DEDICATED

TO

ALL THE FREEMASONS OF FROME PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

FREEMASONRY IN FROME

Chapter I.

EARLY DAYS.

THE first Lodge of Freemasons in Frome was the one we know as "The Royal Clarence."

It is certain that there were individual Freemasons Living in Frome and neighbourhood, and it is due, no doubt, to this, that proceedings were started in 1790 to form a Lodge. In that year George Frederick, Prince of Wales, had become Grand Master, and this gave great impetus to Freemasonry in England. In the museum of No. 973 there is a gold medal, inscribed, to commemorate the Installation of the Prince of Wales as G.M.

Our first Grand Lodge had been formed it 1717 by four London Lodges, although there were various other London and Provincial Lodges in existence at that time. The first recorded list gave the names of twenty Lodges. In 1725 there were seventy. By that year three degrees were being worked. The Grand Lodge of Ireland was in existence in 1725, and that of Scotland was formed in 1736.

The influence of these three Grand. Lodges spread. Masonry rapidly in the three kingdoms. The efforts of Grand Lodge\_ in England to bring Lodges into enrolment, and their endeavours to enforce other regulations, caused. A great deal of dissension, and led to the formation of a rival Grand Lodge in 1751. They called themselves the Antients, and the original Grand Lodge of 1717 the Moderns.

The Royal Clarence Lodge No. 560 was warranted under the Moderns, 2nd of June, 1790. Unfortunately, all trace of minutes or any other local record of this lodge have dis-appeared, and the only means of obtaining any knowledge of it is what is to be found in. Grand Lodge records. In the library there, is a book, dated. 1768-1812, bound with all Masonic signs and symbols, gold tracery, etc., and' labelled " Old Country Registers."

From this book I was able to deduce that the first Lodge was held in Frome on June 10th, 1790. There were apparently seven members present : Dennis Edson, William Palmer, Rev. Wm. Watkins, Thomas Hardy, Thomas Jones, William Chislett and William Hayward.

They made, or as we say, initiated, the same\_ day two more : William Middleton, aged 32 years, Gentleman, of Frome, and Thomas Balne, aged' 27 years, Gentleman, of Frome.

As to these brethren: William Palmer was a painter, and several of his pictures, portraits, etc., are still in existence in Bath. His father was Nicholas Palmer, born in 1686 and buried in 1749 in the old churchyard at Marston Bigot near the old yew tree. This is now the lawn in front of Marston House.

Bro. William Palmer died in 1798, on March 7th. In Mr. Edmond Crocker's diary he says : “Died Mr. Palmer, painter, a man valuable as a friend to individuals, as well as to the public in general."

He was buried with masonic honours in the now church yard of Marston Bigot. The vestry has since been built over his grave. His great-great-grandson, Edward Wilton-Palmer, was initiated in the present Lodge, Royal Somerset No. 973.

In the museum of Lodge No. 973 there is a programme of the service held in Frome Parish Church, July 30th, 1822, when Prov. Grand Lodge met here and attended the service held especially for them on that occasion. Special hymns and an anthem were sung. Bro. Ed. Wilton Palmer presented this framed programme to 973 some years ago.

A window in St. John's chancel on the south side was placed there by Edward Palmer, grandson of the above mentioned Bro. William Palmer, in memory of his own father, Charles, son of William, and of his own daughter Ann, who died, aged. 21 years. Their monograms are shown in the glass.

Wor. Bro. Thomas Jones's portrait is in the room up-stairs in the Masonic Hall, Frome. It shows him dressed in knee breeches and long dress coat of the period, his right arm resting on the Volume of the Sacred Law, P.M.'s jewel in his right hand, and wearing a sash of one of the higher degrees. He has a a peruke. The picture is a photograph of painting, and- was presented to the lodge by the late Wor. Bro. Hayman, P.M. of this lodge and P.P.J.G.W.

Bro. Thomas Jones died in office as W.M' of the Royal Clarence, and was buried in Frome Churchyard on Monday, May 6th 1805. He was followed to the grave by his brethren of the Lodge. The Dep. P.G. Master of -Somerset, William Meyler, attended the funeral and- delivered a very impressive oration at the graveside, in the presence of the members of the Royal Clarence, other Lodges in the Province and many inhabitants of Frome. The address was afterwards printed,

at the request of the several Lodges and visiting-brethren attending the funeral, by William Meyler, Grove, Bath, i.e., the D.P.'G. himself. There is a copy in the present Masonic Museum at Frome.

In St. John's registers, Frome, under " Burials,” is this entry : Oct. 27, 1791. Sarah Jones, wife of Thomas Jones, aged 27 years.

Thomas Jones was one of the Javelin men to Sir Thomas Champneys when he was Sheriff of Somerset.

In the Warrant Book of Grand Lodge the original Warrant of the Royal Clarence Lodge, Frome, No.-560, is dated 2nd June, i790. It states that Dennis Edson is Master, the Rev. Wm. Watkins and Thomas Jones, Wardens'

It was constituted by Bro. Thomas Dunckerley, who became P.G.M. of Somerset, Mav 3rd, 1784' He held at one time eight Prov. G. Masterships. He died Nov' 19th, 1795'

Here are two letters : (1) written to the P.G.M' from Frome : (2) sent to Bro. William White, the Grand Secretary, which letters are extracted from Bro. Henry Sadler's book on Bro. Dunekerley :-

*Frome, Oct. 28, 1795.*

Dear Sir,-

Enclosed I have sent you a list of the persons I have made in the Royal Clarence Lodge since my last return to you: the amount of the Registering fees is £2 10s. 0d. One guinea we have also sent towards

the General Charity and one shilling to have the right of our meeting inserted in the Freemason’s Calendar, which is Monday nearest the full moon. The whole enclosed is £3 12s. 0d., which I hope you will receive safe. I have given an order on the Postmaster of Portsmouth, who will pay it to your order on demand. I hope your health is better than it was when I had the honor to hear from you last.

I hope soon to make the R.C. Lodge the most respectful in the West of England, as I have hints given me that I shall shortly have, many respectful caracters and even noblemen to make, It is my greatest pleasure to see Masonry flourish, but more particularly the Lodge to which I have the honour to be the Master, under that P.G. Master for which I have the greatest affection and most profound respect, and the honor to subscribe my-self his truly and most faithful Brother and very humble servant'

T. JONES.

Doubtless this was the last communication made to Bro. Dunckerley from the Province of Somerset, as he died Nov. 19th. 1795.

The writer seems to have been of a somewhat sanguine temperament. The Grand Lodge Register shows that his hopes as to the " many respectful caracters " joining the Lodge were in a measure realised, but the expected. Noblemen do not appear to have turned up.

Thomas Jones must have been Master twice, as the above Letter shows him Master in 1795, and he died in office as W.M. in 1805.

The second Frome letter was written by Bro. Charles Bayly, an Attorney of Frome-quite entitled to be considered one of the "respectful caracters " mentioned above. He was initiated on Nov. 12th, 1795, and his confidence (or his ignorance) as a six-weeks-old Mason was superb. His lotter is written to Bro. William White, Grand Secy., asking him to get Bro. T. Jones appointed Deputy P.G. Master for Somerset.

Dear Sir and Brother,-

It having been intimated to me that several respectable persons in this town and neighbourhood are desirous of becoming Masons, if they can be made in a Provincial Grand Lod.ge, I beg leave to address you on the subject.

Before the death of Bro. Dunckerley (whose loss we much lament and whose memory we revere) it was proposed to him to appoint our Right Worshipful Master Bro. T. Jones (who has already served the office of P.G. Warden) Deputy Prov. Grand Master for this County, to enable him to hold a Grand Lodge : which he was pleased to approve and would have accomplished if he had not died so soon. If this can now be done, I doubt not but it would add many very respectable members to ye society at large and to our Lodge in particular. I need say no more of Bro. Jones than that his character as a man and- a Mason, and his peculiar zeal for the cause, raises him high in the estimation of all Brothers, and entitles him to general esteem.

As I have not yet learnt who is to succeed Bro. Dunckerley, I shall be obliged to you to inform me ; and also to say if it is possible to obtain a deputation to accomplish our design.

If any other plan should occur to you will you favour me with your sentiments thereon by a line at your first leisure ?

I am, sir, your affectionate Brother (in Masonry),

CHAS BAYLY

Pilly Hill, near Frome,

Dec. 24th, L795.

To Wm. White, Esq.

To return to chronological order once more : Another of these founder brethren, William Chislett, was an Attorney here and a prominent townsman.

In the latter years of the 18th century, when we were at war with France, Volunteer Forces were formed all over the county. The Selwood Volunteers was the name given to Frome's earliest formation. Peace was obtained for a short while, but when the war broke out again in 1803 the Frome Selwood Volunteers came forward almost to a man once more as a Cavalry Corps. Amongst them is the name of William Chislett. Where he was initiated does not appear, but one of the same name was made a Mason in the Royal York Lodge of Perfect Friendship, Bath, in 1780. He was described as a schoolmaster.

Dennis Edson, the first W.M,, was a Frome man, a road contractor, who did" a great deal of work on the turnpike roads then being made in this neighbourhood, under the Trustees of the Frome Turnpike Trust.

Thomas Handy was the landlord of the George Inn at the time the Royal Clarence Lodge was formed in 1790. I have been told that in the year before, 1789. a Masonic meeting was held for the first time in Frome at the George Inn. Probably it was from such informal meetings that the idea was born of obtaining a Charter and having a regularly constituted Lodge with a name and number. John Hooper

succeeded Thomas Handy at the George Inn, Dec. 1st, 1791, coming there from the Lamb Inn, Hindon, Wilts. A lodge was formed in 1798 which met at the Lamb Inn, Hindon, under the name of Innocence and Morality. It was erased in 1832.

The two initiates of Royal Clarence, June 10th, 1790, William Middleton and Thomas Balne, are both described as gentlemen of Frome. William Middleton died Feb. 14th, 1801, aged 45 years, and his memorial in the south aisle of Frome Parish Church says " A worthy and sincere friend." The banking firm of Sheppard, Barton and Middleton were well-known in Frome and district about the time of the formation of our Lodge, and it may be that he was a member of

this firm, though of that I am unable to say with certainty.

Of Thomas Balne, the Church Rate-book says he had a house in Fromefield. Later he was an Overseer of Buckland, in 1801 and in 1821 again.

The Rev. Wm. Watkins was curate of St. Michael's Church at. Stoke Lane in 1784 and in 1792. He signs as Minister twice in 1800. It would be interesting to know how he came to be a founder of the Royal Clarence, where he was initiated. and when. He was also a curate of Whatley and signed the register there in 1790 and 1792. He probably acted for both parishes, Whatley and Stoke Lane.

The Frome Masonic Library contains a sermon preached by this Reverend Brother at Frome on Sept. 17th, 1790, at the Institution of the Royal Clarence Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons.

The flysheet says that the sermon was preached before the members of the Royal Clarence and other Lodges, and published at their request. The price was one shilling.

It was printed in Bath, by B. Crutwell, and sold by W. J. and J. Robinson, Paternoster Row-, P. Daniel, Frome, and Wm. Meyler, Bath, and " all other " booksellers, 1790.

It is an excellent sermon on Masonry : the text, Hebrews xiii., 1, " Let brotherly love continue." The impression one receives on reading it through is that the charge to the initiate to-day is remarkably similar in all its important points.

His treatment, of secrecy is interesting. He insists that it is a virtue, and quotes the V.S.L. in proof.

Perhaps the following point should" be borne in mind by the reader just here. Shortly after that sermon was preached a law was passed suppressing all secret societies, but especially exempting Freemasonry because of the well-known benevolence and charity of the members, and their loyalty to the Throne.

Lodge meetings of the Royal Clarence were held.at first with much frequency, for soon after the inaugural meeting on June 10th, viz., on June 18th, another Lodge was held, and Evan Vaughan, aged 42, Attorney of Frome, was initiated. Six days later, 24th June, Peter Daniel, aged. 36, bookseller, of this town, was made a Mason. Edmund Crocker's Diary say: “July 7, 1799 died Mr. Daniel, who was organist of the Parish Church for about fifteen years. About the same time was elected organist in his father's stead. Thomas Daniel-salary £40 per ann.. twenty of which for five years to come is to be paid to the widow and children of the late Peter Daniel."

So full of enthusiasm were the Royal Clarence members that on July 2nd there were three other candidates, all of whom were initiated that day. James Hyde, aged 30, Auctioneer; John Mees, Taylor, aged 40 ; and ------Breedel, aged" 23, Surgeon, all of Frome. July 16th, Thomas Millard, aged 40, Innkeeper, of Mells, was made a Mason.

Richard Portch, aged 40, Baker, Frome, Sept. 3rd, 1790.

William Hooper, aged 38, Miller, Corsley, Oct. 4th, 1790.

Benjamin Sterling, aged" 40, Innholder, Warminster, Nov. 15th, 1790.

James Cheltenham, aged 37, Innholder, Frome, Dec. 13th, 1790.

Stephen Middleton aged 39, Cabinet Maker, Frome, Dec. 13th, 1790.

This completed the list for 1790 : thirteen initiations in six months !!

Bro. James Cheltenham was the landlord of the Waggon and Horses Inn, and from the yard behind the house the wagons used to start for London and places *en route*.

If the Royal Clarence Lodge followed the customs of other Lodges, such as those of Bath and Taunton, we can form some idea of what the working was like. We have in our museum a photograph of an old Lodge arranged for work according to an exact account of about 1760. The photograph was taken in 1921, when the working was gone through at Weston-super-Mare. The brethren are shown seated at a long table, the perambulation, of course, being made behind the seated brethren. Flats were worn, .knee breeches, stockings and. shoes, long dress coats, in fact very much as Bro. Thomas Jones is shown in the picture of him now upstairs.

Let us just glance at the Masonic development leading up to the time of that old picture. A well-known Mason, the late Bro. Lionel Vibert, P.M., of the Quatuor Coronati Lodge, in a paper read, at Minehead on June 29th, 1925, said. : "The three degrees as we have them in the Craft today are a development at the hands of speculative Craftsmen, of a Guild system which consisted originally, so far as we can ascertain, of a simple oath of admission for the apprentice, a lad in his 'teens, and. a formal ceremony of admission to full membership, with possibly a secret, rite associated with the Mastership.

“By the days of Grand. Lodge this had come to be a system of two degrees only –the 'acceptance, and the Master's part.

"In or just before 1725 the acceptance was divided to form the E.A. and F.C. degrees. By 1730 the Trigradal system was definitely established. But the form of working which we practice to-day, had been agreed upon by the Lodge of Reconciliation," etc., etc. (The Lodge of Reconciliation (1813-16) was formed after the Union of the Grand Lodges in 1813.-J.O.L.)

In the picture I have mentioned (circa 1760) the brethren are shown smoking long churchwarden pipes, and wo know from the minutes of old Lodges that the drinks for their refreshment were brought into the Lodge Room.

In the Royal Clarence Lodge Bye-Laws, numbor.14 says: "No smoking of tobacco shall be allowed in the Lodge, or in the supper room during Lodge hours, and if any brother shall attempt to introduce it he shall forfeit five shillings. No. 15 bye-law regulates, but does not forbid, the bringing of wine into the Lodge.

The second year in the life of the Royal Clarence, 1791, produced five new members. The first of these was Robert Eyres, aged. 26, Clothier, of Westbury Leigh. He was evidently what we call a keen Mason, for, as soon as he was made M.M. he had a medal engraved" (not struck), we can presume, to commemorate his membership of the Craft. On the obverse of the med.al, which is a rather wide oval in shape, are depicted various Masonic Emblems, with a motto : In chief-Fiat Lux et Lux Erat-on a scroll. In base-the year of his initiation, A.M. 5791., and another motto-Amor Honor et Justitia.

On an inner border round the medal is Floreat Ars . Robert Eyres, M.M. Roya1 Clarence Lodge No. 560.

The outside border is a radiated ribbon.

On the reverse are the arms of the Grand Lodge of the " Moderns " at that time-on a shield three castles or towers, with a chevron between, bearing a pair of compasses. Supporters, two beavers, typifying industry in building.

The legend is quite plainly Belief and Truth. This is evidently 'an engraver's error. It should be Belief and Truth, of course. The border bears the words, “Devoted to secrecy and friendship."

The illustration from which I have given these details appeared in Somerset and Dorset Notes and" Queries, Vol. XI., page 125 (facing). The article appearing there was written by the late Mr. A. M. Broadly, of Bridport, in whose possession the medal was in 1908.

Another of these five initiates of 1791 was a gentleman who came to bear a reputation as distinguished as his family name. Harry Foulks Edgell, 28 years, Lieut., Royal Navy, was initiated April 18th. He was a son of Chaffyn Edgell, Esq., of Standerwick Court. His younger brother, James Charles Edgell, aged 22, Captain in the 4th Regt. of Foot, was initiated" Nov. 15th, 1802. This younger brother fought and was wounded at Waterloo. Two other sons of Chaffyn Edgell, viz., Martin Foulkes Edgell, and Beddison Edgell, were also Army officers. One more brother, Foulkes Edmund Edgell, joined the Royal Navy and became an Admiral.

No doubt the strong Masonic tradition in this Edgell family was the means of bringing them to Frome for initiation into Freemasonry. Harry Foulkes Edgell's mother was Lucretia Eleanor Rishton, grand-daughter of Martin Foulkes, Esq.

This eminent scholar was Deputy Grand. Master of the Grand Lodge (of 1717) in 7724, and President of the Royal Society in 1741. (Sir Isaac Newton appointed him one of his vice-presidents in 1723). When Dr. Edmund Halley died in 1742, occasioning a vacancy in the Royal Academy of Sciences at Paris, Bro. Martin Foulkes was chosen in his

Stead, and when Algernon Duke of Somerset, who for many years had been President of the Society of Antiquaries, died in 1750, Bro. Martin Foulkes was unanimously elected to the honourable post rendered vacant by his Grace's death.

When Bro. Harry Foulkes Edgell was promoted to the rank of Admiral, Tom Bunn, in his diary, wrote:-

“In very early youth his mother took him to Capt. McBride, on board a man-of-war. The Captain thought he should please mama by telling her that if an action was fought he should order her son to a safe place.

“Like a Roman matron she said: " No ! let him be on deck and take his chance with the rest."

Tom Bunn goes on:-

“He has dared every danger to which Naval men are exposed, has always been a good" officer, and I am glad he has been promoted to his high rank."

His mother died in 1801 and is buried in the old Parish Church of Frome. He was born in 1767, and was 24 years old (not 28 as stated) when he was initiated. He joined the Navy in 1780, thirteen years old, was made Admiral in 1840, and died at his seat, Standerwick Court, 1846. He was Deputy Lieut. for Somerset for some years.

He was elected a Trustee of the Turnpike Trust in 1816, and. he is there described as Capt., R.N.

In St. John's Church, Frome, is the following memento mori of Charles James Edgell (initiated Nov. 16th, 1802, as stated before) :-

" In memory of Charles James Edgell, Esq., who, after having served his King and country '19 years in the 4th or King's Own Regiment, died on his passage to Barbadoes in the-40th year of his age, having attained the rank of Captain; during which period he fiIled the situations of Deputy. Assistant-General in Holland; Major of Brigade and Chaplain at Cueta in Africa, and Deputy Judge Advocate in the Eastern District; and with the Army in the Peninsular War, commanded by the Duke of Wellington, K.G., G.C.B:

" He was present in the actions of Salamanca, Villa Morial, Osma, Victoria, and Waterloo during which last he was wounded. : as also most severely in the storming of Gamavia Maior, and was appointed one of the six British Commandants the 7th of July, 1815, at

Paris. “He was born at Frome the 28th August, 1719, and died 31st May, 1819, and was buried on the 5th June with military honours in St. Michael's Church, Barbadoes."

It is a good record even for that fighting family.

Besides the brethren already mentioned as being made Masons in 1791, the other three were:-

James Barber, aged 36, Maltster, of Frome, March 7th.

William Davis, aged 40, Innholder, of Frome, Oct. 31st.

John Jones, aged 30, Butcher, of Frome, Dec.27th.

The year 1792 added eleven members to No. 560. Five of them were Shepton Mallet men. Three were initiated the same night, viz, Dec.3rd and were:-

Daniel Follet Scadding, Coroner, aged. 39.

John Palmer, Painter, aged 35.

James Dodderil, a Tanner, aged 28.

The other two Shepton brethren were initiated. Dec. 26th, and

were:-

William Jacobs, Baker, aged 40 years.

William Powell, Innholder, aged 40 years.

That same year the Lodge of Love and" Honour was constituted by the P.G.M. Thomas Dunckerley on Oct. 9th, so that there was already a Lodge in their own town'

The late Wor. Bro. Charles Bishop, in the Somerset Master's transactions for 1931, gives an interesting account of the opening of this Shepton Mallet Lodge of Love and Honour. There had been an earlier Lodge there 1737-1768, meeting at the Angel, but nothing was known of this old Lodge in Shepton Mallet in 1921. I believe the minutes of Love and Honour show some feeling of indignation with the Royal Clarence Lodge for initiating these Shepton Mallet men, who obviously found difficulty in getting made in Shepton Mallet.

Bro. Scadding, the Coroner, is mentioned in the *Bath Chronical* of Sept. 4th, 1804, and it may be interesting as showing something of life and conditions of those time, and more particularly-what a Frome Mason was expected to do as part of his duty.

“Wednesday: John Manners, alias-Maynard, for robbing the warehouse of Mr. Joyce, of Freshford, was executed at Ilchester. After the execution a man was placed in the Pillory for an assault on a child. The spectators for the first half-hour, roughly treated him

with apples, eggs, cucumbers and dirt. These being expended he began to receive a-few volleys of stones, but by the exertion of Mr. Scadding and his constables who took three of his assailants into custody, the wretch came off tolerably well.”

The other initiates of 1792 were : Jacob Willis, aged 30, a silversmith, on Aug. 16th; a name which was extant in Frome for more than a century. Jeremiah Cruse, 40 years, Gentleman, of Longleat, on Sept' 7th'. Thomas Ayers a baker, 39 years, Nov. 5th, and another baker named John Giles 32 years, on Dec 3rd. Robert Bateman Wilkins, 37 a clothier, of Frome. He wasreally41, being baptised in St. John's on Feb.21st', 1750/1. We should say now 1751 but at that time the year began on March. 25th, and it was not until 1752 that the new style of reckoning was adopted.

Miles Lowley, from Bristol, a brandy merchant, aged 38, was also initiated that year, on April 9th. Possibly his coming to Frome on business brought him into touch with Masons meeting at the George Inn and resulted in his becoming one of them.

The Jeremiah Cruse, of Longleat, mentioned above, is described as “Senior "in another book in the Grand Lodge Library. His son, Jeremiah Cruse, Jnr., was admitted (not initiated) into Royal Clarence on Sept' 2nd, 1811, and he is entered as an accountant, of Horningsham' probably he was made a Mason in Bath.

His memorial in the Minster Church of Warminster says he was born April 13th, 1781 and died Sept' 6th, 1861. “He laboured more than sixty seven years a faithful Clerk, Conveyancer and Accountant in the Stewardship Department of the Longleat estate, with four successive stewards and in four Marquisates."

Four members of this family became brethren in the Royal Clarence: the two already mentioned besides Harry Cruse and John Cruse. Harry was initiated on April 30th 1810 aged 26, Accountant of Frome. He became treasurer of the first Frome Savings Bank, and Tom Bunn, in His diary, says that the was the most accurate accountant and the best man of figures (except Master Bidder) that he ever knew, a tribute of' praise indeed, coming from such a very-precise man as Tom Bunn. He also says how honest and trustworthy a man he was. The phrase “Except Master Bidder " refers to a boy of twelve years of age, who came to Frome and gave an exhibition of mental arithmetic in the Assembly Room at the Wheatsheaves (now Mansford and Baily, in Bailey, in Bath Street, and still licensed under the name of the Wheatsheaves). It was then held by a man named Porch. The large assembly room was the top floor of the house'

John Cruse was an Attorney's Clerk, and initiated' April

12th, 1813, aged 33, living in Frome.

The year 1793 produced eight- candidates at as many meetings. Whether there were other meetings cannot be said, as there are no minutes in existence to-day. Probably there were, because of some passings and raisings. Naturally following, the three degrees being worked at that time as we well know.

The first candidate was James Wilson, 45, Captain in the 50th Regt., made Feb. 18th, 1793. The diaries of the time mention Regiments passing through Frome on their way from one place to another. Sometimes they would remain a week here and sometimes only a night. This 50th Regt. was one which had a Freemason's Lodge. Their warrant was dated as 21st April, 1763. In Grand. Lod.ge records they are reported as working in Lisbon 1798, at Gibraltar the same year

and at Malaga, Spain. In 1800. They had a R.A. Chapter in 1797. No doubt Bro. Capt. Wilson wanted to qualify to join the Regimental Lodge.

Others made were :-

On the 17th March, Charles Britton, 25, Taylor, of Kilmersdon.

12th May, Daniel Thomas Windsor, 25, Gent., Longleat.

29th July, James Baker, 23, Sadler, Frome.

15th Sept., William Wilton, 27, Maltster, Warminster.

8th Dec., James Davis, 34, Stationer, Warminster.

16th Dec., William Ford, 22, Clothier, Frome.

29th Dec., William Pitt, 25, Watchmaker, Frome.

Bro. William Ford was the son of William and Jane Ford", of Frome. His father was a clothier, too. They were a Nonconformist family, and had a vault in Badcox Lane Meeting in Frome, where many of them are buried.

Bro. William Pitt was a member of an old. Frome family of Nonconformists. The old" burial ground at Catherine Hill, closed" since the middle of last century, now has but one memorial stone left that is to the memory of E. G. Pitt and dated 1850. One of his forbears named Caleb Pitt, born in 1748, was a clockmaker in Frome.

A clock made by him is still going and is in the possession of Mr. Clem George, formerly of Frome, now living in Quariston, Aylesbury.

Bro. James Baker married, Miss Titford, of Frome, July 10th, 1802 (in Bath Chronicle of that date). He joined the Yeomanry in Frome in 1798. With regard to Bro. William Wilton, there is a memorial in Warminster Churchyard to Bro. William Wilton, who died in 1828. There were many of them buried there, one dated 1689. They migrated to Salisbury later. (Rambles around. Warminster, 1883).

It seems to me that these brethren of Warminster and Longleat were very likely influenced to become Masons by the Masonic traditions of Warminster. In 1793 there was no Lodge in Warminster, but there had been two Lodges successively in earlier years. The first Lodge was founded in Warminster in 1735, the warrant being dated for that year.

The Lodge met at Lord Weymouth's Arms. It survived until 1754, when it was erased on 29th Nov., but had ceased working for some time previously.

The second Lodge formed in Warminster met at the Angel, and the warrant is dated 1770, March 1st. It had a very short life, being erased on 23rd April, 1773. The present " Longleat " Lodge at Warminster has its warrant dated 1874, January 1st, anal was constituted 27th February the same year.

The first Lodge of 1735 is very likely to have been due to the influence of Bro. Thomas, Lord Viscount Weymouth, who, in that year, was installed as Grand Master.

The minutes of Grand Lodge, Thursday, April 17th, say : "At the House of the Rt. Honble. the Lord Viscount Weymouth in Grosvenor Square where mett: The Rt. Honble. the Earl of Craufurd, G.M., Sir Ceed Wray, Bart., D.G.M., John Ward, Esq., Sir Ed. Mansell, Bart., C. Wardens, The Rt. Honble. The Lord Viscount Weymouth, G.M. Elect,

The Duke of Richmond, The Duke of Athol, The Earl of Winchelsea, The Earl of Balcarrass, Earl of Wymes, Earl of Lowdown, Marquess of Bowman, Lord Cathcatt, Lord Vere Bartel, together with a vast appearance of the late Grand Officers and Gentn. being Masons, all clothed in white aprons and gloves, who proceeded in a regular manner in procession (having Hautboys, Trumpets, French Horns, and Kettledrums playing before them) to Mercers Hall in Cheapside; and being withdrawn into a convenient room, the Masters and 'Wardens of Lodges were called in.

"The Grand Master presented the Rt. Honble. the Lord Viscount Weymouth to be ‘Grand Master for the year ensuing, who was unanimously accepted of, with great applause.

“The Grand Master took notice of several Brethren in the HaIl who had their jewels pendant to Blue Ribbons (not having been Grand Officers) contrary to an express order of Grand Lodge-Blue Ribbon belonging to Grand Officers only and therefore ordered that the secretary do send a copy of the said order to all Regular Lodges to prevent any such irregularity for the future.

ADJOURNED TO DINNER

" After Dinner the Grand" Master, etc., walked round" the Hall in procession and took leave of the Brethren: and being returned and seated (in the " convenient room " ? J.O.L.) Then his Lordship invested the Rt. Honble. Lord Viscount Weymouth, Grand Master, with the proper badge of his office, and desired him to proceed to the election of his officers: - Whereupon his Lordship, taking the chair, proceeded to the election of his Officers in manner following t viz.:-John Ward, Esq., D.G.M. ; Sir Edward Mansell, Bart., Senior G.W.; Mr. Martin Clare, Junr. G.W.; Mr. John Revis, Secretary; Mr. George Moody, Sword Bearer.

“Then a motion being made for and on behalf of Randall Took, Esq., to be made Prov. G. Master of South America, which was agreed" to. As also a petition from several brethren now residing in and about the City of Lisbon in Portugal humbly praying that a deputation may be granted, to Mr. George Gordon for constituting them into a regular Lodge, the prayer of which petition was also granted. Ordered that the Secretary make out proper deputations accordingly.

“Then the present twelve stewards were called up and thanks returned to them for the care they had taken in providing such an elegant entertainment for the Society, and at the same time their healths were drank to, and also were desired to proceed for each steward to name his successor for the ensuing year: which they did in manner following, viz. :

Captain Bowden, Sir Joseph Moore, Mr. Noah Roul,

Dr. Walter Weldon, Mr. John Gowland, Mr. James

Pringle, Mr. James Ruck, Mr. Richard Tawle, James

Styles, Esq., Francis Blyth, Esq., Dr. John Hody, Dr.

Isaac Schomberg, Junr.

N.B.-The following brethren served as stewards in the room of Sir Joseph Moore, Capt. Bowden, Mr. James Styles and Mr. Noah Roul, who declined, viz. : Mr. Benjamin Gascoyne, Mr. Champion, Mr. Ross and. Mr. John Jesse."

Lord. Weymouth did not attend the next meeting, i.e., “Quarterly Communications held at the Devil Tavern within Temple Bar, Thursday, 24th June, 1735, being St. John's Day." The principal item of interest seems to have been " to receive an address from the body of Gentlemen who had served the Society in the quality of stewards, praying certain privileges that they might meet monthly as a Lodge of Master Masons under the denomination of the Stewards' Lodge.

“That they might be so distinguished (since all Grand Officers are for the future appointed to be chosen out of their number, and in order to qualify themselves for the right discharge of those offices when called to the same) as to send a deputation of twelve from the whole body of stewards to each Quarterly Communication-all twelve to have voices and all that come to pay two shillings and 6d.. apiece towards the expenses of that occasion. That no person who has not served the Society as steward might be permitted, at a Quarterly Communication or elsewhere to wear their coloured ribbons or aprons, but such as had been stewards might be indulged with wearing a particular jewel by way of distinction, suspended in their proper Ribbon wherever they appear as Masons-the pattern of which they then offered."

These were granted to them upon a division by 45 for to 42 against.

In the Masonic Year Book for 1934 the list of Lodges gives the Grand Stewards Lodge, meeting at Freemasons Hall, and the date of foundation is 1735. It is a Hallstone Lodge and, of course, has received Centenary Warrant.

At the meeting of 11th Dec., 1735, Martin Clare, A.M., acting as D.G.M,, pro tem., informed the Grand Lodge that the Grand. Master, Lord Weymouth, had" received an express from Paris that morning concerning the death of his Lordship's grandmother, the Lady Jersey I so that he could not, with decency, attend the Society that evening according to his intention, and hoped that they would" excuse him on account of the melancholy occasion which detained him.

The most interesting minute of this meeting is : Notice being given that the Master and Wardens of a Lod.ge from Ireland attended without, desiring to be admitted, by virtue of a deputation from Long Kington, the Grand" Master of Ireland, but it appearing that there was no particular recommendation from his Lordship in the affair, their request could not be complied with unless they would accept of a new Constitution here.

This was an example of the attitude of Grand Lodge in attempting to bring all Masonry in this country into line under their own Grand Lodge regulations. It caused. Much dissension, and resulted in the formation of a rival Grand Lodge in 1751, who called themselves " The Antients," and were subsequently known as the Athol Lodge-the Duke of Athol being their Grand Master from 1791 until the formation in 1813 of the present United Grand Lodge of England.

One more item may be noted at this meeting: A letter was received from the Lodge at Bengal, and notice being given that the Brother who brought the letter was without, Captain Rigby was desired to introduce him, which he did; being seated at the table of Grand Lodge, he paid in a further charity of £21.

It can be seen that " the table " in the Lodge was the usual practice, and we know it was so for many years afterwards by the representation of a Lodge of about 1760 now in the Museum at Frome.

Lord Weymouth, who was G.M., was the second Viscount. He inherited the title and the estate of Longleat, as also that of Kempsford, Glos., from the brother of his grandfather in 1714, when he was four years old".

The first Viscount was also named Thomas and received the title in 1682. Lord Weymouth. The G.M., was a posthumous child, his father having died in London from the smallpox in 1710, leaving his mother Mary, daughter of Edward Villiers, Lord- Jersey, enceinte.

The first Viscount was the owner who laid out Longleat in the Dutch style, with rectangular lakes and gardens in the formal manner of that period.. On his death, and the succession of this boy of four year's old, Longleat suffered a period of more or less neglect for some forty years. Lord Weymouth died not live in his Longleat mansion, but occupied an old manor house in Horningsham. His son, who became

the first Marquis of Bath, was the man who, employing " Capability " Brown, gave the lakes and grounds their present appearance, doing away with the Dutch lay-out entirely.

CHAPTER II.

GROWTII AND DECIINE

Returning to the Royal Clarence Lodge once more, after this, perhaps, excusable digression, we find only one record of initiation in 1794, viz., Joseph Brookman, a carpenter, of Frome.

1795 produced five makings :-

James Fussell, 40, Edge-tool maker, Mells, 2nd February,

1795

James Lawrence, 23, of the 13th Dragoons, 2nd February,

1795.

(His name has a note against it " Not stationery ").

James Cox, 32, Gentleman, Jamaica 29th June, 1795.

Charles Bayly, Attorney, Frome, 12th Nov., 1795.

Humphrey Lawrence, Esq., Capt. of the Essex Light

Dragoons, 12th Nov., 1795.

Bro. James Fussell was one of the family so long at Mells. Collinson, the Somerset historian, says, speaking of Mells, " To the east of the church is a romantick narrow valley called Wadbury, or Modbury Yale, which extends in a wandering direction to the extremity of the parish and is afterwards continued through Elm to Frome, where it finally ends. Its length is nearly two miles." There is a footnote which says : " It is worthy of remark that in this sequestered vale there are two iron forges which at this period (1792) are carrying on a trade little inferior, in point of extension, to those of the northern part of the kingdom. All the Western counties are supplied at these manufactories with every iron implement of husbandry, and their connexions extend to the European and American Continents."

But edge tools were not the only efforts of this well-known firm. In the Bath Chronicle, June 10th, 1802, is the following '-Mr. Fussell's balance-lock, for conveying boats from a lower level to a higher or vice-versa, underwent another satisfactory trial on Thursday, on the Somerset and Dorset Canal near Mells. The principle on which it acts is so perfect that boats of any burthen may be conveyed by it with a perfect facility ; and one of the chief recommendations is the simplicity of its construction, which can scarcely ever render it liable to repair."

Bro. James Lawrence aged 23, of the 13th Dragoons, against whose name there is a note " not stationery ". This Regiment subsequently had" a Lodge attached to it, named Lodge of Honour and Humanity." The warrant is dated

July 7th, 1819, Madras. It was not in the Grand. Lod.ge list until 1836. Erased in 1862.

No doubt the Regiment was on the march at the time Bro. Lawrence was made, and perhaps was here for a day or two.

Charles Bayly, Attorney, 12th Nov., 1795, was a Frome man, and. then lived at Pilly Hill (the ground running down to the river at Pilly Yale). later he lived at Garston House, which he purchased from John Clavey Middleton, in 1809. He was the son of Edward Bayly, of Devizes. He had two sons, William Davis Bayly, and. Charles Bayly. Bro. Bayly was born in 1774, and so could only have been just 21 years old when he was initiated.. He was a well-known lawyer in this town. He died Oct. 11th, 1815, aged 41. His son, Bro. William Davis Bayly, born 1796, followed in his father's footsteps and was initiated in Royal Clarence Lod.ge on June 24th, 1821. He is described as a Barrister, of Garston Lodge, Frome, and of the Inner Temple.

He died in Chambers, Lincoln's Inn Fields, 29th Dec., 1827. The Bath Chronicle says he was a Barrister on the Western Circuit, a gentleman of considerable attainments in his profession and so on. His brother Charles was a lawyer here, but I cannot find he was a Freemason. He edited a volume of verses written by local poets, to which he gave the name of " The Selwood Wreath." This Charles was the only one of the family who reached what might be termed" old age. The others all suffered from that dread disease, consumption, Bro. William Davis Bayly died at the early ago of 31, and his daughter at 12 years old. His father, Bro. Charles, only reached 41, as we have seen, and his brother Charles, although living on until 1878, lost his daughter when she was 18 years old, in spite of the greatest care. She was named Stephane Fussell Bayly, and died in Naples in 1850, being buried in the English Cemetery there.

They were a family who were much respected in Frome, and for whom there was a great r1eal of sympathy.

Bro. William Davis Bavly had a friend, George Medlicott Butt, a Barrister of the Temple, who was initiated in the Royal Clarence Lodge, July 29th, 1822. On the death of Bro. William Davis Bayly he wrote some Verses which appear in the little book before-mentioned-" The Selwood. Wreath "- dedicated to his friend, in which he speaks of the closeness of their friendship, etc.

The brother Charles, too, was the author of some verses to his memory, one of which, perhaps, may be given as an example :-

" Oh, could I catch that Master Mind,

Thy late inhabitant on earth,

By genius all thine own refined

And clothed in elegance and worth." And so on.

The year 1796 is blank so far as new members are concerned but 1797 brought forward three :-

John Zephaniah Howell, 24, Lieut., in the 40th Regt. Of Foot,, 16th January'

Samuel Allen, 27, Gentleman, Frome, on the same day.

John Byng, 21, Captain in the 33rd Regt. of Foot, Jan. 19th, 1797.

In " Masonic Records," 1777-1894, by John Lane, there is the following note about the 40th Regt. of Foot : “Warrant 1759 was at Quebec in 1759, Montreal 1760. Lodge number 42 appears with two descriptions, " In the 40th Regt.," in Ahiman Rezon of 1813, but there is no evidence of its existence in Grand Lodge minute-books or registers.

Bro. Samuel Allen was a member of a Frome family of that name, who were established here for centuries. They were interested, like so many of our wealthy Frome men, in cloth-making. This man was a dyer, I believe, because I have a deed, dated" 1791, in which William Sheppard, of Frome, Clothier, leases to John Allen and Samuel Allen, of Frome, Dyers, the Dyehouse, et pertinentia, situate in Dyer's Close Lane, Frome, for 21 years at £14 per annum.

It looks as if John Allen was his father, as he died in 1798, aged 53, and Samuel was 27 years old in 1797, when he was made a Mason. John Allen lived" in Blunt Street and was a clothier. He was buried in Badcox Lane Meeting, in " Sharps " vault.

Bro. Samuel Allen is marked dead in Grand Lodge return for 1823. He died on June 27th from actual starvation caused by cancer of the throat. He lived in Long Row (now Castle Street), Frome, and in 1808 insured his house, plate, linen and. liquors in private use therein, also his Dye-house in Whatcombe Bottom (i.e., Dyer's Close) for f450.

John Byng, aged 21, Capt. in the 33rd Regt. of Foot, January 19th, 1797. Twenty-one seems very young to be a captain. It is in such cases as this one that we deplore the loss of the minutes of the old Lodge. If he had been 24 years of age he would answer the description of a John Byng who joined this regiment in 1793, and was captain by May 241h,

1794, no less a man than John Byng, Earl of Strafford. The doings of his regiment allow our John Byng to be in England with his regiment at the date given, Jan. 19th, 1797, but as his age was only 21 he must have been born in 1776, instead of 1772. Whichever he was, the regiment was commanded by Lt.-Colonel Wellesley, afterwards the Great Duke of Wellington, in that year. It was possessed of a Masonic

Lodge as early as Aug. 16th, 1761, the date of its first warrant. It was in New York, U.S.A., 1783) when on Aug. 5th it presented its warrant of 1761 to the Grand Lodge of New York and acknowledged their jurisdiction. After being in many places on the earth it received on Jan. 30th, 1798, a renewal of the original warrant. It appears in Ahiman Rezon, 1804- 1807 East Indies, and 1813 Pitt Fort, Chatham.

It must be remembered that initiation in those times did not mean necessarily membership of the initiating Lodge.

The loss of our minutes makes it impossible to say in most cases whether the initiate became a member or not. Bro. John Byng does not appear in the list of members of Royal Clarence, who were regular payers of dues. Some Lodges, during those times of war, excused their military members from payment at all.

1798 gives us no names of initiation. In 1799, Sept. 8th, three candidates appear and were made :-

William Thorburn, Whitesmith, of Frome.

Charles Pressley, Brandy Merchant, Warminster.

James Ellis, Linen Draper, Warminster.

On May 12th, 1800, Gabriel McTaggart, 42, Land Surveyor, of Orchardleigh, was made.

On Dec. 1st, 1800, there was admitted James Charles, 60, Gentleman, of Frome.

I do not know what became of Bro. McTaggart. No doubt he was some sort of agent for Sir Thomas Champneys for a time. There is a note in the minutes of the Royal Cumberland Lodge, Bath, under date Nov. 17th, 1820. It is this : " The widow of Bro. McTaggart who had been relieved by the Royal York Lodge with a donation of f2 2s., was recommended a grant of £1 1s. from the Lodge."

In 1801, a Warminster man, John Sunter, aged 30, a gunsmith, presented, himself for initiation, date February 2nd. This appears to have been the only one that year.

Next year, 1803, on Feb. 15th, another Warminster man came over to Frome and was made a Mason. Mathew Davis, aged 48, Attorney, a member of a prominent and highly respected Warminster family.

On Jan. 3rd, 1803, another Warminster man joined his brethren and was initiated" in Royal Clarence, Frome, William Brown, aged. 25, Innkeeper, Warminster.

The family of Brown was well-known in Warminster about this time. One branch occupied the Parsonage Farm for many years, another were ironmongers, whilst a third member kept the " Shearman's Arms " in Portway, Warminster. No doubt our member was one of this latter family.

That day, too, was made J. Lowry, 24, Corpl., 1st Dragoon Guards. This Regiment had attached to it a Lodge whose warrant was dated 10th Jan., 1780, No. 520. " Lodge of George " was its name in 1787, but in 1792 it is entered as " Lodge of St. George." It had its number altered several times, and in 1792 was No, 342. It was erased 1813.

One can understand. Bro. Corporal Lowry wishing to become a Mason.

The following month, February the 15th, 1803, Henry Ryall, 24, Grocer, Frome, was initiated

This brother became the father of a famous son, Henry Thomas Ryall, born in Frome, 1811. The boy early formed a dislike for his father's calling, and desired, to be an artist. His father allowed him to follow his choice and paid for his education and tuition. Going to London he studied under Samuel William Reynolds (1773-1835), mezzotint engraver and landscape painter, and under his tuition young Ryall Himself became a renowned" engraver and" artist. D.N.B. says he engraved plates for Lodges, " Portraits " and. other works, and was appointed. Honorary Engraver to Queen Victoria for engraving Leslie's " Christening of Princess Royal," etc.

He soon began to earn his own living, and when he had saved the first two hundred guineas he brought them to his father and offered them to reimburse the extra expense of his tuition.

One is glad to know that Bro. Ryall refused to take the money. He, the son, gave two pictures ," The Crucifixion," and “The Entombment" to Trinity Church, Frome, shortly after the building was dedicated.

Continuing our chronology, we find a considerable blank in initiations in Royal Clarence Lodge. From Feb. 15th, 1803, when Henry Ryall was made, as stated, there are no entries in Grand Lodge Record of Initiates until 1807, Feb. 23rd, when John Hooper, Junr., Purser in H.M.R.N., was made. He is described as of Frome, and there is a note against his name " occasionally."

He was a son of John Hooper, of the George Inn. His age is not stated, but as he was buried in Frome Aug. 14th. 1824, aged 45, he would be 28 when he was initiated.

The blank in initiations need not be taken as inferring that the Lodge did not lead an active existence, because we know that in 1805 Bro. Thomas Jones was Master and died in office, as stated earlier in these notes.

On the 27th March, 1807, John Ford, aged. 28, Brandy Merchant, of Frome, became a Freemason. This family was one well represented. in Frome at the time. James Ford kept the Swan Inn in Badcox. William Ford, the Woolpack. Both John and William were members of the Frome Selwood volunteers of 1803. There were others of the name also. There was only one initiation in 1808, John Colston, “Plaisterer," of Longleat, on May 9th.

The year 1809 appears to have been blank, but 1810 records two Frome men as having been made Freemasons, viz., James Padfield, 36, Carpenter, and Harry Cruse, 26, Accountant, both on the same day, April 30th. This latter brother has already been mentioned. I can find nothing about Bro. James Padfield.

James Knight, 40, Victualler, Frome, 11th Feb., 1811, gives us & name extant in Frome for over a hundred years, mostly in connection with the brewing and selling of beer, every inn in those days brewing its own supplies.

In 1813, on April 12th, another of the Cruse family was initiated. He was an Attorney's Clerk in Frome, Bro. John Cruse, aged 33, already mentioned.

From this date until 1821 there were no initiates nor joining members. No payments to Grand Lodge appear to have been made for the years 1814-1820 inclusive, and even the original warrant seems to have been lost.

It is impossible to say, in the absence of any minutes, what it was so depressed this Lodge. The poverty and distress in the town of Frome was very great during the times of the Napoleonic Wars, and indeed for many years after Waterloo. No doubt this was reflected in the affairs of Royal Clarence Lodge. There may, too, have been resentment at the union of Grand Lodges, which was effected in December, 1813. New rules and regulations were issued, and the Craft, as a rule, does not take kindly to anything in the nature of

innovations.

Many Lodges in Somerset suffered considerably in those years. Wor. Bro. Hiram Hallet, in his paper on " Freemasonry in Taunton Lodges," printed in the Somerset Master's Proceedings for 1920, shows us a similar state of things in Taunton about that time.

The Prov. Grand Master for Somerset, Col. John Leigh (originally Smith) died Aug. 1st, 1813, and the Province was in commission for some four years, when Arthur Chichester, Esq., was appointed, being installed on March 24th, 1,877.

Bro. Hallett says that the Lodge of Unanimity in Taunton presented an address to the Grand Master, the Duke of Sussex, when it received the news that a P.G.M. was appointed.

The address contained such phrases as “to express our gratitude for the attention to the Masonic interest of this Province which your Royal Highness has lately evinced," and "our ancient and honourable Craft was in this Province fast sinking into a dark and gloomy lethargy from which the well-wishers of Masonry almost doubted if it would ever awake. Reduced in numbers, and enfeebled in spirit, the fraternity were ready to despair, when your Royal Highness was graciously pleased to cast on us an eye of kindness and to send us a Provincial Head, our worthy brother Arthur Chichester, Esq., whose appointment instantly revived in every bosom the latent though inextinguished spark of hope," etc., etc.

However, some two year was all that the new P.G.M. gave to the Province, being succeeded by Bro. Col. Charles Kemeyes Kemeyes-Tynte in 1820.

CHAPTER III.

THE ZENITH.

The Royal Clarence was slow to revive, and it was not until 1821 that there was an evident attempt to renew an interest in Freemasonry in Frome.

Five names then appear, all of them interesting men :-

April 16th, William Fairbanks, Attorney-at-Law, Frome, aged 39.

May 14th, George Monk, Schoolmaster, Frome, aged 30.

Juno 25th, William Davis Bayly, Barrister (already mentioned).

June 25th, Philip Nowell, Builder, Warminster, aged 41".

AII initiates, and there was one joining member on Dec. 10th, William Baker, draper, Frome, from Weymouth, of Lodge No. 283.

Bro. William Fairbanks, the lawyer, appears in several deeds in the writer's possession, but he was never a dominating character here in our legal world; the Wickham family held that position for well over a century. Bro. Fairbanks lived on in Frome until the present Royal Somerset Lodge had come into existence. He was some eighty years old by that time, and in poor circumstances. He lived in Keyford and applied for relief. The application was granted.

Bro. George Monk is a name that is interesting. He was at one time schoolmaster of the boys at the Blue School, where he carried out his duties in a perfectly satisfactory manner.

He married a sister of Mr. Edward Palmer, of Frome, grandfather of Bro. E. Wilton Palmer, who was for some time a member of 973. Bro. George Monk was a Liberal in politics and Edward Palmer was Conservative. At one of the Frome elections these two brothers-in-law agreed not to vote on either side. They did this because Bro. George Monk knew that the Trustees of the Frome Charities, who had appointed him would resent his voting in the Liberal interest, and Edward Palmer, who did a lot of work for the Marston Estate, felt that Lord Cork would equally resent his voting for a Conservative. It may be said that feelings ran high on those occasions in Frome.

However, as the election approached the rising enthusiasm swamped the prudent resolves of these two worthies, and they both agreed to vote and take the consequences. Bro. Monk was turned out of his post as schoolmaster, and Edward Palmer lost his Marston work. Bro. Monk started a school in Keyford". A son of his, named Edwin George Monk, became a professor and Doctor of Music, famous in his day ; was for twenty-eight years organist at York Minster, having previously been music master at Radley College. He was also an astronomer and was elected F.R.A. Society in 1871.

Another son, Henry Theophilus Monk, was an organist of great promise, but died at the age of 26.

A third son, named Charles, married the sister of the late Mr. J. W. Singer, so well-known in Frome for many years.

Bro. George Monk died at Oswestry, June 26th, 1862.

Bro. Phillip Nowell: This family were long familiar to Warminster as builders. Some of the family went to London, and one was employed at Windsor Castle and was afterwards knighted.

Bro. William Baker, Draper, of Frome, the joining member from Weymouth, No. 283. This Lodge was named " All Souls." It received a Centenary Warrant on Sept. 7th, 1867. It was meeting at the King's Head Inn, East Street, in 1804, at the Royal Hotel, Gloster Place, 1811, and in the Masonic Hall, Weymouth, from 1816 onwards. It received its No. 283 in 1814. Weymouth had a very early Lodge-1736 meeting at the Three Crowns Inn. It was erased in 1754. There were from time to time various other Lodges there also : Military Lodges, such as King's Own Stafford Militia meeting there in 1804 ; and in 1810 Seventh Regt. of Light Dragoons, with a R.A. Chapter attached.

Bro. Baker came here from a town steeped in Masonic tradition. He is marked as withdrawn in our Grand Lodge return for 1827. He came to Frome some years before he joined the Royal Clarence Lodge. He insured his property and stock in 1816 for £1,000 in the Phoenix, but the position of the property is not given.

The year 1822 produced six initiations and was one of the series of 1821-7825 which one would say marked the best period of the Royal Clarence Lodge. For some reason the Lodge received a Warrant of Confirmation, dated Sept. 23rd, 1822. (It is now in Grand Lodge archives). The officers were as follows :-

Jeremiah Cruse W.M.

Harry Cruse S.W.

Wm. D. Bayly J.W.

Members: Samuel Allen, Henry Ryall, Wm. Fairbanks, Phillip Nowell, William Baker, and others.

The warrant is signed by Augustus Fredrick, G.M.

Doyle, D.G.M.

Wm. H. White,

Edwards Harper,

G. Secs.

Augustus Fredrick was, of course, H.R.H. The Duke of Sussex. He had been installed G.M. of the United Grand Lodge of England in 1813, a position he held until 1843. General Sir John Doyle, Bart., G.C.B., was Deputy-G.M., 1822-1824.

Of the two Grand Secretaries, Bro. Wm. H. White had been Grand Secretary of the Moderns, and Bro. Edwards Harper of the Antients.

Sir John Doyle, General, 1750-1834, served at the Siege of Charleston, 1780. M.P. for Mullinger in Irish House of Commons, 1783; Secretary at War, 1796-9 : raised the 87th Regt., 1793, and served with it in the Netherlands 1794. Fought at Alexandria and Marabout, 1801; constructed roads in Guernsey and organised the defences of the island when Governor-General, 1804-15 ; created Baronet, 1805 ; K.B,, 1812; General, 1819 (see D.N.B., xv., 412),

The leaders of Freemasonry in England, it will be seen, were very distinguished men.

The six initiates of 1822 were four Frome men, one of Radenham, and George Medlicott Butt, of the Inner Temple, already mentioned as being the friend of the Bayly family.

The six names were:-

Feb. 4th, John Gregory, Baker, Frome, aged 53.

Mar. 4th. Henry Hooper, Cabinet Maker, Frome, aged 30 (a son of John Hooper, of the George Inn).

April 8th, Joseph Warren, Architect, of Radenham, aged 23.

May 6th, John Symons Chard., Tanner, Frome.

June 3rd, John Huntley Singer, Clothier, Frome, aged 23.

July 29th, Geo. Meddlicott Butt, Esq., Inner Temple, London.

John Gregory is marked “dead " in the 1824 Grand Lodge returns. His shop and bakery were in the Market Place. He insured them in 1808 for £500. The policy was endorsed in favour of his son, Henry, July 20th, 1824.

Joseph Warren, I should say, was of the Frome family of that name. They were here for upwards of a century, and appear in many of our Frome records.

John Huntley Singer, the clothier, must have fallen on evil times. Royal Cumberland minutes for June 1st, 1853, report that a letter was read from Bro. Bowden, of Bristol, requesting assistance for Bro. John Hunter Singer, of Frome (this should be " Huntley," not " Hunter," there never was a John Hunter Singer, of Frome). £1 was granted. His widow died in 1868. He lived at Little Keyford, Frome.

On July 30th, 1822, Prov. Grand Lodge was held in Frome. The W.M. of the Royal Cumberland Lodge, Bath, visited Frome on that occasion. He informed the Royal Cumberland on August 9th that he had done so according to the desire of his Lodge. Frome was scarcely equal to the responsibility of entertaining P.G. Lodge without assistance, and they applied to the Royal Cumberland for the loan of some furniture for that occasion. This was very kindly done, and when the Cumberland met on Oct. 5th, a letter was read from the W.M., Officers and Brethren of the Royal Clarence Lodge, Frome, thanking the Bath Lodge for their kindness in accommodating them with various pieces of Masonic furniture used at the P.G. Lodge meeting held at Frome. This was the occasion mentioned earlier in these notes, and of which there remains the programme of the service in the Frome Parish Church.

Prov. Grand. Lodge minutes say : " P.G. Lodge was held at Frome on Tuesday, the 30th July, 1822. The Lodge opened in ample form in the first degree, when an address was delivered by the Rt. Wor. Prov. Grand Master to the assembled Lodges, a procession was formed and proceeded to Church, where service was performed by the Minister of the Parish, and a sermon on the origin and use of Masonry delivered by the Prov. G. Chaplain."

Col. Kemeyes-Tynte was P.G.M., installed. 1820, and the Bev. J. Portis was P.G. Chaplain at that time.

The W.M. of the Cumberland, who visited Frome for the occasion, was Bro. John Morris.

The Somerset Masters' Transactions, 1924, page 240, has a footnote: " According to the late R. E. M. Peach, in his 'Craft Masonry in the City of Bath,' Bro. John Morris was a citizen of high repute as a tutor, and not less as a Mason." Bro. Peach further says that " there was a quiet manner about him that, nothing could ruffle . . . and his perfect elocution lent to the Ritual, the sections, and the lectures, an impressive dignity which perhaps was never equalled except by Desaguliers himself."

The P.G.M.,Col. Charles Kemeyes Kemeyes-Tynte, remained in office until Nov., 1860, when he died, aged 82. The Somerset Masters' Transactions of 1929, page 453. Give some interesting notes on himself and his family.

One wonders what visitors the Royal Clarence entertained at the George during all those years from 1790 to 1830 (circa). One deplores the loss of the minutes proportionately. We must have had visitors, for it was the custom of those times, as it is now, in spite of their difficulties in travelling.

We were surrounded with distinguished Masons, and although we cannot say they were members, they probably did visit us from time to time.

The owner of the George Inn was Lord Cork: Edmund the Seventh Earl, who was made a Mason in the Cumberland Lodge, Nov. 6th, 1787. The same night another local man was made-Charles Hippisley Cox, one of a family connected with the Horners of Mells.

Henry Hippisley Cox, Esq., was also a Cumberland Lodge man, being initiated on Feb. 5th, 1788, and' on May 6th that year Thomas Strangways Horner, Esq., was balloted for and elected a member of that famous Lodge.

Their minutes say that Lord Cork attended the festival of St. John the Baptist held by that Lodge, June 24th, 1788, and amongst the visiting brethren was Sir Charles Warwick Bamfylde. Lord Cork proposed him and Bro. Spry seconded, as a member of the Lodge. Sir Charles was elected on Oct. 7th, 1788. He was the first Prov. Grand" Master of Devonshire, 1755-1820. He was descended from an old Devonshire family, and was Lord of the Manors of Buckland, Hardington and Hemington, three villages adjoining each other and near Frome.

He lived at the Manor House at Hardington for a great many years. In the tiny little Church close by is a family memorial tablet, setting forth several generations of descent. His father was Sir Richard Warwick Bamfylde, who represented the County of Devon in Parliament.'

Sir Charles succeeded him in the estates and title in 1776. Phelps, the Somerset historian, says that Sir Charles was assassinated on the 10th April, 1825, by a man named Moreland, who shot him through the body and then destroyed himself.

The " Gentleman's Magazine," May, 1828, gives April 19th as the day of his death, and says : " Sir Charles, death was occasioned by being shot by a' man named Moreland., whose wife lived in the service of Sir Charles,,, etc. It goes on, "On hearing of the dreadful wound of Sir Charles, Lady Bamfylde, who had lived for several years in a state of separation from her husband, repaired to London to attend upon Sir Charles and administer to his comfort.',

He was buried in Hardington Church, attended by his two sons, a few of his intimate neighbours, and a vast body of his tenantry, eager to pay the last tribute of respect to the memory of one who had always proved himself a most kind and liberal landlord. The service was performed in a very impressive manner by the Rev. J. R. Joliffe, of Ammerdown.

1823 was a very successful year. There were five initiates :-

Jan. 26th, Charles Napper, Attorney, Nunney.

Feb. 15th, James Low, Warehouseman, Broad Street, London.

Oct. 15th, Louis Drews, Painter, etc., Frome.

Nov. 17th, Wm. Bryant, Road Surveyor, Bruton.

Dec. 15th, Abraham Abrahams, Silversmith, Frome.

Bro. Charles Napper was a member of a long-established Somerset family, of whom several generations resided in Frome, owning considerable property. He was Clerk to the Kilmersdon Magistrates for thirty-seven years, retiring in 1864.

Bro. James Low was one of those who did not join the Royal Clarence Lodge, although he was passed to the second degree 27th Jan., 1824.

Bro. Louis Drews, painter and decorator, had his shop in the Market Place, Frome. He was 33 when he was made a Mason. He died ten years later, and was buried July 3rd, 1834.

Bro. Abraham Abrahams was a member of a family of that name who had a silversmith's shop in Cheap Street about the year 1800 and for some time afterwards.^ There were other men in Cheap Street about the same time with Jewish names, such as Moses Abraham, Aaron Joseph. etc. Bro. Abraham Abrahams moved into the jeweller’s shop on the Bridge when the houses were built there on the widening of the bridge about 1826-the shop now (1940) occupied by Mr White, and for so many years by Bro. George Thick and his father before him.

Bro. Abraham Abrahams, in spite of his name, was not a Jew. A few years ago a descendant of his, then an old gentleman, visited Frome and called on Bro. Thick, who lived at that time on the Bridge. He said he was born in that house, and they had a very interesting conversation about those old times.

In 1824, on Jan. 19th, were initiated Wm. Langley, Gentleman, of Warminster, and" Stephen Price, of Trowbridge, Brandy Merchant. On June 21st, Samuel Cradock, Attorney-at-Law, of Shepton Mallet, is entered, and. has a pencil note against his name : first degree, 27lh Jan., 1824 ; no number. Possibly the latter date means the one on which Grand Lodge received the information.

The family of Langley was of considerable antiquity in Warminster, and the name appears in the parish registers there early in the seventeenth century. An old chalice belonging to the church, and dated. 1682, has the name of John Langley as one of the churchwardens. A later John Langley who died in 1799, left one thousand pounds to establish a charity for presenting five shillings each to one hundred and twenty poor parishioners at Christmas: annually. A brass plate in Warminster Minster Church to the memory of three generations of Langleys includes mention of W. C. Langley,-who died in 1840, aged 40 years, son of William and Ann Langley. Probably W. C. Langley was our initiate.

The year 1825 produced no less than eight candidates :-

Jan. 3rd, Thomas Ivey, Woolstapler, Frome, aged 28.

Jan. 31st, James Stride, Auctioneer, Frome, aged 39.

April 5th, John Thynne Carpenter, Woolen Draper, Frome, aged 42.

Oct. 24th, James Ellis, Gardener, Horningsham, aged- 42.

Oct. 24th, Thomas Giblett, Currier, Frome, aged 28.

Oct, 24th, James Boor, Attorney-at-Law, Warminster, aged 28.

Nov. 28th, Fredrick Crabb, Attorney's Clerk, Shepton Ma1let, aged 25.

Dec. 26th, Stephen Charles Middleton, Innholder, Frome, aged 34. (Withdrawn 1827).

Thomas Ivey, the woolstapler, had his establishment in Broadway in 1840 and in 1859. (See voters' lists, Frome).

Bro. James Boor, the attorney, of Warminster, was one of the first to act in the capacity of Clerk to the Warminster Board of Guardians. There is a memorial brass to him in Warminster Church. His first wife died in 1839 and he died in London 1851.

Bro. Thomas Giblett, currier, Frome, was the son of Richard Giblett, alias Henwood, currier, who lived in Stony Street (now Messrs. Lipton's shop). He purchased a 99 years’ lease on the property of three lives-John Sheppard, Samuel Giblett (his son), and Thomas Giblett (his younger son), then aged about 16 years.

Bro. John Thynne Carpenter, woollen draper, lived. " behind town," as Christchurch Street was then called. He came from Rodden, Pear Trees Farm. There is a memorial of him in the Church of St. John, Frome, at the west end of the church. He died in 1828. William Ponsford Penny married his sister and their two sons, W. Carpenter Penny and James Penny, carried on the bookseller's shop in Bath Street for many years.

Bro. James Stride, the auctioneer : There is a sale notice of his still in existence in Frome, dated Sept. 16th, 1845. It'1is the sale of the contents of the " Fleur de Lis " Inn at Norton St. Philip, Mr. Thomas Humphrey " declining " the business. The notice was printed nearly a hundred years ago by Mr. T. G. Coles (Thomas Gear Coles, Albion Printing Office, afterwards Allen's, then Sage's, followed. by thc Capital and Counties Bank, now National and. Provincial Bank).

Jan. 23rd, 1826, was initiated James Loxton, of Frome, Renter and Collector of Turnpike Tolls.

The same day James Parsons, of Shawford. Another Renter and. Collector of Turnpike Tolls.

Bro. James Loxton was toll-keeper at the toll-house at the bottom of Stiles Hill. The little house, was pulled down in 1937. The one occupied by Bro. James Parsons still remains as a picturesque survival of the old turnpike days.

Two candidates appeared in 1828, but none in 1827 :

1828, Jan. 14th, John Farr, Yeoman, Frome, and on April 17th, Thomas Davenport, " Travelling manager of a Theatre." Probably a more correct description of this member would be " Manager of a, travelling company of Actors."

There are many mentions of a theatre in Frome in old diaries, etc. Mr. Arthur Coombs, in his " History of Badcox Lane Church," wrote of a member being admonished in 1794 for " excessive drinking, and attending Public, Plays at a Theater in the Town." -'

In Mary Yeoman's diary, June 4th, 1800 : " Went to Frome, stayed all night at Rodden Down, went to Frome to see the play." Mary Yeoman was daughter of John Yeoman and Mary Hayes, his wife. She was born in Wanstrow, and married Joseph Harding in 1801. No doubt Joseph Harding had something to do with going to see that play.

Edmund- Crocker's diary gives a list of the plays performed at this time in Frome by " Mr. Shalford's Company." They were in Frome performing once or twice a week from May to July 20th, 1800, when they left for Shepton Mallet and Wells. The plays were attended by all the " best " people in the neighbourhood. It is difficult to say whether the "Theatre " was a tent or a temporary building. The location was probably on some waste ground in the Sun Yard (opposite side of the street). That empty space was used in such a manner and for shows of various sorts for nearly a century.

Edmund Crocker was a son of Abraham Crocker. Schoolmaster, of the Blue School, in Frome, a man of many parts, surveyor, artist, historian of the Frome Charities, etc. The son and diarist, Edmund", was churchwarden in 1827-22.

Isaac Gregory, another Frome diarist, says, under date Nov. 26th, 1817 : " Was very near confining Edwin the Master of the playhouse, a small insignificant man."

Dec. 3rd he says : " A terebal row at, the playhouse. The actors was fighting among themselves. The trouble was a piece of rascally injustice by the managers to prevent one of the actors from having a good benefit." Finally the play was acted.

The two brethren just mentioned appear to have been the last two initiates of the Royal Clarence Lodge. There were infrequent meetings, no doubt, that year and in 1829, but in Grand Lodge New Register there is a pencil note, " Answer to letter on arrears, 17th Oct., 1831." " No meeting has taken place for the past two years." Then in ink : " Erased by order of Grand Lodge, 5th Sept., 1838."

No returns were made to Grand Lodge in 1814-1820 inclusive, except for Jeremiah Cruse, Senr., Gent., Longleat, 50 in 1816.

Evidently the bad time for Royal Clarence coincided with the formation of the United Grand Lodge of England and lasted for some seven or eight years, but, in 1821 some returns were made to Grand Lodge and dues were paid. The Confirmation of the Charter was given in 1822, and the Lodge, as we have seen, revived.

The Royal Clarence numbers were : 1790, No. 560 ; 1792, No. 469; 1874, No. 523 ; 1832, No. 346.

CHAPTER IV

THE ROYAL CLARENCE OF BRUTON

On Nov. 2nd, 1940, a warrant was obtained by the Bruton Masons under our old name, Royal Clarence, and the Lodge there was constituted 6th April, 1841. They obtained some of our furniture and a book containing our Bye laws, which original book was kindly lent to the writer, together with the plate for printing our certificates, which we issued in early days to each initiate.

Plate 1. shows the outside cover of the book. Printed inside is a label shaped like a double square, surrounded- by gold ornament, not of a Masonic character, and a similar ornament in gold surrounds the whole cover.

The book is about 15 inches by 10 inches, and the back is similarly ornamented.-- -

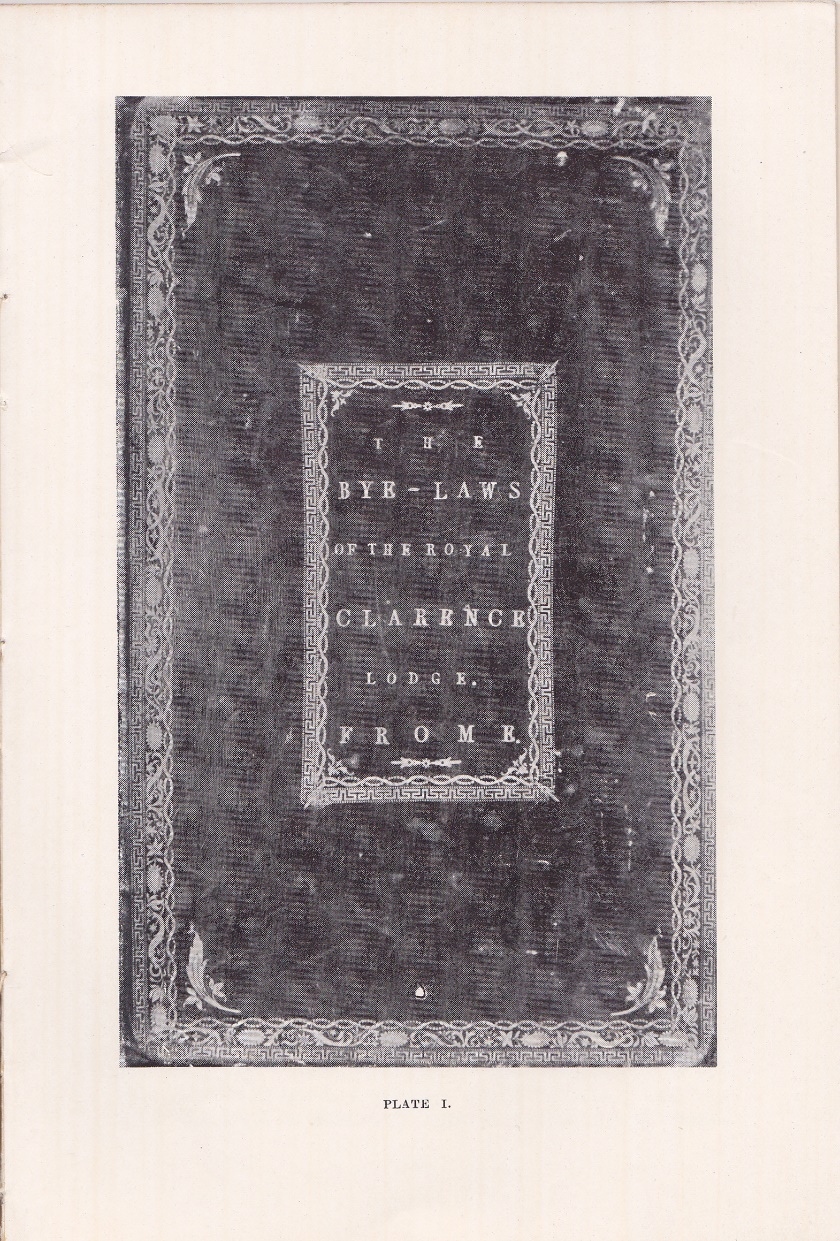
On the second page is a beautiful example of old pen-manship, with many ornamentations and a glory of flourishes, and in writing is a copy of the printing outside.

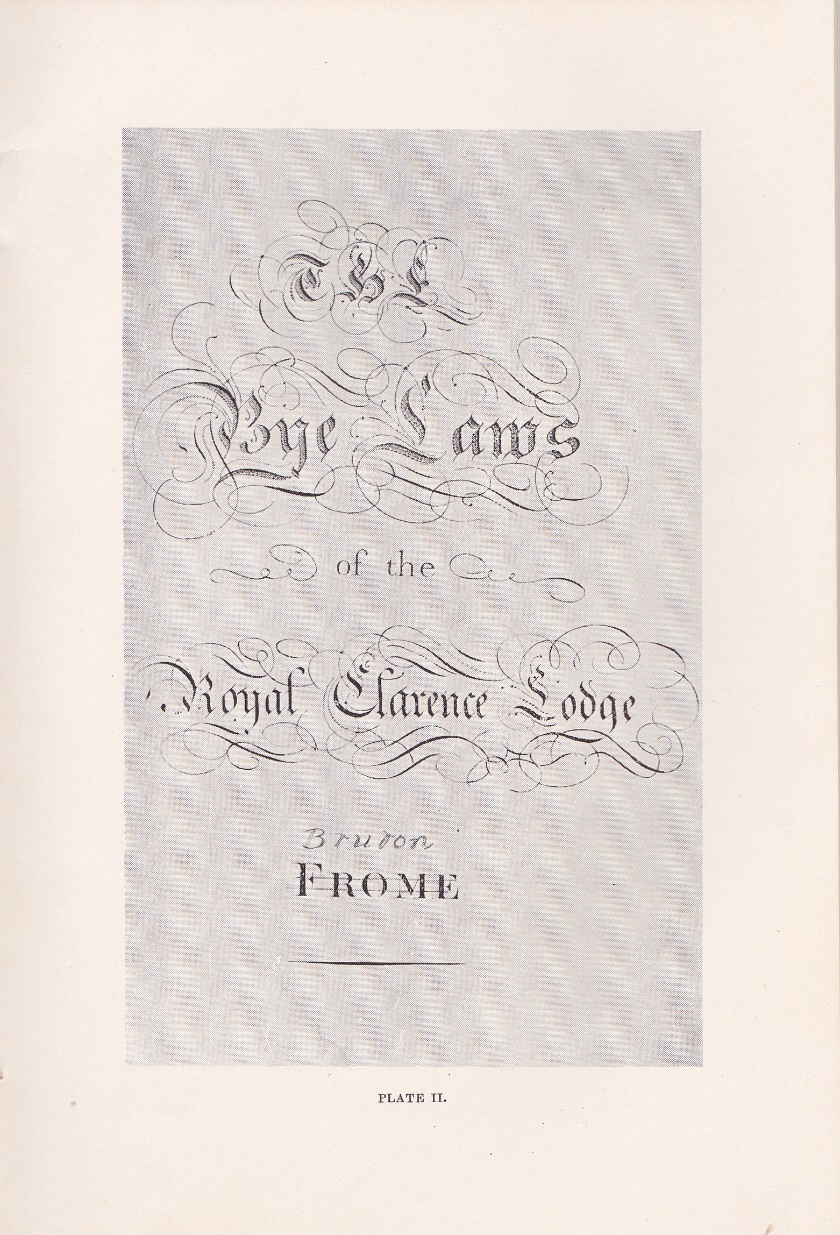
But the word “Frome” is struck through in pencil, and the word “Bruton,” in pencil, substituted. (see Plate11.).

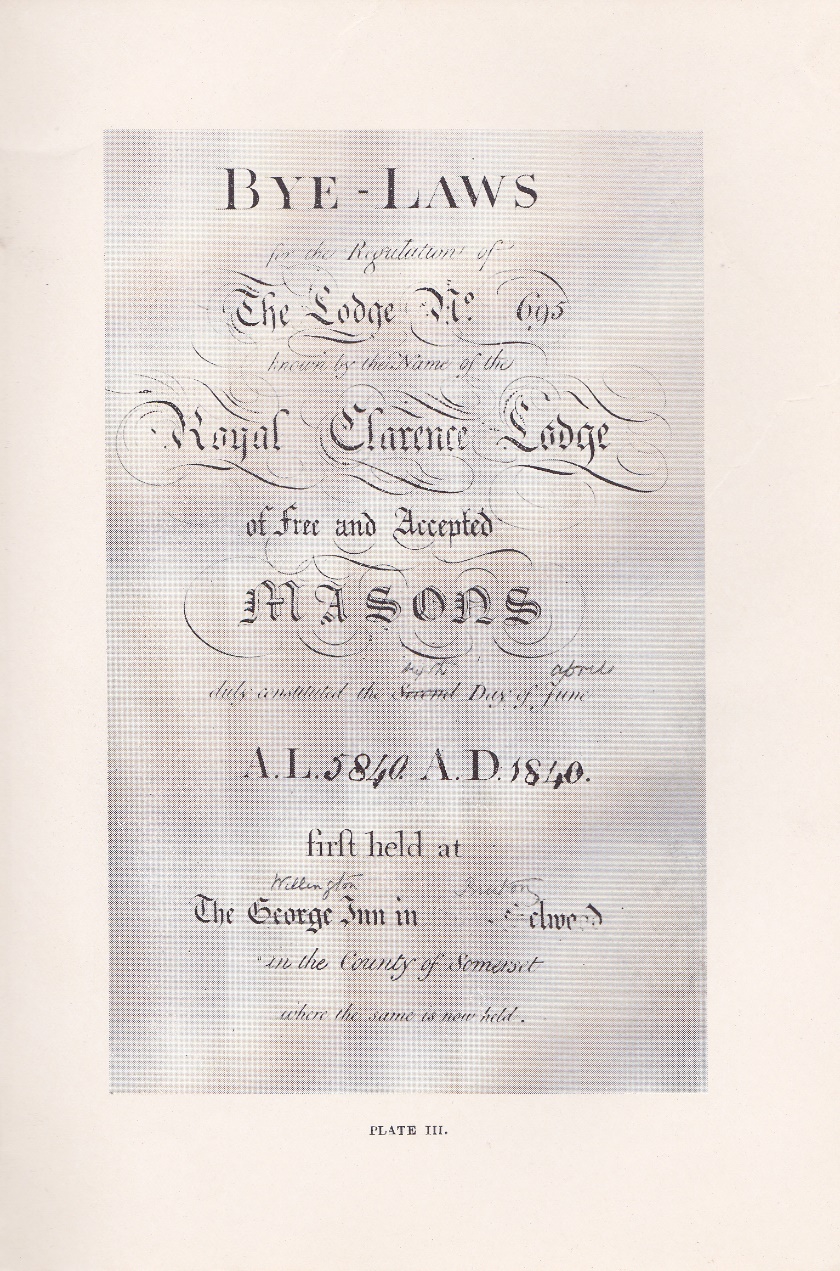
Page 3 is an elaboration of the two foregoing pages, and has had more alterations than the others (see plate III.)

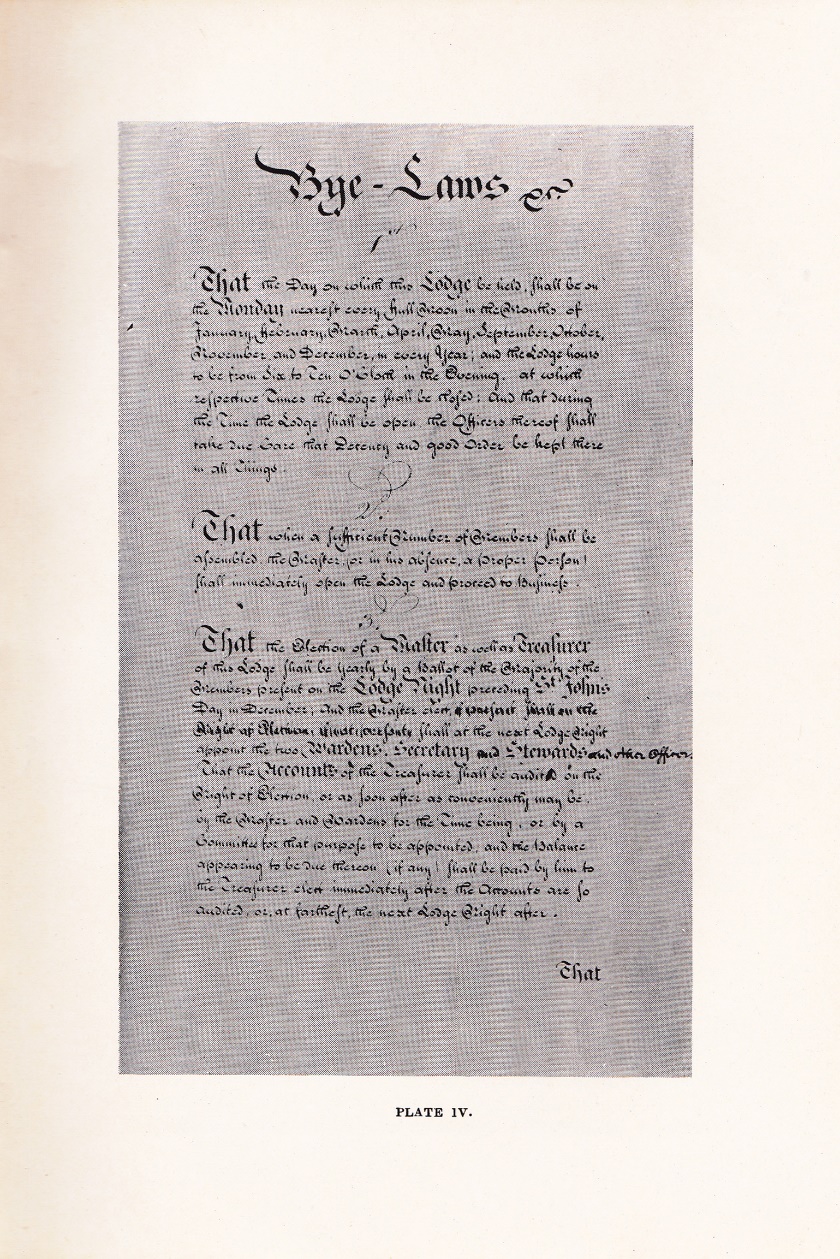
The No. 695 is evidently an alteration. The Frome number was 560. The figure 5 has been erased, the number 6 allowed to remain, a tail-put to the original 0 and the figure 5 added – making695. In the book the 5 becomes too close to the flourish to have been so placed originally ; there is too much space between the “No.” and the next figure ---the 6.

The A L 5840 and A D 1840 have been somewhat simarlv treated, in order-to the date for the Bruton Royal Clarence.









The line " The George Inn in Selwood” was evidently abandoned, a1d a pencil used to strike out the word “George " and, write over it “ Wellington ”; Frome remains faintly and Bruton is written over it in pencil.

The Bruton Lodge first met at the Wellington Inn. The Frome Royal Clarence always met at the George, Frome- Selwood.

The illustration of the first three Bye-Laws shows the beautiful handwriting of the time. (see Plate IV.)

I think the Bye-laws are sufficiently interesting to be given in full. as, of course, they were the original Bye-laws of our old Lodge. Much internal evidence is obtainable from them, which points to a stern discipline, and. Throws light on the habits and customs of that time.

BYE-LAWS.

1ST

That the day on which this Lodge be held shall be on the Monday nearest every full moon in the months of January, February, March, April, May, September, October, November and December in every year ; and the Lodge hours to be from six to ten o'clock in the evening. At which respective times the Lodge shall be closed. And that, during the time the Lodge shall be open the Officers thereof shall take due care that Decency and good ord.er shall be kept in all things.

2ND.

That when a sufficient number of Members shall be assembled the Master (or in his absence, a proper person) shall immediately open the Lodge and proceed to business.

3RD.

That the election of a Master as well as a Treasurer of this Lodge shall be yearly by a ballot of the majority of the Members present, on the Lodge night, preceding St. John's Day in December, and the Master-elect, if present, shall of the night of election, if not present, shall on the next Lodge night, appoint the two wardens, secretary and stewards, and. other officers.

That the accounts of the Treasurer shall be audited on the night of election, or as soon after as convenient may be, by the Master and Wardens, for the time being, or by a committee for that purpose to be appointed ; and" that the balance appearing to be due thereon (if any), shall be paid by him to the 'Treasurer-elect immediately after the accounts are so audited, or at farthest the next Lodge night after.

4TH.

That the Tyler of this Lodge shall be appointed by the Master, with the consent of the members present, on every election night or as often as there shall be occasion, and shall be continued only during his good behaviour: whose duty it is to attend the Secretary, to receive the summonses and deliver them to the members in due time ; to attend every Lodge night; to set out the furniture of the Lodge, to guard the door and to do such other necessary business as may be required of him. For which he shall be paid as follows :-- That is to say : for every night's attendance one shilling. And for the making or raising any brother eighteen pence for each degree. But in case he shall neglect or refuse to attend in due time, whereby the business of the Lodge may be retarded, he shall forfeit and pay to the Lodge for every such neglect or refusal Five Shillings, unless he shall be prevented by sickness or any material business, in which case he shall provide a proper substitute at his own expense.

5TH.

That every Member of the Lodge shall pay to the Treasurer for the time being for the use of the Irod.ge, the yearly sum of one pound one shilling, by equal quarterly payments : that is to say : on the first Lodge night after the 25th day of March, the 24th day of June, the 29th day of September, and the 25th day of December, which will entitle such member to his liquor not exceeding two shillings and sixpence per bottle. And if any member shall neglect or refuse to pay his quarterage within three months after every quarter-day, having had his notice thereof from the Secretary, he shall be expelled as a member of, and be excluded from visiting this Lodge : unless good cause shall be shown to the satisfaction of the Master and Brethren to induce them to a forbearance.

6TH.

That as nothing has a greater tendency to bring the Craft into disrepute than keeping late hours on Lodge nights, the Master shall be acquainted by the Senior Warden when it is ten o'clock, and shall immediately proceed to close the Lodge, either of them failing herein shall forfeit the sum of five shillings. And every member who is in the Lodge (not being a traveller, or lodger in the house) remaining in the same house after twelve o'clock shall also forfeit the sum of five shillings.

It is hoped and expected that no member will offend against this law, calculated to secure the honor and harmony of the Lodge, to prevent uneasiness at home, and to preserve the economy of our families.

7TH.

That the election of any person to be made a Mason in this Lod.ge shall be by ballot ; and in case any ball shall be found in the negative drawer, he shall be immediately balloted for again, to avoid mistakes; but in case, on a second ballotting, one or more balls shall be still be found in the negative side, the election of the person so proposed shall be postponed for the space of three months only, at which time he shall be ballotted for again.

The member proposing any candidate shall, upon his election, immediately pay into the hands of the' Treasurer the sum of one pound one shilling, which shall be considered as part of the fee for making such candidate, if he appears in proper time to be made.

8TH.

That the expense of making to every person shall be the sum of four guineas, to be paid into the hands of the Treasurer of this lodge (a pencil note here, 4th May, 1822, raised to five guineas.-J.O.L.) which sum shall entitle him to the three degrees without further expense, including certificate, registering, one quarter's expenses, and the Tyler’s fees) unless such person so made a Mason shall afterwards prove an unworthy member of the Craft by treating disrespectfully, either by words or actions or leading an immoral and scandalous life : in which case such person shall not be entitled to any further degree in this Lodge.

9TH.

That in case any person who shall be proposed to be made a Mason in this Lodge, and shall be duly elected for that purpose, shall not, within the space of six regular Lodge nights from the time of such election, make or cause to be made, application to this Lodge to be made a Mason, such election shall be null and void", and the money deposited shall be forfeited., unless he can assign any satisfactory reason to this Lod.ge for such his delay.

And whereas propositions have been made, and consent by ballot obtained in favour of persons outwardly and apparently good and well-meaning men who were afterwards found to be vile and unworthy the Society of Masons : Be it remembered that notwithstanding a candidate may be proposed and his election obtained by ballot, if such person shall afterwards be found to be a man unworthy to be admitted into this ancient and honourable fraternity, such balloting shall be void in as full and ample a manner to all intents and purposes as if such propositions had never been made, and such consent by ballot had never been given. And in that case the money deposited shall be returned.

10TH.

That if any entered apprentice or fellow craft Mason, not having been made in this Lodge, shall be desirous of being passed or raised to the degree of a fellow craft or Master Mason in this Lodge (as the case may be) he shall be proposed by some member of the Lodge for that purpose, and be balloted for in a full Lodge. And. upon his having every ball in his favour he shall, after such balloting be passed or raised to the degree of a fellow craft or Master Mason (as the case may be) on payment to the Treasurer of this Lodge of the sum of one guinea and a half for each degree. But in case such candidate so elected as aforesaid shall be desirous of being passed or raised to the degree of a fellow craft or Master Mason (as the case may be) at any other time than the usual stated Lodge night, and an extra Lodge be summoned at his request for that purpose, such candidate shall then pay the whole expense of such extra Lodge over and above the respective sums before-mentioned for such passing and raising.

11TH

That every brother who shall be desirous of being accepted a member of this Lodge, not having been made in this Lodge, shall, on his admittance, pay to the Treasurer thereof for the time being the sum of two guineas (struck out, and one guinea put in-J.O.L.) such admission to be determined by ballot.

12TH.

That all brothers becoming members of this Lodge shall be deemed as such, and be accountable for their Quarterage so long as their names shall continue on the book. Should any brother, therefore, be desirous of withdrawing himself as a member, upon giving one month's notice thereof in writing, or signifying the same in person on any stated Lodge night, and paying his arrears, if any be due from him to the Lodge, he shall immediately have his name struck off the list of members and a minute shall be made of the same.

13TH.

That every brother who shall visit this Lodge shall pay into the hands of the Treasurer thereof for the time being the sum of four shillings, which shall entitle him, such visitor, to his supper and to liquor not exceeding two shillings and six-pence per bottle. But be it understood, nevertheless, that the visiting fee of this Lodge is four guineas, and shall be paid by such visitor if demanded.

14TH.

That no smoking of tobacco shall be allowed in the Lodge, or in the supper-room during Lodge hours ; and if any brother shall attempt to introduce it, he shall forfeit five shillings.

15TH.

That no brother shall swear or use any abusive language, or come into the Lodge intoxicated with liquor, nor shall on any account call for wine or other liquors, but address himself to the Stewards, who, if they think it necessary, will, with the consent of the Master, give their orders accordingly. That all brethren behave themselves with decency to each other, and with respect to the Master in the chair, and presiding officers. That no member shall be permitted to leave the lodge room without consent of the Master, and in case of default in either of these particulars the brother so offending shall forfeit and pay the sum of five shillings.

16TH.

That any member behaving in such a manner when out of the Lodge as to be the occasion of scandalous and unworthy reflections being cast on this Society, or being so troublesome in the Lodge as to destroy the peace and harmony thereof, such brother sha1l be thrice duly admonished by the Master and Wardens in a Lodge formed, and if he does not restrain his imprudence, nor obediently submit to the advice of his brethren, he shall be discontinued a member of the Lodge, and never afterwards admitted as a visitor.

17TH.

That the Treasurer of the Lodge for the time being shall, pay the house expenses of each Lodge night at the end of every quarter, and the sum of one shilling to the waiter attending the Lodge each Lodge night, and shall also pay for each person's supper visiting this Lodge.

18TH.

That all fines and forfeitures inflicted by this Lodge shall be immediately paid to the Treasurer on pain of expulsion, and shall be applied to the use of this Lodge.

19TH.

That when a motion is made for any new Law, or for abolishing or altering any old one, it shall be first handed up in writing to the Master, in order to be read and considered by him and the members present, and no new Law nor abrogation or alteration of any old one shall be valid unless the same be entered in the minutes by consent of at least two-thirds of the whole members of the Lodge at one public lodge, and duly confirmed at the next.

20TH.

That the Master shall order the bye-laws to be read by the Secretary or some other brother the first Lodge night in every quarter.

21ST.

That the foregoing Bye-laws shall be signed by every member of this Lodge, signifying their assent and consent thereto, and their determination to abide by and confirm to the same.

On the top of the next page appears the following:-

We, the Master, Wardens and other officers and members of this Lodge, having attentively perused or heard read the foregoing Bye-laws, do hereby approve of the same, and give our full assent and consent thereto, and are determined to abide by and conform to them. And as a testimony thereof have hereunto subscribed our names the (fifteenth) day of February in the year of Masonry (5842)

and in the year of our Lord" (1842)

The word fifteenth, and the dates 5842 and 1842, are interpolated. There have been several pages cut out from the original book up to the above line, and leaving a margin on the left side of the original writing as a heading, but the word and dates have been placed there after the original ones erased.

Then follows the list of names of members of the Bruton Lodge, instead of those of the Frome Royal Clarence, which evidently were there originally.

The Bruton Lodge has the book of the original minutes of their old Lodge, and they are to be congratulated.

**NOTES ON SOMERSET EARLY PROV.**

**GRAND MASTERS**

The first Prov. Grand Master for Somerset was John Smith, of Combe Hay, near Bath. He was son of Robert Smith, who was born in Frome in 1701. This Robert Smith had a brother John, born in 1704. Their father, Robert Smith, died in 1705, leaving these two infant boys to be brought up by their grandfather, a Robert Smith again. This grandfather, a clothier of Frome had gone to Stoney Littleton to live, on the marriage of his son Robert in 1699 with Margaret Kingman. He also owned Foxcote, where he was buried in 1714, and Combehay.

Our P.G. Master's uncle, John Smith, dying in 1768, S.P. left his nephew John his sole heir. As he inherited his father's large estate, too, in 1755, he must have been a wealthy man. He married the Hon. Ann Tracy, third daughter of Charles Viscount Tracy.

He was M.P. for Bath, 1766, 1768 and.1774. When he became P.G.M. for Somerset is uncertain. The Year Book of Grand Lodge gives 1770 as the date, but in the Somerset Masters' Transactions for 1921, page 320, giving the minutes of the Bear Lodge, is the following:-June 28, 1768. This day Sir Robert Burdett, Bart., and Samuel Eyres, Esq., were, by dispensation of the Prov. G.M. for Somersetshire duly made Masons at Combe Hay, in the house of John Smith, Esq., P.G.M. and paid for their making three guineas each.

Then the Lodge was adjourned to the White Hart, Bath, and held there this evening by the officers and brothers thereof. This night Bros. Sir Robert Burdett, Esq., and Samuel Eyres, Esq. (and four others) were made fellow-craft at the White Hart Lodge by Brother Dunckerley, P.G.M. for Hampshire.

This seems quite conclusive that John Smith was P.G. Master for Somerset in Juno, 1768.

He died in November, 1775.

The Masonic Year Book gives no successor until 1784, when Bro. Thomas Dunckerley was appointed. He held the post until 1795, when he died.

Next year Bro. Col. John Smith, who was the son of John Smith, our first P.G.M', undertook the honour and held it until his death on August 1st, 1813, aged 54.

He was initiated Jan. 15th, 1788, and received the Fellow Craft the same night. He was raised on Feb. 5th, and made a member of the Lodge at the same meeting (Somt. Masters' Trans., 1923, P. 64)'

He changed his name by Deed Poll in 1803 or 1804, taking that of Leigh, but his object in doing so seems to have been unsuccessful. He sold a good deal of his property just about that time. In 1786 he sold Stonev Littleton to Sir John Hugh Smith, of Ashton Court.

Much of his Frome property, too, changed hands in the last ten years of that century, the loss of an expensive law suit being one of the reasons.

This Bro. John Smith was Master of the Lodge meeting at the Bear Inn, Bath, for several half-years, as was the custom of the time, viz., 1791 and the whole of 1792.

There is a monument to his memory in the Church at Combe Hay.

Extracts from a letter written by the late Deputy Prov. Grand Master, Wor. Bro. R. T. A. Hughes:-

Daydon Lodge, Bruton,

27 September, 1934.

Dear Bro. Lewis,-

I will do what I can to aid you in your historical researches, but I am afraid it is not very much. . . .

We have two things which might be of some interest to you. First of all, we have some quite small tracing-boards, which have been mounted and framed together, and when I tell you that the frame in which the three appear measures only 20 inches by 12 you will see that they are quite small.

Bro. Arthur Clements acquired by some means or other and presented them to the Lodge, but how he came by them history does not relate. It is conjectured that they originally belonged to the old Royal Clarence Lodge at Frome.

Also, I have before me at the present moment a Silver Seal, of which the date mark as far as I can make out, is 1794. I am sending you an impression of it, and looking closely into the inscription round it, it is evident that a word has been cut out in the place where the word. Bruton appears and that word inserted. So I think that this seal must have been originally that of the Royal Clarence Lodge at Frome, which was founded in 1790.

. . . I have come across a minute in 1842 which mentions a communication from Bro. Geary, of Freemasons' Hall, Bath, to inform the Brethren that the furniture of that Lodge was to be put up “ By wav of chance," and soliciting the Royal Clarence Lodge to participate, which was unanimously declined by the Brethren; so apparently they had as much furniture as they wanted. (A postscript is added. as follows). I have found two minutes about the furniture of our First Royal Clarence Lodge. On 21 May, 1845, the Lodge acknowledged that the furniture belonged to their W.M., one Thomas Moody, who had purchased it (perhaps) from the defunct Frome Lodge. Subsequently the Lodge seems to have paid him for it, because on the next year they paid him £10 out of Lodge funds and organised a subscription of five shillings a member to complete the transaction."

The date of the seal is 1794, and. that is the date on the plate from which the certificates were printed. The name of the sculptor is I. Doddrell.

In putting on record these notes, gathered from so many sources and over many years, I seem to myself to have been making acquaintances and friends. I am glad that much that would have sunk into oblivion is now, for a time, preserved.. I hope others may feel some of the interest which has been given to me.

Here are some lines, somewhat appropriate, from the

Burton Latimer Registers :-

" They are all gone, their little day is done :

They laugh, they weep, they sport, they toil no more.

Their feet are still, and others in their room

With busy steps are hurrying to the tomb"

We in our turn to others shall give place,

And others yet come forth to win the race :

Again that race by others shall be run,

Till time be over and the world is done."

J. O. LEWIS.

ADDENDA

**Ceremonies and Ritual, with Notes, traditionally followed in the Royal Clarence Lodge, No. 976, Bruton, Somerset**

*Notes by the late W. Bro. R. T. A. HAGHES, D.P.G.M. of Somerset*

In the year 1790 a Lodge of Freemasons, known as the Royal Clarence Lodge, No. 560, was founded at Frome, a town some 10 or 11 miles distant from Bruton. This Lodge was carried on apparently with some success until the year 1838, when its warrant was surrendered. The title of the Lodge was, of course, derived from H.R.H. the Duke of Clarence, brother of the then Grand. Master, and afterwards King William IV.

!n the year 1841 a second Royal Clarence Lodge, No. 695, was founded, this time at Bruton. Probaby some, at any rate of the founders, had been members of the Frome Royal Clarence Lodge, and it is a tradition both of the present Lodge at Frome, the Royal Somerset Lodge, No. 973, and of the present Royal Clarence Lodge, Bruton, No. 976, that much of the furniture and belongings of the Clarence Lodge of Frome was acquired by the first Royal Clarence Lodge of Bruton. That this was the case is evidenced by the fact that the book of bye-laws of the last-named Lodge is that of the former Lodge, the date on the binding and title page having been altered to suit its new owners. Further a silver seal, bearing the arms of the Grand Lodge of the Moderns, and having the date mark 1794, became the property of the newer Lodge, the word " Bruton " having been embossed on it in place of another word, probably “Frome." Moreover, the Minute Book of this younger Lodge (Bruton Royal Clarence Lodge, No. 695) was made from the defunct Frome Lodge. The binding of this book and that of the book of Bye-Laws, both very substantial and with beautifully-tooled scroll work, are exactly similar. Both these books and the seal are now in the possession of the present Royal Clarence Lodge, Bruton. The Minute Book and Seal have always been so, while the book of Bye-laws has been recently acquired by the courtesy of the Gooch Lodge of Swindon, No. 1295, together with other articles and papers of interest both to the Frome and Bruton Brethren. I will later on give my reason to show how the Gooch Lodge became possessed of them.

Well, Bruton Royal Clarence Lodge, No. 695, thus founded in 1841, had but a short life, and was finally dissolved, and its warrant surrendered in 1851. In its early days the most active members seemed to have been Bro. A Marchant, the first W.M., and Bro. Thomas Moody, who seems to have occupied the chair for some five or six years of the Lodge's existence. Other Brethren were installed, but resigned, and he assumed, or in some way took over the reins of office. Among other names of members were Bro. T.E.S. Jelley, who subsequently went to live at Frome. John Speed Andrews and John Jones, who afterwards became Founders and active members of the present Royal Clarence Lodge, No. 976, which, as I have said received its warrant in the year 1863, the year which also witnessed the birth of the present Royal Somerset Lodge, No. 973, at Frome.

I always heard that among the members of both the first and the present Bruton Lodges were Masons connected with the Great Western Railway, not resident in Bruton, but brought there in the course of their work in the construction of the Weymouth Branch, and their books and other papers may have passed into the possession of the Gooch Lodge through these Brethren. We owe the Members of that Lodge a great debt of gratitude for their restoration to us. If tradition does not lie (and. it seldom does) it was due to those enthusiastic Masons from Swindon that Masonry in Bruton exists to-day.

The book of the Bye-laws as altered in pencil says :- “duly constituted the sixth day of June. A.L. "5840. A.D. 1840."

According to “Lane," this Bruton Lodge was constituted 6th April, 1841. Warranted 2nd Nov., 1840.

But the minute book of the old Royal Clarence Lodge, No. 695, now in the possession of the present Bruton Lodge, says (under date 6th April, 1841) :-" Lodge opened in 1st degree. W.M. received a Dispensation from the Rt. Wor. P.G.M. Col. Tynte authorizing the W.M. and others therein named, to open this Lodge and make, pass and raise, Freemasons therein."

A similar Lodge was held on May 10th.

On June 8th, 1841, when the Lodge again met, the W.M. Bro. Merchant, produced a warrant, under the hand and seal of the Most Worshipful G.M. His Royal Highness, the Duke of Sussex, constituting the Lodge.-(note by J.O.L.).