



The Grand Lodge of Antient Free and Accepted Masons of Scotland

Charles Iain R. Wolrige Gordon of Esslemont Grand Master Mason

David M Begg CA Grand Secretary

202/7/gp

30th August 2013

Secretary, Lodge St Clement, No. 202

John W. Oliver, Esq.,
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Kilmarnock,
KA3 7NR.

Dear Brother Oliver,

Many thanks for your Email dated, 27th August 2013.

With a view to being of assistance I enclose herewith a copy of pages from a Scottish Masonic Records Book held within my office that I trust will be helpful.

With kind regards,
Yours sincerely and fraternally,

George Begg
Grand Secretary

FAR



SCOTTISH MASONIC RECORDS

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PREFACE

It is not known with any certainty when the Grand Lodge of Scotland first assigned numbers to the Lodges on her Roll. In the first two Minute Books of the Grand Lodge of Scotland her Daughter Lodges are invariably referred to by their names. It is not until we come to the fourth Minute Book—for the third is lost—that we find Lodges referred to by their numbers as well as by their names. From the evidence at present available it would seem that numbers were assigned to Lodges between the years 1756 and 1769. On the 21st March, 1769, a Charter of Confirmation was issued to the Lodge at Lesmahagow, and the Charter states that this Lodge was No. 22 on the Roll. The first printed Roll of Lodges holding of the Grand Lodge of Scotland assigns the number 3 to Lodge Kilwinning Scots Arms, which was certainly dormant in 1756. From this it may be presumed that numbers were assigned at least by that date if not before it.

The Minutes of Grand Lodge state that, in 1737, the Lodges were placed upon the Roll in order of seniority. This Roll cannot now be found, but it is probable that it formed the basis of the numbering scheme at the time when it was first introduced. Certain Lodges, which are known to have been chartered do not appear to have carried numbers at any time, and it must be presumed that they were no longer active when numbers were first assigned. Because the first Roll was made up in 1737, I have used that date as being the date of the first enumeration although, as I have already said, numbers were probably not assigned to Lodges until as late as 1756.

The first enumeration (1737-1756) remained in use until 1816, with certain changes which took place in 1809. The changes of 1809 were due to the return to Grand Lodge of Lodge Mother Kilwinning and the addition to the roll of the Daughter Lodges under her jurisdiction. This took place in May 1808 and, as part of the agreement between Grand Lodge and Lodge Mother Kilwinning, the latter Lodge was placed at the head of the Roll with the number "0". The Kilwinning Subordinate Lodges were placed at the foot of the Roll until such time as the Roll could be revised and these Kilwinning Lodges accorded a position in it in accordance with the dates of their Kilwinning Charters. There is little doubt that Grand Lodge fully intended to purge their Roll in 1809, but the passing of the Secret Societies Act seriously interfered with that intention. This Act permitted the continuance of Masonic Lodges in the United Kingdom, but the wording of the clause legalising their continued existence was so framed as to, apparently, prohibit the setting up of any *new* Lodges. In order to get around this difficulty, which lasted until the passing of a later Secret Societies Act, the Grand Lodge of Scotland adopted the procedure of re-issuing the Charters of Lodges which were no longer active. The legality of this is open to some question for, in at least one case, Grand Lodge re-issued a Charter which had been lost by a Military Lodge in the Seven Years War. It must be clearly understood that in re-issuing these dormant Charters, the Grand Lodge of Scotland did NOT re-issue the numbers, e.g. when, in 1809, the Grand Lodge issued a Charter to Lodge St. David at Kirkpatrick-Durham under the number 296, that Charter contained a clause to the effect that there was now assigned to this new Lodge all the rights and privileges which were contained in Charter No. 122 which had been issued, in 1765, to Lodge St. Bernard's Kilwinning at Kirkcudbright.

