

History of St. Andrew's Lodge, A.F. & A.M. No. 16, G.R.C. Toronto

The mission of the Masonic Brotherhood, which extends over the habitable globe, has always been, and ever will be, one of peace and good-will to mankind. It seeks to guide and help men onward to a better life. Its primary object is true fraternity. To enter the portals they must believe in a Supreme Being, who has revealed His will to man, and who will punish vice and reward virtue; otherwise they are free to choose their politics and their particular form of religion, and their course of social life.

The cosmopolitan character of Freemasonry has been beautifully exemplified in St. Andrew's Lodge from its earliest period. It has numbered among its members men of different nationalities and creeds, many of whom have taken foremost positions in Canada as jurists, legislators, educationists, ministers of the gospel, military men, medical men, architects, artists, merchants, journalists, and other avocations. The brethren connected with St. Andrew's Lodge have been more or less identified with every movement for the welfare of the City of Toronto and of Canada, since "York" (now Toronto) was selected as a site for the capital of Upper Canada.

The circumstances connected with the formation of St. Andrew's Lodge are related by R.W. Bro. Simon McGillivray, Provincial Grand Master of Upper Canada for 1822-41, in his report to the Duke of Sussex, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of England. He says:

"At York I had the advantage of being personally acquainted with the most respectable individuals in the society of the place, and the subject of my Masonic mission being occasionally alluded to in my conversation, I soon found that several of my friends were Freemasons, although they had never joined or visited any of the lodges in the Province, nor taken any notice whatever of the proceedings or progress of the Craft, and on my expressing regret at this indifference on their part, the answer was that Masonry had not been in such hands, nor conducted in such a manner