



A Short History of

Royal Victoria Lodge

#443, C.C.

1837 - 2025





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To begin at the beginning

If the true origins of Freemasonry are obscured by the mists of time we should not be surprised. When we enter the Craft we are promised mysteries as well as secrets in exchange for our commitment.

We are instructed that the usages and customs of Masons date back to the cultures of ancient Egypt and, some would say, to the fertile crescent that cradled earlier civilizations in the Middle East; five millennia, at least, of good men building society as well as structures. Not only are the stonemasons guilds, from which we draw our spiritual inspiration, as ancient as the fine buildings they produced, they also represent the growth of the organized society that required those buildings. The movement from a largely operative or practical organization to one that is mostly speculative or morality-based reflects the changes to mankind in those many years. Little wonder, with such a tradition, that some details have not stood the test of ages, yet remarkable that anything at all survived for us to claim.

English Freemasonry is somewhat easier to trace, being closer to the lens, yet it is still wreathed in obscurity for the early years. England is a country forged from many different races, cultures and traditions. The process was painful. At times “civil” war was a prerequisite. Societies with secrets, even if they were of a professional nature for the most part, were just as easily mistaken for “secret societies” then as they are now. They were subject to suspicion from all sides. Freemasonry had no written history, its rituals were learnt verbatim and by word of mouth, its meetings deliberately held in private and its work not open to public scrutiny. Misapprehension and persecution drove the Craft from public and historical view.

The 17th Century diarist Elias Ashmole recounts that he was made a Mason in Warrington in 1646 and subsequently describes attending meetings of his lodge. He is the earliest known English Freemason. Brother Ashmole lived during the latter part of vexatious religious wars that followed the creation of the Church of England by Henry VIII. Freemasonry, while acknowledging the Supreme Being, is not bound to any particular religion

and so both Catholic and Anglican viewed it with suspicion, if not downright enmity. The Craft was forced further underground.

It was not until the accession to the throne of William III of Orange, in 1689, that some stability and religious tolerance was achieved. Coincidentally, the House of Orange-Nassau, is the origin of the name of our capital city in The Bahamas, named in William's honour. He sponsored an Act of Tolerance in 1689, enabling certain Protestant groups to meet freely. He converted from Roman Catholicism to Protestantism while on the throne. By his family connections and emphasis on Parliament, instead of the Monarch's rule alone, he encouraged broad-based religious freedom for his subjects. By the time he died in 1702 the stage was set for a more public face of English Freemasonry to emerge.

The Grand Lodge of England was established in 1717, as an umbrella organization for the many lodges in operation throughout the country and abroad. It was the first Grand Lodge of Freemasonry to be formed and Brother Anthony Sayer was the first Grand Master.

Not surprisingly, there were teething problems as disparate lodges came to grips with variations in ritual and procedure. Some lodges left to form Grand Lodges of their own. Some have never been reconciled with the parent body, while others co-operate within the spirit of Freemasonry, although still retaining their individuality. Conflicting jurisdictions remain a source of Masonic discord to this day.

The earliest internal threat to English Freemasonry was the schismatic group who called themselves "The Antients", who seceded or abstained in 1751 from Grand Lodge. They were also known as the Atholl Grand Lodge because the Earl of Atholl was the first Grand Master. As the name suggests, they considered their practices more traditional and purer than the "Moderns", as they dubbed the Grand Lodge. The debate between these two Grand Lodges was energetic and often vituperative for over sixty years. For their reconciliation, it took the foresight and ingenuity of two Royal Brothers, the Dukes of Sussex and Kent, who were elected Grand Masters of the estranged Grand Lodges, Modern and Antient, respectively. The Act of Union was signed in November of 1813 and the United Grand Lodge of England was formed. The Commissioners who had worked out the details of the arrangement over the span of the previous four years also produced a new ritual to the satisfaction of both parties. It is called Emulation Ritual.

When the United Grand Lodge of England came into being, Freemasonry had already started in The Bahamas and the story of those early years is fairly well, if sparingly, documented.

Survival

Freemasonry may well have been practiced in The Bahamas before 1750 in the form of Military Lodges, but when a new posting was received the lodge moved on with the particular regiment. There are rumours of Nautical Lodges before then. The “skull and cross bones” was not unknown in the region.

The first attempt to begin a locally-based organization, was in 1752, when Governor John Tinker (musically misspelled Tinkler in Gould’s account) was appointed Provincial Grand Master of the Province of The Bahamas. He passed on the title in 1759 to Brother James Bradford. Neither of them had any lodges to supervise!

It was quite common at the time to spur the ambition of likely Brethren by giving them empty vessels to fill, but it was not until 1782 that the policy bore fruit and Bahamas Lodge No. 228 was issued a warrant. In a pattern often repeated at the time, the lodge died out before the Act of Union in 1813. In 1787 Lodge 242 was warranted, but failed around 1825. Both of these Lodges were originally held under the Atholl Grand Lodge of England.

Between 1790 and 1799 we find that an Irish Regimental Lodge No. 192 was operative in Nassau. It was affiliated to the 47th Regiment of Foot, a distinguished Unit, which had participated in General Wolfe’s victory at Quebec in 1759 and less successfully in the Battle of Bunker’s Hill, 1775, and the capitulation of Saratoga, 1777. Sir Guy Carleton was its Honorary Colonel in 1773.

Under the Scottish Constitution, No. 275 Turks Island Lodge was consecrated there in 1806 but was declared dormant in 1848, Union Lodge No. 298, (later No. 231) was warranted in 1809, became dormant in 1894, reopened in 1917 and finally returned its warrant in 1923 and Lodge St. John, in Inagua, lasted between 1856 and 1881. In 1842, Brother John Cooke was appointed Provincial Grand Master of the Scottish Lodges in the Bahama Islands. There were two at the time.



John Tinker, Governor of the Colony of the Bahamas, 1738-1758.
First Provincial Grand Master of the
Province of the Bahamas - with no Lodges to supervise!

Under the English Constitution, Royal Victoria Lodge No. 649, (later No. 443) was consecrated in 1837, in 1855 Turks Island Forth Lodge No. 647 received its warrant and Brittania Lodge No. 1277 in Harbor Island lasted between 1869 and 1901. Of all these early lodges only Royal Victoria and Forth Lodge remain active.

The processes of becoming dormant and being reactivated, as they apply to these Lodges, are instructive. Most Lodges were declared dormant because their Grand Lodge had received no returns for seven years. It is said that Brittania Lodge in Harbour Island never made a return, which makes its survival for 32 years all the more impressive. Reactivation of a dormant Lodge was only possible if there was a living survivor of the original Lodge. There was also a requirement of "sponsorship" by two other active Lodges.

The numbering system used by these historical Lodges is complicated by the renumbering of them from time to time. The attrition rate in emergent Lodges was a major cause, while there was also a consolidation after the Act of Union. The dates given are somewhat approximate, as different chroniclers use different dates. Where direct evidence from a Grand Lodge exists, it has been used.

The Royal Victoria Lodge was consecrated on 23rd June, 1837, the date of accession to the throne of Queen Victoria, but the odds were stacked against its survival.

Although the minutes of the first three years have not been preserved, those of later years tell of fluctuating numbers, internal and external strife and financial strictures, any of which could have been fatal to the Lodge.

One reason they did persist is the sure hand at the tiller from the start. Brother George Campbell Anderson was the first Master of the Lodge and he went on to be Master three times more in five years. He was appointed Provincial Grand Master in 1843 and when he signaled his intention to resign in 1854, the brethren of Royal Victoria sent a letter imploring him to reconsider. He did.

He it was that arbitrated the differences that occurred in the Lodge and finally decided who should be refused membership or excluded for misconduct. In 1842, after the final year of his Mastership, the Lodge consisted of 30 members; 4 Past Masters, 20 Master



The Honourable George Campbell Anderson, First Master of the
Lodge, four-time Master and Provincial Grand Master of the
Province of the Bahamas

Masons and 6 Entered Apprentices. On 13th August, 1845, he announced to the brethren that he had received a charter for The Royal Victoria Royal Arch Chapter. At the inauguration, G.C. Anderson was First Principal, John Cooke the Second and Stephen Dillet the Third.

Another reason for Royal Victoria's early survival is the support of other lodges in the region, particularly Union Lodge No. 298, Scottish Constitution. In earlier times it was Atholl Lodge No. 242 and Union Lodge who had a close relationship, laying cornerstones together and attending each others' meetings. After the demise of No. 242 and the birth of Royal Victoria, Union quite naturally lent a helping hand. Royal Victoria rented a meeting room from Union Lodge and when English Bye-Laws were unavailable in 1837, Union Lodge lent theirs, until such time as the correct version could be obtained. Union and Royal Victoria also entered into many joint ventures together, the principal of which was the building of the Temple on Bay St.

The minutes of the early meetings reveal procedures that might surprise present-day brethren. Due to the small number of qualified brethren, elections for Master were quite keenly contested. The Bye-Laws were scrupulously consulted and the result in 1860 was even referred to R.W.P.G.M. Anderson for arbitration. The non-payment of dues disqualified some Brethren from voting and on one occasion only 8 votes were able to be counted. One year the Treasurer was, in all but name, impeached. He was returned, unblemished, the following year. Brethren were reprimanded and admonished in open Lodge, for inebriation and lack of adherence to Masonic principles. Acrimonious resignations resulted. Royal Victoria moved on.

The list of Masters for the first hundred years suggests periods when the lodge moved forward in a regular way and when more experienced brethren had to accommodate lower numbers. The Boer Wars drew men away, the First World War left too many empty seats in the temple and hard times caused fluctuations in the population as a whole.

Principal among the repeat Masters of Royal Victoria are J.F.W.Turtle, with seven years between 1885 and 1906 and W.H.H. Maura, who served seven years between 1915 and 1938; Geo. M. Cole, five years between 1904 and 1912; F.J. Aranha, four years between 1872 and 1880; G.C. Anderson, four years as Master. A quarter of the first century was



J. F. W. Turtle, seven-time Master of the Lodge
between 1885 and 1906.



W.H.H. Maura, seven-time Master of the Lodge between 1915 and 1938.
Master during the Centenary year 1937.

under the direction of these five men and near to a quarter century with R.W.P.G.M at the helm, in one capacity or another.

Nowadays it is almost unknown for English Lodges to parade in full regalia through the streets. In the early years of Royal Victoria it was commonplace, particularly when performing a public function like laying a cornerstone or dedicating a building. When United Grand Lodge in England forbade the practice a General Dispensation was obtained by Royal Victoria in 1904. It was only cancelled in 1956. Often, more than one Lodge took part and the Order of March, when the cornerstone of the present Temple on Bay St. was laid, was as follows: Two Tylers with drawn swords, one for each Lodge, the Friendly Society's Band, Members of the Lodges, Grand Officers from the two Grand Lodges and the Grand Tyler bringing up the rear.

The Tyler was a paid servant of the lodge, as well as a regularly made Master Mason, and the minutes indicate that there was spirited debate as to whether he should be entitled to vote, as he paid no dues.

Stability and Consolidation

Throughout the turmoil of establishing a regular Lodge at a remove of four thousand miles from United Grand Lodge in London, Royal Victoria aimed at stability from the start. Correspondence between England and The Bahamas might take months by sea in those days. Questions of procedure might not be answered within the tenure of the same Master. The letters themselves might be lost completely by act of war or weather. Help, therefore, was most effective on a local basis.

A shining example of the close relationship between Union Lodge, S.C. and Royal Victoria Lodge, E.C., was the struggle to establish a meeting room and dining room for the lodges to use.

Before the consecration of Royal Victoria, the earliest Atholl Lodges met in "the Public Building" on the corner of Bay and Market streets, with the Festive Board held at Webster's Tavern on the waterfront, Bay St. This was hardly ideal, since the furniture of the Lodge would have been struck after each meeting to allow normal public business to continue the next day and waterfront taverns are not famous for their decorum.

By 1837, though, Union Lodge had a building on Charlotte St. which it was able to lease to Royal Victoria for meetings. The rent was fifteen Pounds per annum.

By 1844, the Fraternity, represented by these two lodges, devised a plan to build or purchase a permanent temple for their use. Three trustees were appointed alternately between the two and all money held by the lodges individually, after charitable work and lodge expenses, was deposited with the trustees. Further sums were privately subscribed by Masons and non-Masons, alike. The first Trustees were brothers James Jarrett, Gilbert Smith and Stephen Dillet.

In 1849 the Trustees purchased the premises where the temple now stands from the estate of Harriet Young. The price was eight hundred and seventy-five Pounds and a bank loan of two hundred and sixty-six Pounds was necessary to complete the deal. They paid this off by the resale of part of the property, rent receipts and continued contributions from both lodges. A further one hundred Pounds was spent to convert the upper storey into a meeting room and to effect repairs. The Union Lodge then sold their premises on Charlotte St. and deposited the proceeds with the Trustees. By 1852 all debts were repaid and the Trustees had a credit balance of fourteen Pounds, seven Shillings at the bank. Rental income of about seventy Pounds a year continued to come in and by 1855 and 1859, respectively, Royal Victoria and Union were able to stop their regular contributions; apart from the rent, of course. In 1866, severe hurricane damage was repaired by the Trustees and rents went up.

By 1881, Royal Victoria had a total of thirteen Pounds, one Shilling and Threepence in the bank, but the Trustees were able to enter into a contract to build an entirely new building at the front of the premises in the amount of four Thousand, two Hundred and fifty-five Pounds. Private subscriptions were again essential to supplement what was in the bank. The present building on Bay St. was begun in 1882 and the first meeting held in the Temple in 1884. A notable omission from the original plans was the dome planned for the upper storey, to facilitate "the higher degrees", because it was deemed too unstable and susceptible to hurricane damage; it would be "... the laughing stock of the community after a Gale of Wind", as F.J. Aranha wrote in 1882. The new building also had rental properties that ensured the capability of the Trustees to effect repairs and cement the firm Masonic foundations laid with the cornerstone. At the dedication service in Christ Church Cathedral the proceedings began with the hymn "Pleasant are thy Courts", which must have pleased the lawyers present.

Thus, just before the Fiftieth Anniversary of its consecration, Royal Victoria was well on the way to financial stability. The right of property was forever vested in the members of the Union and Royal Victoria Lodges, who would have the right to appoint Trustees alternately, as vacancies occurred in the natural scheme of things. There was no room for complacency, however, for in a few short years this excellent cooperation between the Scottish and English Grand Lodges in the Bahamas was dealt a serious blow.

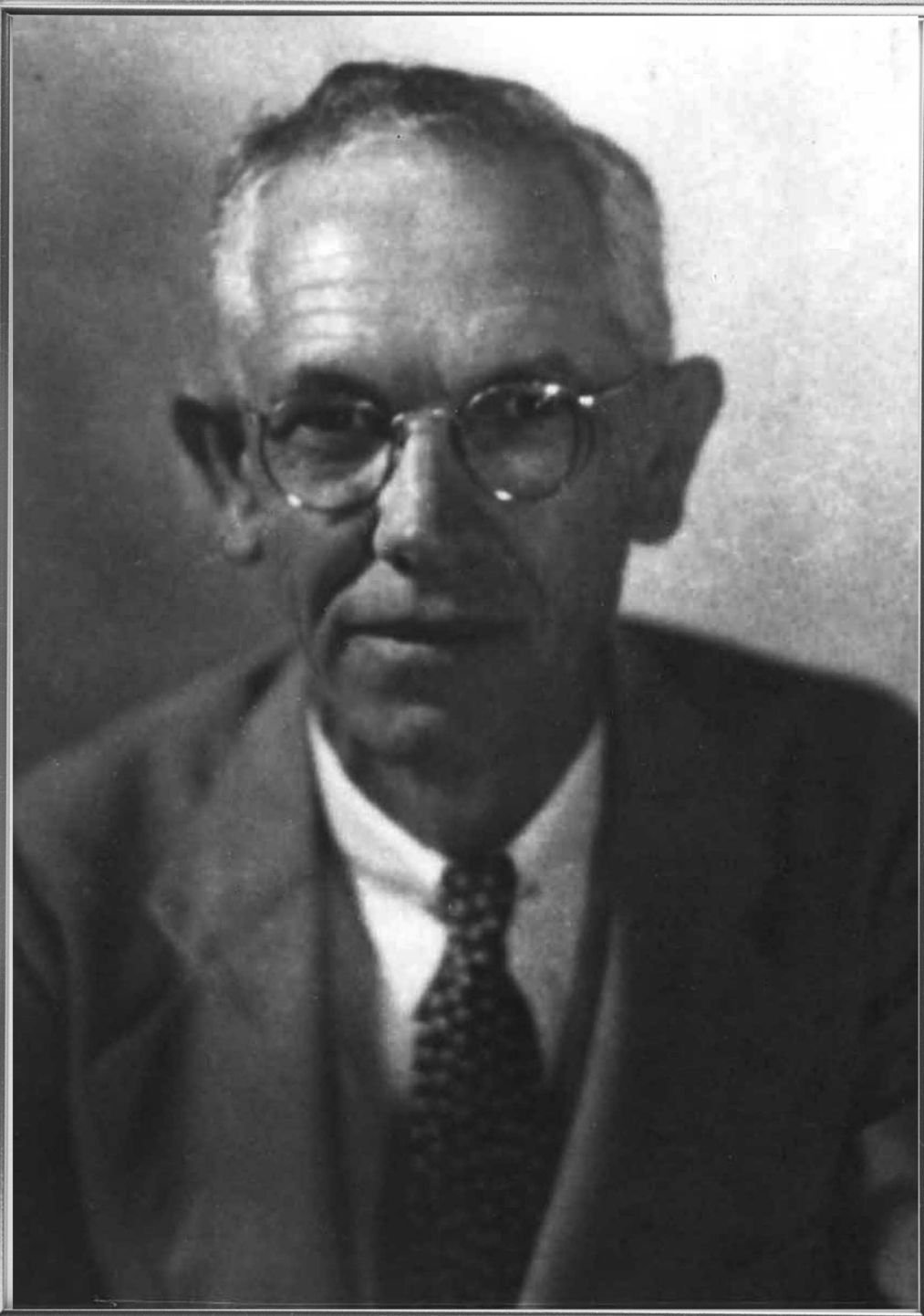
The Union Lodge ceased to function in 1894 and was finally declared dormant in 1923. Scottish Freemasonry disappeared from the Bahamian scene until 1967, when Brother C.R. Walker and other enthusiasts led to its re-institution. There was an immediate response from Royal Victoria and in the first few years, before the McKinney Avenue temple was dedicated, the temple on Bay St. was offered to the Scottish for their meetings. For the moment, though, in 1894, Royal Victoria would have to press on without their oldest partner.

They were not yet alone, because by that time Turks Island Forth Lodge was operating in the South and Britannia Lodge in Harbour Island was hanging on in the North. By 1901, Britannia had failed and Forth had been reporting directly to United Grand Lodge since 1870, due to communication difficulties with the capital. Essentially, Royal Victoria was the sole survivor of either Constitution in the Province of The Bahamas for more than sixty-five years.

The Trustees continued their good work. In 1892 there was a debt of one Thousand seven Hundred Pounds, owed to The Kirkwood Trust, still outstanding from the building of the temple. By 1908, they had a balance in hand of fifty-five Pounds, after having paid maintenance costs, taxes and insurance in the intervening years. There are no further records of Royal Victoria being in debt.

The prudence and faithfulness of the founding Brethren were rewarded by the zeal and steadfastness of their successors. As evinced by the list of Past Masters and reported by Thompson in his account, "periods of steady growth are seldom marked by outstanding events". The Lodge settled into what might be recognized as current procedure. Royal Victoria approached its Centenary.

The preparations began in 1933, when a fund was set up to finance the celebrations. Twenty Pounds was immediately deposited and ten Pounds added every quarter there



T.A. Thompson, distinguished educator and twice Master of the Lodge, who wrote the first comprehensive History of the Lodge for the Centenary year of 1937.

after. The same year the lodge equipped a ward in the Bahamas General Hospital and placed two Hundred Pounds in a safe investment for its upkeep. Twenty-five Pounds was set aside for decoration of the temple. The same flags were used for the Coronation of King George VI earlier in 1937. The programme of events included Divine Worship as a body, a social evening, an initiation and a banquet. A Centenary Warrant and Jewel were approved by United Grand Lodge. All members of Royal Victoria are entitled to wear the jewel as part of their regalia. Visiting Brethren from Florida demonstrated the American working of the Third Degree. The following year Grand Lodge gave permission for the Master and Brethren of Royal Victoria to return the favour on an official visit to the United States. Brother W.H.H. Maura was elected Master for the centenary year, being the most experienced and capable of the Past Masters.

When United Grand Lodge sanctioned the use of printed rituals to improve and standardize the work done, instead of relying purely on verbal transmission of the words and gestures, Royal Victoria was in a dilemma. The Emulation Ritual it had used for many years was printed, but did not contain enough rubric to enable a clear understanding of the whole. It was decided, therefore, to adopt the Nigerian Ritual, as taught by the Emulation Lodge of Improvement. It was first printed in 1939 and contains ample instructions as to movement and set up, as well as the words to be spoken. The District of Nigeria, like The Bahamas, needed a ready reference in hand because of the difficulty of communication with London. It is through this slightly different source that Royal Victoria derives some of the “Landmarks” of the lodge, which are not found in the Emulation Ritual now being used.

War and Peace

During the Great War of 1914-1918, many members of the lodge left to do their patriotic duty, while those at home put non-essential projects to one side and undertook additional fund-raising for the war effort. When the world found itself again at war, in 1939, there was a similar response from our members. Many joined the struggle overseas. Attendance, though, remained steady because of the large number of visitors from foreign lodges, who were “doing their bit” in The Bahamas. Canadian lodges were particularly well represented.

An unexpected benefit of the war was the presence of H.R.H. The Duke of Windsor in Nassau. He was serving as Governor of the Colony, as the British Government sought

to remove him from harm's way in Europe. The Duke was then Past Grand Master of United Grand Lodge, having been a Mason for twenty-two years. It is said that he was less than happy to be in The Bahamas, being used to a larger sophisticated society. He made only one visit to Royal Victoria, in 1941 and, as the Master, A.D. Sweeting, expressed to him, it was the only time we had been honoured by a visit from a Past Grand Master, a member of the Royal Family or a Governor of the Colony. It was a historic occasion, indeed. The Duke shared his memories of becoming King in 1936, when his connection to Freemasonry was nearly severed because it was a principle that a ruling monarch should not be a member of a secret society. The Grand Master at the time and the Lord Chancellor conferred and then ruled that, "while Masonry has its secrets, it is not a secret society. It is one of the most loyal societies that exist."

The end of the war allowed our members to return from overseas, while visiting brethren returned to their homes. Some were honoured, some mourned by the lodge when they did not return. Some visitors put down roots here and the lodge was enriched by their continued presence. As normality returned in 1947 there were fourteen meetings of the lodge; sometimes as many as three in a single week. This year was not unusual in that respect.

Membership steadily increased. In 1956 there were ninety members of the lodge in addition to forty-one Overseas members.

The cross-fertilisation of Masonic visits during the war resulted in our brethren being exposed to the many Degrees of Freemasonry beyond the Craft. Those at home learnt from visiting brethren and those abroad were sometimes inducted into Degrees after visiting lodges overseas. Royal Victoria became sensitised to the variety and richness of the extended Masonic experience. It was a short step to wish for such an experience in The Bahamas.

The original charter for a Royal Arch Chapter, obtained by R.W.P.G.M. Anderson in 1845, had lapsed. When the temple was constructed in 1884 there was a room set aside for the Chapter to meet, but Grand Chapter received no returns after 1859. The Chapter was erased from the roll in 1899. In 1951, spurred by the desire for Masonic variety, a new Royal Arch Chapter was consecrated. Royal Victoria once more moved beyond the Craft in its endeavors and so began a most remarkable period in our history.



Ernest Sidney Larkin, Master of the Lodge 1955-1956, prime-mover of the "Great Expansion" and first District Grand Master of the District of the Bahamas and Turks.

Expansion and diversification:

During the 1950s and 1960s there arose a group of enthusiasts within the lodge who determined to bring a full range of Masonic degrees to Nassau. They were led by Sid Larkin, who was ably abetted by G.C.L "Roy" Cole, Artie Nottage, Len Thomas, Gerry Leonard, Gordon Higgs, Mark Murray and others. They also resolved to return The Bahamas to District status within United Grand Lodge by sponsoring more lodges in the Craft.

It was an expensive business, to host consecrating officers in Nassau every time a new lodge was begun and induct a slate of officers to be founders. The group quickly discovered that it was quite efficient, and much more fun, to join lodges in England and so become qualified to form their own lodge on their return to Nassau. So the travels began and with great regularity the Degrees were imported.

Mark Masonry	1970
Rose Croix	1971
Royal Ark Mariners	1972
Knight Templar & Malta	1975
Secret Monitor	1977
Allied Masonic Degrees	1978
Royal & Select Masters	1978
Knight Templar Priests	1980
Royal Order of Scotland	1980

The immediate result was an enriched Masonic experience in The Bahamas that Freemasons in England could only envy. We are the beneficiaries today, who can expect to enter each Order in turn, should we last so long, rather than hope to be invited into one or two. It also meant that for most of the year the Fraternity met almost every week, for one Order or another. Royal Victoria reduced its Craft meetings to six a year.

The District Grand Lodge, Bahamas and Turks:

The initiative to regain District Grand Lodge status in The Bahamas proceeded concurrently with the increase in other Orders. The following Craft lodges were consecrated:

Lucayan Lodge 8188, Freeport	1967
Lodge of Unity 8760	1976
Bahamas Installed Masters Lodge 8764	1977
Arawak Lodge 8877, Freeport	1979
Coral Lodge 8888, Grand Turk	1979

It was after the consecration of Lodge of Unity 8760 on 11 June 1977 and two days later at the consecration of Bahamas Installed Masters Lodge 8764 on 13 June 1977 that Lodges 443, 647, 8188, 8760 and 8764 were formed into the Bahamas & Turks Group of Lodges with W Bro. Syd Larkin being appointed as Very Worshipful Grand Inspector. The addition of Arawak and Coral Lodges in 1979 enabled the Group to be upgraded and the District Grand Lodge of Bahamas & Turks was inaugurated in 1981, with VW Syd Larkin being installed as RW District Grand Master.

Ironically, after all his efforts, Brother Larkin passed to The Grand Inspector then to the Grand Lodge Above having only served two years as D.G.M. The mantle then fell on Ralph Seligman for ten years, Peter Cole for ten, James Bain for 16 years and Robert Deal Jr. since 2018 the last three having been born in The Bahamas.

District Grand Masters of Bahamas & Turks:

Ernest Sidney Larkin	1981-1983
Ralph David Seligman	1983-1993
Peter Desmond Cole	1993-2002
James Randolph Bain	2002-2018
Robert Christopher Deal Jr.	2018- Present

All are Past Masters of Royal Victoria Lodge.

Under their guidance the District has further been augmented by the consecration of more Craft lodges:

Carleton Lodge, Marsh Harbour	1984
Caicos Islands Lodge, Providenciales	1997
Ernest Sidney Larkin Lodge of Research and Instruction, Freeport	2004
Bahamas & Turks Tercentenary Lodge	2017;
Yuma Lodge	2017;
District Grand Stewards Lodge	2023

Royal Victoria has been active in the sponsorship of these additional lodges and, no doubt remembering the assistance given in its own infancy, has supported them financially as well.

It is encouraging to see these recent additions to The District surging into the dedication of Orders beyond The Craft in their own right. There will, no doubt, be Bahamian Districts for each of these Orders in future.

In 1967, The Grand Lodge of Scotland had returned to The Bahamas, with the consecration of Lodge St. Michael. Royal Victoria has enthusiastically renewed its ties with our brothers in this jurisdiction and visitation between us is a most rewarding experience. In 1997, the lodge hosted the first of the annual Burns Nights, which honour the Scottish Mason and Poet. It is an occasion well attended by brethren under both Grand Lodges.

In 2003, The Irish Constitution returned to The Bahamas when Providence Lodge #928 was consecrated. It is part of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Jamaica, The Bahamas, and the Cayman Islands. Brethren from Royal Victoria were among the founding members and brother Joseph B. Alfred the first Master.

After years of uncertainty, Masonic interchange with some of the lodges under the Prince Hall Grand Lodge, has been approved by United Grand Lodge. Royal Victoria has enjoyed visiting and being visited by this additional Fraternity, long lost to our fellowship.

An Electronic Age:

The Minutes of the meetings of Royal Victoria Lodge were hand-written from 1837 to 1999.

The Summons for a meeting was delivered by The Post Office from 1837 to 2005.

In 1837, a response from U.G.L.E. might have taken months; it might take minutes now.

The word-processor/computer, the Internet and E-Mail have revolutionized the way the world communicates and Royal Victoria Lodge is no exception. Nowadays it is possible to hold informal meetings on line, for the more efficient running of the lodge. Returns can be made to London by attachment to Email. We exchange ideas with each

other, within the District and with our brethren in the region and further afield with a facility that would astonish our ancient forebears. The research for this short history took days, rather than the years that T.A. Thompson spent on his history seventy-five years ago. Yet, if all the modern comforts and applications were to end tomorrow, the Fraternity would go on. The minutes of meetings are a joy to read and contain a wealth of detail that would have been unthinkable even twenty years ago, but there is still a “hard” copy kept in the Minute book, duly signed by the Master.

As illustrated by the rapid growth and expansion of Bahamian Freemasonry being enjoyed at present, our modern age enables us to do more with fewer resources, so we are encouraged to do more. It seems unlikely that this will regress any time soon. Whatever the future holds, Royal Victoria Lodge has a history unequaled by most in Freemasonry. May it long continue.

Past Masters of Royal Victoria Lodge No. 443

Hon. G. C. Anderson	1837,1838, 1841,1842	Dr. E.Y. Webb	1884
J. Pinder	1839	J.F.W. Turtle	1885,1886,1887,1889, 1897,1900,1906
Dr. S. Clutsam	1840	H.W. Lightbourn	1888
W. Bethel	1843	S.S. Morton	1890
G. D. Smith	1844,1845,1846	G. Dittmore	1891
S. Dillet	1847	Dr. F.A. Holmes	1892,1895
Hon G. P. Wood	1848	J. W. Culmer	1893
G. Renouard	1849,1853	C.R. Menendez	1894
T. H. Dillet	1850,1851	J. Bullard	1896
T. H. Rouse	1852	Dr. Geo. H. Johnson	1898, 1899
G.D. Harris	1854	Dr. J.B. Albury	1901
P. Treco	1855,1856,1860	J. Butler	1902,1903
T.B. Thompson	1857	G. M. Cole	1904,1905,1909, 1910,1912
J.H. Webb	1858	E.P.L. Solomon	1907,1908
N. French	1859	L. Taylor	1911
C.R. Perpall	1861,1862	R.W. Turtle	1913,1914
H.C. Lightbourn	1866, 1868	W.H.H. Maura	1915,1916,1918,1937, 1938,1925,1934
J.J.M. Thompson	1867	E.V. Solomon	1917,1921
J.H. Minus	1869,1870	A.K. Solomon	1919,1920,1923,1929
J.A. Culbert	1871	A.B. Sutton	1922
F.J. Aranha	1872,1873,1878,1880	E.C. Moseley	1924
J.E. Dupuch	1874,1875	K.F. Butler	1926
G.F. Dupuch	1876,1877		
T.N.G. Clare	1879		
A. J. Thompson	1881,1882,1883		

A.H. Cole	1927	J.R. Flint	1967
O.F. Pritchard	1928	R.J.H. Hall	1968
G.M. Cole	1930,1931,1943	L. Thomas	1969
T.A. Thompson	1932,1936	R.H. Button	1970
J.K. Cole	1933	R.D. Seligman	1971
G. A. Higgs	1935	J.V. Shepherd	1972
W.A. Cole	1939,1940	J.H.G. Albury	1973
A.D. Sweeting	1941,1942,1945	L.S. Lightbourn	1974
T.E.H. Fisher	1944	G.T.L. Leonard	1975
E.H. Cole	1946,1947	J.R.B. Henderson	1976
F.L. Cole	1948	J.W. Petrie	1977
O. Sweeting	1949	C.E. Carey Jr.	1978
E.H. McKinney	1950,1951	O.F. Kanitsch	1979
F. Solomon	1952,1953	H.E. Pinder	1980
G.S. Mather	1954	D.E. Brogden	1981, 1982
A. Roberts.....	1955	N.J. Reiach	1983
E.S. Larkin	1956	C.G. Honess	1984
G.C.L. Cole	1957	R.F. Albury	1985
C.W. Pemberton	1958	T.D. Albury	1986
T.L. Malone	1959	D.A. Albury	1987
D.T. Knowles	1960	W.D. Carey	1988
D.A. Nottage	1961	K. Andrews	1989
M.F. Murray	1962	D.T. Albury	1990
E.L. Hammond	1963	P.D. Cole	1991
G.P. Higgs	1964	P.O. Cash	1992
A.N. Kimble	1965	G.P. Cates	1993
J.A. Hawthorne	1966	B.W. Lightbourn	1994
		A.K. Rolle	1995
		D. Reynolds	1996

K.G.S. Palmer 1997
 J.G. Cash 1998
 D.M. Bancroft 1999
 J.R. Bain..... 2000
 A.B. Dorsette 2001
 A.B.B. Dupuch 2002
 B.A. Malone 2003
 T.R. Hall 2004
 B.J. Packington 2005
 W.K. Sweeting 2006
 A. Wilson 2007
 H.M. Skolnick 2008
 B.M. Albury 2009
 I.A. Mabon 2010

S. P. d'A. Tavares 2011
 R.C. Deal 2012
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