on 22 May, 1865, Flaming Star could not begin work that year as it was short of members who had "gone out on another commando".¹⁵ After visiting Graaff-Reinet Brand received a request, also in 1865, from Dutch masons in the town to re-open De Vereeniging which had closed a few years earlier. Granting them permission, he asked the newly-created English lodge, Midland, in that town, to allow them use of their temple but Dutch-English feeling still ran high and Midland Lodge refused. P. Buyskes, master-elect of De Vereeniging, complained to Brand that the English regretted the resuscitation of De Vereeniging but added "If they [the English Masons] do not attend I shall have no lodge".¹⁶ Buyskes' problem was typical of those of masters of lodges in small towns. There were often not sufficient English or Dutch masons to form separate lodges and only occasionally would they unite in one lodge, the sectional loyalties of the period proving too strong for masonic ties. Even within new lodges, feelings often ran high and the lodges foundered. But

¹⁵ DGMN: Letters Received and Sent, Jan. 1864-Dec. 1865; Brand to Excelsior, 18 Jan. 1865; Flaming Star to Brand, 29 Aug. 1865.

¹⁶ DGMN: Letters Received and Sent, Jan. 1864-Dec. 1865; Brand to Midland Lodge, 23 Nov. 1865; Buyskes to Brand, 29 Nov. 1865.

Brand persevered, travelling a great deal, spurred by his determination to ensure a solid base for Dutch Freemasonry.

He went to Colesberg in January 1866 to install and open Northern Lodge, provisionally warranted by him on 10 Dec. 1865. This became the key lodge to eventual open conflict between the English and Dutch constitutions.

More petitions were submitted - and more problems arose. Philippolis in the Orange Free State petitioned for authority to open a lodge in January 1866 but a fellow Dutch lodge, Unie at Bloemfontein, protested at its being granted a provisional warrant on the grounds there were not sufficient masons in that area. Brand agreed to pass on its objection to Holland.¹⁷

Patronheid Lodge, Philippolis, was not warranted until 1869. But nearer at home, St. Jan, Malmesbury (petition 9 Aug. 1866) and Oranje, Paarl (petition 7 Aug. 1866) were both constituted in that year. Because of his growing domain, Brand had asked the Grand East of the Netherlands for permission to reconstitute a provincial grand lodge for South Africa. This took place on 3 Sept. 1864 and Brand appointed D.G. Van Breda as Provincial Grand Master under him.

Brand reported to his resuscitated Provincial Grand Lodge on 6 Aug. 1867 that, from 1847 to 1862, he had had two lodges under his jurisdiction. There were

¹⁷ DGMN: Letters Received, Jan. 1866 - Dec. 1866;
Unie Lodge to Brand, 21 Jan. 1866.

now 12 lodges. "The stewardship over these 12 lodges, distributed over the colony and beyond, would be a labour too great and a weight of responsibility too heavy for my shoulders", Brand said. "My proceedings in establishing these lodges have on many occasions created bitter feelings in my mind", Brand added, referring to the difficulties he had had to contend with and the "stumbling blocks thrown in my way", particularly English masonic queries about the privileges of the Netherlandic Constitution.¹⁸ He did not put the complete position to his Provincial Grand Lodge for, although he had opened up Dutch Freemasonry in the territory to the north and east, he had built on shaky foundations and, more important, solidified the opposition of English Freemasonry. Ironically, in 1865, he had written to all Dutch lodges presenting to each a portrait of himself on his nearly attaining 50 years as a mason "anxious to be remembered by my brethren".¹⁹

Brand had failed to report that, in most cases, the initial enthusiasm he had engendered on his travels had not lasted. Swemmer, master of Rising Star, George, wrote to him on 1 Aug. 1865, that the lodge had not met

¹⁸ O.H. Bate: De Goede Hoop, p. 94; Netherlandic PGL in South Africa: AGM, Brand's Report, 6 Aug. 1867.

¹⁹ DGMN: Letters Received and Sent, Jan. 1864- 1865; Circular from Brand to Lodges, 26 May, 1865.

for four months, not having a building.²⁰ Potchefstroom was handicapped by military operations as the disturbances on the frontier "had driven many officers and members out of the country". It was in abeyance two years.²¹ Excelsior at Willowmore had reported that "dissension and bad feeling" had divided the lodge but its master added "we are trying to bring them back to the road of honour". It was also in difficulty being without a warrant for an aggrieved member who had been sent the lodge's warrant by Brand refused to give it to the lodge and dispatched it back to Cape Town. The lodges at Paarl, Stellenbosch and Burghersdorp had become dormant by 1867.²² There were also political repercussions. D. Buyskes, a government official and master of the resuscitated De Vereeniging at Graaff-Reinet, wrote to Brand that the establishment of his lodge "had done me [Buyskes] an immense deal of harm with Southey, the Colonial Secretary [the English Provincial Grand Master]". "I received what I considered the sack. But I am in the right and shall send the papers to Parliament ... the country will be astounded at the revelations I am about to make". He also complained of persecution and "diabolical lies" from the English lodge, Midland, in

²⁰ DGMN: Letters Received and Sent, Jan. 1864 - Dec. 1865; Swemmer to Brand, 1 Aug. 1865.

²¹ DGMN: Letters Received, Jan. 1868 - Dec. 1868; Flaming Star to Brand, 11 Jan. 1868.

²² DGMN: Letters Received Jan. 1866 - Dec. 1866; Excelsior to Brand, 16 Feb. 1866; PGL in S.A.: AGM, Brand's Report, 6 Aug. 1867.

the same town.²³

1770 Convention

The rivalry between the two constitutions, accentuated by the expansionist moves of Brand and Southey, brought confrontation in 1866 when the rights and jurisdiction of the Grand East of the Netherlands in South Africa were questioned, seriously damaging relations between English and Dutch lodges. Several English and Scottish masons claimed that the Dutch Constitution had no right to establish new lodges in South Africa and that, therefore, such lodges were illegal and in violation of the Convention of 1770.

The Grand Lodge of Holland, created by the Grand Lodge of England, had in 1770 asked for acknowledgement of its status, "promising that, if the Grand Lodge of England would agree in future not to constitute any new lodge within its jurisdiction, the Grand Lodge of Holland would observe the same restrictions in respect of all parts of the world where lodges were already established under the patronage of England".²⁴ This declaration formed the basis of the so-called 1770 convention. It had been tacitly ignored in the Cape for nearly 100 years until John Saunders, founder and master of the first Scottish lodge in South Africa, Southern

²³ DGMN: Letters Received Jan. 1867 - Dec. 1867;
Buyskes to Brand, 5 June 1867.

²⁴ DGMN: Masonic Epistle, 12 Jul. 1867, p.3.

Cross, in 1862, questioned Brand's authority and that of the Netherlandic Constitution in South Africa which he headed. When Brand was about to issue a provisional warrant in 1862 following an application from George, Saunders disputed his right to do so, claiming that, under the 1770 Convention, the fact that the Colony was now under British rule prevented Dutch masonic expansion. Saunders had already approached the George group of masons, advising them to petition for a warrant under his own Grand Lodge, the Grand Lodge of Scotland. Disregarding Saunders' protest, Brand granted it a warrant. It will be recalled that Brand had opposed the formation of Southern Cross by Saunders two years earlier. There were further objections to Brand issuing a provisional warrant in June 1864 on a request from masons in Bloemfontein, Orange Free State, on the surprising grounds that, by the Treaty of Cession in 1814 when the British took over the Cape, it had been agreed the Grand East of the Netherlands should not create any more lodges in the colony. Brand dismissed this objection as absurd, pointing out that the Dutch constitution had established itself in the Cape in 1772 and its lodges had been ruled since then by the Deputy Grand Master National appointed by Holland. It was, in fact, the first masonic constitution in the Cape.

The dispute flared up again in July 1866. English members of the Dutch Lodge, De Goede Trouw, wishing to exert their right to visit other lodges, attended British Lodge in Cape Town. They were told that having Dutch

masonic certificates of membership, they would not be admitted to any English lodge. At the same time they were offered English certificates free of charge. After protest the master of the British Lodge "exculpated himself" to his counterpart in De Goede Trouw by explaining that his members had resolved not to admit any masons initiated in the Free State, or elsewhere (except those initiated in Lodge De Goede Hoop and De Goede Trouw) and regarded them as "being illegal" in the Cape Colony for the masonic jurisdiction of the Grand East of the Netherlands did not extend itself beyond Cape Town.

Replying to British Lodge, De Goede Trouw pointed out this slight on members must be considered a "joke although very much out of place"; British Lodge's action was unmasonic. Brand termed the British Lodge resolution "preposterous" in a letter to Southey, head of the English lodges. A further complication arose when John Saunders Rowe, the English Provincial Grand Secretary and a pastmaster of British Lodge (1857-1858, 1860-1861, 1863) informed Brand that his Provincial Grand Lodge had already sent a memorial in June 1866 to the Grand Lodge of England, asking for advice about the legality of the Netherlandic Constitution forming new lodges in the Cape.²⁵

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DGMN: Masonic Epistle, 12 Jul. 1867, pp. 1 - 3, Annexures No.2, De Goede Trouw to Brand, No.3; De Goede Trouw to British Lodge. A visiting mason was required to produce his Grand Lodge certificate of membership on entry to another lodge.

Rowe, a Cape Town accountant, who was behind the contentious British Lodge resolution for some reason pursued a vendetta against the Dutch lodges. He did not tell his senior, Southey that, as master of British Lodge, he had also written in 1863 to the English Grand Lodge asking for a ruling on "foreign lodges".²⁶ The memorial Rowe sent on behalf of his Provincial Grand Lodge to England in 1866 claimed that the Cape was a British Colony acquired by conquest. At that time - 1814 - there were only two Dutch lodges - De Goede Hoop and De Goede Trouw. Since 1863 Brand had granted warrants for a further five lodges and also revived De Vereeniging at Graaff-Reinet. Masons made at these new lodges had claimed admission into English lodges and had been rightly, he claimed, refused entry on the grounds of being "irregularly made" masons. The objections were based on the 1770 Convention, wrote Rowe: "whereby each Grand Lodge undertook to abstain for the future from constituting new lodges within the jurisdiction of the other". All lodges in the Cape under the Dutch Constitution made since 1814, the date of cession, were therefore irregular under this convention.

The English complainants, added Rowe, not only asserted the right to exclude these "irregular" masons but wanted the English Provincial Grand Lodge to suspend all English masons who had helped to establish these new Dutch lodges. Professing to deplore any agitation that

²⁶ FMH: File SN 1584, British Lodge; Rowe to Grand Lodge, 20 Feb. 1863.

permitted its English-speaking members to break away and form The Hope Lodge in 1821, while the English Lodge, Joppa and the first Scottish Lodge, Southern Cross, also were mainly formed by De Goede Hoop members. "I cannot be silent when I find the right of my Grand Lodge thus ignored and her authority set to naught", he wrote. However he agreed to await the decision of the Grand Lodge of England after Southey told him he had instructed Rowe to inform English lodges to suspend all "agitation" respecting masons made at the new Dutch lodges until the Grand Lodge had replied. But Rowe did not obey his master, Southey, and, on his own responsibility, endeavoured to widen the English-Dutch breach. Brand was first aware of Rowe's undercover action when he met B.T. Bedford, master of the Dutch lodge, Northern at Colesberg, who was attending Parliament in Cape Town. Bedford told him his members were divided over a question unknown to him and he could not get his officers to attend meetings. After a letter from Bedford, Brand, who was anxious about this lodge, travelled to Colesberg in February 1867 and at a conference of officers "most extraordinary disclosures were made and a most wicked intrigue came out".²⁸ He found that Rowe had not as instructed, halted his campaign pending a decision from England. Instead he had written to a Colesberg mason, T. Kidd, a letter on 28 June 1866 in reply to his query about his status as a Dutch mason and declared on

²⁸ DGMN: Masonic Epistle, 12 Jul. 1867, Annexures 4, 5, 6, 7, pp. 7 - 9.

his own responsibility: "All masons initiated in lodges lately formed by Sir C. Brand under the Constitution of the Netherlands and raised are not acknowledged as masons".

In a letter to Southey in April 1867, writing in "great pain", Brand denounced Rowe's letter as a violation of the English Provincial Grand Master's command.²⁹ Obviously Rowe had continued his campaign, presuming to act as head of the English constitution while Southey was busy on official duties. He had repeated his June letter to Colesberg again in August 1866 informing Kidd for the second time he was an "irregular" mason. To his discomfiture Brand discovered Rowe had also not told Midland Lodge, Graaff-Reinet, of Southey's decision to let matters be until the English Grand Lodge decided. When Brand visited that town he was informed Midland Lodge had refused the use of its building to the resuscitated Dutch Lodge De Vereeniging. Brand hastened to tell Southey of his Provincial Grand Secretary's unauthorised letters but, when Brand tried to obtain from Kidd the full text of Rowe's letters, Kidd refused, claiming they were private even though they were on official letterheads. In the meantime, Rowe denied writing to Kidd, leaving Brand facing a charge of fabricating the letters about "irregular masons". Brand persisted in his

²⁹ DGMN: Letters Received and Sent, Jan. 1867 - Dec. 1867; Brand to Southey, 3 Apr. 1867.

letters until Southey and the rest of his Provincial Grand Lodge were forced to move. They finally took a serious view of the matter and, in June 1867, dismissed Rowe for dereliction of duty, repudiating his acts and writings and hoping peace between the constitutions would be restored.³⁰

Despite this a "thunderbolt" came down on Brand with yet another incident of non-recognition of Dutch masons. On a visit to Port Elizabeth, H. Rudlin of the unfortunate Colesberg lodge had applied to be passed to the second degree at the English Lodge of Goodwill, Port Elizabeth, only to be told his lodge was "irregular" and he would have to be initiated again in an English lodge again as a result of another letter from Rowe disclaiming Dutch masons. In desperation, Brand reported this to Southey and appealed to him to acknowledge publicly that he recognised Colesberg Lodge. The chastened master of Goodwill, A. Brand, apologised profusely for committing "a grave masonic error" in repudiating Rudlin's lodge, basing it on the fact he, too, had received another unauthorised letter from Rowe and had acted on it. Accepting his apology, Brand then printed and published his Masonic Epistle dated 12 Jul. 1867 setting out his standpoint on the legality of his constitution. With it were the 25 letters concerning Kidd and Rudlin of Colesberg.³¹

³⁰ DGMN: Masonic Epistle, 12 Jul. 1867, Annexures 9 - 13, 17.

³¹ DGMN: Masonic Epistle, 12 Jul. 1867, Annexures 20-25.

But the main question - whether the 1770 Convention was still in force in South Africa - had yet to be answered. Meeting on 24 Apr. 1867, the United Grand Lodge of England had already decided, after consultation with the Grand East of the Netherlands, but, with slow mails, the decision did not reach the Cape for several months. In another pamphlet, *Masonic Decision*, published in September that year, and distributed to every lodge in South Africa, Brand set out the English Grand Lodge's decision which is in force today. After the cession of the Cape to Britain in 1814, wrote the English Grand Lodge, Dutch lodges in the Cape had welcomed the newly-formed English lodges and, when an English Provincial Grand Lodge in South Africa was formed in 1829, Sir John Truter, head of the Dutch lodges, was chosen also to lead the English lodges. By this double appointment, the Grand Master of England thus recognised the Dutch lodges and it was felt, therefore, that the 1770 Convention had never applied to the Cape, which was to be considered neutral ground where the two Grand Lodges might exist side by side. The Grand Master of England recommended to his English lodges in South Africa that they continue to work in harmony with the Dutch lodges.³²

But England's recommendation that all lodges should work in harmony was not always taken to heart. De Vereeniging, Graaff-Reinet, complained to Brand that its

³² DGMN: *Masonic Decision*, 6 Sept. 1867, pp. 2 - 3, 18-20;
 FMH: *Grand Lodge Quarterly Communication*, 6 Mar. 1867.

English sister Midland Lodge had fostered a "spirit of petty jealousy" towards it when the two lodges fell out over a candidate who had applied to join both. In Cape Town, De Goede Hoop and British Lodge argued over a De Goede Hoop member who had been suspended. British Lodge refused to recognise the suspension and admitted him. Finally it was agreed by Brand and Southey that lodges should circularise names of those suspended and respect each other's decisions on these suspensions.³³

Despite his years Brand was able to handle these squabbles and continue his missionary journeys particularly now that the English Grand Lodge had vindicated the credentials of his office and the lodges he represented. In January, 1869, aged 73, he planned his last trip. "Mental and bodily depression induced me to undertake a journey and thus I resolved to employ it exclusively for the purpose of visiting lodges under my jurisdiction", he reported to the Dutch Provincial Grand Lodge on 14 Aug. that year. As on other journeys his visit had again stimulated flagging Dutch Freemasonry while he found that the brotherly feeling shown towards him restored "happiness of heart and health". After visiting Star in the East, George, he helped to rally Excelsior at Willowmore. At Graaff-Reinet he found De Vereeniging's membership had increased from 23 to 38

³³ DGMN: Letters Received and Sent Jan. 1868 - Dec. 1868; De Vereeniging to Brand, 28 Dec. 1867; Brand to Southey, 23 Mar. 1868.

and he was able to act as mediator and bring accord between it and the English Midland Lodge. Lodge Harmony at Richmond he found to be flourishing with 43 members, and ready to build their own temple which he later consecrated. He granted both De Vereeniging and Harmony provisional constitutions for "high" degree chapters and constituted them for he was also head of the Dutch "high" degrees in South Africa.

Unie Lodge at Bloemfontein he found the most flourishing with 102 members in 1869 and "a splendid building. She may be considered the Mother lodge in the Free State and the Transvaal", he reported. Happily, Flaming Star at Potchefstroom which had begun work after being disturbed by "wars with the natives and commandos being called out", now had 37 members and there also he installed a "high" degree chapter. In June 1868 he granted a provisional warrant to form Aurora Lodge at Pretoria, the first in the Transvaal, and on his visit there found the masons had made progress; they also asked and obtained authority for a "high" degree chapter.

He went on to Philippolis and in February received a petition from masons in that town to start Lodge Getrouwheid with most of the petitioners coming from Unie Lodge, Bloemfontein. He issued them a provisional warrant dated 22 Feb. 1869. He also visited Somerset East and masons there petitioned him successfully to start Lodge Eintracht.³⁴ While in Bloemfontein, Brand

³⁴ Netherlandic PGL: Brand's Report, AGM 14.Aug. 1869.

was invited to Adelaide and was surprised to be handed a petition by the master and members of the English lodge, St. Pauls, to allow them to form a Dutch lodge De Vriendschap. They complained to him of neglect by the English Provincial Grand Lodge, but Brand tactfully remarked to his Provincial Grand Lodge that "the application was not intended as opposition to the lodge then existing - but to enable those who did not understand the English language enough ... to be instructed in the language familiar to them". On the same day - 10 Mar. 1869, on the petition's receipt, Brand granted them a provisional warrant and installed the lodge. To cap his visit to Adelaide he authorised another "high" degree chapter.³⁵

Both Brand and Southey saw De Vriendschap as one solution to the language rivalry that had bedevilled their relations. A Dutch-speaking candidate in Adelaide could join De Vriendschap and an English speaker could join St. Pauls but, as it happened, most masons were members of both. In his report to Provincial Grand Lodge in August Brand was pleased to see masons "working under different laws, walking hand in hand". He also reported that, on his return to Cape Town, he had received a petition from 10 masons in Cronstadt [sic] Orange Free State to form Morgenster and immediately granted them a provisional warrant dated 15 May, 1869.

³⁵ DGMN: Letters Received Jan. 1869 - Dec. 1869;
 Petition St. Pauls Lodge to Brand, 10 Mar. 1869;
 Netherlandic PGL: AGM 14 Aug. 1869, p.7.

His tour, covering 2878 miles by cart and horse, had produced "healthy fruit". He had established four new lodges at Somerset East, Philippolis, Adelaide and Kroonstad, and five "high" degree chapters - at Graaff-Reinet, Richmond, Pretoria, Potchefstroom and Adelaide. He added: "the honourable position which we hold and the extension which during the past year the Order has obtained under our Dutch jurisdiction are sources of high gratification". He now had 14 lodges under his control.³⁶

Brand's euphoria was not to last for, because of his age, he could not personally maintain the close links with far-off lodges necessary for stability and good masonic government. Neither could he anticipate and remove local problems facing lodges as his letter files indicate. Politics, language, church opposition - all were factors affecting his newfound strength. The controversial Northern lodge, Colesberg, whose members unwittingly precipitated an open rift between English and Dutch constitutions in 1866, was among the first to fail. A member wrote to Brand: "Colesberg is not the place where brotherly love can exist ... too much party feeling is being exhibited".³⁷ L'Astre de L'Orient at Stellenbosch

³⁶ Netherlandic PGL: Brand's Report, AGM 14 Aug. 1869.

³⁷ DGMN: Letters Received Jan 1869 - Dec. 1869;

Orlepp, Colesberg, to Brand, 14 June, 1869.

and Oranje at Paarl had also ceased working.

His efforts to start a lodge in Fraserberg also failed. A Dutch mason there, J.L. Doësel, wrote to Brand in October 1869: "The Dutch brethren are happy to start a lodge here - the English don't want to work under the Dutch constitution and we, of course, return the compliment. It is a great pity the most wealthiest masons here are English ... the Dutch are too few to afford the costs of a Lodge".³⁸

Nevertheless Brand had succeeded in making the Dutch constitution the more numerous in South Africa by 1869. When he retired as Deputy Grand Master National in 1874, 18 lodges had been warranted in the Cape, Natal, the Orange Free State and Transvaal even though several others had foundered. He had won for his constitution English approval of its legality and reduced highly-placed enemies to insignificance.

Church Opposition

Dutch Reformed Church

But, as Brand's empire spread in the 1850s and 1860s, it aroused bitter outspoken opposition from the orthodox sections of the D.R.C. which regarded Freemasonry as a secret society intent on replacing the church in the task of improving mankind. To them, the Craft was seen as a dangerous "liberalising" influence. Freemasonry was condemned for pursuing the path of Deism, for recognising God as the Maker of the

³⁸ DGMN: Letters Received Jan. 1869 - Dec. 1869;

Doësel to Brand, 21 Oct. 1869.

penetrated more widely to all circles of Cape activities - the administration, Parliament, military circles after 1850, it came under more critical survey by the orthodox church, particularly after the Wurtemberg incident in Germany in 1856 when 51 church leaders asked that church pastors should be prohibited from becoming Freemasons.⁴³ This feeling spread to the Cape and Freemasonry began to be seen as a greater threat to the church and vocal opposition grew. Dutch masons bore the church's fiercest attacks and many resigned as a result.

Church dislike for Freemasonry had been expressed in the Cape since the start of De Goede Hoop lodge in 1772 and it helped to bring about its demise in 1781. It had, however, been muted to some extent until the 1860s when it assumed full voice, and particularly at the synod of the newly-formed Dutch Reformed Church which met at Cape Town in October 1862. Representatives of other disestablished churches from the Cape, Natal and the Free State were invited to the Synod while the Rev. Andrew Murray, Junior, was elected Moderator. Unfortunately two D.R.C. elders of the Cape were not admitted as delegates and took exception to the fact that ministers from outside the Cape were admitted, to the extent that they put their case before the Supreme Court, asking it to declare the synod illegal. While the court debated the issue, the synod opened its proceedings

⁴³ Hanekom: Die Liberale Rigting, p. 273.

which were recorded at length in the Cape newspapers - the Cape Monitor, Cape Argus and the S.A. Commercial Advertiser. On the 14th day of the synod it discussed whether the seminary should move from Stellenbosch to Cape Town. On 29 Oct. 1862, the Rev. G.W.A. Van Der Lingen of Paarl rose to speak. The Cape Monitor reported: "he ran atilt at secret societies". The S.A. Commercial Advertiser wrote that Van Der Lingen said he felt that, if the Stellenbosch seminary were removed to Cape Town, "the youths would fall into the snares of the clique of Freemasons ... there might be one or two places of bad name in Stellenbosch but there were scores of such in Cape Town. There might be one or two stray Freemasons in Stellenbosch but it was wellknown there was no city on earth so completely under the influence of Freemasonry as Cape Town". According to the Cape Argus he described Cape Town as "full of wickedness" which included Freemasons.⁴⁴

A staunch champion of Dutch culture against increasing English influence, Van Der Lingen had in 1858 founded a gymnasium in Paarl to prepare students for the seminary after resisting attempts to start an undenominational government school in his town. He had accused the government school of having its roots in the French Revolution for education, he felt, devolved on the church and not the state, contrary to official policy at the time.⁴⁵ He feared that, if the seminary

⁴⁴ Cape Monitor, 30 Oct. 1862; S.A. Commercial Advertiser, 30 Oct. 1862; Cape Argus, 30 Oct. 1862.

⁴⁵ Dr.H.D.A. Du Toit: G.W.A. Van Der Lingen, DSAB Vol.I pp. 812-814

were moved to Cape Town, it would suffer from the English influences of that town which, to him, and to others of the orthodox circle included Freemasonry.

After this allegation at the synod, the Rev. A. Kotze of Darling, leader of the "liberal" voice of the synod, called Van Der Lingen to order, claiming he had ridiculed and condemned Freemasonry. Cape Town was not under the influence of Freemasonry, Kotze said, adding that "the brotherly love of that body was stronger, if not more generous, than that shown within the precincts of the synod itself." Van Der Lingen replied that his accuser was a Judas or a Rationalist. The Moderator, Murray, quickly ended the argument but it flared up several days later.⁴⁶

The Rev. M. Krige, who denied he was a "mason or a liberal", objected to Van Der Lingen's remarks, claiming his attack "was especially unjustifiable when it was remembered that several ministers from the synod had studied from funds provided by various masonic lodges". The Cape Monitor correspondent in Graaff-Reinet wrote that there was a feeling Van Der Lingen should resign "for he has shown himself to be too uncharitable in his ideas of a Predikant and the masons here almost swear vengeance against him".⁴⁷

More mediatory was Het Volksblad which questioned

⁴⁶ Cape Argus, 30 Oct. 1862.

⁴⁷ Cape Monitor, 11 Nov. 1862.

for freedom of thought and conscience and the other struggling to stem the tide of enlightenment and to uphold the traditional authority of the Church Articles".⁵⁰

This division, and the legal repercussions that followed, were to split the church for some years. Two issues acted as catalysts. The two elders, H. Loedolff and H.H. Smuts, both of the Cape, persisted in their Supreme Court application to overturn the synod proceedings on the grounds that they had been refused admission to the synod while delegates from outside the Cape had been admitted. They were represented in court by Christoffel Brand who argued that the Church had illegally changed its name from that of the Church of the Cape Colony to that of the Church of South Africa and that delegates from outside the Cape therefore should not be admitted to the synod.⁵¹ The Cape Supreme Court, on 26 Nov. 1862 decided in favour of the plaintiffs "which served to increase the number of liberal votes in the synod".⁵² This decision was fortuitous for Mr. Kotze, champion of Freemasonry in the 1862 synod. He had by this time suffered a reversal of fortune. On 25 Nov. he had refused to acknowledge the 60th question in the Heidelberg Catechism that "men are still continually inclined to all evil". He was called upon to retract but refused and a majority of the synod, led by

⁵⁰ Cape Argus, 28 Oct. 1862.

⁵¹ Cape Argus, 27 Nov. 1862.

⁵² Dr. G.B.A. Gerdener: Rev. A. Murray Jnr., DSAB
Vol.I, p. 577.

Van Der Lingen found him guilty of attacking a fundamental doctrine of the Church.⁵³ Facing a charge of heresy Kotze again refused to recant. On the second day of the heresy hearing he was given until the afternoon to withdraw but at that session - on 26 Nov.- Murray pointed out that the Supreme Court had that day ipso facto declared the synod illegally constituted and all its proceedings, including accusations against Kotze were thus illegal.⁵⁴ Kotze, determined to vindicate his "liberal" viewpoint in respect of the Catechism, took his case to the Supreme Court and judgment was given against the Church. Eight years of bitter struggle between orthodox and liberal elements followed and the church was forced to acquiesce on this verdict which was eventually to divide it.⁵⁵

Nevertheless the church's criticisms of Freemasonry increased. In 1869, in a defence of Freemasonry against church criticism, Brand observed that several D.R.C. ministers had been members of De Goede Hoop. He pointed out that discussion on sectarian or dogmatical subjects were forbidden in lodges. "We form no church: religion, morality and love are the groundwork of our labours and the aim of our actions because, by that, we promote the happiness of mankind. Why then should the clergy and

⁵³ ACTA SYNODI 1862 Synod pp. 84 - 86, 89, 92, 95, 99, 102.

⁵⁴ Cape Argus, 27 Nov. 1862.

⁵⁵ Gerdener: Rev. A. Murray, DSAB Vol I, p. 577.

particularly those of the D.R.C., act so hostilely against us?". He reported at one of his lodges in the Transvaal a D.R.C. clergyman had been asked by masons to open proceedings with a prayer. Later he was charged before his church vestry and brought before a presbytery for "daring to pray for us to the Almighty", but he was discharged and escorted home by masons in procession.

"Worse happened at Potchefstroom", wrote Brand for the minister there "has thought fit to fall foul of masonry". He had preached a "tremendous anathema" against the Craft, denouncing it as a curse and claiming its adherents were "calumniators of God, infidels and had ceased to be Christians". Brand hoped the ministers would soon lose their prejudices against the Craft, alluding particularly to the Transvaal, but opposition by then had also solidified in other areas.⁵⁶ At Harmony, Richmond, Natal, which had been provisionally warranted on 6 Sept. 1867, the master, S.V. Cloete wrote to Brand that his lodge had met heavy obstacles "due to great antipathy and ignorance" ... "We are called Mother idolaters, liberals, workers with the Devil".⁵⁷

Fortunately for Freemasonry, D.R.C. opposition to the Craft was not unanimous nor organised to the extent of later years but mainly expressed itself in individual hostility in particular towns to local lodges. As à

⁵⁶ Netherlandic PGL: A.G.M. Brand's Report, 14 Aug. 1869.

⁵⁷ DGMN: Letters Received Jan. 1868 - Dec. 1868;
Richmond Lodge to Brand, 21 Dec. 1867.

result there was no general synodical broadside, particularly as there was still no prohibition on D.R.C. members being active members in lodges while leaders of the Dutch Craft continued to maintain strong ties with the church.⁵⁸

Roman Catholic Church

Opposition to Freemasonry from the Roman Catholic Church was first expressed in the 1860s though its condemnation of the Craft had been spelt out by Papal Bulls of 1821 and 1826 which specified bluntly all Freemasons were to be excommunicated and "all who aid and abet Freemasonry are also to be excommunicated".⁵⁹ The second resident Vicar Apostolic of the Cape of Good Hope, Bishop Thomas Grimley, in an address at the Roman Catholic Cathedral, Cape Town on 23 June, 1868, linked Freemasonry and the Irish revolutionary group, the Fenians, together as secret societies which "are the promoters of every species of evil".⁶⁰ His public attack

⁵⁸ The first recorded synodical decision concerning Freemasonry emanated from the 1915 synod when a draft resolution to preclude masons from being members of church councils was watered down to the effect that the church would not condone masons serving on these councils but would not prohibit them. ACTA SYNODI 1915 Synod, pp. 41 - 42.

⁵⁹ Eastern Star, Grahamstown, 12 Apr. 1878: R.C. Bishop, Grahamstown J.D. Richards to Editor, 10 Apr. 1878.

⁶⁰ Bishop T. Grimley: Unpublished Autobiography Vol.II, p.88; clipping from Cape Argus, 23 June, 1868, Diocesan Archives, Cape Town.

on Freemasonry expressed his displeasure over one of his flock, the explorer and hunter, James Chapman, becoming a mason and the subsequent publicity. One of Grimley's priests, Rev. J. O'Haire, Chapman's pastor, learning of this, had written to Chapman criticising his decision, pointing out that the Church excludes Freemasons from her fold and God excludes them thus from Heaven.⁶¹ Incensed, Chapman handed over this and other letters to the Freemasons and eventually produced a pamphlet - *Inotgaotu - The Priest and the Freemason*, condemning the church's interference in his personal life. He claimed the Roman Catholic priesthood was ignorant of Freemasonry's aims.⁶² Grimley chided O'Haire for writing to Chapman. "Your letter ... is in everybody's hands ... it has raised a storm which will, I believe, do immense harm".⁶³ Unrepentant, O'Haire in his *Recollections* wrote that the pamphlet *The Priest and the Freemason* teemed with the "bitterest invective and misrepresentation".⁶⁴ Chapman later fell ill at the Du Toit's Pan diamond diggings and, on his deathbed, recanted and called for a Catholic priest. But the incident had a macabre ending. At the graveside the Catholic priest was about to begin the funeral service

61 J. Chapman: *Inotgaotu; The Priest and the Freemason*; O'Haire to Chapman, 8 Jan. 1867, p.4.

62 Chapman: *Inotgaotu*, p. 4.

63 W.E. Brown: *The Catholic Church in South Africa*, p.76.

64 Rev. J. O'Haire: *Recollections of 12 years Residence as a Missionary Priest in the Western Districts of the Colony of Good Hope, S.A.*, p. 365.

when Freemasons arrived and insisted they perform the last rites. "The Catholic Priest had to leave the corpse", wrote O'Haire.⁶⁵

Grimley's displeasure at the publicity over the Chapman incident showed his concern over public attitudes to his Church which was only then consolidating its tenure after earlier uncertain years at the Cape. After this incident there apparently was an end to public condemnation of the Craft by the Catholic Church during the remainder of the 19th century.

In practice, there was some cooperation between masonic lodges and the two churches. The Roman Catholic Church acquired land from De Goede Trouw Lodge in 1839 opposite Bouquet Street while the D.R.C. Kerkenraad frequently used the grounds and buildings of De Goede Hoop for church bazaars.⁶⁶

Despite church opposition, the 1860s saw considerable expansion in both English and Dutch Freemasonry, the resuscitation of both Provincial Grand Lodges, and the start of the Scottish Constitution in South Africa. There were 25 lodges, accommodating about 1200 masons, operating in the Cape, Natal and the two northern republics. But other factors occurred in the 1870s to upset this hard-won success.

⁶⁵ O'Haire: Recollections, p. 365.

⁶⁶ Title Deeds, 26 Apr. 1839, Diocesan Archives; ACC 731,1/1/14, Kerkenraad to De Goede Hoop, 4 Mar. 1874, 18 Nov. 1874.

CHAPTER VI.

DIVISION AND A SEARCH FOR UNITY 1869 - 1876

Within Freemasonry there were echoes of the important political developments during this period - the mineral rushes, hostility between the British south and the Republican north - the Transvaal and Orange Free State Republics - and continuing separatist sentiments in the Eastern districts of the Cape Colony. Many masonic lodges were depleted by the loss of would-be diggers heading for the diamond or gold fields and had to close. Relations between English and Dutch lodges became further strained, reflecting the political enmity of the time while lodges in the eastern Cape sought and won local autonomy.

Secession or Unity

English Freemasonry was divided into two major groups - the secessionists and the unificationists. Lodges in the Eastern Province called for their own local administration, claiming they were neglected by Cape Town, while British Lodge in Cape Town deplored this breakaway movement. At the same time the first signs of a campaign to bring about a united grand lodge for South Africa appeared in Cape Town itself. This was encouraged by the Grand Lodge of England which apparently aligned itself with the confederationist policies of the British Government in its move to encompass the Boer republics and accordingly gave support to masonic expansion northwards into the republics

and the possible formation of Transvaal and Free State English Provincial Grand Lodges.

Several Dutch lodges in the Transvaal Republic and Free State were in harmony at first with this move for a united grand lodge of South Africa but for different reasons. While many English Freemasons saw masonic unity as a necessary appendage to a federated South Africa under the British flag, some Dutch lodges reflected fears that, unless a united grand lodge were formed, Dutch Freemasonry would eventually be incorporated into English Freemasonry, thus effectively losing its traditional ritual and language. As a result, reversing the English call for provincial authorities as a basis for a Grand Lodge of South Africa, the majority of Dutch lodges opposed any suggestion to set up provincial Dutch masonic government, believing that unification would thus be hindered. Brand, as the Netherlands Deputy Grand Master National, tested their views in 1871 in a circular about forming a provincial grand lodge in the north.¹ By now his territory stretched from the Transvaal to the Cape, too large for one man based in Cape Town who was already ailing to administer. Generally his lodges were adamant - no splintering, not even into provincial grand lodges. There was, however, some wavering in the north where some new lodges felt a provincial grand lodge might serve them better than that in Cape Town. Peace and Harmony, Du Toit's Pan, led an unsuccessful campaign to present a petition to

¹ DGMN: Letters Sent Jan. 1871 - Dec. 1871; Circular, Feb. 1871.

Prince William Frederick, Grand Master National of Holland, to establish a provincial grand lodge in the Transvaal and Orange Free State Republics.²

English Secession

The English Albany Lodge in Grahamstown became the key to the secessionist movement in the Cape Eastern Province. From 1833 Albany had complained of the neglect by the English Provincial Grand Lodge in Cape Town and resolved to end contact with it and communicate direct with the Grand Lodge in England. It has refused to pay its dues to Cape Town but, in 1848, reluctantly made submission. It gained allies when, between 1852 and 1861, seven new English lodges were warranted in the Eastern Province, one in Bloemfontein and one for Port Natal. In a mediatory move, Sir Richard Southey, appointed English Provincial Grand Master in 1863, visited Albany Lodge when he was in Grahamstown on official duties attending the Cape Parliament in 1864.³ Relations were cordial but peace was not yet. Lodge of Goodwill, Port Elizabeth took the initiative, circularising neighbouring lodges for views on the formation of an English district or provincial grand lodge for the Eastern Province.⁴ Some lodges hesitated, fearing the

² DGMN: Letters Received 1870 - 1891, Peace and Harmony Lodge, Du Toit's Pan: Circular 23 Feb. 1875.

³ FMH: Records of Warrants and Petitions S.A; J.J. Breitenbach : Sir Richard Southey. DSAB Vol.II pp. 695 - 698; Drury: Albany Lodge, p.31.

⁴ Cranstoun-Day: Chronicle Lodge Goodwill, Port Elizabeth 1857 - 1911, p. 34.

cost of setting up another provincial grand lodge. Midland Lodge, Graaff-Reinet for instance, asked for costs first before a decision.⁵ While a consensus of opinion was awaited in the Eastern Province, the Natal lodges, having sent a memorial to Grand Lodge, were told on 8 October 1867 that Natal formed no part of the jurisdiction of Southey and they were to communicate direct with London.⁶

Gradually the eastern lodges formed a united front. Fort Beaufort replied in 1867 to Goodwill's circular, agreeing to a locally-based authority while spokesmen of St. Pauls, Adelaide addressed a joint meeting of Albany and Lodge Good Hope of Port Elizabeth the next year, giving cogent reasons why the existing Cape Town Provincial Grand Lodge should confine its jurisdiction to the Western Province and a new Eastern Provincial Grand Lodge be formed. Star in the East, Queenstown, concurred and a petition for a separate Eastern Province Grand Lodge began its rounds. Meanwhile Southey singled out Albany as the ringleader of the "rebellious" lodges which, he alleged, were not paying their dues nor making returns of membership to Cape Town in protest at Cape Town rule. A meeting of the English Provincial Grand Lodge in Cape Town on 12 Apr. 1868 resolved to summon the representatives of the lodges which had not made returns nor paid fees, to appear at a meeting on 15 Jul.

⁵ T.G. Saunders: History of Midland Lodge 1862 - 1922, p.16.

⁶ Cranstoun-Day: History of British Lodge, p. 108.

in Cape Town to show cause why they should not be suspended for contumacy. Southey's instruction was ingenuous as the Albany master, R.E. Rushby, pointed out in a letter to Grand Lodge of England. To attend this summons in Cape Town would take Albany representatives three weeks at a cost of £50 at least to cover the 200 miles by road to Port Elizabeth and back, and the 1000 miles of sea to Cape Town and back. Rushby told London of the languishing of Freemasonry in the Eastern Province under Southey's rule and the desire for an eastern provincial grand lodge, or, alternatively, for direct rule by Grand Lodge.⁷

Delegates from eastern lodges met at St. John's lodge, Grahamstown in January 1869 and a draft petition was prepared stating that Grahamstown as the most central position should be the seat of the proposed eastern provincial grand lodge. But the separatists were quiet for a few months, watching the trials of Albany Lodge which had been singled out by Southey for punishment. As Southey had warned, Albany was suspended for contumacy on 23 May, 1869 but the five other Eastern Province lodges made submission. After this shock, Albany's master, the forceful "dominant ... and also unlucky" Rushby, persuaded members to sever their ties with the English Constitution and apply for a warrant from the Grand Lodge of Scotland. They contacted John Saunders, founder of Scottish Freemasonry

⁷ Drury: Albany Lodge, pp. 31 - 32; Cranstoun-Day: Lodge Goodwill, pp. 34 - 35.

in the Cape, who had an understandable ambition to establish more Scottish lodges. After forming Southern Cross in 1860 and Royal Alfred, Simonstown in May 1862 he had moved into Natal and encouraged the start of Caledonia, Durban on 7 Aug. 1865.

Rushby's approach in July 1869 suited Saunders who transmitted Albany's application for a Scottish charter to the Grand Lodge of Scotland and meanwhile granted it dispensation to begin working. The Charter was granted on 2 Aug. 1869. Rushby, a jeweller, is alleged to have melted down some of the original heavy silver jewels of office of the English lodge and formed them into those for a Scottish lodge.⁸ While his new lodge failed to attract candidates, its existence created a split between the English and Scottish Constitutions. Rushby's collaborator, Saunders, was taken to task by the English Provincial Grand Lodge in Cape Town who pointed out the grave irregularity he had committed by forwarding Albany's application to Scotland when it had been suspended by the English Provincial Grand Lodge for non-payment of dues. Saunders admitted he had used his influence with Scotland to have the petition granted but he undertook not to forward Albany's charter when it arrived in Cape Town until both English and Scottish Grand Lodges had considered Albany's position. However, his territorial ambitions were apparently too strong for,

⁸ E.W. Stoyell: Scottish Freemasonry in South Africa, pp. 9 - 11; Drury: Albany Lodge, p.33

in September, an enraged English Provincial Grand Lodge in Cape Town heard that Saunders had sent the new charter directly to Albany "in breach of his promise". The Provincial Grand Lodge in a circular of 19 Aug. 1870 set out Saunders' and Rushby's actions and added that "thus suddenly confronted and affronted, felt itself constrained to vindicate its authority . . . and forthwith suspend all communication with the Brethren of the Scottish Constitution".⁹ Saunders and his Scottish masons then found themselves masonic outcasts. But the edict that English masons should not visit Scottish lodges or chapters proved impractical, particularly as many masons were members of lodges or chapters under different constitutions. The difficulties were outlined by the British Lodge master, William Johnson, who asked Provincial Grand Lodge a series of conundrums on the matter. How could the ban be applied when, for instance, an English mason was a member of a Scottish "high" degree chapter, or of a Scottish lodge? Would a member of a Scottish chapter be denied admission to an English lodge of which he was a member? The situation became farcical when the acting English Provincial Grand Secretary, J. Ball, wrote to British Lodge and the master, Johnson, refused to reply as Ball was a member of a Scottish chapter, claiming rightly the edict precluded communication with a Scottish mason.¹⁰

⁹ DGMN: Letters Received Apr. 1870 - Dec. 1870,
District Grand Lodge English Constitution,
Circular 19 Aug. 1870.

¹⁰ Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, pp. 101 - 102.

stimulated the Western Province.
 The cause of the split, Albany Scottish Lodge, found
 itself friendless. By June 1870, nine lodges all to
 supported its application, recanted, following a threat
 of erasure by English Grand Lodge. After only one meeting
 published in Port Elizabeth with Frederick
 in August, Albany Scottish Lodge closed, several of its
 members leaving Grahamstown in the Diamond Fields rush in
 1870. Among them was Rushby who took with him the lodge
 jewels which were recovered later. Of the remaining
 members 10 tendered submission on 24 Nov. 1870 to the
 English Provincial Grand Lodge and the Scottish Charter
 was returned to Scotland but the suspension was only
 removed in Feb. 1871. After some effort the English
 Lodge Albany was reopened in December that year.
 Yet the initial suspension of Albany was imposed
 under a misapprehension, acknowledged later by the
 English Provincial Grand Lodge. For some reason, its
 secretary, W. Rufus Ellis (1867-1869) had suppressed
 letters, presumably the returns and dues, from Albany
 Lodge which, if recorded, would have put that lodge in
 good standing and removed any threat of action against it.
 As a result, Ellis was expelled from Freemasonry in 1870
 for "serious neglect and irregularity" and imperilling
 the position of the embarrassed Provincial Grand Lodge.
 The announcement of the misdoings of the Provincial

Drury: Albany Lodge, p. 33; Stoyell: Scottish
 Freemasonry, pp. 11 - 12; Cranstoun-Day:
 British Lodge, p. 101.

12 Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, pp. 100 - 101, 194.

for, because of the pressure of his official duties, Southey had been unable to give the necessary time to his position as Provincial Grand Master for South Africa. Conditions in his masonic district had become chaotic but he did not resign as Provincial Grand Master until 1879.¹³

Further delays occurred when, in November 1873, Grand Lodge informed the eastern petitioners that the warrant establishing a new Eastern Province District Grand Lodge could not be signed as the Grand Master, Earl of Zetland, had resigned in 1870 and his successor, the Prince of Wales, was in India. It was suggested the matter be held over but the exasperated Eastern lodges expressed their dissatisfaction with the "rule of the West" by petitioning London successfully to be released from the jurisdiction of Cape Town and placed directly under London.¹⁴

The English separatist movement now spread northwards. Three new lodges on the Diamond Fields - Cosmopolitan (Kimberley, 1872), Octahedron (Barkly West, 1872) and Richard Giddy (Kimberley, July 1875) petitioned Grand Lodge on 22 Nov. 1875 "for local

13

Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, p. 108; Drury:

Albany Lodge, p. 34; Cranstoun-Day: Goodwill,
p. 36.

14

Cranstoun-Day: Goodwill Lodge, pp. 36 - 37;

Drury: Albany Lodge, p. 34.

self-government and release from the District Grand Lodge of South Africa" to form a northern District Grand Lodge to include Griqualand, Orange Free State, Transvaal and Natal.¹⁵ Their territorial demands clashed with those made by the eastern lodges but Grand Lodge recommended that Griqualand and Port Elizabeth have separate districts "as the latter area had long agitated for a separate district". It suggested the Northern District include Griqualand West, Transvaal, Orange Free State and Natal and pointed out that Cape Town had four English lodges, Natal 5, Griqualand 4 and the Eastern Province 16.¹⁶

The underlying reason for the Grand Lodge agreeing to this separation was given in a memo from Lord Carnarvon, the Pro-Grand Master, to the Grand Master, Prince of Wales, dated 9 Dec. 1875, in which he wrote: "It is not fair to insist upon Cape Town being the sole centre of masonic activity". A separate District Grand Lodge for Griqualand West, Transvaal, Orange Free State and Natal was essential. Carnarvon hoped that "the English element scattered through the Dutch states is strong enough, if incorporated in one District Grand

¹⁵ FMH: DGL Eastern Division Letter File; Petition to Grand Lodge 22 Oct. 1875; DGL Central Division Annual Report 22 May, 1976; R.C. Cowie: History of Central Division, pp. 20 - 21.

¹⁶ FMH: Grand Lodge Letters, Grand Secretary to Giddy, 21 Dec. 1875.

Master into three districts. "This division took me by surprise. The feeling in the east and northern lodges about the division is not unanimous .. many lodges oppose it", he wrote to Grand Lodge on 2 Jul. 1877 and offered his resignation as a result. A year later he resigned and handed over to Charles Aken Fairbridge on 19 June 1879 the post of District Grand Master Western Division, an area of jurisdiction greatly reduced compared to his original authority.²¹

The Eastern Division, with 19 lodges, functioned from 1 Jan. 1877 under Egan and by 1880 returned 848 members. Griqualand West with 4 lodges was placed under Giddy whose patent was dated 30 Mar. 1876. This district became extinct in 1882 and was incorporated into the Central Division set up on 22 Oct. 1895. It included Griqualand West and the Protectorate of Bechuanaland. Natal was constituted as a district in 1883.

The hoped-for movement northwards by the English constitution across the Vaal, however, did not materialise until 1878 when the Transvaal Lodge was established in Pretoria after which no other lodge appeared until 1889 when lodges were warranted at Johannesburg, Zeerust and Klerksdorp. Only in 1895 was a Transvaal district for the English Constitution set up.²²

²¹ FMH: DGL Western Division, Letters Received;

Southey to Grand Lodge, 2 Jul. 1877; FMH:
DGL Western Division, Letters Received;
Southey to Grand Lodge, 7 Aug. 1878;
Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, p. 114.

²² Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, p. 111.

Dutch Unification and the United Grand Lodge of South Africa Movement.

Against this background of division among English lodges there arose moves by some Dutch lodges to unify rather than separate. Unification meant to them the formation of a United Grand Lodge of South Africa to control the fortunes of all English, Dutch, and Scottish lodges in the Cape, the Orange Free State, the South African Republic and Griqualand West, with the Dutch element dominant. Brand's travels northwards in the 1870s which had aroused masonic enthusiasm wherever he went, were a spur to this movement but an equally important factor was the fear that British political moves towards a confederation of states in South Africa might tend to bring Dutch masonry under English control and its language and rituals be submerged as a result. None of Brand's voluminous correspondence in the early 1870s gave open support to this unification movement for his earlier battles to obtain full recognition of Dutch Freemasonry in the Cape had led him to maintain cautious, friendly relations with the English masonic establishment which, in the Cape, through Southey, was linked to the political hierarchy. Some lodges under Brand's control were not so diplomatic, writing to him to advocate unification and resist attempts at provincial organisation.

"The time has arrived to establish a Grand East [Grand Lodge] in the colony which might embrace the different lodges working at present under the different

Grand Easts. The money sent overseas to various Grand Lodges would be kept in the Colony for education and welfare", wrote a Dutch lodge, Harmony, Richmond, to Brand in September, 1870.²³ This was the first recorded mention of the unity movement.

In 1871 Brand asked his lodges in the Orange Free State and the Transvaal if they wanted a provincial grand lodge for the north. But they were opposed to splintering. Aurora Lodge, Pretoria, replied they wanted to stay under the Dutch Provincial Grand Lodge in Cape Town: "We are fearfully against anything to do with the Free State. If an Orange Free State Provincial Grand Lodge is established then the Transvaal will want one. Both Flaming Star (Potchefstroom) and Aurora will cease to exist and English lodges will be established in their place".²⁴

The unification issue so far as the Dutch lodges were concerned was quiet for some years for the exodus to the diamond and gold fields had depleted membership and even closed down some lodges while the change in leadership when Brand resigned in 1874 brought uncertainty. "Enterprising brethren left their towns

²³ DGMN: Letters Received, Apr. 1870 - Dec. 1870; Harmony Lodge, Richmond, Extract of Minutes in Letter 7 Sept. 1870.

²⁴ DGMN: Letters Sent Jan. 1871 - Dec. 1871; Circular Feb. 1871; DGMN: Letters Received, Jan. 1871 - Dec. 1871; Aurora Lodge, 7 Jan. 1871, 8 Jan. 1871.

and districts to seek their fortunes at the 'Fields', and lodges and chapters deprived of their presence and influence, became moribund and eventually defunct", recorded Christian Silberbauer, Deputy Grand Master for the Netherlandic High Degrees in 1930. He referred in retrospect to the problems which had faced the then newly-appointed Deputy Grand Master National for the Dutch Craft degrees, Jan Hendrik Hofmeyr who succeeded Brand after the latter had resigned following a serious illness.

"Hofmeyr's official duties as Master of the Supreme Court chained him to his desk and prevented him from visiting rural centres nor was he backed by the organisation existing today [1930] ... Even with that support he could not have stopped the inevitable landslide", wrote Silberbauer referring to the weakening of Dutch lodges in the 1870s.²⁵

An English lodge, Joppa, warranted in May 1861 in Cape Town, took the next initiative towards a United Grand Lodge of South Africa when it issued a circular in Feb. 1875 to all lodges claiming the "time has arrived for taking steps with a view of establishing a Grand Lodge of South Africa as a means of uniting the masons under the various constitutions in the Colony and adjacent states" and to retain funds then sent overseas. Its committee produced detailed statistics of the state of the Craft - somewhat misleading as it omitted the two

²⁵ Inaugural Address Settlers Rose Croix Chapter,
Grahamstown, 22 Nov. 1930, p. 15.

existing Scottish lodges, Southern Cross and Royal Alfred. It listed eleven lodges in the Western Province, eight Dutch and three English; fourteen in the Eastern Province, eleven English and three Dutch; eight in the Midland Province, four English and four Dutch; five in the Free State, three Dutch and two English; two in the South African Republic, both Dutch, and three in Griqualand West, two English and one Dutch. The 22 English lodges had 1167 members and the 21 Dutch 1114. In all they sent to their respective Grand Lodges in England and Holland about £559 yearly. By contributing a little more and ending remittances overseas, South African masons would be able to afford their own Grand Lodge, Joppa claimed. Another £500 would be needed to maintain it and a further £1278 should be set aside for benevolence.²⁶

The circular was a signal for renewed distrust between English and Dutch masons, the leading lodges rejecting Joppa's suggestions for differing reasons. The oldest English Lodge, British, disdainfully resolved in March 1875 that, having every confidence in the present government of the Craft under the constitution of England it "fails to see any good cause for throwing off its allegiance to the Grand Lodge of England nor the necessity of establishing a Grand East in the Colony".²⁷

²⁶ DGMN: Letters Received, Apr. 1871 - 1875;
Joppa Lodge Circular 25 Feb. 1875; ACC 731,1/1/14,
DGH Minutes, 31 Mar. 1875.

²⁷ Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, p. 105.

Soon afterwards, the senior Dutch Lodge, De Goede Hoop, in a circular, pointed out that Dutch lodges would be placed under a great disadvantage by adopting the scheme for a South African Grand Lodge. They were "more likely to augment their field of usefulness by adhering to the Grand East of Holland with its minimum cost of government". It suggested that the constitutions should form a joint organisation to handle charitable cases. It criticised contributions suggested by Joppa Lodge needed by lodges under a United Grand Lodge of South Africa. For a lodge with 100 members, dues would rise from £7.42 to £64.4, impossible for lodges to meet.²⁸

The District Grand Master of the new Griqualand West English Division, Richard W.H. Giddy, saw the issue in a different light. He wrote to Grand Lodge that there was a movement begun by Dutch masons to set up an independent Grand Lodge for lodges of all constitutions in South Africa: "This independence scheme has been heartily taken up by Dutch lodges ... they see plainly its success would throw all power into Dutch hands ... perhaps a Grand Lodge of South Africa would be possible after South Africa becomes a federation of British colonies", he added, echoing Carnarvon's words.²⁹

²⁸ DGH Lodge: Correspondence 1876 -1884, Circular 1876.

²⁹ FMH: Letter File on Division of Districts in South Africa; Giddy to Grand Secretary, 27 Sept. 1875.

Joppa Lodge still persisted in its scheme for a United Grand Lodge and arranged a meeting at the Athenaeum Hall, Cape Town in November 1876 to discuss it. As Southey was residing in Kimberley the English Deputy District Grand Master of the Western Division, C.A. Fairbridge, presided over a gathering of some 200. The question before them, he said, was to decide whether or not masons in South Africa "had not attained that stability and were not sufficiently numerous and powerful to be entitled to claim supervision of their own affairs independently of the control of the Grand Lodge ... as we in the Cape have taken upon ourselves Responsible Government in political affairs so the masonic fraternity, or, at all events, a great portion of them thought the time had arrived for taking upon themselves the responsibility of self-government". Fairbridge added that a mason at the Cape should be able to travel without suffering those inconveniences which existed at present "owing to certain differences in English and Dutch lodges". It was unfortunate, he said, that the unification move had begun at a time when Lord Carnarvon as Pro-Grand Master had divided the English masonic area into three sections, each of which was hardly likely to give up its independence, a reference to the formation of the three English districts, Western, Eastern and Griqualand West in 1876.

It was suggested at the Cape Town meeting that the three Craft degrees and the "side" degree, the Royal Arch, be under the English constitution and from the

Royal Arch to the 33rd "high" degree under the Dutch - "a compromise and concession to both sides", said Fairbridge.

Proponents of the movement for autonomy, mainly English masons, argued that money sent overseas could be better used for charitable works at home while differences in ritual could be settled. The discussion finally concentrated on finances of a proposed grand lodge. This Fairbridge deplored. There were more important issues than money at stake: "Masonry had since its inception become the defender of civil and religious liberty. In the Cape at present there was a system of persecution being got up against us" [by the N.G. Kerk] and unity was necessary, he pointed out.

Eventually it was decided to set up a committee to make further financial investigation.³⁰ But, because of the opposition of the two senior lodges, the British and De Goede Hoop, the issue was not taken further at that time. It did have some effect, however, in pushing the English secessionists in the east and north into consolidating their new district lodges. One of the incentives hastening speedy agreement on the formation of an English Eastern Province District Grand Lodge at the November 1876 conference in Grahamstown was a resolution, carried unanimously, that Grand Lodge should stop any effort that may be made by a "small portion of the Craft in the Western Province to obtain a

³⁰ Cape Times: 1 Dec. 1876; Cape Argus: 2 Dec. 1876.

Grand Lodge for South Africa". The conference "felt the best interests of masonry in this District would be served by continuing its allegiance to the Grand Lodge of England". The resolution referred to the circular from Joppa Lodge which was not represented at the Grahamstown conference.³¹

The move towards a United Grand Lodge of South Africa was thus opposed by the three new English districts, each anxious to preserve its new independence. The Dutch lodges on the other hand, missing the strong leadership of Brand who died in 1875, and influenced by political events in the two northern republics, passed into a state of vacillation, their links with their Cape Town headquarters weakened. As a consequence, in the late 1870s Netherlandic Freemasonry languished and in the Western Cape itself several Dutch lodges returned their charters to the Netherlands Grand Lodge and obtained new ones from the English Grand Lodge.

While in office Brand had been personally responsible, through his enthusiasm, for creating 18 new lodges. Those at Burghersdorp, George, Stellenbosch and Bloemfontein were chartered in 1863 to add to the three existing Dutch lodges - De Goede Hoop, De Goede Trouw and De Vereeniging. After that, lodges were formed at Willowmore in 1865, at Potchefstroom, Colesberg, Malmesbury and Paarl in 1866, at Richmond and Adelaide in 1869, at Kroonstad in 1870, at Smithfield and Pniel in 1871 and Swellendam in 1872. Only one of these

³¹ DGL Eastern Division: Minutes Conference Grahamstown, 15 to 17 Nov. 1876.

18 new lodges, St. Jan, Malmesbury, has had a continuous existence. Of the others, four were revived and are active today. In a tribute to Brand, Bate writes: "This failure of the lodges did not take place during Brand's term of office nor was it due to any fault of his successor [Hofmeyr]".³²

After 1876.

Masonic relations in the late 19th century were dominated by two major issues - the legality of the Grand East of the Netherlands in the Cape and the proposed United Grand Lodge of South Africa. In 1892, the Grand Lodge of England surprisingly ruled that the Grand East of the Netherlands had no power to grant warrants for new lodges in the Cape, despite its clear injunction in 1867 that the 1770 Convention, which forbade encroaching, did not apply to South Africa. "To do so would be an act of masonic warfare" it decreed and only the Grand Lodge of England had that authority.³³ After some argument the issue was settled for a time, but it reappeared again in 1901, reflecting the Anglo-Boer hostility of the period. It eventually became submerged in the second issue - that of a United Grand Lodge for

³² De Goede Hoop Lodge, p. 102.

³³ Netherlandic PGL in South Africa: Annual Meeting,

Provincial Grand Master's Report, 25 Aug. 1893.

South Africa. In Oct. 1892 a conference of heads of constitutions was called at Kimberley to discuss unity but the Dutch Provincial Grand Lodge strongly opposed the English proposals, again fearing the loss of its independence. However by 1910 the unity movement gained strength, backed by the Masonic Journal of South Africa which collected more than 1000 signatures of support. Lord De Villiers of Wynberg "who had guided the South African National Convention to political union and welded the four colonies into a solid whole" was suggested by the journal as the first Grand Master of a United South African Grand Lodge.³⁴

But despite political union, none of the masonic hierarchy would give up its independence. Again in August 1955, in Bloemfontein heads of the four constitutions - English, Dutch, Irish and Scottish - met to discuss the issue but decided the time still had not yet come for a change in their masonic status.³⁵

When South Africa became a Republic in 1961, the issue came up again but this time it was modified. The Netherlandic lodges decided to set up their own Grand Lodge, hoping this would act as a catalyst to a united authority in the new South African Republic.

³⁴ Masonic Journal of South Africa: 31 Dec. 1911.

³⁵ Conference District and Provincial Grand Masters of English, Irish and Scottish Constitutions and the Grand East of Netherlands in South Africa, Bloemfontein: Report 1 and 2 Aug. 1955, p.6.

CHAPTER VII

THE SOCIAL AND PUBLIC ACTIVITIES OF THE FREEMASONS

Freemasons in the Cape in the 18th and 19th centuries played a significant role in the society of their times. Their activities as masons co-existed with their duties as citizens. They were masons as well as being lawyers, doctors, tradesmen and government servants. Their influence on the communities can be seen in several fields - political, educational and social.

Political.

In terms of power, their holding of high position in successive Dutch, British, Batavian and finally British governments surely enabled them to predispose the administration in favour of the Craft, though as said earlier, the Batavian and British administrations appreciated the unifying influence of Freemasonry and readily permitted its practice. This official attitude to the Craft changed to some extent in the 1860s and 1870s following the emergence of open rivalry between the expanding Dutch and English masonic branches. Even then, the importance of the Craft in the political sphere was underlined by the appointment of Sir Richard Southey, Colonial Secretary, as English Provincial Grand Master in 1863 and the long rule of Sir Christoffel Brand, Speaker of the House of Assembly, as Deputy Grand Master National of the Dutch lodges from 1847 - 1874.

If the strength of a movement is determined by the strength of its leaders, then Freemasonry began to

decline as an influential body in political affairs consequent on several events. Brand resigned as Deputy Grand Master National in 1874 to be succeeded by J.H. Hofmeyr, Master of the Supreme Court, who was unable to travel around his area of jurisdiction as frequently as Brand did and therefore unable to keep up support in lodges. Again, the unsettled state of South Africa to the north prevented him from consolidating his masonic province of South Africa. English Freemasonry lost much of its force when it was divided into three districts in 1876, each with its own District Grand Master, each eager to extend his territory.

Relief and Education

One of the principal aims of Freemasonry since its inception had been to provide relief for the widows of masons and education of the children. Masons in the Cape had early set out to put this into effect. From the start of De Goede Hoop Lodge in 1772, there was a general rule that, at all meetings, poor masons should be assisted and the indigent cared for through donations. Fees levied for degrees included a contribution to the poor while one-third of fines charged for breaches of discipline went to the Deacon of the Poor and the balance to the Dutch Reformed Church and the Lutheran Community.¹ This contribution to the churches apparently disappeared after the second British occupation.

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O.H. Bate: De Goede Hoop, p. 22.

As other lodges were formed, each set up its own widows' and orphans' funds to assist masonic families directly while some contributed to the Orphans Asylum which was founded in Cape Town in 1814.²

In the early 1800s there was concern both in public and private circles about the state of education in the colony, an inheritance of the rule of the Dutch East India Company. Despite a century of occupation the Company had not introduced secondary schooling though it did pay elementary school teachers, who were chosen not necessarily for their educational qualifications by the Dutch Reformed Church Council.³ But these schools were not generally supported by parents while those who could afford it employed private tutors for their children. In 1791 a move began to establish "good" schools at each church and seat of magistracy and also to set up a high school in Cape Town, a Latin High School, which failed in 1793.⁴

Under the Batavian regime the Commissary-General Abraham De Mist put forward his progressive plan for education. In a report in 1802 containing recommendations for the form and administration of government at the Cape, De Mist expressed his horror at

² G.M. Theal: History of South Africa, Vol.V, pp. 284-288.

³ M. Whiting Spilhaus: South Africa in the Making, 1652 - 1806, p. 111.

⁴ Theal: History of South Arrica, Vol.IV, p. 262.

at the complacency of the colonists without education who watched their children grow up without schooling. He outlined schemes for teacher training colleges, secondary schools and schools for girls. School boards should be reorganised taking them away from control of the church and placing them in the government's hands.⁵ But no public funds were available for his plans and the sporadic birth and death of private schools began again. The Dutch-based agricultural, cultural and educational society, Tot Nut Van Het Algemeen founded a "Tot Nut" school in Cape Town in January 1814. It declined in the 1830s through poor attendance but, on resuscitation, became the "premier education institution at the Cape " until its final dissolution in 1870.⁶ The halting progress of education in the Cape was exemplified by the numbers of schools registered. In 1809 there were one Latin and one English privileged school and five "ordinary Dutch schools".⁷ Six years later the 1815 Cape Almanack recorded that the Latin school had been temporarily eclipsed. There were then three English schools, one for "Teaching Mathematics", six Dutch schools and one Dutch and English Free School.⁸

⁵ Spilhaus: S.A. in the Making, pp. 367 - 368.

⁶ W. Tyrrell-Glynn: Early Cape Libraries, book Collections and establishment of S.A. Public Library, p. 35.

⁷ Cape Almanack, 1809, p. 13.

⁸ Cape Almanack, 1815, pp. 13, 14.

The Freemasons shared this public concern about the lack of educational facilities and were prominent in trying to remedy it. In 1813 a Freemasons' Education Fund was established by the Effective or full Members - the shareholders of the lodge's property - of De Goede Hoop Lodge. The motivation for the lodge's own education fund apparently arose from the government's earlier announcement to set up a committee to establish a free school and to seek support by private subscription. Sir John Cradock, then Governor, was head of the government committee and headed the list of subscriptions for the free school with 1000 rix dollars (about R250). Masonic lodges also contributed - De Goede Hoop 400 rix dollars, De Goede Trouw 650 rix dollars and British Lodge 350 rix dollars.⁹ The longer-established Dutch lodges were obviously more affluent. De Goede Hoop's own education fund submitted rules for its operation in September 1813 to the lodge which were approved and the lodge fund began with a total of 3000 rix dollars of which De Goede Hoop contributed 200 rix dollars.

The fund also sought support from the public. Sir John Cradock gave 300 rix dollars and his wife 200 rix dollars while the Orphan Chamber also contributed.¹⁰ Lists were published weekly and on 23 Nov. 1814 the government press carried an announcement that an

⁹ Bate: De Goede Hoop, p. 52.

¹⁰ Bate: De Goede Hoop, p. 53.

institution "established by this Fund will be opened at the beginning of next year, 1815, in the House No. 8. standing in Bloem Street". The architect, Anton Anreith, a mason, was to be in charge, assisted by J.G. Blankenberg, and children were to be taught "Arithmetic, Geometry, Architecture, Drawing and Modelling". The school would also teach "higher degrees in science and trades". Those who could afford to pay would do so, those who could not would pay two-thirds or less.¹¹ The fund's first published report in 1815 showed it had invested 7500 rix dollars at 6 per cent and it had loaned, among other sums, 2475 rix dollars "for the use of a young promising native of the colony now studying the laws at Leyden" - Christoffel Josephus Brand, who was to become Deputy Grand Master National of the Dutch Constitution in 1847.¹²

In August 1819, De Goede Hoop Lodge advertised a public meeting to hear a report on its education fund and, after that, a new subscription list was opened. Later another list was opened, headed by the then Governor, Lord Charles and Lady Somerset. It included donations from Dutch Reformed Church members.¹³ The

¹¹ ACC 731, 6/1/2/1, De Goede Hoop Education Fund
Letters Received 1813 - 1819; Newspaper Clipping
23 Nov. 1814.

¹² ACC 731, 6/1/2/1, De Goede Hoop Education Fund
Letters Received 1813 - 1819; Newspaper Clipping
20 Nov. 1815.

¹³ Bate: De Goede Hoop, p. 53.

institution failed when Anreith died in 1822 and the fund committee "resolved to employ the revenue of the fund in aid of university education as it has been of great aid in promoting the studies of young colonists in Theology, Law and Medicine".¹⁴

When the South African College was started in 1829 under the chairmanship of Sir J.A. Truter, members of the fund took part in the preliminary meeting and offered £50 a year to assist in meeting expenses. All masonic lodges opened subscription lists which were also held at the S.A. Library, the Commercial Exchange and banks.¹⁵

To raise money to meet these commitments several Effective Members pledged their shares in De Goede Hoop property to the fund. The lodge owned a large portion of Garden Domburg bought from George Mulder in 1800. Measuring "one morgen 273 square roods 52 ft.," the property was bounded on the east by Bouquet Street, on the south by St. John Street, on the north by the Government gardens and on the west by "Mr. Barrange's Garden".¹⁶

¹⁴ ACC 731, 6/1/1/1 DGH: Education Fund Committee Minutes Jan. 1848 - Aug. 1899; Declaration by Committee to DGH, 24 Feb. 1871, p.21.

¹⁵ SAC Archives: Vol. 1828 - 1829, Letter DGH Fund, 21 Jan. 1829.

¹⁶ ACC 731, 5/2, Shareholders Register DGH, Surveyor's Map and description Garden Domburg, Feb. 1833.

In 1839 by permission of the then Governor, Sir George Napier, members were allowed to take out shares in the property which included the temple and Society Rooms.¹⁷ Only 36 individual shares were to be allowed to the joint owners, who were all to be Effective Members of the lodge. When pledged to the lodge's Education Fund, these shares were redeemed by regular payments. For instance, Sir Johannes Andreas Truter gave in all 4211 rix dollars to the fund which held his 1/36 share. The shares were used as surety for mortgage bonds pledged to the Education Fund. The first recorded bond to be raised was for £330 in 1841.¹⁸ But the problem of obtaining payments from Effective Members through this method caught up with the fund's directors and soon their earlier promises could not be met. The South African College asked on 2 Jul. 1844 for its promised annual contribution "as the college stands in great need of the assistance so liberally afforded by the committee".¹⁹ Receiving no reply it again asked the following year

¹⁷ ACC 731, 5/2: Shareholders Register DGH; Governor's Reply to Lodge's request, 21.Aug. 1839.

¹⁸ DGH Treasurer's Receipts and Payments 1841 - 1846; Memorandum on Bond 1845; ACC 731, 6/1/4/1, DGH: Education Fund Loan Account 1816 - 1848, p.9.

¹⁹ ACC 731, 6/1/2/2: DGH Education Fund Letters Received 1820 - 1852; S.A. College to Fund 2 Jul. 1844.

for its donation as it was being pressed by the Colonial Government for repayment on a loan.²⁰ It was only told in 1847 that the fund had already decided to discontinue its donation of £50 a year but would pay its arrears of £200 for 1843 to 1846. For some reason the fund did not pay until the South African College issued a writ to obtain the balance, finally paid on 5 May, 1848.²¹

Brand, in the chair of the De Goede Hoop fund from 1848, signed a declaration made to the Effective Members of De Goede Hoop on 24 Feb. 1871 that the fund's committee could not operate because of lack of members and that the funds, by now very low, must revert back to the Effective Members. However he could boast that many "young colonists owed to it [the Fund] the position they afterwards occupied in one or the other of the professions". The fund previously had operated by making loans of part of its capital without interest for a period of years, the capital to be repaid on completion of studies. But some losses had been sustained and it was thus decided, on his suggestion, to change the method of employing the fund. The capital would be invested and only the interest would be used

²⁰ ACC 731,6/1/2/2: DGH Education Fund Letters Received
1820- 1852, S.A.College to Fund, 16 Feb. 1845.

²¹ ACC 731,6/1/2/2: DGH Education Fund Letters Received
1820- 1852, Receipt S.A.College to Fund, 5 May, 1848.

annually to pay school fees of children or orphans of masons in needy circumstances. The fund's committee had not from its inception, nor with this change, limited itself to helping only children or orphans of masons but was ready to help any deserving cases, he pointed out.²²

Prior to this De Goede Hoop Lodge members had felt in 1869 that "more solid provision should be made for the relief of poor masons and their families and the education of their children than at present exists in this Province".²³ They suggested to their Provincial Grand Lodge that an approach should be made to the English Provincial Grand Lodge to co-operate in the creation of a permanent fund for this purpose. At first the English masons refused, claiming that they already sent donations to masonic schools and institutions in England but, in August 1870, the English Provincial Grand Lodge nominated a committee to confer with the Dutch committee to discuss a preliminary scheme to establish a Widows and Orphans Fund and also a school for orphans and children of masons in Cape Town.²⁴ The joint committee circularised its recommendations in 1870 to

²² ACC 731, 6/1/1/1: DGH Education Fund Minutes Jan. 1848 - Aug. 1899, Declaration by Committee to DGH, 24 Feb. 1871.

²³ Netherlands PGL of South Africa: Annual Meeting, 13 Aug. 1869; Circular from Joint Committee 6 Aug. 1869.

²⁴ Netherlands PGL of South Africa: Letters Received 1868-1871, English PGL to PGL 24 Jan. 1870.

all lodges but, for the next 10 years, because of continuing economic depressions and political upset, few lodges would, or could, contribute towards setting up this fund.

Meanwhile De Goede Hoop Lodge continued its educational assistance through its own fund. By 1878 it could boast of assets of £1426, giving aid to needy children - whether of masons or not, for three years at a time.²⁵

The Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria in 1887 gave the needed impetus to the movement among all masonic constitutions to form a general education fund for South Africa.²⁶ Several regional funds today exist for this purpose.

Social Life

The focal point of social life in the late 18th and early 19th century for masons, and many non-masons, was the Lodge De Goede Hoop's Society Rooms, a building attached to the main lodge. As early as 1794, these rooms offered recreation and relaxation - meals, a library, billiards, bowls, skittles and "Kolf" played on a small course in the grounds. But all games of chance were prohibited. Similar facilities were offered when the lodge moved to its new property in the Garden Domburg on Bouquet Street in 1803.

There were few other facilities in Cape Town for

²⁵ ACC 731,6/1/1/1: Education Fund Committee Minutes
Jul. 1878.

²⁶ Masonic Education Fund of S.A. Annual Report,
27 June, 1890

men to meet for serious discussion or recreation. One of the earliest social clubs was the Society Concordia in Concordia Gardens on Bouquet Street. Founded in 1797, it offered meals and a small library but the members "principally drank, smoked and gamed".²⁷ In the first British occupation in 1795 the African Clubhouse in the Heerengracht, another exclusive social body, was formed, later to change its name to Society Harmony. It also offered a library, billiards, cards and meals. It became particularly important during the Batavian regime, allowing only the influential as its members. Among them were such prominent masons as P.B. Borchers.²⁸

After the second British occupation in 1806, Cape Town could boast of other clubs, the New Clubhouse, Union Club and De Vriendschap. All had limited membership.²⁹ While several masons were members of these clubs, the majority supported the De Goede Hoop Society Rooms which grew in importance with the passing years, particularly as members often met three to four times a week for lodge business and adjourned afterwards to the rooms for evening refreshment and relaxation or used the society facilities at weekends.

The golf "course" and bowling green at De Goede

²⁷ J. Barrow: Travels into Interior of Southern Africa, Vol.II, p. 98.

²⁸ P.B. Borchers: Autobiographical Memoirs, p.23.

²⁹ Tyrrell-Glynn: Early Cape Libraries, p. 34.

Hoop Lodge created much interest and, after the first quarter of the 19th century, periodical golf matches were held followed by beefsteak dinners. A floating trophy of a silver golf club was awarded but so enthusiastic had this game been taken up that, in 1848, its playing on Sunday was prohibited.³⁰ The golf "course" was in effect a pitch and putt course, the only course of its kind in the environs of Cape Town. De Goede Trouw and British Lodges, both of which owned land on Bouquet Street, followed De Goede Hoop's example and opened flourishing society rooms. While De Goede Hoop Lodge Society Rooms were open to guests, the lodge ensured privacy for members by holding "Society Days" on Thursdays and Saturdays. All Effective Members had to be present on one or both of these days or they were fined.³¹ The Society Rooms were rebuilt in 1814 at a cost of £4000 and included a large hall 104 ft. long and 20 ft. wide which later became the meeting place of the Cape House of Assembly for many years.³²

"Discord, disunion and animosity" among members led to the dissolution of the Society Rooms in 1834. But this seems to have been a device to get rid of some

³⁰ G. Botha: General History and Social Life of Cape of Good Hope, Lodge De Goede Hoop, p. 97.

³¹ Bate: De Goede Hoop, p. 37.

³² Bate: De Goede Hoop, p. 54. The Society Rooms stood almost on the present site of the Government Stationery Office.

undesirable members for, a month later, it was reformed, though under stricter regulations.³³ At the end of 1842 non-masons were admitted to membership of the Society and the lodge made admission to the Society an easy way of obtaining initiation. But by the end of the year membership was again restricted to masons, although non-masonic guests were still admitted.³⁴ The billiard room was however kept solely for use of members who individually bought shares in the "Biljard Tafel".³⁵

Use of the Society Rooms was offered to members of the House of Assembly when the Assembly met in the hall from 30 June 1854. Parliament made alterations to the premises during its lease of the building up to 1874.³⁶ In the meantime the lodge opened its gardens to the public for promenade concerts and theatrical performances. The grounds were illuminated, a vegetable garden uprooted and gravelled and a stage erected while concerts were held until the end of 1875. Lodge members were issued with free vouchers while the public were charged a small entrance fee and proceeds went to charities.³⁷

³³ Bate: Lodge De Goede Hoop, p. 76.

³⁴ Bate: De Goede Hoop, p.82.

³⁵ DGH Treasurer's Receipts and Payments 1841-1846:
 Certificaats van Aandeel in de Biljard Tafel
 1843 - 1845.

³⁶ Bate: De Goede Hoop, p. 90.

³⁷ Bate: De Goede Hoop, p.99.

Other lodges - British and De Goede Trouw, for instance, were not so much in the public eye, not having the grounds to offer these recreational amenities. But their presence in Cape Town society did not go unnoticed by the public for, in common with De Goede Hoop, their members paraded through the streets every St. John the Baptist Day, 24 June, on the occasion of installation of their new master, or on public ceremonies.

For masons' families St. John's Day was also a time of entertainment after the new master had been installed. The first recorded festivity was on St. John's Day in 1775 when De Goede Hoop members held a concert to which ladies were admitted and the entertainment lasted to 4 a.m.³⁸ These concerts, followed at times by supper, were to become annual features on that day but, during the Dutch East India Company rule, apparently no dances were held. This changed under the first British occupation as a result of the presence of military lodges. Africa No.1. Lodge, formed by the 98th Regiment and others in 1798, held a masonic ball in 1801. Lady Anne Barnard on 4 Jan 1801 wrote to the Earl of Macartney: "Tomorrow there is a great Ball in town at which I don't appear nor any of the English ladys of fashion at the Cape whose husbands are not masons. There is much taste for masonry here". She complained that the married ladies

³⁸ Bate: De Goede Hoop, p.10.

had been invited, presumably as companions for the military, but not one non-mason husband.³⁹ When the British regiments departed, these functions ended and the social occasions for masons again became evenings at lodge society rooms or all-male banquets following masonic ceremonies. As military lodges returned with the second British occupation, masonic balls again became a feature, principally held by English lodges, both in Cape Town and the Eastern Province. A masonic "dress ball" was held by British Lodge in June 1844 at the George Hotel, 36 Heerengracht, setting a yearly pattern.⁴⁰ Lodge anniversaries were also occasions for jollity. British Lodge celebrated its jubilee on 9 Aug. 1861 with a Grand Ball which was described as "one of the gayest affairs that had ever taken place". Both Dutch and English masons attended and Sir Christoffel Brand, the Netherlandic Deputy Grand Master, gave an address.⁴¹

The masons' families were not forgotten. Entertainments for them included concerts, musical soirees and the inevitable suppers. Often the men dined in one room and their families in another.⁴²

Processions

From 1772 with the start of De Goede Hoop Lodge,

³⁹ T.N. Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, pp. 4 and 5 quoting Barnard.

⁴⁰ Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, p. 56.

⁴¹ S.A. Advertiser and Mail, 7 Aug. 1861.

⁴² Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, pp. 66, 76.

the public of Cape Town were able to view masonic processions through the town, from lodge to lodge or at public ceremonies. These occasions added colour to everyday life in the Cape as masons, in their various aprons and regalia and carrying banners and masonic implements, accompanied usually by regimental bands, paraded through the streets.

The inauguration of the English Provincial Grand Lodge in January 1829 illustrates the masonic pomp and ceremony of the time. Reporting on the event, the S.A. Commercial Advertiser of 21 Jan. 1829 gave a full description: "The Installation of the Provincial Grand Lodge for South Africa of the Ancient and Honourable Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons of England took place in the Temple of the Good Hope Lodge on Monday last, a day which will long remain in the memory of Masons as cementing an union of all Brethren in this part of the world, and tending to promote the best hope, and sublimest principles of the Craft as a day of Peace, Unanimity and Concord. The whole ceremony was conducted with so much order and regularity, that it gave pleasure and promised happiness to all. About 200 brethren were assembled in the Lodge by 11 o'clock when the ceremony commenced. Shortly after two, a deputation was sent to Government House for the purpose of introducing Their Excellencies, and a party of ladies - the friends of Lady Frances Cole - as distinguished visitors during a permitted interval, into the lodge. A party of soldiers lined the street from the Lodge to Government

House, and a Guard of Honour was appointed to receive His Excellency and Staff. The visitors were conducted into the Lodge and seated in front of the Grand Master, from which situation they commanded a view of the whole assembly, and seemed highly pleased with the novelty of that truly Masonic assembly. A neat and appropriate but short, oration being delivered by the Grand Secretary (Orator of the Hope Lodge) and an anthem sung by the Choristers, the distinguished party then retired, amid the acclamation of the Brethren, the band playing 'God Save the King'; they were attended back again to Government House in the same order, and with the same Honours".

About half past three the masonic procession was formed and proceeded to the D.R. Church. The band of the 72nd Regiment, led the assembly. Members, in their regalia, of The Hope, British, Union, De Goede Trouw and De Goede Hoop Lodge followed. Next came the band of the 98th Regiment. Masons carried a cornucopia, golden ewers and a polished cubical stone. Officers of the Provincial Grand Lodge preceded the Bible which was carried on a velvet cushion. Finally, flanked by the new banner and sword of the Provincial Lodge, came the English Provincial Grand Master, Sir John Truter and his deputy, J.H. Neethling.

"In this order the Brethren proceeded to Church, attended by part of the 98th Regiment to keep off the press of the multitude. On reaching the Church door, the Procession halted and opened out, receiving the

Grand Lodge through their lines, after which the other Lodges entered, according to seniority, and took the proper stations assigned to them. After the Brethren were seated, the Governor and his party arrived, and were received by the Grand Director of Ceremonies and the Stewards. Divine service was performed by Bro. the Rev. F. Fallows (H.M. Astronomer at the Cape), and a most suitable sermon for the occasions was preached by Bro. The Rev. B. Goodison (Chaplain to the Forces), the Grand Chaplain. The Procession afterwards left the Church in the same order as it entered and returned to the Lodge".

"During the whole of the important proceedings of the day, the most perfect order and harmony were observed, and every Brother participated in the delight which usually prevails on such occasion, but could, under no circumstances, be more eminently predominant than on the present". About 100 masons sat down to the banquet at 5 p.m. at 14 rix dollars per head. The Advertiser commented: "We are sorry to find that the badness of the dinner and wines was generally complained of".⁴³

Masons in full regalia were seen by the Cape Town public every St. John's Day, 24 June, as the traditional processions, following installations of new masters on that day, took place either within lodge grounds or through the streets from one lodge to another.

At De Goede Trouw, for instance, on St. John's Day "the band would range itself round the fountain.

⁴³ S.A. Commercial Advertiser, 21 Jan. 1829.

[at its lodge building in Concordia Garden erected in 1853]; the garden gaily decorated with flags ... the Sisters under the verandah and the children in their best bib and tuckers all bent on enjoyment". The installation ceremony began at 11 a.m. while outside the band played and refreshments were served. After the officers were invested, the temple doors were thrown open and the masons headed by the tyler, the outer guard of the lodge, armed with a drawn sword, perambulated the grounds to the "inspiring strains of the Freemasons March". The procession re-entered the temple and then the lodge adjourned to 7.30 p.m. The ladies were then invited inside the temple.⁴⁴

Another account of this colourful ceremony on St. John's Day - this time at British Lodge's premises, then on Roeland Street, is given by the S.A. Commercial Advertiser of 29 June, 1861. "In its grounds the Craft assembled, the 59th Regiment played, the ladies looked on, the masons paraded with their gay banners and gorgeous array, conspicuous among them being the crimson and gold of the young but flourishing Southern Cross. In the evening there was a dinner at the Masonic Hotel". The newspaper adds: "It is well known that, while Masonry cultivates and develops all the finer and nobler feelings of the heart, it does not forget the homage due to what are commonly called the creature comforts".⁴⁵

⁴⁴ F. Griesbach: History of De Goede Trouw, p. 20.

⁴⁵ S.A. Commercial Advertiser, 29 June 1861.

It was also customary in those years for masons to attend, and often officiate at, the laying of foundation stones of major public buildings in the Cape. The first recorded ceremony was the laying of the foundation stone of St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, the Scottish National Church, in Somerset Road, Cape Town on 24 Oct. 1827. The Dutch Deputy Grand Master National, Sir John Truter being absent, the seven lodges then in Cape Town - De Goede Hoop, The Hope, L'Esperance, De Goede Trouw, Union, British and Military 354, decided to form a temporary provincial grand lodge. The deputy master of De Goede Hoop, G.H. Maasdorp, was chosen to act as deputy grand master, and officers of other lodges given positions. The master of British Lodge, James Manchee, was appointed marshal to organise the procession to the church and "the clothing of the highest Masonic rank was worn and civilians were in black with white gloves".⁴⁶

The foundation stone of the English Episcopal Church, later St. Georges Cathedral, was laid on St. Georges Day, 23 Apr. 1830 with full masonic honours by the Governor, Sir Galbraith Lowry Cole. Again the Cape Town Press recorded the proceedings. The English Provincial Grand Lodge was opened in De Goede Hoop temple at 10 a.m. that day with 400 masons present. A procession then went to the D.R. Church where prayers were read by a mason, The Rev. Fearon Fallows, and a discourse given by another mason, the Rev. George Hough, Provincial

⁴⁶ ACC 731,1/1/6: DGH Minutes 1825 - 1828, Joint

Grand Chaplain. The procession led by the bands of the 72nd and 98th Regiments then moved to the site of the stone. Troops lined the route. Between the masonic officials walked the Governor and his staff, the Chief Justice Sir John Truter, officials and ministers, elders and church wardens of several churches. At the entrance they passed through a triumphal arch surmounted by the Royal Standard of England. The masonic ceremony at the stone was conducted by the English Provincial Grand Master, Sir John Truter who was at that time also head of the Dutch lodges. As the stone was laid the shore batteries fired the Royal Salute.⁴⁷

De Goede Hoop members attended the ceremony of laying the foundation stone of the new Dutch Reformed Church "Nieuwe Kerk", Bree Street, on 18 Apr. 1833. Some masons, without regalia, were at the service in the Adderley Street church and in the later procession.⁴⁸

Another public event, on 6 Oct. 1845, marked the laying of the cornerstone of the Cape of Good Hope Gas Light Works by the Hon. John Montagu, the Colonial Secretary, assisted by masons. They assembled in the Commercial Exchange, meeting place of the Hope Lodge, and went in procession to the site. Clerke Burton, then English Provincial Grand Master, officiated.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ S.A. Commercial Advertiser, 28 Apr. 1830.

⁴⁸ Bate: De Goede Hoop, p.77.

⁴⁹ Bate: De Goede Hoop, p. 84.

Cape Town masons took a major role in the laying of the foundation stone of the new S.A. museum and library on 23 Mar. 1858. The Governor, Sir George Grey, who was a mason, was assisted by the masters of four lodges, De Goede Hoop, De Goede Trouw, British and Hope. The Cape Argus reports that, after the ceremony, "upwards of 30 Kaffirs sat down to an excellent dinner of roast beef, mutton, plum pudding with home brewed ale. The Kaffirs were convicts but had been employed as labourers ... the Astronomer Royal, Bro.T. Maclear, a mason, presided at the head of the dinner table and first illustrated the civilised mode of eating with knives and forks".⁵⁰

In his last public function, the Governor, Sir George Grey, laid the foundation stone of the new Somerset Hospital on 18 Aug. 1859, with full masonic honours. A public holiday was declared and 10,000 attended the ceremony, according to the Cape Argus.⁵¹

The next year, 1860, the South African Library was inaugurated by Queen Victoria's son, 16 year-old Prince Alfred, then a midshipman aboard the visiting British warship, H.M.S. Euryalis. On this visit the Prince laid the foundation stone of the Sailors' Home on Lower Burg Street and inaugurated the new harbour breakwater. Masons officiated at the Sailors' Home ceremony. Sir Christoffel Brand, then Netherland Deputy Grand Master National, was in charge, assisted by the masters of the British, De Goede Hoop, De Goede

⁵⁰ Cape Argus, 24 Mar. 1858.

⁵¹ Cranstoun-Day: British Lodge, p.74.

Trouw and the new Scottish lodge, Southern Cross. The masons assembled at the Lodge De Goede Hoop at 11 a.m. on 17 Sept. 1860. A mounted marshal headed the procession followed by the band of the 59th Regiment, stewards, banners, entered apprentices, fellowcrafts, master masons, Knights Elu, Royal Arch, Scotch (sic), Masters, Princes Rose Croix and their banners. Then came the principals of chapters and the band of the Cape Royal Rifles followed by the architect bearing plans, and senior wardens carrying the constitutional books of the lodges, followed by the lodge masters and, finally, Brand, flanked and guarded by masons.

The procession entered the back entrance of the Gardens and halted in front of Government House where it was joined by the Prince, the Governor Sir George Grey, and his staff, escorted by the Cape Town Cavalry. They all marched down Adderley Street to the site of the Sailors' Home. The ceremony was fully masonic even to the extent that the choir sang a masonic hymn "When Earth's Foundations first were Laid" to the tune of "Rule Britannia". The lodge masters presented the square, level and plumb rule to the Prince to help him lay the stone and the choir sang another masonic hymn "Hail Masonry Divine" to the tune of "God Save the Queen".⁵²

The masons were in evidence again in July 1870 when they attended the inauguration of the Cape Town docks.⁵³ Perhaps their most significant involvement in

⁵² Cape Argus, 19 Sept. 1860.

⁵³ Cape Argus, 12 Jul. 1870

growing Cape Town was their attendance at the laying of the foundation stone of the then new Houses of Parliament on 12 May, 1875. Sir Thomas Maclear, the Deputy District Grand Master, was in charge supported by lodge masters and, again, the stone was laid with masonic honours by the Governor, Sir Henry Barkly.⁵⁴

"Masonic honours" refers to the custom of carrying in procession oil, corn and wine to the foundation stone and sprinkling them on it. The official is handed masonic instruments used by operative masons to make the stone "true" - the square, level, plumb rule and trowel.

In 1887, the Governor, Sir Hercules Robinson, who was a mason, laid the stone for the statue of Queen Victoria in the grounds of the Houses of Parliament with masonic honours on 20 June.⁵⁵ Masons were active again on 23 Jul. 1898 at the laying of the foundation stone of St. Michael and All Angels Church, Observatory.⁵⁶

These masonic appearances at public ceremonies connected with new buildings continued until the mid-20th century when the Grand Lodges decreed that masons were not to appear in regalia in public. At present special permission has to be obtained for masons to parade in regalia at non-masonic functions.

⁵⁴ Cape Argus, 13 May, 1875.

⁵⁵ Cape Argus, 22 June, 1887.

⁵⁶ Cape Argus, 25 Jul. 1898.

CONCLUSION

In the 105 years from 1772 - 1876 covered in this thesis, Freemasonry became firmly established in the Cape Province, Griqualand and Natal and was represented sparsely in the Transvaal and Orange Free State Republics. The two senior lodges, De Goede Hoop of the Netherlandic Constitution and the British of the English Constitution, had been the foundation stones on which the structure of the two constitutions had been laid. De Goede Hoop, as the mother lodge, sponsored Dutch, English and French lodges and acted as a central masonic authority until the rule of Sir Christoffel Brand as Deputy Grand Master National. Later British Lodge helped in the expansion of English Freemasonry, issuing provisional warrants until the reconstitution of an English provincial grand lodge. By 1876 the English Constitution boasted 22 lodges and the Dutch 21, with membership about equal, though the Dutch lodges had greater geographical spread throughout South Africa. In those 105 years, a profusion of "side" and "high" degrees also emerged. A third constitution, the Scottish, had appeared and had warranted three lodges. The first Irish Constitution lodge in South Africa, St. Patricks, Cape Town was not warranted until 1896.

In the early years recorded in this thesis Freemasonry, was influenced to some extent by the change in administrations - from Dutch East India Company rule to British, Batavian back to British and bringing fluctuating fortunes to lodges. Strains between the two

major communities, Dutch and English, were reflected in masonic hostility between lodges and within them, particularly over differing languages and customs. Freemasonry was concentrated in Cape Town until the arrival of the 1820 Settlers in the Eastern Districts and the establishment of Albany Lodge at Grahamstown. The stationing of British regiments with military lodges attached in those areas during the frontier wars spurred the formation of lodges, in a similar fashion to the encouragement of English lodges in Cape Town during the two British occupations. The next and most significant move in the expansion of Freemasonry in South Africa came from the masonic missionary efforts of Sir Christoffel Brand who, as Deputy Grand Master National of Dutch lodges from 1847 to 1874, was responsible for establishing lodges not only in the midlands of the Cape Province but in the Transvaal and Free State Republics. His zeal, however, was to polarise relations between the two constitutions, principally on English-Dutch antipathy, although Brand worked unceasingly for accord between the two main branches of Freemasonry.

His missionary success led unfortunately to the first open confrontation when, in 1866, the rights and jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of the Netherlands in South Africa were questioned by the English Provincial Grand Lodge in South Africa. It claimed that, as the Cape Colony was under British rule, Brand's actions in opening up new Dutch lodges were illegal. The Grand

Lodge of England finally ruled that the Cape was neutral ground for masonic recruitment and advocated the continuance of harmonious relations between the two constitutions while Brand in his "Masonic Epistle" and "Masonic Decision" triumphantly reaffirmed the Grand Lodge's decision. But neither authority was able to stop this rivalry which was worsened through political events in the north to the extent that, in the 1870s, the English masonic hierarchy became identified with the ambitions of the Colonial Secretary, Lord Carnarvon, who was also the English Pro-Grand Master, and Sir Richard Southey, the English Provincial Grand Master, to win a confederation of South African states under the British flag. English Freemasonry was in the ascendancy at this time for Dutch Freemasonry had been seriously weakened by the death of its leader, Brand in 1875, the breakdown of communication between lodges in the northern republics and their headquarters in Cape Town and the depletion of lodges because of the diamond and gold rushes. At the same time there arose the movement to form a Grand Lodge for South Africa uniting all the constitutions. Dutch lodges at first supported it but eventually feared English domination and opposed the "unity movement" while some English lodges fervently campaigned for it, seeing it as a masonic complement to Carnarvon's ambition for a united South Africa.

During these 105 years sound foundations for Freemasonry in South Africa were laid. But at the same time there appeared the first signs of a rift

between the various masonic bodies, between those who wished to continue their allegiance to grand lodges in England and Scotland and the Netherlands - and later, Ireland - and those who wished to set up a United Grand Lodge for South Africa. This issue was partly resolved in 1961 when the Netherlandic lodges set up a Southern African Grand Lodge and transferred their allegiance to local soil.

The political union of South Africa in 1910 and the formation of the Republic in 1961 were events that moved South African Freemasonry to a greater awareness of the need for a united grand lodge. But apparently South African Freemasonry's tendency to mirror political, economic and social changes in the community, as reflected under past administrations, has to some extent fallen away. While relations between the governing masonic bodies are amicable, there is an unease in the masonic body politic arising from this question of allegiance. There is no thought of disloyalty to South Africa, that is clear, for the labels "English", "Irish", "Scottish" and "Southern African" do not indicate division into ethnic groups. The majority of members are South African and in fact take an oath of allegiance to this country during their initiation.

Rather the issue has become one between the "traditionalists" - the English, Irish and Scottish constitutions preferring to retain their historic ties with their Grand Lodges overseas and the "progressives" - the Southern African Constitution which has set up its

own Grand Lodge in Johannesburg. There seems every likelihood that outside events in time will influence South African Freemasons to form a United Grand Lodge.

CRITICAL NOTES ON SOURCES

Archival Records

The most valuable sources for this thesis are the unlisted and unsorted records of Sir Christoffel Joseph Brand, Deputy Grand Master National of the Netherlandic Constitution from 1847 - 1874. His previously undiscovered letter books, letter files, registers, journals and scripts found at the Cape Archives give a much wider view of masonic events during these crucial years than the minute books available in archives and in lodges. While Brand's handwriting in copies of the letters he sent needs considerable deciphering, the letters he received are readable.

Given access to these unlisted records, I was fortunate to discover two important historical collections of documents - Provincial Grand Master English Constitution : Letters Received and Sent 1821 - 1844 and the Lodge L'Esperance: Letters Received 1840 - 1851 and Minute Book 29 Dec. 1832 - Dec. 1833. The first collection contains a copy of the acknowledgement by Sir John Truter of his appointment as the first Provincial Grand Master of the English Constitution in 1826 while he was also Deputy Grand Master National of the Netherlandic Constitution. This is the first recorded confirmation of his appointment and has aroused interest at Free Masons Hall, London. Lodge L'Esperance, the first and only French lodge in South Africa, was formed by members of De Goede Hoop. It had been believed its records had been lost. Also

in the records are the rituals of the lodge and its high degree chapters handwritten in French.

I was also given access to some 40 boxes of records of Lodge De Goede Hoop in the South African Library. The lodge correspondence dating from 1854 to 1860 and from 1871 to 1875 was particularly important, though in poor condition. This deterioration resulted from flooding of the archives chamber in De Goede Hoop Lodge some time in the early 20th century. Lodge records at the Cape Archives, both classified and unlisted, also show the effect of water. As a result, a great many are illegible and damaged.

The early minutes of Lodge De Goede Hoop from 9 May 1772 to 24 Apr. 1778 were preserved by the zeal of Christoffel Joseph Brand who, as secretary of the lodge in 1835, found rough minutes and notes of the lodge and transcribed them into a minute book. There are no records of Lodge De Goede Hoop from 1781 to 1794 while minute books from 1795 to 1799 are missing. There are gaps in records for the second half of 1824 and the first part of 1825 and for the years 1843 to 1845 and 1857 to 1859.

British Lodge can claim an almost comprehensive set of records from its establishment in 1811. On being moved to the Masonic Centre, Pinelands, Cape Town in 1978, however, these records are still to be classified.

Records of the English Provincial and District Grand Lodges in South Africa are incomplete. For instance the English District Grand Lodge Western Division has

records only from 1869, perhaps as a result of the several moves of the district office during the last 20 years when records were misplaced.

The archives of Free Masons Hall, London were found to be particularly important as they contained many early records of the start of Freemasonry in South Africa. However, they are by no means comprehensive as it appears it was the custom some years ago to send documents back to South Africa on request - although these still have to be found.

Books and Pamphlets

There are many published works on the origins of Freemasonry. Some of them, particularly those written in the early 18th century, hopefully, but wrongly, endeavour to trace the history of Freemasonry back to King Solomon's reign. The most definitive work on this subject is Harry Carr's *Freemasonry Before Grand Lodge*, in *Grand Lodge 1717 - 1967* published by the United Grand Lodge of England in 1967, while articles in the same work by T.O. Haunch, J.R. Clarke, P.R. James, V. Reid, H.G. Michael Clarke and A.J. Milborne are equally informative about the early days of the Grand Lodge. The transactions of the Quatuor Coronati Lodge No. 2076 published yearly contain several authoritative articles on the early history of Freemasonry.

Two general reference works on Freemasonry were found useful - B.E. Jones' *Freemasons Guide and Compendium* and F.L. Pick and G.N. Knight's *The Pocket History of Freemasonry*.

Regarding Freemasonry in South Africa the two most useful books were O.H. Bate's The Lodge De Goede Hoop revised and brought up to date by T.N. Cranstoun-Day and Cranstoun-Day's The British Lodge No. 334 and English Freemasonry at the Cape of Good Hope 1795 - 1935.

Helpful subsidiary publications were E.G.D. Drury's Records of Albany Lodge No. 389 E.C., F.T.R. Griesbach's History of Lodge De Goede Trouw 1811 - 1906 and E.W. Stoyell's Record of Lodge St. Andrew No. 651 S.C. 1880 - 1930 and Scottish Freemasonry in South Africa. These works and the several lodge histories existing in pamphlet form were generally drawn from lodge minute books and correspondence. While admirable as records of particular lodges, they were necessarily limited. In most cases, these lodge histories avoided mention of political, social and economic events which impinged on masonic life, but they did spare me a certain amount of detailed work and provided useful guidelines. Answers to my circulars revealed that, in many cases, lodges had lost their early minute books and records, with the possible exception of lodges in the Eastern Districts which were apparently more aware of the need to preserve records.

Newspapers

As it was the custom in the 18th and 19th centuries to advertise masonic events and report on them at length, the Cape Press afforded useful material.

Conclusion

My researches led me to conclude, with some distress, that the lodge secretary, as custodian of lodge records, was not, and apparently still is not, alert to the need to preserve vital records. If in the future, there arises a move to establish a central archives for Freemasonry, unfortunately there will be many significant gaps.

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 1/1/14 1871 Jan. 9 - 1876 May 7.

Draft Minutes

1/2/1 1864 June 30 - 1867 Jan. 10

Annexures to Minutes

2/1 1803 Feb. - 1808 Dec.
 2/2 1808 Mar. - 1811 Dec.
 2/3 1812 Mar. - 1814 Dec.
 2/4 1815 Jan. - 1816 Dec.
 2/5 1817 Jan. - 1825 June.
 2/6 1825 June - 1827 May.
 2/7 1827 June - 1828 May.
 2/8 1828 June - 1832 June.
 2/9 1832 June - 1835 June.
 2/10 1835 June - 1836 June.
 2/11 1836 June - 1842 Dec.
 2/12 1843 Jan. - 1848 June.

5/1 Register of Members 1772 - 1953.

5/2 Register of Shareholders 1801 - 1845.

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6/1/1/1 Minutes 1848 - 1891

6/1/2/1 Letters Received 1813 - 1819.

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1833, 1834.

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(c) DGMN, Netherlandic Constitution: Unlisted

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1853-1854, Jan. 1855-1857, Jan. 1858-
Dec. 1860, Jan. 1861-Dec. 1862, Jan. 1863-
Dec. 1863, Jan. 1864-Dec. 1865, Jan. 1866-
Dec. 1866, Jan. 1867-Dec. 1867, Jan 1868-
Dec. 1868, Jan. 1869-Dec. 1869, 1870-
April to Dec., Jan. 1871-Dec. 1871,
Dec. 1871-Dec. 1875, Jul. 1874-Aug. 1892,
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