

the same time. News of naval battles came with every mail packet from England and after such occasions as the Battles of the Nile and Trafalgar, the town celebrated the event with illuminations and hilaricousness. This period so far as our story is concerned virtually closes with the battle between the Chesapeake and the Shannon and the arrival of the two ships in Halifax, with their dead and wounded, under the command of Provo Wallis. The war dragged on for another two years.

The Establishment of Grand Lodge. As stated in a previous chapter the Grand Lodge of England ("Ancients") established a Provincial Grand Lodge of England on Dec. 27th, 1757. The Provincial Grand Master, Erasmus James Philips, died in 1760, and his successor the Hon. Jonathan Belcher, in 1776. Grand Lodge then became dormant, and for the next four years Lodge 155 was the only Lodge of the Ancients in Halifax. After the establishment of St. John Lodge, No. 211 "quarterly communications" of the two Lodges were held for the transaction of business which might properly be called Grand Lodge business.

On November 22nd, 1781, "Lodges 155 and 211 together with the Lodge called Union, in the Town of Halifax aforesaid and the Lodge called St. George's in His Majesty's Independent Company on St. John's Island (which will be in Halifax in the Spring)" petitioned the Athole Grand Lodge (the "Ancients") for the establishment of a Provincial Grand Lodge. They refer to the unsettled state of the Craft in Halifax and remote parts of the Province for want of such a Lodge and the existence of "clandestine work almost on all sides," also a Lodge of Modern Masons in Halifax. The Petitioners recommended John George Pyke for Grand Master; John Cody (of Lodge 155) as S. G. W.; and Ephraim Whiston (also of Lodge 155) as J. G. W. The petition failed in its purpose because of "objections made by a number of private Brethren."

In the following year, 1782, when these objections had been removed the application was renewed by Lodges 155 and 211, St. George's, Thistle (in the 82nd Foot) and Virgin and Union Lodges (recently established under dispensation). John George Pyke was again recommended as Provincial Grand Master; Charles Adams, P. M. of Lodge 155 as D. G.