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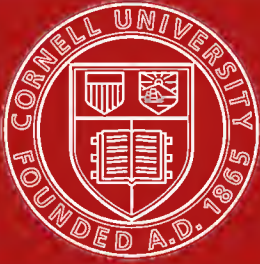
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Early History
of Freemasonry
in Michigan

A. G. Pitts



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Notes on the Early History of Freemasonry in Michigan

(A. G. PITTS)

A reasonably accurate account of the early history of Freemasonry in Michigan has never been printed. The following notes are not printed as the final word on this subject. We have kept them by us for years in the hope of making them more complete before publishing them. We have lately decided that we had better get them into print. First, because we have "loaned" copies successively until we have but one left. Second, because we have heard of two new histories of Michigan Masonry which are about to be published reproducing all the old errors. And third and chiefly, because from the starting point of these notes some useful work can be done and we want to ask that Masonic students and scholars and investigators take up the matter where we leave off and fill in the gaps we have been obliged to leave.

The Common Account.

The history of Freemasonry most widely circulated in this country has the following account:

MICHIGAN.—April 27, 1764, George Harrison, Provincial Grand Master of New York, granted a warrant to open a lodge at Detroit, to be known as Zion Lodge, No. 1, to a number of brethren belonging to the 60th Royal American Regiment. It was intended to be a military lodge; but evidently became local for the warrant was used long after the regiment left. Its records are supposed to have been destroyed in the fire that consumed Detroit in 1805. It is not known how long the lodge continued active, nor can anything connected with its history be learned. The original warrant, however, is in the archives of the Grand Lodge of New York.

Warrants were issued by the Grand Lodge of England (Moderns) for two lodges at Detroit, No. 298, in 1773, and No. 320, in 1783, also for St. John's Lodge, No. 373, at Mackinaw in 1785. These were purely "Military lodges," having been issued to British regiments; and when England, in 1796, surrendered Michigan soil to the United States, the warrants went with the regiments.

Two years prior to this date, September 7, 1794, a warrant was issued by the Provincial Grand Lodge of Canada for Zion Lodge, No. 10. Whether this was a revival of the Zion Lodge, No. 1, of 1764, or an amalgamation with it, is not known. In 1806 the members applied to the Provincial Grand Lodge of New York for a warrant, at the same time surrendering the original warrant received in 1764, but not the one received from the Canadian Grand Lodge.

The warrant was granted September 3, 1806, under the original name and number, Zion Lodge, No. 1.

A Corrected Outline.

The particular vice of this account is that it undertakes to make a connected story of Michigan Masonry from 1764 down. In this respect it is the least objectionable of all. Some of the published accounts have been outrageously distorted and untruthful. They generally represent a Zion Lodge existing here continuously from 1764 to 1794 and then induced to change its allegiance.

A correct sketch of the foundation of Masonry in Michigan would be about as follows:

In 1794 a warrant was issued by the Grand Lodge of Lower Canada for Zion Lodge, No. 10, to be held at Detroit. This was the first introduction of settled and permanent Masonry into the region which now comprises the state of Michigan. Zion Lodge, No. 10, was allowed to die in 1812 on the occasion of the occupation of the town by the British. Why this should have prevented at least keeping the lodge alive does not appear and we are apt to conclude that Masonry at Detroit has always been a sensitive plant, ready to fold its flowers at the first breath of adversity. For again in 1829, on the occasion of the anti-Masonic excitement, Zion Lodge died and this time not Zion alone but all the Freemasonry in Michigan unless it is true, as claimed, that Stony Creek Lodge, No. 7, (now Rochester, No. 5), continued to work. If it did it is the oldest lodge in Michigan. It received a new charter from the Grand Lodge of Michigan June 5, 1845, and the Grand Lodge of Michigan gives it precedence from that date on the theory then and probably now held by most American Grand Lodges, that when the Grand Lodge of Michigan died in 1829 all its lodges, necessarily died—that a lodge cannot exist, except dependent upon some grand lodge. This theory is unmasonic and ought to be resisted.

The Oldest Lodge in Michigan.

This introduces the interesting collateral question, "which is the oldest lodge in Michigan?" If it be not Rochester Lodge, then St. Joseph Valley of Niles is entitled to the honor. In 1840 the Masons of Detroit and vicinity undertook to revive Michigan Masonry by proceeding to reorganize the Grand Lodge of Michigan which then chartered lodges. The other American Grand Lodges held, correctly this time, that a grand lodge could be created only by delegates from existing lodges. After vainly struggling four years for recognition the soi-disant Grand Lodge of Michigan gave up the ghost in 1844 and a new grand lodge was organized in September of that year by delegates from Zion, Detroit, Oakland and St. Joseph Valley lodges which had received charters from the Grand Lodge of New York.

The existent Zion and Detroit lodges accordingly date from June 8, 1844, the date of these latest charters from New York and dating them any earlier than that is nothing but a fiction. But St. Joseph Valley Lodge had been previously chartered by the same Grand Lodge of New York June 10, 1843, after working under dispensation from June 8, 1842. Afterward she surrendered the New York charter and accepted a new charter from the Grand Lodge of Michigan dated June 5, 1845. She has had a continuous existence since June 8, 1842, and is the oldest lodge in Michigan unless (as has been pointed out) she is second to Rochester Lodge.

Reference has been made to the fiction of dating the foundation of a lodge back beyond the period of its last foundation. Legally such ante-dating has no force in any case. When a lodge dies it dies and if its place is later occupied by another lodge of the same name that does not make the latter lodge any the less a new lodge. In popular estimation, however, the new lodge will be regarded as a continuation of the old if the interval between the death and the resurrection has been short and the new organization is composed of substantially the same members as the old and retains and continues the old name and the old records and archives. This is illustrated by the lapse of 1812 to 1816.

Probably no one would quarrel with the claim that the Zion Lodge of 1794 practically survived for 35 years—until 1829. It is impossible, however, to close one's eyes to the effects of death and burial for 15 years (1829-1844) since we are constantly being reminded of the disastrous results of death and burial for 15 days.

Moreover the revival of 1840 was the work of new settlers, not of the old survivors, and the first thing done by the convention of Masons, held at Mt. Clemens, Nov. 15, 1840, was to appoint a committee to investigate a "rumor" that there had previously been a Grand Lodge in Michigan.

See the "reprint" of the early transactions published by the Grand Lodge of Michigan.

Early Provincial Lodges.

The important point to be noted about our sketch of the foundation of Masonry in Michigan is that it begins in 1794. Many lodges had been brought into the region prior to that date by sojourners—never by settlers—but they had all been taken away again and had left no remains behind them.

As to the alleged foundation of 1764 it stands on the same footing as half a dozen other lodges which were held in various parts of Michigan prior to 1794. The only reason why it was selected for different treatment from the others is because it was the earliest. Unscrupulous "historians," wishing to claim a continuous history for Michigan Masonry from a fictitious date, naturally chose the earliest date possible.

IF a lodge was organized under the charter of April 27, 1764, it was not called Zion. IF it ever did any work at all it was dead and forgotten prior to 1794. Not one of the charter members of the lodge of 1794 had previously been a member of the one of 1764 if any there was. Therefore in no sense, popular or legal, can the one be regarded as the continuation of the other.

The Christie Lodge.

Having to some extent cleared the ground by showing what the lodge of 1764 was not, let us see what it was and what were its circumstances and surroundings if it ever existed.

If there had not been so much lying done about the Christie lodge it would never have occurred to me to doubt even the fact

Another Collateral Inquiry.

Captain Henry Hamilton of the 15th Regt. assumed the position of Lieutenant-Governor at Detroit Nov. 9, 1775. He was succeeded by Col. de Peyster of the 8th and he by Jehu Hay, who arrived at Detroit July 12, 1784, and died there in August, 1785. He had been a Major of the Detroit volunteers under Hamilton and was captured with him. I am not aware of his having ever held a commission in the British army.

Farmer's Hist. of Detroit, Ed. of 1884, pp. 242, et seq. 255.

Governor Hamilton was made a prisoner at Vincennes March 5, 1779. He was greatly hated by the Virginians and was confined in irons. General Washington exerted himself to have these badges of infamy removed and his earnestness in this matter was such that it has been a matter of surprise to some historians. It would be interesting, therefore, to determine, if possible, whether Gov. Hamilton was a Mason.

A Summing Up.

The conclusion of the whole matter is this: that from 1764 to 1794 there were from four to ten lodges at Detroit at various times, each of which was taken away by the same men who brought it there, none of which lasted beyond the period of the sojourn of the proprietors, none of which struck root, none of which left a trace behind, so that for any trace we have to go to the archives of New York or of England.

There is no difficulty in understanding this if one remembers the circumstances of the country and of Masonry at the time.

As to Masonry. There was no such exact supervision of the lodges as is the case today. Masonry had as yet hardly outgrown the period of occasional lodges when any group of Masons by their own authority might assemble a lodge anywhere *pro hac vice*. This very thing was still practiced to some extent. Perambulatory lodges were common. Take Christie's case. He and Fleming, (and Harper also, no doubt) were connected with the army. They wanted a lodge to relieve the tedium of service in a hated wilderness and to last there as long as they lasted there. With the ideas which then prevailed, a Provincial Grand Master would not have hesitated about chartering a lodge,

understanding that it was to be temporary or ambulatory. I have no doubt Christie and his friends, if they ever organized their lodge, took it away with them when they left. With whom could they have left it? Certainly they had no idea of settling at Detroit when they went to Detroit or when they determined to found a lodge there.

For there were no settlers at Detroit except a few French, nor was any settlement of the country contemplated, desired or permitted. It is not commonly known or remembered but it is a fact that the British government forbade the settlement of this country. This for many reasons:

1. The country was too remote considering the modes of transportation then in vogue.

2. Nothing which the country produced, except furs, had enough of value in little enough of weight to stand the expense of export. Even a block of pure copper of five tons weight exposed upon the surface of the ground in the Ontonagon country was not worth removing.

Alex Henry, Travels in Canada, pp. 205, 232.

- (A pound of beaver skin was worth a dollar at Detroit or Mackinac or Sault de Ste. Marie. Otter twice as much and others in proportion.)

3. Settlers would destroy the fur-bearing animals, substituting nothing of equal value or of any value.

4. Settlers would be an embarrassment in that they would require protection.

5. The coast colonies needed to be strengthened and not weakened by emigration to the west.

From 1775 to 1783 settlement was further prohibited by war. From 1783 to 1794 it was greatly hindered by the fact that the British were trespassers and interlopers and would not become settlers because they were constantly anticipating the time when they would be required to evacuate, while Americans avoided the place on account of the marked unfriendliness of the British authorities. What Americans did come were usually ill-treated.

For many years after 1764 the only British in the country were soldiers like Christie or connected with the military like Fleming (in those days a commissary of provisions was a civilian) or fur traders. There were no British settlers.

Alex Henry, *Travels in Canada*, passim.
Jonathan Carver, *Three Years' Travels Through the Interior Parts of North America*.

And as for the French settlers, where do you find a French name in the annals of early Masonry in this region? Even Zion Lodge, settled and permanent at Detroit, does not show one until it has passed completely out of British hands and into those of the Americans, that is to say in the year 1800.

We cannot forbear adding, as an aside, that this is a very significant fact, illustrating the social relations of the British and French who lived here side by side—one of those facts by which the history of Freemasonry is capable of illuminating the pages of secular history if it were not for the conspiracy which seems to have been formed by secular historians never to mention Freemasonry and never to have or to acknowledge any indebtedness to it.

Zion Lodge had an origin similar to that of all its predecessors. It was brought to Detroit by British soldiers to be a solace to them during their service here. But when they left, the Americans took their place and in the meantime a little settlement had begun. Accordingly Zion Lodge was able to survive.

Grand Lodge of Quebec.

In spite of the peace of 1783 the British army kept possession of Detroit until 1796. The Prov. Grand Lodge of Upper Canada (Ancients) had been established in 1792 and was nearer to Detroit than was the Grand Lodge of Quebec. Nevertheless it was to the latter that application was made for a warrant in 1794. This was due to the fact that the founders of this Lodge (Zion, No. 10), were Quebec Masons.

Edward Byrn, who was designated as S. W., was a Past Master of Lodge No. 9 in the 4th Eattalion, Royal Artillery, which lodge became one of the constituents and organizers of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Lower Canada (at Quebec) in 1791 and Bro. Byrn had taken part in that organization.

Robertson's *Freemasonry in Canada*, I. 846.

Findly Campbell, J. W., was also a Quebec Mason, a member of the same Lodge No. 9.

Robertson gives a complete list of all the members of Zion Lodge, No. 10. There is no reason to infer that any of them had ever been members of any local lodge at Detroit,

the pretended Zion, No. 1, or any other. There were only six charter members and some can be traced to Canadian and military lodges. James Donaldson, the first Master, was a tavern keeper and the lodge met at his house. Doubtless that is why he was made Master. Donaldson had not been long resident in Detroit, but I have not yet ascertained where he came from. The two wardens were the moving spirits and they were Canadian Masons and connected with British military forces which had recently been sent to Detroit. It is natural to infer that the remaining three were of precisely the same class. We would not allow this to remain subject of inference only but for the fact that thus far we know only their last names and those are the common ones, Johnson, Patterson and McClintock. Common as these names are, none of them appear in the record books of those days, but there are two "Pattinsons," Richard and Hugh.

Liber C, Wayne Co. Register's Office, pp. 405, 407.

The proceedings bear no resemblance to a shift of obedience by a lodge from one grand lodge to another. If it had been that which took place there would have been more than six charter members and members of the old lodge would probably have been among the master and wardens of the new one.

At the first meeting of Zion Lodge No. 10, held Dec. 19, 1794, two petitions for initiation were presented, both by Bro. Campbell and both are of soldiers in the Royal Artillery. At the second meeting, Dec. 27, 1794, the principal business was this, that a Bro. John Askwith was "hailed from modern to Ancient Masonry." This ceremony was gone through upon another brother at the fifth meeting, Mar. 2, 1795.

These two items are significant. The first illustrates the source from which Zion in those days ordinarily received its material, i. e., the military. The second shows that it would not have been a simple matter if the Christie lodge had still continued to exist, to turn it into the Zion Lodge No. 10.

Every man would have had to be "hailed" or rather healed. And there would have had to be a lodge to do it in. For the Christie lodge was what is meant by a "Modern" lodge in the item relative to Askwith. But for this item and the one of Mar.

2, 1795, we might have assumed that out here in the wilderness the distinction between "Ancients" and "Moderns" was lost sight of, although it would have been more natural to assume that Bro. Edward Byrn, who was a Past Master and who had been a member and an organizer of a grand lodge at Quebec, would be exact and punctilious. Evidently he was. Evidently his six charter members were all ancients. And Askwith and the brother "healed," Mar. 2, 1795, are the only early members (not organizers) of Zion Lodge of whom it can even be conjectured that they were relics of the Christie lodge or of Harmony Lodge or of Union Lodge or of lodge 298, or of lodge 320, or of the Mackinaw Lodge, or of any other "Modern" lodge connected with the 15th, or 60th or 8th, or 47th, or 10th regiments or the artillery.

Grand Lodge of New York.

The name "Zion" first appears in 1794. The minutes of the lodge then founded are preserved and are complete. In 1806 it surrendered its warrant to the Grand Lodge of New York and received another as Zion Lodge No. 1 (afterward No. 62, later No. 3).

It has been printed over and over again that the warrant which was surrendered was the one issued in 1764.

Historical Sketch of Early Masonry in Michigan, by Foster Pratt, Past Grand Secretary. Published in 1884.

Barker's Early History and Transactions of the Grand Lodge of New York. XVII.

Robertson's Freemasonry in Canada, I, 196.

I can find no authority for the statement. It seems to be an inference from the fact that the 1764 warrant was in the possession of the Grand Lodge of New York. I shall not be surprised if it turns out that it had never left that possession!

Bro. Robertson even goes so far as to account for the fact that the 1764 warrant was surrendered in place of the 1794 one on the ground that the first was a "Modern" warrant and the second an "Ancient" one and that a Grand Lodge of one denomination would not recognize a warrant of the other. This can be turned against him. He carelessly assumes (knowing better all the time) that the Grand Lodge of New York in 1806 was as "Modern" as the Prov. Grand Lodge of 1764 which issued the warrant of that date. In fact it was as "Ancient" as any.

Foster Pratt argues the question at length (see pp. 22-32). But he is entitled to no weight. He goes so far as to state as a bit of his evidence that the charter of 1794 was, when he wrote, in the possession of Zion Lodge and therefore could not have been surrendered. As a matter of fact the charter of 1794 was in the possession of the Grand Lodge of New York until a few years ago when it was presented to Zion Lodge.

Freemasonry in Canada, I, 194.

Foster Pratt is probably the father of the fable that the records of the 1764 lodge were destroyed in the fire of 1805 which destroyed the whole town of Detroit with the exception of a single house. It is much more reasonable to conclude that there had never been any such records. If there had been records and they were kept along with those of Zion Lodge No. 10 they would have been saved with them. If Zion Lodge No. 10 was preserving them and the 1764 warrant along with them why were the other records destroyed while the warrant was saved? And why is nothing said about these matters in the minutes of Zion Lodge?

It was in October, 1803, that the members of Zion Lodge prepared their petition to the Grand Lodge of New York for a charter. The text of the petition is to be found in Robertson I, 224. It plainly appears from this petition that the members had some information relative to the New York charter of 1764 but this is not evidence that the 1764 charter had ever been at Detroit at all. It is only necessary to suppose that the members had gotten hold of some list of lodges or other evidence that a warrant had been issued.

The petition would appear to have first come before the Grand Lodge of New York in 1806. At all events the records of the Grand Lodge are silent on the subject until then. It was then granted and the lodge was chartered as Zion Lodge No. 1. Evidently no importance was attached to the number since New York had a No. 1 already. Resorting to conjecture again, I would guess that the New York Grand Lodge in chartering Zion Lodge did not have any idea of adding another lodge to its own number or of admitting another member to a place at its hearth, but that of starting another household hearth in the distant wilderness.

A Provincial Grand Lodge of New York was organized by some "Ancient Lodges" in 1782, by virtue of a warrant issued Sept. 5, 1781, by the "Ancient" Grand Lodge of England. This became the present Grand Lodge of New York in 1784 by the simple process of assuming independence.

In 1783 this Provincial Grand Lodge chartered a lodge for the 60th regiment to be held "in H. M. Loyal American Regiment or elsewhere."

While people are guessing upon what occasion the warrant of 1784 was surrendered to the Grand Lodge of New York, we submit that as good a guess as any heretofore made, is that it was upon this occasion. It is much more likely that the warrant was still traveling with the regiment than that it was left at Detroit.

But two other guesses equally good are, first, that it never left New York and, second, that Christie sent it back long prior to 1783.

Some Romance.

Entries in the minutes of Zion Lodge No. 10 have proven stimulating to my imagination.

1. Sept., 1801. Bro. Schieffelin was authorized to purchase certain books on Masonry for the use of the lodge, using his own judgment with respect to quality, number and price.

I can see a picture of Bro. Schieffelin "in my mind's eye, Horatio." He was one of those harmless, scholarly, enthusiasts by one of whom almost every Masonic Lodge is destined to be bored some time in its career. One who, soon after his initiation, is attracted by the archaeology and literature of the craft, who takes seriously the claim of the craft to intellectuality, who begins to read and study Masonry, who is filled with interest and enthusiasm by what he learns and who fancies that his lodge is ready to follow him on the path upon which he has entered and needs only to have the way pointed out. He is indulged for a while, the members of his lodge, a little intoxicated by his enthusiasm, listen to him at first, buy a few books and think they are going to be all Masonic scholars. Of course the enthusiasm is short lived and the unhappy father of it becomes a bore. Finding himself no longer listened to he is silenced and squelched, generally waking up to find himself outside the Craft alto-

gether, which is the happier without him free to cultivate the social side of Masonry without being importuned with its (alleged) intellectual side.

I hasten to add explicitly that the last paragraph is pure fiction and I have no historical authority for a word of it. This was implied in my first sentence, but I wish at any cost to be understood. I will give no one an excuse to add another to the historical fictions of which the early history of Masonry in Michigan is composed.

I wrote the paragraph at first only to please my own fancy. I print it now for this reason as much as any other that it very well illustrates how the history referred to has been made. Also the proper use of conjecture, inference and hypothesis in an historical work. Nothing can be more useful or more legitimate upon the single condition that the conjectures shall be carefully distinguished from the facts and the grounds upon which they are built fully indicated so that the reader can judge for himself how substantial the building is.

2. May, 1803. The lodge decides to turn to the Grand Lodge of New York for a charter, through Bro. Schieffelin, who undertakes to procure the same.

CONJECTURE. The book worm has turned up the amazing discovery, new to every member of Zion Lodge, that it is recorded that the Grand Lodge of New York had once chartered a lodge for Detroit. And, after the manner of impractical bookworms, is the more eager to put his new found knowledge to practical use. He proposes a return to New York and his brethren, understanding nothing of the matter, entrust the whole enterprise to his hands.

Of course we now know that it was not the Grand Lodge of New York as it existed in 1803, which had issued the warrant of 1784, nor any predecessor. Prov. Grand Master Harrison was commissioned by the premier Grand Lodge. His work had largely died out. What was left was ignored when the Grand Lodge of New York was organized in 1782 by lodges holding of the rival Grand Lodge of England—the Atholl or so-called "Ancient" Grand Lodge. The claim that is sometimes made that the Grand Lodge

of its existence. But, so far as I have been able to find out, there is no proof that it ever existed. This is one of the points to which the attention of students is requested. That is to say, if there is any evidence that it ever came into existence let us have the evidence stated.

The only certain fact thus far is that under date of April 27, 1764, a warrant was prepared by the Prov. Grand Master of New York empowering Lieut. John Christie of the 60th regiment, Sampson Fleming and Josias Harper to organize a lodge "to be held at Detroit under whatever name the said master and his officers shall please to distinguish it."

It is also a fact that a few years ago this warrant was found among the archives of the Grand Lodge of New York and it is now preserved in this city.

There is no certain evidence that this charter ever reached Detroit. I believe that it did. Nevertheless it is possible, so far as we have thus far been able to ascertain, that it never left New York. It is perhaps significant that when it was found it was found folded up with the warrant issued by the Grand Master of England to Geo. Harrison himself, the man who issued it.

The 60th Regiment.

In this state of uncertainty it is necessary and in any event it is interesting to examine every circumstance surrounding Christie and his lodge (actual or projected).

The 60th Foot, at first called the "Royal Americans," now the King's Royal Rifles, was raised in 1756 at New York and Philadelphia on a basis then new, since it was expressly provided that commissions therein might be given to men not British subjects. Under this rule the famous Indian fighter, Col. Bouquet, became commander of one battalion which was with Forbes at Fort Duquesne.

Fortesque's Hist. of the British Army, p. 333.

At the same time the 2d and 3d Battalions were with Amherst at Louisburg.

Ibid, p. 316.

And with Wolfe on the Plains of Abraham.

Ibid, pp. 316 and 377.

It is possible that the four battalions came together at Montreal.

Ibid, p. 400.

Bouquet's battalion (at all events in 1763) was the first and Christie belonged to this battalion.

Parkman's "Conspiracy of Pontiac," Vol. I, p. 297. Vol. II, p. 35.

After the surrender of Canada the 3d and 4th battalions were disbanded and the 1st and 2d reduced.

Army list, 1789.

The remnant of the regiment was scattered all the way from Fort Duquesne (Pittsburg) to Green Bay (Menominee) with a handful of troops at Presque Isle (Erie), Sandusky, Detroit, Mackinac, Green Bay, St. Joseph and some other posts. This scattered condition and insufficient force was the primary cause of Pontiac's outbreak.

The first battalion was at Eoston, October, 1775.

Collections of N. Y. Hist. Soc., 1883.

Kemble Papers, Vol. I, p. 61.

During the American war which followed it served in the West Indies.

George Turnbull, described as Captain in the 2nd Battalion of the 60th Regt., was commandant at Detroit as late as June 4, 1769.

Wayne County Records, Liber A, p. 91, in the office of the Register of Deeds for Wayne County.

January 24, 1773, Major Henry Basset, of the 10th Regt., was commandant.

Ibid. pp. 227, 259.

I conclude that the 10th followed the 60th at Detroit.

Curiously enough, the 60th Regiment was again stationed at Detroit in 1790, or at least a large part of it. This we learn, not from any history of the British army or other printed books but from the manuscript records preserved in the office of the Register of Deeds for Wayne County, Mich.

Liber C, pp. 374-8.

This is the record of a treaty in the form of a deed, executed May 19, 1790, by the chiefs of the Ottawas to King George, conveying a tract on the north shore of Lake Erie. It is witnessed by Patrick Murray, Major 60th Regt., "commanding at Detroit," and by 20 other officers of the 60th Regt. and of the artillery, undoubtedly all the officers available. Among all this cloud of witnesses there are no familiar names.

John Christie.

Ensign Christie was in charge of the fort at Presque Isle near the site of the modern city of Erie, Penna., and surrendered to a detachment of Pontiac's Indians, June, 1763. He was under a cloud on this account for a time.

Parkman I, 297; II, 50.
Gladwin Ms., p. 638.

He was not commissioned Lieutenant until Nov. 15, 1765.

Army List 1766.

It seems strange that a mere Ensign who had not yet had the court martial, which necessarily followed his surrender of his post, should have been selected to be Master of a Lodge.

Christie was brought to Detroit and released by his captors. By this time the fort at Detroit was the only one held by the British.

The Indians closely beleaguered it until winter came on in 1763 when many of them departed for the winter to return in the spring in accordance with their modes of warfare. But it was not until August 26, 1764, that the fort was finally relieved. It was not until the summer of 1765 that the war was ended by a treaty with Pontiac.

Between July, 1763, and August, 1764, communication between Detroit and the east was very dangerous if not impossible. Twice in that period considerable forces failed in their attempt to make their way from Niagara to Detroit. Single scouts probably made the journey, but it was a journey of 250 miles through a wilderness wholly in possession of the enemy. Every British post on the way had been captured. Settlement of the country had not even been begun. And after reaching Niagara a letter for New York had still to be carried in canoe the length of Lake Ontario, thence up the Oswego, through Oneida Lake, across the portage and down the Mohawk to Albany, all the way along the flank of the fierce and dangerous Iroquois Six Nations, restless and disturbed by the news from the west. Witness the massacre at Devil's Hole on the brink of the Niagara chasm, of a force destined for the relief of Detroit, which massacre was the act of some young Iroquois who had broken loose from control. As a matter of fact we know that communication between Detroit and New York was wholly suspended except for the most urgent calls for relief.

It is curious that such a time should have been chosen to make application for a charter. The question arises how Christie's application got to New York and it seems pretty certain that the charter could hardly

have been delivered at Detroit, if at all, prior to August 26, 1764. One is tempted to conjecture that Christie made the application prior to June, 1763, in time of peace and in anticipation of being removed from Presque Isle to Detroit. That the charter was made out in due course but that the outbreak of the war made its delivery impossible and that it was laid away and forgotten and was finally with the other papers on hand turned over to the Ancient Grand Lodge of New York, organized in 1782. It is significant, as has been said, that when it was found it was folded in with the dormant commission of the Prov. Grand Master of New York.

Christie was still in Detroit in July, 1767, and is described as Lieutenant in Co. B.

Wayne Co. Records, Liber B, in the office of the Register of Deeds for Wayne Co., p. 507.

In August, 1767, he was at Michilimackinac and in relations with the noted (afterwards notorious) Robert Rogers, the first man to train regular troops to fight Indians in Indian fashion, the man who trained to war Israel Putnam, John Stark, et al.

Wayne County Records, Liber A, p. 68.

In . . . he made a trip to Montreal.

Journal of John Lees, a book in the catalogue of the Detroit Public Library but never upon the shelves, wherefore this reference cannot be completed.

A John Christie became a member of Masters Lodge at Albany, New York, in 1777.

McClenachan's Hist. of Freemasonry in New York, I, 259.

A letter to this lodge asking further information remains unanswered.

In 1789 there was a Captain John Christie, on half pay, credited to Dunlop's Jamaica Corps.

Army List 1789.

(I do not have access to any army list between 1766 and 1789.)

Sampson Fleming.

June 11, 1761, and March 8, 1768, he was Deputy Commissary of Provisions.

Gladwin Ms., p. 633.

Wayne County Records, Liber A, p. 34.

January 6, 1774, a house and lot was deeded to him at Detroit. He is described as a gentleman.

Liber B, p. 125.

January 1, 1785, a Fleming was Quartermaster of the 60th Regt., 1st Batl.

Kemble Papers, I, p. 213.

(No reason to think it was the same man.)

Sampson Fleming married Alice Haliburton, half sister of John Kinzie. They moved to New York and had several children. After Bro. Fleming's death Mrs. Fleming married a Low. Many of their descendants are prominent in New York to this date.

(We interject such paragraphs as this as often as possible because they suggest possible lines of further inquiry.)

(There is no trace of Josias Harper.)

The English Records.

1773-1779 "448, Lodge at Detroit in Canada."

1780 "355, Lodge at Detroit in Canada."

1781- 91, "356, Lodge at Detroit in Canada."

1792-1813, "289, Lodge at Detroit in Canada."

Bro. Robertson states that the name of this lodge never appears.

Freemasonry in Canada, I, 190.

All the authorities agree on this point although the name is given as "Zion" in the history quoted, in Gould's History of Freemasonry, American Edition IV., 259, and in a score of sketches and articles.

Union Lodge.

In the meantime there had been at different times two other lodges working at Detroit. At least this is the conclusion of Bro. Robertson in his "History of Freemasonry in Canada" which contains more genuine contribution to the early history of Freemasonry in Michigan than do all the books and articles which profess to expressly treat the history of Freemasonry in Michigan.

One of these is Union Lodge. From 1775 to 1778 it was entered as "Union Lodge No. 488 at Curacoa." In the lists of 1781-91 it appears as 393-394 "Union Lodge at Detroit in Canada" and from 1792-1813 with the same description but with the number 320.

This is the place to make some explanation relative to the manner of keeping the roll of the Grand Lodge of England. It has been noted that the first time any lodge at Detroit appears on this roll is 1773. Yet it does not necessarily follow that there was no lodge there in 1764. It does not even follow that this might not be the very lodge organized in 1764. It would be a rather extreme case but it is just possible that a lodge existed at Detroit for nine years and after that interval first made its appearance upon this roll.

On the other hand the fact that this lodge was kept upon the roll until 1813 is no evidence at all that it lasted until that date. Of course we know absolutely that it did not last so long, at least at Detroit. After a lodge in foreign parts once got upon the list it was likely to stay there until 1813 whatever might happen to it in the meantime. It was in 1813 that the two grand lodges of England were united and then a large number of the extinct lodges were dropped and especially all those in the United States.

In the third place there were successive renumberings of the lodges in 1770, 1780, 1781 and 1792 and this accounts for the fact that the same lodge (dead or alive) appeared at different dates under different numbers.

Of the existence at Detroit of Union Lodge in 1778, Bro. Robertson found a piece of most interesting direct evidence in the shape of a letter written to the lodge by James Heseltine, Grand Secretary, which letter is preserved in the archives of the Grand Lodge of England.

The letter acknowledges the receipt of a contribution of 10 guineas and states "your lodge is now entered in our books and stands numbered 510 in the Grand Lodge lists."

Compare this with the fact that Union Lodge had been on the list since 1775 and bore several numbers but never No. 510 and it will be seen how little can be inferred from the lists of the Grand Lodge of England. It is not even safe to conclude that this was the same Union Lodge. It is quite possible that the Curacoa Lodge was at Detroit in 1776 and that before 1778 it had departed and a new Union Lodge had come in to take its place. At all events nothing in the roll of the Grand Lodge of England is evidence to the contrary.

It might be inferred that Union was the Christie lodge and that the name of the Christie lodge was Union and not Zion. Even if it is a fact that both appear upon the Grand Lodge Register at the same time this would not militate against this theory in view of the way in which that register was kept.

However it seems to be agreed that this was the same lodge as the one given in Lane's records as "Union Lodge—Curacoa, No. 12, West Indies." It is commonly assumed that it must have been brought to Detroit by a

British Regiment. Detroit was an important post to the British during the revolutionary war and was occupied by a relatively large force. It is hardly to be doubted that several military lodges were here at various times during that period. Robertson states that in the year 1779 there were in the fort at Detroit 180 men of the 8th Regt. and 138 of the 47th and 50 rangers; in 1782 246 of the 8th and 71 of the 47th.

Freemasonry in Canada, I, 192.

If Union Lodge was removed from Curacao, and if it was a military lodge, possibly more light can be thrown upon its history by an examination of the movements and assignments of the 8th, 10th, 15th and 47th regiments and of the artillery. But how did it happen that British authority chartered a British military lodge for Curacao or how did a British military lodge come to be held at Curacao at a time when that island was in the undisputed possession of the Dutch? These questions have apparently never occurred to any of the historians who have easily assumed that Union came to Detroit with a British Regiment.

It is to be noted that an express treaty had a short time prior been made between the Grand Lodge of Holland and the Grand Lodge of England according to the terms of which the high contracting parties agreed not to charter lodges, the one in any part of the British Empire and the other in any of the dependencies of Holland.

Gould's Hist. of Freemasonry, Am. Ed. Vol. III, p. 226.

This was in 1770 and the treaty was hardly old enough to be violated in 1775.

It may or may not be a significant fact that a Union Lodge was warranted for Curacao in 1773 by the Grand Lodge of Holland.

Gould's Hist. of Freemasonry (Am. Ed.), IV, 168.

I am very desirous of knowing—

(1) On what evidence is the Curacao Lodge identified with the one in Detroit?

(2) What is the evidence by whom and when it was first chartered?

(3) What possible hypothesis is there for the reason and the occasion of its removal to Detroit?

I believe that these questions can be cleared up. If Union Lodge was ever at Curacao at all it must have been a lodge carried around over the face of the earth by two or three

British officers or officials. I suggest that inquiry be made what British officers or officials were on duty in Curacao about 1775. That there was any military force there I do not believe unless it was a man-of-war. Did it ever happen, in those days, that officers of the artillery served sometimes afloat and sometimes ashore? Or did the British government send naval officers to Detroit at the outbreak of the American Revolution?

In any case the fact that Union Lodge appears one year at Curacao and the next year at the farthest outpost of the British Empire in another direction, shows how lodges were carried around in those days and illustrates to perfection the actual character of the Christie lodge.

Still Another Lodge.

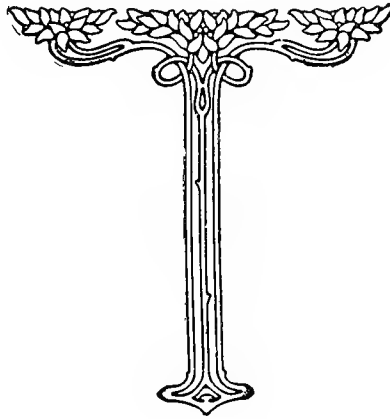
The letter already quoted from Grand Secretary James Heseltine recommends to Union Lodge that it place itself under the government of the Provincial Grand Lodge at Quebec. Now in an official list of lodges sent to England by the Provincial Grand Lodge of Quebec in 1785 there is given "Harmony L——, No. —, at Detroit, held by a warrant from the P. G. L. of New York." Two years later, in 1787, the Grand Secretary of Quebec adds to his official report to the Grand Lodge of England, "N. B. There is at Detroit a lodge called No. 1, New York, constituted by the Grand Master of New York, who have put themselves under our care."

It is impossible under all the circumstances to conclude that this was the Christie lodge. If the Christie lodge ever began it had not so long survived.

It would take too long to review all the circumstances referred to. It is not necessary. No one will be tempted to make any such claim. For what would it profit those who have always contended that a Zion Lodge began in 1764 and existed continuously until 1794 and then continued under a different charter but with the same name, to have it established that a Harmony Lodge existed from 1764 to 1787 and to some later date, and after it was dead and gone a Zion Lodge first appeared in 1794, organized by men who had just come to Detroit with the changing British forces and who were not Detroit Masons but Quebec Masons?

of New York in granting its charter in 1806 was reviving the one granted in 1764 is absurd. An "Ancient" Grand Lodge could no more "revive" a "Modern" charter than the Ancient Order of Hibernians could do so today. Nor would it have undertaken

to do so. All it undertook to do was to substitute its warrant for the one granted by the Grand Lodge of Lower Canada, which was an "Ancient" body like itself, and one whose existence and whose charters it could properly recognize.



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