

must be admitted Masters and Fellows only here, unless by dispensation; thus, at this early period, Lodges were enabled, by virtue of a dispensation, to pass or raise Fellow Crafts and Master Masons. In the second edition of the Constitution of the Grand Lodge of England, A. D. 1738, page 160, we are told that on the 22nd November, 1725, it was agreed that 'The Master of a Lodge with his Wardens, and a competent number of the Lodge assembled in due form, can make Masters and Fellows at discretion.'

"Accordingly, in the year 1725, the Lodges generally were permitted to work the second and third degrees, although a number did not avail themselves for some time of so important a privilege.

"All the old minutes make mention only of the reception of the Neophytes, and anything of a ceremonial or esoteric character to which the whole body of Masons were not entitled to be present, can not be found alluded to in any ancient document so far made public. We do not say positively there were no Masonic degrees prior to the last century; but simply that up to the present time no evidence has been submitted of there ever having been more than the ceremony of reception or initiation, and that the official positions merely of Master Masons warrant us in believing there were no other secret forms of admission.

"This radical author cites the laws and minutes of Lincoln Lodge (England), warranted in 1730, of its general laws in 1732. (in which the Fellow Craft degree is not quoted as worked for ten years).

"In 1734, the two Wardens nominated for the ensuing year, as well as several other brothers of this Lodge well qualified and worthy the degree of Master, not called thereto, our Right Worshipful Master has pleased to direct that a Lodge of Masters should be held on the 31st inst., at which time the said (names given) should be severally admitted to the degree of Master, on their paying severally 5 apiece to the box and 12 to the doorkeeper.

"December ye 31, 1735. At a Lodge of Masters held this day at the place aforesaid, when was present [the names given] and in pursuance of the order given at the last Lodge, the several brethren following were in due form admitted to the degree of Master: Bro. Lahr (Senior Warden), Bro. Every (Junior Warden), Bro. Curtois, Bro. Raynor, Bro. Newcomon, and Bro. Clarke; after which a general Lodge was held."

"From these minutes it would appear that this ancient Lodge worked the degree of Master Mason (as distinct entirely from the Master of a Lodge, whose election is mentioned separately) at intervals, and that the 'General Lodge' had the power to elect officers and members for the Master's Lodge, and receive fees for the same. That all Lodges then had not authority (or did not work) the degree in question, we think is proved from the fact that members of other Lodges were 'Passed Masters,' according to the ninth By-law; and that the 'Master's Ceremonial' was a degree, is equally evident from the frequent occurrence of that title. It resembled in its construction at that period a kind of *imperium in imperio*.

"These laws and extracts from old minute-books abundantly confirm the fact that the degree of a Master Mason was distinct from that of Master of a Lodge, and that it was worked in Lodges prior to the laws of the Grand Lodge, bearing date November 22, 1725."

"Due praise should be given to Bro. Bailey, then proprietor of the *Voice of Masonry*, at Chicago, who bore all the expenses attending the transcription—to secure exact copies of certain important manuscripts for publication.

"The files, then, of that magazine, which has Bro. William James Hughan as a permanent contributor, also the files of the *Keystone*, of Philadelphia, should be secured by every student of Masonic history. The distinguished

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