

esting document, well worthy of perusal. He commences with England. As we hear a great deal about Ancient York Masonry in our own Jurisdiction, believing it will be of interest to our brethren, we quote :

### Whence Came We? ENGLAND.

#### ANCIENT YORK MASONS.

"WM. JAMES HUGHAN, of Truro, England, an officer of the Grand Lodge of England, says the facts of his research into the old records sadly

"Interfere with some of the notions in the United States, and as to some of the Grand Lodges especially, which claim a descent from the *Old York Masons*; and we know for a fact, that it is the pride and boast of some highly respectable Grand Lodges to be the descendants of the Grand Lodge of all England, held at York, from A. D. 926. The true statement however, is to be found in the evidence afforded by a study of the old records; and these, for four centuries, prove clearly that the Grand Lodge at York, from 926, is a fabrication; that it never existed until the last century, and what is more, even then and until its extinction, never at any time granted a warrant for a lodge in any State of America, or for any country beyond the confines of England.

"These statements we make seriously, and with evidence before us, and challenge a denial or confutation based upon any historical foundation. Not a Grand Lodge now existing in the United States was, or is, derived from the York Lodge or York Grand Lodge, but wholly and solely from one or other of the two rival Grand Lodges situated in London, one of which claimed a connection with York *it never had*, and both finally settled their differences, and united in 1813.

"The 'Surtees Society,' established in 1834, has done good by publishing the Fabric Rolls of York Minster, and these aged and most valuable documents abundantly confirm our position, for they clearly prove the existence of a Lodge, but never at any time refer to a *Grand Lodge* or a *Grand Master*. These records date from the fourteenth century, and hence their testimony is conclusive.

"This punctures the swollen pretensions of the Grand Lodge of all England, formerly held at York. The truth must be told, there never was a *Grand Lodge* held in that City until 1725; and before that period it was simply an ordinary Masonic Lodge, or company of Freemasons. The old Constitutions of the Masons point to the honorable position held by York, and to its being the seat of the 'Annual Assembly,' but certainly never to a *Grand Lodge* being formed in that city, and never once do any of the valuable records ever allude to *Grand Lodges* until we arrive at the second decade of the last century, when the speculative and revival tendencies of the more fortunate rival at London led the York Masons to make a few changes, and, by a movement of the Masonic Magician's magic wand, turn their small quiet Lodge into a *Grand Lodge*, ruled by the *Grand Master* and his *Grand Officers*.

"The first parchment roll of minutes preserved at York begins March 19, 1712, when several members were 'sworne and admitted, *Geo. Bowes, Esq., Deputy President.*' Meetings of the Lodge were also held 24th June and August 7th, in the following year, and on December 18, 1713, 'a private lodge' was called, when several gentlemen were admitted, and Sir Walter Hawksworth, Knight and Bart., was the President.

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