ATHELSTAN – FIRST KING OF ALL THE ENGLISH

(Born 894 AD – Died 939 AD)

Athelstan was the son of Edward the Elder and the Grandson of King Alfred the Great. He ascended the throne at the age of 30 in 925AD and was consecrated on the famous Coronation Stone in the town of Kingston upon Thames, then named Cyningstun. The Stone is still to be seen in the Town.

Athelstan reigned from 925AD to 939AD and was a courageous and distinguished soldier who, in the 14 years of his reign, extended the boundaries of his kingdom beyond anything previously attained. In 927AD, Athelstan took the city of York from the Viking King thus becoming the first Anglo-Saxon King to rule the whole of England. Having established his sovereignty over the whole of England, the Scottish and Welsh Kings soon recognised Athelstan, and even the Cornish were forced into submission.

In 926AD an event took place which cemented Athelstan firmly in the ranks of Masonic history and, although he could not have realised it at the time, ultimately led to the foundation of the Masonic Order of Athelstan almost 1100 years later.

This was the legendary assembly of Master Masons at York, said to have been called at the behest of King Athelstan. This assembly was called to correct poor practices which had crept into Operative Masonry. At the assembly new codes of practice were introduced and laws for the government of the Craft were firmly established. These in time became known as the Antient Charges and have since been recognised as a foundation stone of Masonic practice by orders of Freemasonry throughout the world.

Athelstan left a rich legacy of organisational and legal reform and at the time of his death in 939AD had instituted huge changes to the laws of England.

Athelstan was buried in Malmesbury Abbey in the Province of Wessex and a 15th Century tomb can still be seen in the Abbey today.

THE MASONIC ORDER OF ATHELSTAN

The Order of Athelstan, as the name suggests, is based upon the life and times of King Athelstan. The focus of the Order is to show how the early reference to the importance of Masonry in English history played a significant role in the later development of speculative Freemasonry.

Since its foundation in 2005, having sprung from the researches and common interests of a group of Masonic friends, the growth of the Order has been extraordinary, with Provinces throughout England and Wales, North and South America, Europe and the Far East.

In common with most Masonic Orders, Athelstan utilises legend and allegory in its ritual to impart and illustrate moral lessons. It seeks to provide its members with a code for life and a thirst for knowledge. The ritual centres on a young Master Mason attending the Grand Assembly at York and the lessons learnt from his Instruction *(please note that we use the word Instruction instead of Initiation)*.

All Courts generally have three regular meetings a year, although additional meetings may be held, by dispensation, solely for the purpose of Instructing Candidates. Court meetings are followed by a Festive Board. There are no speeches at the Festive Board and no wine takings. This practice is designed so that members and guests may talk together with little or no interruption. The Formal Toasts are given standing at the end of the meal, one after another, with no preamble before each Toast.

Subscriptions are kept to a minimum and annual charges levied by both the Province and Grand Court are modest. There is one alms collection a year and that is at the Installation meeting.

The Order is an Invitational Order with a current member inviting a suitably qualified Craft and Royal Arch Mason to consider Membership.

OFFICERS OF THE COURT

Court Officers are similar to, but not the same as, the Officers in a Craft Lodge. For the purpose of comparison, listed below is the Craft equivalent next to each Athelstan Officer where appropriate:

Worshipful Master
Eminent Prior *(Chaplain)*
Senior Warden
Junior Warden
Secretary
Treasurer
Marshal *(DC)*
Almoner
Deputy Marshal *(ADC)*
Senior Deacon
Junior Deacon
Organist
Captain of the Guards *(Inner Guard)*
Burghs *(Stewards)*
Guard *(Tyler)*

ATHELSTAN REGALIA

Members Apron

Installed Master

Provincial Apron

Grand Officer

QUALIFICTIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP

The Masonic Order of Athelstan recognises that the Craft and Royal Arch are the foundation stones of Masonry.

The qualifications therefore for membership of the Masonic Order of Athelstan are that prospective members must be current subscribing members of a Lodge recognised by the United Grand Lodge of England and a current subscribing member of a Royal Arch Chapter recognised by the Supreme Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of England.

PROVINCE OF MERCIA

The Province of Mercia covers the areas of Shropshire, Staffordshire, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire, Worcestershire, and Warwickshire.

In England and Wales, the Order of Athelstan is structured so that its Provinces, wherever possible, reflect the ancient Kingdoms of the Anglo-Saxon Period.

In the Masonic Order of Athelstan, individual units are not referred to as Lodges but as Courts, in line with the Anglo-Saxon setting of the Order.

At present, there are eight Courts spread over the vast area of Mercia.

If you are interested in learning more about Athelstan Masonry or have an aspiration to become a member –

Please contact:

Provincial Grand Secretariat of the Province of Mercia
Email: provgsec@moa-mercia.org.uk
asstprovgsec@moa-mercia.org.uk

COURTS AND MEETING PLACES in the PROVINCE OF MERCIA

*Installation date in **bold***

High Cross Court № 5

Lutterworth, Leicestershire LE17 4ED
1st fifth weekday in January, 1st Monday in **April** and 4th Wednesday in June

Wychbury Court № 23

Kidderminster, Worcestershire DY10 1TL
3rd Wednesday in March, 4th Wednesday in **June** and 3rd Wednesday in October

Court of Leofwyne № 33

Chesterfield, Derbyshire S40 1JR
4th Tuesday in **January**, 4th Thursday in May and 1st Monday in September

Bernesdelaue Court № 35

Worksop, Nottinghamshire S80 2AE
2nd Thursday in **January**, 4th Tuesday in April and 1st Thursday in July

Wrœcensætan Court № 38

Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY1 2HQ
4th Saturday in **March**, 4th Saturday in July and 2nd Saturday in November

Court of Offa № 43

Belper, Derbyshire DE56 1AP
1st fifth Monday in January to April and 3rd Thursday in **July**

Court of St Chad № 68

Burton-on-Trent, Staffordshire DE15 0LA
3rd Saturday in February, 3rd Saturday in July and 1st Saturday in **September**

Court of the Pecsætan № 208

New Mills, Derbyshire SK22 3ES
3rd Wednesday in **February**,
3rd Wednesday in July
and 3rd Wednesday in November

The Masonic Order of Athelstan

in

England, Wales and Its Provinces Overseas

Province of Mercia

ORDER OF ATHELSTAN

PROVINCE OF MERCIA

INFORMATION FOR PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS

www.athelstan.org.uk

www.athelstan-mercia.org.uk