

Endorsement.

Let the within Lodge and Warrant, No. 53, all and every the Members thereof being first duly returned to and registered with the Clerk of the Peace, pursuant to the Statute in that case made and provided, be transferred to and held at a house known by the sign of the Fleece Inn, Market-Place, Hull, the Master and Wardens, and all and every the Members thereof, at all times paying due respect to the Grand Lodge, and the Rules and Regulations thereof, by whom the within Warrant and these Presents are granted: otherwise the same to be of no force or effect whatever.

THOMAS HARPER, D. G. M.

Entered, ROBERT LESLIE, G. S. K, fol. 46-7.

The early annals of Masonry, or rather the supposed records, are marshaled in form by Brother Smith, and if they had been facts, the story told would have proved instructive as well as interesting, but unfortunately the account given of our early history is most faulty. We pass over the alleged Grand Lodge of 926 when a charter was granted by King Athelstane, to his son Prince Edwin, at York—"which charter is stated to be in the possession of a gentleman in the neighborhood of Doncastle, because though not at all proved, it is an old tradition which possibly has some elements of truth in it. The character, however, as might have been known beforehand, has never been found in Doncastle or elsewhere.

We have simply to do with the Masonic historic age from 1717. We are told that the four lodges at that period formed themselves into a Grand Lodge, "assumed to themselves all the functions of power and authority as a Grand Lodge, and this, too, when the Grand Lodge at York was, and long after continued, in the full power and exercise of its privileges, as the only head of Masonry in this country." We emphatically deny this statement, having personally examined the records at York! Prior to 1725, there was an old lodge meeting in that city, the chief officer of which was styled the President. It was not until that year the members assumed the title of a Grand Lodge (without any lodges!) and only then does the title of Grand Master occur on the minutes. It is much to be lamented that such a story has been propagated for a number of years, and that so many of our historians have reproduced the tale, without ever examining into its truth or falsity. We read again that "The Grand Lodge at York, however, subsequently falling into decay through the preponderating influence of the new Grand Lodge, these two Grand Lodges formed themselves into the United Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons." *They never did any such thing!* "The Grand Lodge of all England" held at York died out before the last century was ended, and so could not have united with the regular Grand Lodge at London in 1813, and, of course, *did not do so*.

Brother Smith next observes: "It was many years prior to the union of these two Grand Lodges that the warrant we possess was granted by the Duke of Athol, who, at the time, and for many years afterwards was the Grand Master of the Ancient Grand Lodge at York, or, as it was then, and for many years afterwards contended, the only lodge that had power to grant warrants in England." *It was never so contended, the Duke of Athol was never Grand Master of the Grand Lodge at York, and the warrant of the Humber Lodge was not issued by the York authorities.* A reference to the document, as per transcript herewith given, will exhibit the fact that the warrant was granted in London, not York, A. D. 1775, and that the Grand Lodge was known by the short name of the "Ancients" or "Athol Masons." This Grand Lodge was formed soon after 1750, had no connection whatever with the York Grand Lodge, and was the rival of the regular Grand Lodge of England formed in 1717, from which its members had seceded, and with which it subsequently united, the two institutions becoming the United Grand Lodge of England from 1814, since which there has been no secession of any kind. The number of the warrant 53, must have been owned by a lodge before 1775, as evidently from the note, the original issue of that number bore the date of May 19th, 1756. What became of this lodge we know not. The members may have purchased a dormant warrant, and thereby obtained a higher number on the roll, as many did under the "Ancients" in the last century, or it may have ceased to meet, and a new warrant may have been issued with the same number (53) for Liverpool. At all events, it is quite clear that No. 53 of 1756, to be held where we know not, became No. 53 of 1775, to assemble in Liverpool. The warrant thus re-granted authorized the holding of the lodge in the latter town, subject to the usual conditions recited in "Ahiman Resson" of the 1764, and the member chose for their distinctive title the strange name of the "Ancient Knight Templars' Lodge." How long the lodge remained in Liverpool is not known, "but during the time that it was held there, several hundreds, both British subjects and foreigners, particularly Americans, were initiated." The members, it appears, joined another lodge, and the warrant re-