

CHAPTER II.

The "Moderns" in Halifax, 1750-1757.

The First Lodge. With Cornwallis in the expedition were five men who afterwards played a leading part in Masonic affairs in Halifax; Capt. Richard Bulkeley, later (1791 to 1800) Provincial Grand Master of Nova Scotia; William Steele, Robert Campbell, William Nesbitt and David Haldane. The last named four became, with the Hon. Edward Cornwallis, the founders of the first Masonic Lodge in Halifax. The "History of Freemasonry in Nova Scotia" published in 1786, states that "as early as the year 1750 which was as soon almost as there were any houses erected at Halifax, we find a number of the Brethren met together with Governor Cornwallis at their head, "deeming it," as they expressed it, "for the good of the Fraternity, that Masonry should be propagated in the Province, and that there was a necessity of encouraging it in this place."

"Erasmus James Phillips, Esq., of Annapolis Royal was Provincial Grand Master at that time, and they agreed to petition him for a warrant to hold a Lodge at Halifax, and that His Excellency might be Master of it."

A copy of the petition to Philips dated June 12th, 1750, signed by the Hon. Edward Cornwallis and the other Brethren, is in the archives of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, but this would seem to have been a second application, for the Halifax Lodge is referred to in the Grand Lodge minutes of April 13th, 1750, a circumstance probably explained by the fact that the petitioning Brethren had previously applied to the St. John's Grand Lodge, Boston, and had been referred by that Lodge to the Provincial Grand Master.

The History above referred to, goes on to say that "this warrant was received on the 19th of July; and on the same evening Lord Colville and a number of Navy Gentlemen were entered apprentices of the Lodge. It had also the honour of making many of the principal inhabitants, and most of the Gentlemen holding considerable offices in the Province; and it was in this Lodge that our present Senior