

A.F & A.M; F. & A.M.; A.F.M.; and F.A.A.M.

GRAND LODGES in the United States are designated as "Free and Accepted" or "Ancient, Free and Accepted." In addition, the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia is designated F.A.A.M. interpreted "Free And Accepted Masons." The Grand Lodge of South Carolina likewise, is written A.F.M., meaning "Ancient Free Masons." There are, then, but four proper titles used by the Grand Lodges of the United States - A.F.&A.M.; F.&A.M.; F.A.A.M., and A.F.M. Of the 51 Grand Jurisdictions in the United States, 25 have Ancient descent in their title and 26 Modern descent. Of these it is clear that 4 have their origins from the Ancient Grand Lodge of England and 1 from the Moderns. The other 46 are of mixed origin.

Antient or Ancient

This word is not used today to denote the antiquity of the Craft. It has special reference to the Antient or Ancient Grand Lodge of England which existed from the year 1751 to 1813. Many Masonic historians have called this event a "schism" but most modern Masonic scholars do not accept this view. A "schism" denotes a break or withdrawal. For many years it was believed that a group of Masons who were members of the 1717 Grand Lodge had withdrawn from it and formed a rival Grand Lodge. But in 1887 Henry Sadler in his book "Masonic Facts and Fictions" proved conclusively that this event was not a "schism."

Various reasons have been advanced for the organization of this new Grand Lodge. It appears that a number of Irish Masons residing in London were not permitted to visit the Lodges of London by the snobbish and aristocratic members of that city. These Irish members claimed that the London members were making innovations in the ritual and ceremonies of the Craft. It is likely that changes were being made in the modes of recognition to prevent visitation by Masons from Irish Lodges. At any rate, the new Grand Lodge used these innovations as an excuse for organizing stating that it wanted to preserve the ancient usages of the Craft. As a term of derision members of the 1717 Grand Lodge were called the Moderns and the members of the other Grand Lodge were called the Ancients. At one time the Ancients were known as Atholl Masons after the third Duke of Atholl who became Grand Master in 1771 (*See Atholl Masons*).

As a result of these two Grand Lodges in England, the Lodges in Colonial America were not united because some Lodges received charters from one Grand Lodge and other Lodges from the other Grand Lodge. While the rivalry that existed was not healthy for the Craft, the Ancient Grand Lodge added much vitality to Freemasonry and many stirring parts to the ritual. In the year 1813 the two Grand Lodges joined in a Lodge Reconciliation and became the United Grand Lodge of England.

In those states where the Lodges are called "Ancient, Free and Accepted" they are calling attention to their historic connection with the Ancient Grand Lodge of England, to the Operative Masons of the past and to the Accepted Masons that were the link between the Craft and the Operative Craft of yesteryear. In those states where the word "Ancient" does not appear the lodges are linked historically with the "Modern" Grand Lodge.

Who were the Ancients. What was the cause of their forming a separate Grand Lodge?

This question is answered briefly above but the following is a more detailed description:

(a) Throughout the latter half of the 18th century Freemasonry in England was divided into two camps bitterly opposed to one another. These were the Moderns (so called) who loyally adhered to the original Grand Lodge and the Ancients who formed a rival Grand Lodge in 1751. Until recently it was customary to refer to the Ancients as "Seceders" and "Schismatics" but investigation has shown that none of the founders belonged to any Lodge owing allegiance to the Premier Grand Lodge. They were mostly Irish Brethren resident in London.

(b) The causes of the break were rooted partly in the slackness and weak administration of the Premier Grand Lodge at the time and partly in certain changes in custom and ritual which had been deliberately made for the purpose of excluding imposters (following the publication of the "exposures").

These changes can be stated as probably including the following:

- (1) The dechristianization of Freemasonry which had started as early as 1723.
- (2) Neglect of the days of the St. Johns (the Baptist and the Evangelist) as special Masonic festivals.
- (3) A transposition of the modes of recognition in the E.A. and F.C. Degrees. This apparently was the principal cause of offence.
- (4) Abandonment of the esoteric (secret) part in the Installation of Masters.
- (5) Neglect of the Catechisms attached to each Degree.

OVER

Atholl Masons - This is a popular term for the Ancient Masons which originated from the fact that dukes of Atholl were Grand Masters from 1771 to 1781 and from 1791 to 1813 when the Ancients became united with the Moderns. The third Duke of Atholl became Grand Master in 1771 and his nephew, John Murray, succeeded him both in temporal title and Masonic rank after his death in 1774. The fourth Duke created something of a record in Masonic advancement in 1775, when he was initiated, passed and raised, installed Master of the Grand Lodge (No. 1 today) and elected Grand Master - all in four days. Twenty-four days later he was installed as Grand Master and he remained in that office till 1781. Ten years later he was re-elected. Lodges under the Ancient Constitution also became known as "Atholl Lodges".

Union of Grand Lodges - An act of union was agreed upon in December 1813 between the Grand Lodge of England (called "The Moderns" est. 1751) and the Grand Lodge according to the Ancient Institutions (known as the "Ancients" est. 1717). After separate existences lasting sixty years they were finally united under the Duke of Sussex the first Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England.

Articles of Union - This was the agreement that united the two rival Grand Lodges of England in 1813. The articles were signed on 25th November by H.R.H. the Duke of Sussex, Grand Master of "The Moderns" and H.R.H. the Duke of Kent, Grand Master of "The Ancients". The latter Masons-mainly Irish and Scottish had formed a rival Grand Lodge of England in 1751 because they objected to certain changes in the ritual, and customs, that the Moderns had thought fit to introduce. For more than sixty years they were bitter opponents to the original Grand Lodge formed in 1717. The Act of Union was finally accepted at a joint meeting of both bodies on 27th December, 1813 (St. John the Evangelist's Day) and "The United Grand Lodge of Antient Free and Accepted Masons of England" came into being-and has remained the sole controlling jurisdiction of English Freemasons ever since.

Dr. James Anderson (1684-1739) – Dr. Anderson, known in later years as "The Father of Masonic History" was the author of the two first official publications of the Grand Lodge of England. They are the "Book of Constitutions" issued in 1723 and 1738. He was the son of James Anderson, a member of the Aberdeen Lodge in 1670 and described as a "glassier and measson". Dr. Anderson was educated at the University of Aberdeen, went to London and in 1710 became Minister of the Scottish Presbyterian Church in Swallow Street, Westminster. He was a member of the original No. 4 Lodge that met at the Rummer and Grapes Tavern., and is now No. 4 on the United register, the Royal Somerset House and Inverness Lodge. In his first "Constitutions" he introduced terms derived from Scottish operative masonry, such as "Entered Apprentice" and "FellowCraft".

Laurence Dermott (1720-91) A remarkable Irish Freemason who was strongly opposed to the "Moderns". He wrote a Book of Constitution for the "Ancients" with the peculiar title of "Ahiman Rezon", which could be very roughly translated from the Hebrew to mean "A help to a Brother". Dermott was installed Master of a Dublin Lodge (No. 26) in 1746 and then went to England, where he worked as a commercial painter. He later became Grand Secretary of the "Ancients"--and one record describes him as "the most remarkable Mason that ever existed". He was a man of considerable education, and progressed from painting to prosperity as a wine merchant. But meanwhile he "improved" upon his Book of Constitutions and put forward four editions during his lifetime. Apart from being Grand Secretary, he was Deputy Grand Master of the "Ancients" for several years.

Ahiman Rezon - A peculiar title given to books of constitutions (there were several) written by Lawrence Dermott, an Irishman, who was a staunch supporter of the "Ancients" in early English Freemasonry as opposed to the "Moderns". It is not known for certain what the two words stood for, but it is believed they meant "A Help to a Brother", worked out very loosely from Hebrew. Another translation was "Faithful Brother Secretary". Dermott, a commercial painter, was made Master of a Dublin Lodge in 1746 and came to England two years later. He became Grand Secretary of the "Ancients" and then wrote his first Book of Constitutions under the odd title quoted above. Several issues of "Ahiman Rezon" were published right up to the Union of the two Grand Lodges in 1813.