

# HISTORY

of

The Relations Between the  
Grand Chapter of Texas

and the

General Grand Chapter

of the

United States of America

By

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Past Grand High Priest

# THE GRAND ROYAL ARCH CHAPTER OF TEXAS

Fort Worth, Texas, August 25, 1943.

To the Past Grand High Priests, and the Elective Officers of the Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Texas; and to the Officers and Companions of the Subordinate Chapters.

Companions:

At the Triennial Convocation of the General Grand Chapter of the U. S. A., Salt Lake City, August 26-27, 1942, in a movement designed to unify all the regular Grand Chapters of Royal Arch Masons on the Western Hemisphere for the purpose of uniting and establishing Capitular Masonry in one general confederation, as a living force for human welfare and progress, in the new era lying before us, passed the following resolution:

“BE IT RESOLVED that the General Grand Chapter of the United States of America, in the midst of a world conflict which threatens our very existence as a fraternity, desiring to cooperate with all branches of the Masonic Fraternity in the promotion and encouragement of Masonic ideals, hereby respectfully invites the Grand Chapters of the United States of America, not now in affiliation or cooperation with the General Grand Chapter, Royal Arch Masons of the United States of America, to unite with us under one banner, realizing that only in Union can there be Strength.

“That this invitation be extended to the Grand Chapters of Canada, so that they, too, may join with us in this campaign of self-preservation; that should they decide to become members of our National Organization, we welcome them upon an equal basis with the Grand Chapters which now constitute the General Grand Chapter of the United States of America.

“That the General Grand High Priest be authorized to extend such an invitation to each of these Grand Chapters, visit them at their invitation, and carry out the various procedures necessary to constitute all or any of them members of this organization.”

The Most Excellent General Grand High Priest Ray V. Denslow, also an Honorary Member of the Grand Chapter of Texas, presented the above invitation in person at our last Convocation at Waco (See pages 2, 69-74, Proc. 1942), which you are respectfully requested to review.

The above invitation having been solemnly adopted by the General Grand Chapter, the largest body of Royal Arch Masons in the world, and graciously presented in person by its Illustrious General Grand High Priest, was deemed by our Grand Chapter to be entitled to courteous and earnest consideration in keeping with the dignity of both Grand Bodies.

The Grand Chapter unanimously adopted a resolution authorizing the incoming Grand High Priest to appoint a special committee to consider the invitation and to submit their recommendations at our next annual Convocation.

Pursuant to the action of the Grand Chapter, Most Excellent Grand High Priest John Temple Rice appointed a special committee consisting of all the living Past Grand High Priests and the elective officers of the Grand Chapter.

There will be, no doubt, many questions which the committee will desire to consider before reaching a decision in so important a matter.

On account of the limited time available at our annual Convocation, after consultation with our Most Excellent Grand High Priest, it was agreed that the committee should hold a meeting at Waco, sometime prior to our Annual Convocation, for the purpose of full discussion and consideration of the subject.

Due notice of the time will be given hereafter.

Under the terms of the resolution creating the committee, a report is to be made to the Grand Chapter in 1943, with its recommendation. The report of the committee will be submitted to a vote of the Grand Chapter. It is, therefore, important that the several Chapters, as well as the members of the committee, give consideration to the subject in the meantime.

There is, undoubtedly, a great deal of misinformation prevalent concerning the history of our former relations with the General Grand Chapter. Many erroneous impressions seem to exist on both sides.

While we are giving consideration to this subject, would it not be a good time to correct erroneous impressions so that the Companions of both the General Grand Chapter and of our own Grand Chapter may obtain a true picture of the relations of these two great organizations and the real causes of their misunderstandings of the past? It is doubtful that many of our Chapters have available in their libraries a sufficient number of volumes of the Proceedings and other records by which the true facts and history may be traced.

Having reviewed much of the history on the subject and having first obtained the approval of our Most Excellent Grand High Priest, I am authorized to submit a general historical outline which is intended only for the purpose of being helpful in a better understanding of all the questions you may desire to consider in connection with this interesting subject.

## **ORIGIN OF THE ROYAL ARCH DEGREES**

It is not deemed necessary for the purposes of the questions to be decided, that we set forth all the traditional and historical records relating to the Origin of the Royal Arch Degrees. It will be sufficient to say that there are traditions which indicate that some of them antedated the organization of the Constitutional Grand Lodge of England in 1717, especially is this believed to be true of the Mark Master's degree, which it is contended was conferred as a supplement to the degree of Fellow Craft by some of the old Guilds. In the year 1751 there arose a schism in the Grand Lodge of England. A rival Grand Lodge was set up by certain dissenters in 1753 to become known thereafter as the Atholl Grand Lodge, with the Duke of Atholl as Grand Master. They assumed the title of "Ancients," although it was 36 years younger than the Constitutional Grand Lodge of 1717. The "Ancients" stigmatized the older Grand Lodge as "Moderns" on account of certain changes it made in its signs and mode of recognition which was apparently done in order to protect their Lodges from visitation by the "Ancients."

The "Ancients" had four degrees in their system of work, consisting of the E. A., F. C., M. M. and the Holy Royal Arch. The "Moderns" had only the three degrees of the Blue Lodge until 1765, when they, also, adopted a Royal Arch Degree. The schism continued until the year 1813, when all differences were composed and they were united as "The United Grand Lodge of Ancient Freemasons of England." Section 2, of the Articles of Union, provided as follows:

"It is declared and pronounced that pure Ancient Masonry consists of three degrees, and no more, viz: those of the Entered Apprentice, the Fellow Craft, and the Master Mason, including the Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch."

Following the Union, a Supreme Grand Chapter was established by the United Grand Lodge to exercise jurisdiction over Chapters and the Holy Royal Arch Degree. It was destined to become one of the great powers of English Freemasonry.

Thus it will be observed that, historically, the Royal Arch Degree had its origin and was nurtured within the bosom and under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodges of England, before a separate Grand Body working under its own constitution, powers, and jurisdiction and known as a Grand Chapter, was ever organized for the purpose, either in England, America, or elsewhere.

According to Mackey's History of Freemasonry, Vol. V, pages 1257 and 1258, it will be seen that "at first, the Royal Arch Degree was conferred in the Lodges, and as a supplement to the Third Degree." Later, he says, "it was conferred in a body called a 'Chapter' hut still constituting a part of a warranted Lodge." The regulations adopted by the Atholl Grand Lodge (Ancients) for the instruction and government of the Holy Royal Arch Chapter, among other things declares "every regular and warranted Lodge possesses the power of forming and holding meetings in each of these several degrees, the last of which from its pre-eminence is denominated among Masons a Chapter."

The earliest official minutes of the Royal Arch Degree among the "Ancients" bears the date of 1752. At that time the "Ancients" were organized in a Grand Assembly, which bore the name of "Grand Committee." The degree was then conferred in the Lodges but only on those who had passed the Chair, that is to say, on Past Masters of the Lodge. We have seen that this right of the Lodges to confer the Royal Arch Degree was always recognized by the Grand Lodge of Ancients. A Grand Chapter of England was organized by the United Grand Lodge after the Union in 1813. Warrants for the organization of Chapters were thereafter granted by it, but only where the parties composing such Chapters possessed a regular Warrant, granted by the Grand Lodge. Hence, every Chapter under the system of the "Ancients" was, though independent as to the degree, an appendage of a warranted Lodge. An application for initiation in the Royal Arch degree was to be directed "to the presiding Chiefs of the Chapter of Excellent Royal Arch Masons, under sanction of Lodge No. \_\_\_." This usage prevailed in America as long as Lodges of "Ancient Masons" existed here. Mackey says: "I have in the early part of my life personally known several old Royal Arch Masons who received the degrees in Chapters attached to Lodges." (Mackey's History of Freemasonry, Vol. V., p. 1259.)

## **INTRODUCTION OF THE ROYAL ARCH IN AMERICA**

During the period from 1733 to 1813 the Grand Lodges of England, Scotland and Ireland granted warrants and charters for Masonic Lodges in the Colonies of North America. After the schism of 1753, the "Ancients" did likewise. In the year 1758, five years after the organization of the Grand Lodge of the "Ancients," it granted its first warrant for a Lodge in America, a Lodge in Pennsylvania. In the same year a warrant was issued by that Lodge opening the first Royal Arch Chapter in this country. The Grand Lodge of the "Ancients," as stated, always granted this privilege to its Lodges. The Chapter was known as Jerusalem Chapter, and without doubt can be considered the Mother of Royal Arch Masonry in America. The Grand Lodge of "Ancients," later in 1764, established a Provincial Grand Lodge in Pennsylvania. The Provincial Grand Lodge chartered other Lodges. All such Lodges worked the Royal Arch Degree in Chapters opened by them under the authority of its Master's warrant.

In 1795 an attempt was made to organize a Grand Royal Arch Chapter by three independent Blue Lodges in Philadelphia, which had been constituted by Lodges in Maryland and Georgia. The attempt was frustrated by the Provincial Grand Lodge, but the attempt prompted the Grand Lodge to sponsor a Grand Chapter. The record shows their comments as follows:

“Throughout this controversy the Grand Lodge acknowledged the right of all regular warranted Lodges, so far as they have ability and numbers, to make Masons in the higher degrees, but lest differences might exist, or innovations be attempted in such higher degrees, which, for want of some proper place to appeal, might create schism among the brethren,” they therefore Resolved that a Grand Royal Arch Chapter should be opened, under the immediate sanction of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania. Thus the Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Pennsylvania, so established in 1795, was the first Grand Chapter established in America, and was the first Grand Chapter established by the direct sanction of Blue Lodges and by the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania. The Grand Chapter of Pennsylvania is still in existence and perhaps on account of being the first and oldest Grand Chapter, never surrendered that honor by affiliating with the General Grand Chapter.

The pertinency of this history will become apparent when, hereafter, we come to consider the dispensations granted by the Grand Lodge of the Republic of Texas, to form Royal Arch Chapters in Texas, which action was challenged as irregular by the General Grand Chapter at that time. The Grand Lodge of the “Ancients” under the aggressive leadership of Laurance Dennott, Grand Secretary, outstripped the more conservative “Moderns” and at the close of the century they had established Lodges in Pennsylvania, Canada, Maryland, South Carolina, New York, Massachusetts, Nova Scotia, Gibraltar, and most of the provinces and islands of the East and West Indies and had also secured recognition by the Grand Lodges of Ireland and Scotland.

The Grand Lodge of Texas is directly descended from this line. The Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania (Ancient) chartered four Lodges in Louisiana. A Lodge in South Carolina (Ancient) also chartered a Lodge in New Orleans. Those five Lodges met and formed the Grand Lodge of Louisiana in 1812. Subsequently, the Grand Lodge of Louisiana issued charters to the three Lodges in Texas which formed the Grand Lodge of the Republic of Texas. Thus the original Grand Lodge and the original Grand Chapter of the Republic of Texas trace their genealogies backward in a direct and unbroken line to the Grand Lodge of “Ancients” of England, the *first* and *original* sponsor of the Royal Arch Degree anywhere in the world.

Thus it is established that according to the Constitution, Laws, Regulations, Customs and Usages established by the Grand Lodge of “Ancients” of England, which were continuously in force from 1753, it delegated to all Lodges created under its authority the right to issue warrants authorizing the creation and opening of Royal Arch Chapters. The action of the Grand Lodge of the Republic of Texas, in issuing warrants or dispensation creating the first Chapters, and then granting a warrant sanctioning the creation of the Grand Chapter of the Republic of Texas, was in every respect regular and legal, especially since no other Grand Chapter existed in Texas at the time.

There was another source of authority which attempted to exercise jurisdiction over the Royal Arch degree, and created Chapters in America in the early days. The Scottish Rite exercised such authority. The 13th degree of the Rite of Perfection was somewhat similar to the English degree and was known as the “Royal Arch of Solomon.” Several Chapters were opened in Virginia by Joseph Myers, a duly authorized Deputy of M. M. Hayes, who had, under the authority of Stephen Morn, been engaged in the dissemination of the twenty-five degrees of the Rite of Perfection, which were afterwards developed into what we now know as the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of thirty-three degrees. In 1783 Myers moved to Richmond, Va., where he imparted the degrees to many Master Masons. Members of the Royal Arch of Solomon, or 13th degree, afterwards opened Chapters for the purpose of conferring that degree. It was these Chapters which united in organizing the Grand Chapter of Virginia. However, in 1820 the ritual of the Scottish Rite was discontinued by the Chapters of Virginia and that of the General Grand Chapter was adopted by them instead. The Scottish Rite of the Southern Jurisdiction contended with Grand Lodges and Grand Chapters of other states for many years, claiming supreme jurisdiction over the Royal Arch Degree, but it finally abandoned its claims and recognized the several Grand Chapters as the governing power in Capitular Masonry. The Grand Chapters of Pennsylvania and Virginia are the only two Grand Chapters in this country which never affiliated

with the General Grand Chapter, and counting the Grand Chapter of Texas, are the only Grand Chapters in the 49 Grand Jurisdictions of the United States of America which are unaffiliated today.

## **ORGANIZATION OF THE GENERAL GRAND CHAPTER**

It has been seen that the first American Chapter was instituted in Philadelphia in 1758. At a somewhat later period in the century the Royal Arch Degree was conferred in many Lodges in the United States under their Master's Warrant. This custom continued for many years in the Southern States, where separate and distinct Chapters were unknown until the 19th century.

In some of the Northern States, the control of the Royal Arch degree passed out of the jurisdiction and control of the Lodges. Toward the close of the 18th century we find that Chapters, created by a Master's Warrant, began to grant, in their own right, Dispensations and Charters for the formation of other Chapters. Such authority appears to have been assumed without seeking or obtaining the sanction of the Lodge or Provincial Grand Lodge. One of the most important of these was Washington Chapter in the City of New York. It granted warrants for the establishment of other Chapters in many of the Northern Provinces. In Connecticut, prior to the year 1800, all the Chapters except one derived their warrants from Washington Chapter of New York; likewise, said Washington Chapter granted a warrant for "Providence Chapter" in Rhode Island.

By that time Capitular Masonry had spread to many sections both North and South. The great difference in Rituals, derived from so many sources, including the two Grand Lodges of England, as well as the Ramsay Ritual of the Scottish Rite, started a movement to bring about more uniformity in the degrees.

We learn from the minutes of Jerusalem Chapter No. 3, the original Chapter, that in 1793 the Royal Arch, as given in Pennsylvania, differed so much from that conferred in Scotland, that Bro. George Read, coming from the latter country, where he had been made a Royal Arch Mason, "not being able to make himself known" in some of the most interesting points, he was (in consequence of his certificate) granted the privilege of a second initiation. There was likewise a recognized need for a uniform jurisprudence to govern the Craft and to regulate the order and method of conferring Degrees and supervising the Craft in general. On October 24<sup>th</sup>, 1797, a Convention of Royal Arch Masons was held in Boston, for the purpose of forming a Grand Chapter.

At this Convention, delegates of three Chapters were present: St. Andrews of Boston; Temple of Albany, N. Y.; and King Cyrus of Newburyport, Mass. This Convention, probably in consequence of the small number of Chapters represented, did no more than issue a circular addressed to the various Chapters in the Northern States, recommending a future meeting to be held at Hartford, Conn., "to form and open a Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons, and to establish a constitution for the government and regulation of all the Chapters that now are, or may be hereafter erected within the said states."

In this circular the delegates at Boston enunciated the principle, which, after many years of contention, was generally accepted by acquiescence, as the law of Royal Arch Masonry in the United States; namely, that "No Grand Lodge of Master Masons can claim or exercise authority over any Convention of Royal Arch Masons, nor can any Chapter, although of standing immemorial, exercise the authority of a Grand Chapter."

Strange as it may seem, every Chapter which entered into the formation of the Grand Chapter for the Northern States which ratified and sponsored the above declaration, had been created, either directly or indirectly, by warrants issuing from a Blue Lodge, a Grand Lodge or a Chapter. If the said declaration was a correct pronouncement of Masonic law, every Chapter forming the Grand Chapter of the Northern States, by its own formula must be deemed to have been "irregular" in their creation. However, they perhaps intended

that the rule should thereafter be made to apply, not to themselves, but to all such Chapters in other states whose regularity they might desire to challenge.

This was the first declaration by Chapters in America which denied the jurisdiction of Blue Lodges or Grand Lodges over the Royal Arch degree. It will be noted that it was a self-assumed authority, not sanctioned by any higher authority of competent jurisdiction.

From this time, the apparently illegal assumption of exclusive jurisdiction over the Royal Arch degree by these Chapters began a movement culminating in the organization of a Grand Chapter with self-asserted jurisdiction over six states, and which ultimately, by its sole declaration, expanded itself over all the territory of the United States and even into foreign lands, excepting the States of Pennsylvania and Virginia. All of which was accomplished without the prior consent or sanction of Grand Lodges which, according to ancient custom and usage, held original and supreme jurisdiction over the Royal Arch degree.

On January 24th, 1798, pursuant to the above cited circular, a Convention of delegates from seven Chapters assembled at Hartford, Conn. They were joined by delegates from two other Chapters the following day. The Chapters represented were from the States of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut and New York. The following Chapters were represented: St. Andrews, of Boston; King Cyrus, of Newburyport; Providence, of Providence, R. I.; Solomon, of Derby; Franklin, of Norwich; Franklin, of New Haven; Hudson, of Hudson; Temple, of Albany; and Horeb, of New York.

It was then unanimously Resolved that the delegates should establish a Grand Chapter for the States of New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Vermont and New York, to be denominated "The Grand Royal Arch Chapter of the Northern States of America."

On January 26th, 1798, a Constitution was adopted, and immediately afterwards the officers were elected. The preamble of this Constitution ordains and establishes the body as "The Grand Royal Arch Chapter for the Northern States of America," a title under which jurisdiction was assumed over the states of New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Vermont and New York.

In each of the states there was to be organized, under the jurisdiction of the Grand Chapter, a Deputy Grand Chapter, over which a Deputy Grand High Priest was to preside, assisted by a Deputy Grand King and a Deputy Grand Scribe.

The Grand Chapter which they organized was composed of its elective officers, Past Grand High Priests, Kings and Scribes and the first three officers of the Deputy Grand Chapters. The Grand Chapter was to meet biennially, and the Deputy Grand Chapters annually. The first meeting of the Grand Chapter was to be held at Middletown, Conn., in the following September.

It will be remembered that at and before that time there was no fixed order of precedency anywhere, for conferring the degrees. The Royal Arch degree only was conferred as an additional degree in some of the Blue Lodges. It was conferred in Chapters by others, such Chapters being opened for the purpose, by warrant of either the Blue Lodge or by warrant from the Grand Chapter. In some Blue Lodges the Mark Masters degree was conferred as a supplement to the Fellow Craft. At that early date the Royal Arch degree was reserved exclusively for Past Masters of the Lodges. In order to make the degree available to Master Masons generally, the Past Masters degree of the Blue Lodge was appropriated by Thomas Smith Webb, who is credited with having created what is called the "American Rite." This eminent ritualist is said to have fabricated the Most Excellent Masters degree and combined them with the Mark Masters and Royal Arch degrees, to form the four degrees known universally as the "American Rite." However, there is evidence of the existence of a Most Excellent Masters Degree before Webb became a Mason.

The Constitution adopted at Hartford fixed the nomenclature and precedence of the Capitular Degrees, so that the names and sequence should remain forever thereafter as they were then established.

This arrangement made the Mark Master, Past Master and Most Excellent Master essential preliminary degrees, and a proper preparation of the candidate for the solemnities of the Holy Royal Arch, as a fitting climax and consummation of the system.

The arrangement known as the "American Rite" was later universally adopted, even by Pennsylvania and Virginia. It remains unchanged unto this day.

Their Constitution made the Grand Chapter of the Northern States the supreme authority in Capitular Masonry in its general jurisdiction. The Constitution also delegated to it exclusive power to hear and determine all controversies between Chapters in its jurisdiction and gave it appellate jurisdiction over all the proceedings of the Deputy Grand Chapters. It will be noted that the meeting at Hartford was merely a Convention of delegates assembled for the purpose of taking the preliminary steps necessary to organize a Grand Chapter. Therefore the first official meeting of "The Grand Chapter of the Northern States" after the Hartford meeting was holden on October 19th, 1798, at Middletown, Conn. The previous election of the officers and the adoption of the Constitution was ratified and approved.

As the Grand Chapter of Pennsylvania was the first Grand Chapter created by action of Blue Lodges, so was "The Grand Chapter of the Northern States" the first Grand Chapter created in America by the exclusive action and authority of Chapters. The regularity and legality of the action in setting up a Grand Chapter, without securing the sanction of the Grand Lodges or any authority of superior rank or jurisdiction, was promptly questioned and became an active issue in many states which lasted for half a century. As will be noted hereafter, the question became an important issue in the controversy which arose between the first Grand Chapter of the Republic of Texas and the General Grand Chapter, half a century later.

The second meeting of this Grand Chapter was held at Providence, Rhode Island, on January 9th, 1799. Some important changes were made in their regulations, and the Constitution was revised. The title of the Grand Chapter was altered to that of "The General Grand Chapter for the Six Northern States of America," and the meetings were changed from biennial to a septennial, or seven-year period. The Deputy Grand Chapters were in the future to be styled "State Grand Chapters." The powers of the General Grand Chapter were much abridged. The section giving it appellate jurisdiction over the proceedings of the State Grand Chapters was omitted from the new Constitution, and has never again been re-asserted. Its powers were confined to a control of the Ritual and to the establishment of Chapters in states where there were no Grand Chapters. It continued, however, to maintain the prerogative of defining the powers and functions of State Grand Chapters, until the year 1859, when radical changes were made in the structure of the organization and in its relation to the State Grand Chapters. These changes will be fully discussed later, when we reach that period in the history of the General Grand Chapter.

The third Convocation was holden at Middletown, Conn., on January 9th, 1806. The Constitution was again revised, and some important changes made. Hitherto the General Grand Chapter had claimed jurisdiction only in the six Northern States. But it now sought to extend its territorial limits over the whole country and assumed the more pretentious title of "The General Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons for the United States of America." This title it has ever since retained, and with the exception of the States of Pennsylvania and Virginia, and of Texas since 1861, has practically realized its great ambition.

The exclusive right of issuing charters to subordinate Chapters by State Grand Chapters was conferred by this Constitution on those bodies within their respective jurisdictions, while the General Grand Chapter reserved to itself the right of issuing warrants for Chapters which were to be established in states, or territories, where no Grand Chapter existed.

The next twenty years constituted a period of expansion into many of the states and territories. No important changes were made in the Constitution, except in 1826, when the Convocations were changed from septennial to triennial periods, which remains in effect today.

By the year 1826, the General Grand Chapter had Grand Chapters and at least subordinate Chapters in the following states: Massachusetts, New York, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Vermont, South Carolina, Maryland, Ohio, Kentucky, New Hampshire, Maine, Alabama, Tennessee, District of Columbia, New Jersey, Louisiana, and perhaps others.

Probably the most important event that occurred at that meeting which was holden in the City of New York on September 14th, 1826, was an attempt to dissolve the General Grand Chapter. After extensive debate the vote was taken and the proposal was overwhelmingly defeated. The arguments had no weight with the Grand Chapters, and the G. G. C.\* emerged from the contest triumphantly, to rise in greater influence and general acceptance as the supreme authority in Capitular Masonry in the greater portion of the land. The leadership in the G. G. C. had been strong, zealous and aggressive. Started amid chaotic conditions as to the degrees, by a handful of Chapters, without the sanction of any superior authority, they had in a little over a quarter of a century erected a structure whose jurisdiction and humanitarian service was destined to extend from Alaska to Chile, and from Puerto Rico to China, including many of the Islands of East and West Indies. The general sentiment prevailing among the Grand Chapters in 1826 has been well summarized by Mackey in his History of Freemasonry, Vol. V, page 1300, as follows:

“It is ‘passing strange’ that an institution whose utility has been proved by ample experience, should ever have met with opposition to its existence, we have already seen that to it we are indebted for that common and universal law, which has done so much good in the establishment of an organized system.

“When we remember the discordant condition of Royal Arch Masonry at the close of the last century, when the number of the degrees, their names and order of sequence, which varied in every state and sometimes even in adjacent Chapters, when there was no positive and generally recognized principles of Masonic law, and no authority to which to appeal for the settlement of controversies in ritual or in custom, and when we view the uniformity which now prevails in all parts of the country, which is undoubtedly owing to the weight and influence of the General Grand Chapter as a well-organized head, it cannot be denied that all American Royal Arch Masons owe a debt of gratitude to the founders of that institution which thus wisely brought order out of chaos.”

## **PERIOD FROM 1825 TO 1859**

This era in many respects may be said to have been the most epochal in the history of the General Grand Chapter. It was true also of the history of Royal Arch Masonry in Texas. This era was signalized by the expansion of the jurisdiction of the General Grand Chapter to lands beyond the territorial limits of the United States by the attempted effort to introduce Capitular Masonry into Mexico; and by the Grand Lodge of Texas issuing warrants setting up Chapters in the Republic of Texas, though the exercise of its ancient prerogatives received by regular descent according to ancient custom and usage from the Grand Lodge of the “Ancients” of England; by the dissolution in 1849 of the Grand Chapter of the Republic of Texas, and by the organization of a Grand Chapter in Texas under authority granted by an officer of the General Grand Chapter in 1850; by the amendments to the Constitution of the G. G. C. in 1859, which abolished the sovereignty and supremacy of the G. G. C. and changed the style of the organization of the G. G. C. into a confederation of Grand Chapters, functioning through the G. G. C. as a center of union, which reduced it to the position of a limited jurisdiction and subordinate in powers to the State Grand Chapters; and by the final withdrawal of the Grand

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\* The use of an abbreviation for General Grand Chapter is for economy of space only.

Chapter of Texas from the confederation in 1861, allegedly because of these constitutional changes. The withdrawal, as will hereafter be shown, was not occasioned by the bitterness growing out of the Civil War, as has so often been erroneously proclaimed. I will now undertake to set forth the historical foundation for the topics set forth above.

In the year 1825 the General Grand Chapter is said to have issued a warrant to Joel H. Poinsett, a distinguished diplomat of the United States, and a Mason, authorizing him to establish a Chapter of Royal Arch Masons in the City of Mexico; however, there does not seem to be any record of such a Chapter having been actually opened.

On December 8th, 1835, while the territory which afterwards became the Republic of Texas was a part of Mexico, a charter was issued by the General Grand Chapter authorizing the establishment of a Chapter in the province of Texas (See Proceedings, G. G. C. 1835, p. 133). The resolution reads as follows:

“To the General Grand Chapter:

“The Committee to whom was referred the application Comps. Samuel M. Williams, James C. Miller and other Royal Arch Masons of Texas associated with them, for a warrant or charter for a Royal Arch Chapter to be located at San Felipe de Austin, respectfully report:

“That in their opinion the application is proper and ought to be granted. And they would respectfully recommend that a warrant or charter, by the name of ‘San Felipe de Austin Royal Arch Chapter No. 1 of Texas,’ issue to Comp. Williams as High Priest, and Comp. Miller as King, with authority to them to fill up the other offices, And they would further recommend, that the Deputy Grand High Priest of New York be, and he is hereby authorized to install into the office of High Priest of said Chapter, Comp. Samuel M. Williams.

“By order of the Committee.  
Signed J. T. B. Van Vechten,  
Chairman.”

The report was approved and adopted.

Since Companion Samuel M. Williams and his charter played such an important role in the early history of Capitular Masonry in Texas, a brief reference to him will not be out of order.

He was prominent in the early history of Texas. He was associated with Stephen F. Austin in colonizing the then Province of Texas, a part of Mexico. They were jointly interested in what was known as the Austin-Williams Colony.

In 1835 Williams went from San Felipe de Austin to New York. By whom recommended; by what right of jurisdiction; by what custom; the Masonic Bodies in New York acted, the record is silent. However, by Dispensation, he received the three symbolic degrees in Independent Royal Arch Lodge No. 2, New York, the same night, November 21, 1835. Four days later, on November 25th, 1835, he was exalted as a Royal Arch Mason in Jerusalem Chapter No. 8, in New York City, receiving all the Chapter degrees on the same date. Six days later, on or about December 1st, 1835, he received the orders of Knighthood in Morton Commandery No. 4. Seven days later, on December 8th, 1835, or just sixteen days from his initiation as an Entered Apprentice, he had received all the degrees of the York Rite bodies, been installed as High Priest of a Chapter which had no existence, and started back to San Felipe with a charter procured by his own personal application, notwithstanding the Constitution of the General Grand Chapter contained provisions requiring the

signature of not less than nine Royal Arch Masons to a petition for a charter, and the recommendation of the nearest Chapter. (See Proc. G. C. of Texas, 1916, following p. 84.)

Perhaps unknown to the General Grand Chapter, which was in its Triennial Convocation at Washington, D. C., in December, 1835, and likewise unknown to Samuel M. Williams, who at the same time was taking all the York Rite degrees in New York, Texas was being invaded by a Mexican army bent upon either expelling the Colonists from Texas or to exterminate them, during which the town of San Felipe was destroyed by fire.

It may not be out of place at this point to review briefly some of the high points in the history of Mexico and the relation of Texas to it, for a clearer understanding of some of the causes which provoked the war for independence from Mexico. This history has some interesting side lights of Masonic history.

It will be remembered that from the conquest of Mexico in 1521, by Hernando Cortez, that country was a crown colony of Spain, ruled by viceroys appointed by the King. The rich natural resources were exploited, with very little accomplished in the way of progress among the people. The Roman Catholic Church, representing the State religion, was all-powerful in the governmental affairs of the country. In 1810, when Napoleon captured Spain and imprisoned Ferdinand, its king, an agitation for a revolt was begun in Mexico.

Don Miguel Hidalgo Castilla, an ecclesiastic, the rectoral *cura* of Dolores, raised the standard of revolt. The insurrection probably would have succeeded had he possessed the necessary military skill. He, with the other leaders, were captured in 1811, and were promptly shot. Thus perished the first Mexican revolutionary leader.

Another revolution was fought in Texas territory in 1813, under the leadership of Don Jose Alvarez de Toledo, but his cause was lost at the battle of Medina, where his forces were defeated by the Royalist Army.

On the 24th of February, 1821, the first successful revolution for separation from the Spanish Crown was launched by Don Augustin Iturbide, an ambitious Royalist officer of Creole birth.

He proclaimed a project of separation, embracing the following propositions: Mexican Independence of Spain; the offer of the Crown of Mexico to Ferdinand, and failing him, to the other members of the Royal family in succession, on condition of residence in Mexico, and fealty to the constitution to be established by the Cortes; full security for the supremacy of the Roman Catholic faith, and the immunities of the clergy, regular and secular; the abolition of all distinctions of classes, and the union of Spaniards, Creoles, Indians, Africans, and Castes on the equal footing of free citizenship.

For the support of this project—since celebrated as the plan of Iguala—an army was to be raised, to be styled “The Army of the Three Guarantees,” to preserve the Holy Apostolic Religion, the independence of Mexico, and the union between the Spaniards of Mexico and the Americans of the South.

The plan was approved by the troops on the spot, who bound themselves to its support by an oath. About that time a new Viceroy arrived at Vera Cruz from Spain, and finding it useless to contend against the general demonstration in favor of national independence, negotiated a treaty with Iturbide, which embraced the principal provisions of the plan of Iguala. It was called the Treaty of Cordova, from the place where it was finally executed. Opposition was now arrested, the capitol occupied, and a provisional Junta installed, of which Iturbide was appointed President, for the purpose of making arrangements for assembling a National Convention to frame a constitution for the new monarchy. The first Mexican Cortes met on the 24th of February, 1822, and the members, by their oaths and their votes, yielded an unanimous sanction to the Plan of Iguala.

The unanimity was short lived. The Cortes became divided into three factions: the Bourbon Monarchists, the Republicans, and the personal adherents of Iturbide. The last, adroitly maneuvering between the other two parties, and backed by the army, prevailed; and, on the 19th of August, 1822, Iturbide was proclaimed “Augustin I, Emperor of Mexico,” in the hall of the Cortes, by the united voices of the soldiers and the city rabble, amidst the brandishment of swords and knives. Iturbide, soon forgetting the unstable foundation of his throne, attempted too early and too comprehensively to usurp the powers of an absolute monarchy. He soon suppressed the Cortes, and substituted a Junta of his own nomination which acted as a ready echo of the imperial will.

The standard of revolt was soon raised by Soto de Morena. The haughty dismissal by Iturbide of his former supporter, General Santa Ana, from the government of Vera Cruz, induced him to join in the movement. Dissatisfaction spread throughout the provinces, part of the Imperial Army revolted also, and, on the 19th of March, 1823, Emperor Augustin I resigned his imperial crown and sailed with his family for Leghorn on May 11th, 1823.

A new Cortes was convened in August, 1823, and a new constitution, modeled after the constitution of the United States, was decreed on the 31st of January, 1824, and was definitely sanctioned in October of the same year.

However, there were deviations from their great model. They neither introduced trial by jury, nor did they provide for publicity in the administration of justice. The third Article decreed that— “The religion of the Mexican nation is, and will be perpetually, the Roman Catholic Apostolic. The nation will protect it by wise and just laws, and prohibit the exercise of any other whatever.” A decree of the constituent Cortes, dated the 7th of May, 1824, declared that Texas should be annexed to Coahuila, until it possessed the elements necessary to the formation of a separate state, when, with the approval of the National Congress, the connection was to be dissolved, and an independent State Legislature given to Texas.

The inviolability of the fundamental Articles of the Constitution was solemnly proclaimed by the framers.

It was under the guarantees of this constitution and laws enacted by the Mexican Congress, that the contract entered into by Moses Austin and later by his son, Stephen F. Austin, to establish colonies in the Province of Texas, was finally ratified. Art. 3, of the Act of the Mexican Congress of the 18th of August, 1824, declares that the Legislatures of all the states will, as soon as possible, form colonization laws or regulations for their respective states, conforming themselves in all things to the constitutional act, general constitution, and regulations established by law. The Congress of Coahuila and Texas formed their Colonization Laws March 24th, 1825. The prime object in the movement to encourage the establishment of colonies in Texas, composed of foreign settlers, was to secure the frontiers of Mexico against inroads by savage Indians. It was stated in the official Report of the Minister of Exterior and Interior Relations, addressed to the Cortes, “that, in consequence of Indian irruptions, the Missions of Texas had been ruined and abandoned.” To secure the frontier against savage inroads, and at the same time increase the public prosperity, the Minister recommended that waste lands should be opened to colonization on a system similar to the national land sales of the United States.

The average Mexican citizen and, for that matter their officials, knew little or nothing of Texas and its potential values, the difficulties of travel in that early age and the menace of wild savages and ferocious beasts discouraged trips of exploration except along the sea coast.

From Kennedy’s History of Texas, p. 365, I quote:

“Until Anglo-American enterprise and industry had imparted marketable value to the luxuriant wilderness, Texas was valueless and useless to its nominal possessors, who had ceased to incur even

the expense of maintaining the old military posts. Indeed, to the great majority of the Mexicans, the country was known only by its evil reputation, as the haunt of irreclaimable savages.”

It would be very interesting to narrate all the historical events which took place in Mexico from the overthrow of the Spanish regime to the year 1835, if the already too lengthy narrative did not forbid it. The numerous revolutions, suspensions of the constitution, the setting up of dictatorships, the establishment of military and religious dictatorships, all followed in rapid succession to the end that no permanent or stable government was founded during that period.

## INTRODUCTION OF FREEMASONRY INTO MEXICO

It is a matter of historical interest to note how the great Masonic Order was made use of and perverted during the revolutionary period from 1821 to 1835.

The “Scottish Rite” was introduced into Mexico by civil and military officers of the monarchy about the year 1810. After this, Lodges were erected by the Grand Lodge of Louisiana at Vera Cruz in 1816, and at Campeachy in 1817. The Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania chartered a Lodge at Alvarado in 1824. “A period of civil strife was active at this time, during which Masonry and politics were so closely interwoven as to render quite hopeless any attempt at their separate treatment,” says Gould, in his History of Freemasonry, Vol. III, p. 369.

The two political factions struggling for mastery were also divided into factional Lodges. The Spanish nobility and adherents of a central monarchial form of government, belonged to the Scottish Rite Lodges, and were called “Escoses,” while the advocates of Republican institutions and favoring the expulsion of the “old” or native Spaniards, held membership in the Blue Lodges and were called “Yorkinos” or York Rite.

Says Gould:

“The Escoses, originally the ‘Scots Masons’ numbered among their members all who, under the ancient regime, had titles of nobility; the Catholic Clergy, without exception; many military officers; together with all the native Spaniards of every class.

“The Republican party, viewing with dismay the progress of their opponents, Resolved ‘to fight the devil with his own fire’ and therefore organized a rival faction, on which they bestowed the name of ‘Yorkinos,’ the members of which were supposed to be adherents of the York Rite.”

The American Minister to Mexico, Illustrious Brother Joel R. Poinsett, was very active in the affairs of the Yorkinos. I have before me copies of correspondence courteously furnished to me from the archives of the Grand Lodge of New York by Brother W. K. Walker, Librarian.

The following is the application of Brother Poinsett for charters for five Lodges to be constituted in Mexico in 1825: The letter was addressed to M.:W.:Stephen Van Rensselaer, then Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of New York. The letter is as follows:

“Mexico, 15 Oct., 1825.

“Most Worshipful Sir:

“Enclosed herewith you will receive the petitions from five Lodges of Ancient York Rite Masons formed in this City praying for charters.

“You will confer a favor on me and contribute essentially to spread the light of Masonry throughout this land by complying with the prayers of the petitioners and by forwarding the charters to me by the earliest opportunity to the care of M. M/. Taylor, Consul of the United States, at Alvarado. If at the same time you will let me know the amount of the dues, it shall be immediately remitted to you. And in the meantime I make myself responsible for the dues. I think it would be advantageous to our Order to invest me with authority to grant dispensations to Lodges in these countries. With the Masters I should be glad to receive a copy of the Laws of the Grand Lodge of New York, and one of the rules and Bye Laws of one of the subordinate Lodges.

“I am with great respect  
“Most Worshipful Sir  
“Your most obt servant  
“and Brother

J. R. Poinsett,  
P. D. G. M. of the  
G. L. of So. Ca.”

The prayer was granted and the charters, together with a copy of Webb’s Monitor and the laws, were dispatched as requested. From a copy of a letter in the archives of the Grand Lodge of New York, the Grand Secretary said:

“The officers of the Grand Lodge as well as the fraternity in general feel happy in being called on in so respectable and dignified a manner to assist in establishing the glorious cause of the fraternity in a government where tyranny, oppression and bigotry have so long forbid the exercise of its benevolent and happy influence to prevail among you, and while we cherish an interesting and delightful correspondence on this subject, it becomes me further to state that it is an acknowledged right that in any Territory where there is an independent civil jurisdiction of the magnitude of a State having within it three or more Master Masonic Lodges holden a regular warrant that they may assemble by their Masters and Wardens and form a Grand Lodge and report to the Grand Lodge or Lodges from which their warrants were obtained, and on the approbation and acknowledgment of such Grand Lodge or Lodges, and with full confidence I can assure you the Grand Lodge of this State would gladly receive and with pleasure acknowledge the organization of a Grand Lodge in the Government of Mexico. Accept the most cordial wishes of the Gd. Lodge for your fraternal success and personal welfare.”

Mackey informs us that such a Grand Lodge was organized by Poinsett. In 1828 while Vincent Guerrero—Grand Master under the York Rite—was President of the Republic, a law was enacted by which all Masonic Lodges were closed. It will be remembered that in 1828 Stephen F. Austin and other Master Masons petitioned that Grand Lodge for a dispensation to open a Lodge in Texas. It was the first effort made to establish a Lodge in this State.

No answer was ever received from the Grand Lodge. The above history will, perhaps, account for the failure of the Grand Lodge to respond.

After the enactment of the law closing Masonic Lodges in Mexico, it seems that the Yorkinos obeyed the law, but the Escoses continued to work. Some of their more influential Lodges were suppressed and their members banished.

Santa Ana, a leading Yorkino, however, was able to muster members in his several insurrections. In 1859 Albert Pike issued authority for the establishment of a Supreme Council of the Scottish Rite. Among the

great leaders and insurrectionists also prominent in the Mexican form of Masonry was Benito Juarez and Porfirio Diaz.

Mr. Poinsett became so active with the Yorkinos and interfered in local politics of Mexico to such an extent as to augment the jealousy with which the authorities had begun to regard the Anglo-Texans of the colonies.

Indeed, Poinsett became so active that President Andrew Jackson was requested by the Mexican Government to recall him, which was done.

In 1827, an arduous and exciting contest terminated in the election of Manuel Gomez Pedraza, the candidate of the "Escoses," by a majority of two votes over Vincent Guerrero, the Yorkinos' candidate. Thereupon, General Santa Ana appeared at the head of a military force and, on the 16th day of September, decreed the return was at variance with the popular will, and proclaimed Guerrero (Grand Master of the Yorkinos) President. After much bloodshed, Pedraza was forced to flee and Guerrero was chosen to the Presidency on January 6th, 1829, with Anantasio Bustamente, Vice-President, and Antonio Lopez de Santa Ana, Secretary of War. (See Kennedy's History of Texas, pp. 352, 353.)

Guerrero was overthrown by Bustamente in 1831, he was tried by a mock courtmartial, condemned as a traitor and executed in February, 1831.

A decree issued by Bustamente clearly testified the altered disposition of the Mexican Government toward the American colonists. He put into effect many regulations which were in conflict with the constitution and statutes of 1824.

It was determined that henceforth (in violation of constitutional guarantees) to rule the colonies by military force. Military posts were established in the various settled districts and trading points: at San Antonio, Nacogdoches, Goliad, Galveston, Velasco, Victoria and other points. In 1830 there were armed clashes between the colonists and the military at Velasco and Anahuac, the colonists being victorious in each case.

In 1832, Santa Ana led another insurrection and overthrew Bustamente. Pedraza was recalled and served out the unexpired part of the term for which he had been elected in 1827.

On April 1st, 1833, he was succeeded by Santa Ana. The Federal System of Constitutional Government was again recognized. On June 1st, an attempt was made to declare Santa Ana the Supreme Dictator of Mexico. The movement failed temporarily. Stephen F. Austin, who had gone to Mexico City to protest against the abuses imposed on the colonists and to offer suggestions to remedy the evils complained of, was arrested and thrown into the dungeons of the Old Inquisition, where he was confined for two years, shut out from the light of day, and not allowed to speak to or correspond with anyone, nor to have books, pen, ink or paper.

The fortunes of the colonists were in a low state period. In addition to a hostile government; there irruptions of savage Indians, and a plague of cholera out to add to their misfortunes.

On the 8th of September, 1835, Stephen F. Austin returned to Texas, after an absence of more than two years. Theretofore, he had been loyal to Mexico and the constitution of 1824. Now he realized the futility of his efforts and advised the colonists to prepare to defend their homes and their rights by force of arms in a war which he deemed inevitable.

On the 3rd day of October, 1835, a decree was issued which abolished the legislative powers of the states, and established a central Republic with Santa Ana as dictator. He was to be elected for a term of eight years, and be re-eligible for life. The Senate should be composed of twelve members—six generals and six bishops, to be appointed by the dictator.

This decree was regarded by the colonists as a monstrous perversion of power, and destruction of all their hopes of good local government.

Hostilities soon broke out and on the 12th day of February, 1836, Santa Ana arrived at the Rio Grande at the head of an army of 8,000 well-disciplined and equipped men, bent upon expelling every colonist from Texas or to exterminate them.

On the 6th of March, the forces of Santa Ana overwhelmed the 153 defenders of the Alamo, who sacrificed their lives in the cause of freedom, rather than to retreat or surrender.

A bronze plaque on the Alamo, the Shrine of Texas Freedom, proclaims this message:

“Thermopylae had its messenger of defeat; but the Alamo had none.”

On the 27th of March, the forces of Fannin, numbering 400, were overwhelmed at Goliad, and they surrendered as prisoners of war, with the agreement that they should be treated as such. No sooner had they surrendered their arms than they were lined up and brutally massacred by the forces of Santa Ana.

Shortly thereafter General Urrea captured Brazoria, sacked the city, discovered the Lodge room of Holland Lodge U. D. No. 36, and burned the Dispensation, records, jewels and all other equipment.

General Houston was, at the time, encamped on the Brazos, and withdrew toward San Jacinto River, more than 100 miles to the east, San Felipe de Austin was burned in order to prevent it from falling into the hands of Santa Ana. General Houston continued to retreat in the face of the Mexican army, in order to reach the spot for the battle of freedom on the ground secretly selected by him. On April 21st he reached the San Jacinto River and encamped with the back of his small army to the River, with no means of retreat across the river. Santa Ana pitched his camp about one mile away. At three o'clock in the afternoon of April 21st, the Texans sallied forth and attacked the army of Santa Ana, numbering more than 2,000 men. In a short time the Texans routed and annihilated the Mexican forces, slew double the number of their own forces, and captured the President of Mexico.

At the Centennial Celebration of the Grand Lodge of Texas in December, 1937, Illustrious Brother Temple Houston Morrow, 33<sup>0</sup>, and Past Grand Orator of the Grand Chapter of Texas, a grandson of the immortal Sam Houston, Commander-in-Chief of the Texan Army, was Grand Orator. No more eloquent description of the short and decisive battle of San Jacinto, following the Mexican invasion, can be found in literature. I quote from his address as follows:

“Where and when in the history of the whole world, before or since, has any state or any nation or any political subdivision of a country, met in solemn convention, drafted and signed a declaration of independence and formed a constitution when an invading army was within two hundred miles of its meeting place? And there in that old blacksmith shop, on the banks of the Brazos River in Washington County, that galaxy of fifty-eight immortals, wrote a page in the world’s history as deathless as eternity and as enduring as the granite mountains that lift their blue peaks in the fading distance.

“That little Texas army of 783 volunteer, untrained civilian soldiers clad in homespun and buckskin and shod with brogan shoes and rawhide boots, whose Commanding General (General Sam Houston) was the

only man in the whole army who had ever before participated in a major military engagement and whose uniform consisted of a worn pair of snuff-colored trousers, an old black coat and vest, a fur cap and a worn-out pair of boots, with a U. S. Army Dragoon sabre hung from his waist by buckskin thongs; that little nondescript band of men fell upon the Mexican army twice its size and in less than twenty minutes time, vindicated the ideals and teachings of Masonry and the traditions of the Anglo-Saxon race; and by that victory they cast the die which later molded the states of Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Nevada and California into this great nation which is ours today, and added to its territorial domain over one million square miles. No regimental band, resplendent in brilliant uniforms, was there to cheer them to the combat with martial airs, but two young lads had a fife and drum. And when Houston gave the order for battle formation, and to remember the Alamo and Goliad, that boy with the fife started playing 'Yankee Doodle,' and as the battle line swung over the rise, into full view of the Mexican army, he drifted off into a love song, 'Will You Come to the Bower,' and the magic wand of memory touched the minds and fired the hearts of those ragged, desperate, homesick men, and conjured up visions of sweethearts and wives and little children in lonely cabin homes; and the sword of San Jacinto leaped from its scabbard, never to be returned till victory was won. It would have mattered little to that group of men whether Santa Ana had sixteen hundred or sixteen thousand soldiers, the gates of Hell could not have prevailed against them.

"Never again within fifty-one days time will so many events of importance to the American people be recorded in history. On March 2nd Texans signed their Declaration of Independence; on the 4th they elected their provisional officers and selected the Commander-in-Chief of their army; on the 6th the Alamo fell; on the 27th Fannin and his men were massacred at Goliad, and on April 21st, the Lone Star of the Republic of Texas, emblematical of the five points of fellowship, streaked its way across the firmament of the nations, leaving in its path a blaze of glorious achievements, and took its place among the nations of the earth, there to swing within its own orbit, sovereign and independent for ten years, and finally to join the great constellation of the American Union."

## **INTRODUCTION OF MASONRY INTO TEXAS**

In the year 1828 Stephen F. Austin and other Master Masons in Austin's Colony petitioned the Grand Lodge of Mexico for a Dispensation to open a Lodge, but no answer was ever received and, therefore this first effort to introduce Masonry into Texas failed. The reason for the failure to receive a reply from the Mexican Grand Lodge has been explained.

The first duly warranted body of Freemasonry was organized in Texas, a Province of Mexico, on December 27th, 1835.

On that date Holland Lodge No. 36, U. D., was opened at Brazoria, under a Dispensation granted by the Grand Lodge of Louisiana. The Lodge was given the name of the then Grand Master of that Grand Lodge, J. H. Holland. The Master of the Lodge was Dr. Anson Jones, who later became the first Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Texas, and he was also destined to become the last President of the Republic. He it was who, with his own hands, lowered the flag of the Republic, and raised the flag of the United States, over the capitol of the new state, completing the ceremony of annexation on the 29th day of December, 1845.

The Lodge held its meetings at Brazoria, in the second story of the old Court House. About this time the difficulties with Mexico broke out into open hostilities. General Cos led an army into Texas from Mexico with orders to either expel the colonists or to exterminate them. The Lodge held a few meetings and added a few members by initiation and others by affiliation. However, it was handicapped by the absence of many of its members who had volunteered to defend their country and homes. The Lodge struggled on until February, 1836. Brother Jones presided at its last meeting at Brazoria which he thus described:

“I well recollect the night, and the fact that Brother Fannin, who one month after became so celebrated for his misfortunes and those of his unfortunate party at Goliad, acted as Senior Deacon. It seemed indeed that the gloom which prevailed in the Lodge that night was a foreshadowing of its and theft unhappy fate, which was so soon to overtake both.”

You will recall that Fannin and his men had capitulated to superior forces, under an agreement to be treated as prisoners of war, were lined up and massacred by a brutal and ruthless enemy.

In March, 1836, Brazoria was abandoned. General Urrea at the head of a Mexican detachment took possession of the place, and the Dispensation, records, jewels and everything belonging to the Lodge was utterly destroyed by them, and its members were scattered in every direction.

In the meantime the Grand Lodge of Louisiana had issued a charter for Holland Lodge No. 36. This, with some letters from the Grand Secretary, were delivered to Bro. Jones on a prairie while on the march, near what was to become the Battlefield of San Jacinto, and the liberation of Texas from the dominion of Mexico.

The charter was carried by Bro. Jones through the Battle for Freedom. Had the Texans lost that battle, Santa Ana, more than likely, would have captured the charter of Holland Lodge at San Jacinto, as Urrea had the Dispensation for it at Brazoria. The overwhelming and annihilating victory of the Texans and the capture of the President of Mexico made such an event impossible. The charter and papers were safely carried to Brazoria. On account of the death of many of its members, and the absence of others in the service of their country, the Lodge was not reopened at Brazoria.

In the meantime the Grand Lodge of Louisiana chartered two other Lodges in Texas: Milam, at Nacogdoches, and McFarlane at San Augustine. Delegates from these and Holland Lodge met in convention at Houston on December 20th, 1837, for the purpose of organizing the Grand Lodge of the Republic of Texas.

Illustrious Brother Sam Houston, President of the Republic, and Commander-in-Chief of the forces of liberation, presided over the convention and signed the minutes of the meeting. Bro. Anson Jones was elected first Grand Master and a copy of the Constitution of the Grand Lodge of Louisiana was adopted for the government of the Grand Lodge until such time as its own Constitution could be drafted and adopted. The meeting then adjourned to meet in its first official communication on the 24th day of April, 1838.

The Grand Lodge met pursuant to adjournment and a committee was appointed to draft a constitution, the model chosen was that of the Grand Lodge of Tennessee, which, after such amendments deemed necessary to meet the conditions in Texas, was unanimously adopted on May 10th, 1838.

The three original Lodges returned their charters to the Grand Lodge of Louisiana and received charters from the Grand Lodge of the Republic, to be numbered and located as follows: Holland Lodge No. 1, at Houston; Milam Lodge No. 2, at Nacogdoches; and McFarlane Lodge No. 3, at San Augustine. At the Communication held on the 12th day of November, 1838, the Grand Secretary was directed to issue warrants of Dispensation to several new Lodges, including Harmony No. 6 at Galveston; Matagorda No. 7, at Matagorda; Austin Lodge No. 12 received a Dispensation in 1839, and its charter in 1840.

The members of our special committee and the Chapters are respectfully requested to note carefully the historical data now being presented, as it has an important bearing upon the early controversy which arose between the General Grand Chapter and the Grand Chapter of the Republic of Texas.

The history will also account for the old charter of San Felipe de Austin Chapter showing up in Galveston.

It will be remembered that this charter was never used to open a Chapter at San Felipe as intended, when Companion Sam M. Williams received it in New York in 1835. San Felipe was burned, including the home of Stephen F. Austin, on the approach of the Mexican Army in March, 1836. It would appear from all the circumstances that Samuel M. Williams must have removed to Galveston later and took his dormant charter with him.

It will be noted above that a Dispensation was issued to Harmony Lodge No. 6, at Galveston, on the 12th day of November, 1838. At the next election of officers in June, 1839, Sam M. Williams, the versatile, accomplished and fast working Masonic Craftsman, was elected Junior Warden of Harmony Lodge. Six months later, on December 8th, 1839, the Grand Lodge met at Austin. The proceedings of that meeting records the following credential on p. 48:

“The Grand Secretary read the credential of Bro. S. M. Williams as Representative of Harmony Lodge No. 6, at Galveston, which is in the words following - viz:

““To the Grand Lodge of the Republic of Texas, Harmony Lodge No. 6 being duly assembled in due form, do hereby appoint Bro. S. M. Williams to represent said Lodge in the Grand Lodge at their regular annual communication, at Austin, in November, A. D. 1839, A. L. 5839.

““In testimony of which we do hereby certify this to be a true copy of the minutes.

(Signed)  
C. Wemayne,  
Secretary pro tem.

(Signed) John H. Walton  
W. Master.’

“Which being found correct, the M. W. Grand Master pronounced Brother Williams as the Representative of said Lodge.”

On the 15th day of December, 1839, just one week later, illustrious Brother Samuel Williams, Junior Warden, and without having previously visited the Grand Lodge, or without having held any other office in it, was elected and installed Most Worshipful Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the Republic of Texas. (See Proc. G. L. Rep. of Texas, 1839, p. 49.)

## **INTRODUCTION OF CAPITULAR MASONRY INTO TEXAS**

The first Chapter of Royal Arch Masons to be legally opened in Texas was in the year 1838. Three Chapters were opened under Master’s Warrants of Matagorda Lodge No. 7, at Matagorda; McFarlane Lodge No. 3, at San Augustine, and Austin Lodge No. 12, at Austin.

The record shows that Companion Dugald McFarlane, a Scotchman, and ten or twelve other Royal Arch Masons, living in and near Matagorda, took the initial steps, in 1838, and proceeded to open a Royal Arch Chapter by the name of Cyrus Chapter No. 1, with the sanction of and in connection with Matagorda Lodge No. 7, of which they were all members.

Soon after, San Augustine followed their example and Rising Star Chapter appeared in the East under the sponsorship of McFarlane Lodge No. 3. Next, Lone Star Chapter No. 3 was established in connection with Austin Lodge No. 12 (See Mitchell’s History of Freemasonry, p. 653, also, Proc. Grand Chapter of Texas, 1916, p. 7, Report of Special Committee, following p. 84).

It will be seen that these three Chapters were organized in connection with Blue Lodges and under their Masters' Warrants, in the same manner that the first Chapter in America was created by a Lodge in Pennsylvania, and as a matter of history the same manner in which a large majority of the Chapters were brought into existence in Colonial America.

The right of the Blue Lodges to open Chapters under the powers of their Masters' Warrants was a privilege granted to all Lodges existing under Warrants or Charters granted by the Grand Lodge of Ancients of England, as heretofore established.

Under these circumstances the first three Chapters organized in Texas by sanction of their Lodges, namely: Matagorda Lodge No. 7, McFarlane Lodge No. 3, and Austin Lodge No. 12, were certainly in harmony with the ancient custom and usage prevailing since the year 1753, when it was established by the Grand Lodge of Ancients. St. Andrews Chapter of Boston, one of the leaders in creating the General Grand Chapter, was created in an identical manner. The Grand Lodge of Scotland, in 1769, granted a Warrant for a Lodge in Boston, under the title of St. Andrews Lodge No. 82, in the same year the Royal Arch Degree was conferred in a "Royal Arch Lodge" attached to St. Andrews Lodge. (See Mackey's History of Freemasonry, Vol. V, p. 1273.) On this point I quote from Mackey's History, Vol. V, pp. 1281-83, as follows:

"The Royal Arch was probably introduced into many of the Southern States, as it had been in the Northern, either by possessors of the degree coming direct from England, or by military Lodges in the British Army, and which held their Warrants from the Grand Lodge of the Ancients. Chapters were, however not organized as independent bodies, but the degree was, until sometime after the beginning of the 19th century, conferred both in South Carolina and Georgia, and I think also in North Carolina, in Chapters dependent on and deriving their authority from Master's Warrants."

Since the creation of the three original Chapters in Texas were declared by the General Grand Chapter to have been self - constituted by Royal Arch Masons without Warrants, and therefore irregular, let us examine the records as they may relate to Lone Star Chapter No. 3, of Austin. We have quoted an excerpt above from Mitchell's History of Freemasonry, p. 653, to the effect that Lone Star Chapter was established in connection with Austin Lodge No. 12, The author of that statement was none other than Dugald McFarlane, the organizer of the first Chapter at Matagorda, and was later Grand High Priest of the Grand Royal Arch Chapter of the Republic. Certainly, no one could have been better qualified to speak on the subject. The Grand Lodge of the Republic had knowledge of the relationship existing between Austin Lodge No. 12 and its Chapter, Lone Star No. 3, and knew it to be regular. We quote the following resolution adopted by the Grand Lodge at its communication, December 24th, 1840:

*"Resolved*, that a committee be appointed to confer with similar committees on the part of Lone Star Chapter and Austin Lodge No. 12, to procure proper Lodge rooms for the accommodation of said Lodges."

The Grand Master appointed the committee. On January 3rd, 1841, the committee made its report as shown on p. 81, Proc. G. L. of Texas, 1841.

"The joint committee to whom was referred the duty of obtaining suitable Lodge rooms for the accommodation of the Grand Lodge, Lone Star Chapter, and Austin Lodge No. 12, made the following report:

"The joint committee, appointed to obtain Lodge rooms for the accommodation of the respective Masonic Bodies held in the City of Austin, would respectfully report that they have entered into an engagement with Bro. A. Russell for the whole of the second story of the building in which the

present meetings of the Fraternity are now held. By this agreement, the Grand Lodge will be expected to pay at the rate of six dollars per month for the use of the room, and Austin Lodge and Lone Star Chapter are awarded to pay twelve dollars per month each.

“The whole of the above is submitted, and the concurrence of the M. W. Grand Lodge respectfully requested.

(Signed) Henry Millard,  
Chairman Joint Committee’.”

City of Austin, Jany. 3rd, 1841.

“On motion of Bro. Call, the above report was received and adopted. On Motion of Bro. Teulon -

“*Resolved*, that the Grand Treasurer of the M. W. Grand Lodge be and he is hereby authorized to pay to the order of the Chairman and Treasurer of the Joint Committee for obtaining and fitting up a Lodge Room, the sum of three hundred dollars in the promissory notes of the Republic of Texas, to be appropriated towards the expense of fitting up the room.”

The Committee on Finance and Accounts made the following report:

“Your Committee on Finance, to whom was referred the account of Austin Lodge No. 12 for candles, washing aprons and rent of Lodge Room, beg leave to report, that they have examined said account, and recommend the same be paid out of the funds of the Grand Lodge, and that the Chairman of the Finance Committee be authorized to draw on the Treasurer for said amount of \$142. Texas Treasury-notes, in favor of Austin Lodge No. 12.

(Signed) James Izod,  
Chairman Committee Finance.

“On motion the above report was received and adopted.”

(See Proc. G. L. Rep. of Texas, 1841, p. 82.)

From page 96 of the same Proceedings, on November 14th, 1841, I quote as follows:

“The report of the Chairman of the Committee on Finance on the estimate for funds for rent for the years 1841 and 1842, for \$94 par funds, was adopted and ordered to be paid as it becomes due.

“Bro. Mason was appointed a committee of one to cooperate with the like committees from Lone Star Chapter No. 3, and Austin Lodge No. 12, to examine the accounts of Bro. J. Izod, Treasurer, of the Lodge Room repairing Committee.”

On December 10th, 1841, Bro. C. Mason made the following report:

“*Resolved*, that the committee appointed by this Grand Lodge at its last Annual Communication to act in conjunction with a like committee on the part of Lone Star Chapter No. 3, and Austin Lodge No. 12, having performed their duty, be discharged.”

It will be remembered that the joint occupation of the same Lodge rooms by the Grand Lodge, Austin Lodge No. 12, and Lone Star Chapter No. 3, and the joint business transactions among the three Bodies was during the period when Lone Star Chapter operated under and by virtue of a Master's Warrant sanctioned by Austin Lodge No. 12.

The time had now arrived when it was deemed desirable to organize a Grand Chapter for the government of Royal Arch Masonry in Texas. There were four Chapters operating in Texas in 1841. The three Chapters opened under Master's Warrants of the Lodges at Matagorda, San Augustine and Austin, to these may be added San Felipe de Austin No. 1, irregularly organized and opened at Galveston under the old Williams charter, irregularly issued by the General Grand Chapter in 1835.

It was, no doubt, deemed by them to be necessary to have the sanction of some higher authority before these Chapters could legally act to organize a Grand Chapter, although there existed ample precedents for such action.

In order to remove any question of the legality and regularity of their actions, all four Chapters applied to the Grand Lodge of the Republic for dispensations to operate their respective Chapters under warrants from the Grand Lodge. From page 101, Proc. G. L. Rep. of Texas, Dec. 10th, 1841, I quote the following:

“The petitions of sundry Royal Arch Masons, asking for Dispensation to open Chapters at Matagorda, Galveston, Austin and San Augustine were read, Bro. Teulon moved that the prayer of the petitioners be granted, and that the usual fees to the Grand Lodge be dispensed with and remitted, which motion adopted.”

It is worthy of note that among those present in the Grand Lodge when it granted a dispensation to San Felipe de Austin Chapter, was Brother John H. Walton, a member of said Chapter. He will be remembered as the Worshipful Master of Harmony Lodge No. 6, who signed the credentials of Brother Sam M. Williams, as the representative of said Lodge to the Grand Lodge in 1839. Brother Williams, upon being elected Grand Master, appointed Brother Walton Grand Lecturer of the Grand Lodge.

These matters are noticed because it was Brother Walton who, 13 days after the above stated dispensation was granted to the four Chapters, including San Felipe de Austin Chapter, appeared at and presided at the organization of the Grand Chapter of the Republic of Texas. He represented San Felipe de Austin Chapter at the convention. But after the adoption of the Constitution, San Felipe de Austin Chapter refused to sign the Constitution and continued to function under its old charter.

Notwithstanding these well authenticated historical facts, and the large number of pages of the Proceedings of the General Grand Chapter devoted to this subject, covering nearly 100 years of history, not one sentence will be found in which any reference is made to the fact that San Felipe de Austin Chapter applied for and received a dispensation from the Grand Lodge of the Republic of Texas, and acted under its authority when it participated in the organization of the Grand Chapter of the Republic.

## **ORGANIZATION OF THE GRAND CHAPTER OF THE REPUBLIC**

Following the action of the Grand Lodge of the Republic on December 10th, 1841, when it granted dispensations to the four Chapters existing in Texas, a Convention was held on December 23rd, 1841, for the purpose of organizing a Grand Chapter for the Republic. Delegates were present representing Cyrus Chapter of Matagorda; San Felipe de Austin of Galveston; Rising Star, of San Augustine; and Lone Star of Austin. Companion John H. Walton, of San Felipe de Austin Chapter of Galveston, was elected President and

presided over the Convention. A constitution was adopted and Grand Officers were chosen. The Convention thereupon addressed the following memorial to the Grand Lodge of the Republic:

“Your memorialist, in accordance with the resolution adopted by the Grand Royal Arch Chapter of the Republic of Texas, now makes known to your Worshipful body that the several Chapters of Royal Arch Masons in Texas have deemed it expedient to meet in convention and form a Grand Royal Arch Chapter for the government and control of the several Chapters already in existence, and such as may hereafter be constituted and formed in the Republic of Texas. We feel assured that your Worshipful body will give us a hearty welcome and greeting. We are servitors in the same temple whose votaries are engaged in spreading and inculcating the doctrines of brotherly love, friendship and virtue. Our Grand Secretary will soon furnish your Worshipful body with a copy of our Constitution.

“Before the formation of our Grand Royal Arch Chapter, each subordinate Chapter being independent of any controlling head, and fearing that regularity and harmony could not prevail, and that the great objects of our institutions for the want of concert would be lost, we petitioned your Worshipful body as the great Masonic head in the Republic of Texas, to take the subordinate Chapter within the pale of your resolution until a Grand Royal Arch Chapter for the Republic could be formed. Such a one being now duly organized agreeably to the usages of the Order, the necessity of the case has passed away.

“The Grand Royal Arch Chapter of the Republic of Texas respectfully asks of the Grand Lodge of the Republic of Texas to relinquish and surrender all jurisdiction and control over the Royal Arch Chapters and Royal Arch Masons in the Republic of Texas upon the surrender of the Dispensations heretofore granted by your Worshipful body.

“With greetings of brotherly love, we shall ever remain, etc.

(Signed) B. Gillespie,  
G. H. P. G. C. R. T.”

“On the communication being read, Bro. Teulon offered the following resolution, which was unanimously adopted:

“*Whereas*, we have received official information that there has been constituted and formed a Grand Royal Arch Chapter of the Republic of Texas for the government of the Chapters of Royal Arch Masons in this Republic.

“*Be It Therefore Known and Resolved*, by this Grand Lodge that we surrender all jurisdiction over the said Chapters and Royal Arch Masons to the said Grand Royal Arch Chapter, they now being the appropriate head and should of right control and govern the same.”

(See Proc. G. L. Rep. of Texas, 1841, p. 112.)

Thus the Grand Chapter of the Republic came into being and succeeded to the ancient jurisdiction and powers of the Grand Lodge of the Republic of Texas. It was created in the same manner as was the Grand Chapter of England; of Pennsylvania, and of practically all the Grand Chapters of Provincial America. Companion John H. Walton, President of the Convention and representative of San Felipe de Austin Chapter, is shown to have been present in Grand Lodge when the vote on the recognition of the Grand Chapter was taken and since the vote was unanimous, the presumption must be that he voted for it. (See Proc. G. L. Rep. of Texas, 1841, pp. 111, 112.)

Cyrus Chapter of Matagorda, Lone Star Chapter of Austin and Rising Star Chapter of San Augustine surrendered their Dispensations to the Grand Lodge and received charters from the Grand Chapter.

San Felipe de Austin refused to sign the Constitution of the new Grand Chapter and did not submit to its jurisdiction.

A short time after the organization of the Grand Chapter, perhaps early in 1842, San Felipe de Austin Chapter made its first report to the General Grand Chapter, notifying it of the organization of the Grand Chapter of the Republic, calling attention to the failure of San Felipe de Austin Chapter to open at San Felipe, and the opening of a Chapter at Galveston five years later in 1840, and praying that their irregular action be ratified and approved, which was done at the next triennial of the G. G. C. in 1844.

The correspondence between San Felipe de Austin Chapter and the General Grand Secretary, unfortunately was never published. We, therefore, are compelled to rely upon the Report of the General Grand Secretary to the General Grand Chapter for such information as it imparts. We are unable to ascertain therefrom just who made the Report. It contained much erroneous information and may be charged with precipitating misunderstandings and controversies which have endured for nearly one hundred years.

One of the unfortunate features growing out of the unhappy events which followed, is the failure of the General Grand Chapter to admit its own error in challenging the regularity of the organization of the Grand Chapter of the Republic and declaring its members to be irregular and, therefore, clandestine. Such a baseless charge, as you may well imagine, was not appreciated or relished by that group of hardy pioneers, who had the courage, to fight savage Indians, the armed forces of Santa Ana, to achieve freedom, and possessed of sufficient genius to establish a constitutional Republic and to conduct its affairs for nearly ten years, in a manner which aroused the admiration of the whole civilized world. Among their number were many as well versed in Masonic jurisprudence, customs, usage and history, as any of the 15 distinguished members of the G. G. C. present at the Convocation of 1844 when the decree was promulgated.

Had the General Grand Chapter investigated in an unbiased manner the true facts of the history of the origin of these Chapters, and had undertaken to affiliate the Grand Chapter of the Republic in a diplomatic manner, as it subsequently did with other Grand Chapters, perhaps the entire controversy may never have arisen. This supposition is given weight by the fact that Texas was extremely anxious for annexation to the United States and any organization with the "United States of America" attached to it, was very popular in Texas, especially, an organization in which so much good will between the two countries might have been generated. The Triennial of the General Grand Chapter of 1844 met at New Haven, Conn., on the 10th day of September, 1844. Its Proceedings contain the following:

"The General Grand Secretary made the following communication, which being read, was referred to a Special Committee of three consisting of Comps. Moore of Massachusetts, Goodwin of Connecticut, and Hubbard of Ohio; whose duty it was made to report specially as to the disposition of the several matters therein contained:

"To the M. E. General Grand High Priest, and other Officers and Members of the General Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons for the United States of America:

"In pursuance of a resolution of the General Grand Chapter, requiring the General Grand Secretary to prepare and present, on the first day of each biennial session, a digest of the communications received by him requiring the action of the General Grand Chapter, the undersigned has the honor to submit the following:

“Soon after the close of the last triennial session, the General Grand Secretary received the herewith accompanying papers (Marked Document 1), from San Felipe de Austin Chapter, in Texas, a Chapter under the jurisdiction of this General Grand Chapter. Which documents were intended to be submitted for your advice and instruction at that session; but unfortunately the vessel by which they were sent was detained at sea until after the adjournment.

“From these papers it appears that, in consequence of unforeseen events, the Companions to whom the charter of that Chapter was granted found it impracticable to conduct the business of the Chapter at San Felipe de Austin, the place designated in their charter for its location, and assumed the responsibility of opening same at Galveston, which was done on the second of June, 1840. It also appears that said Chapter has received a communication, purporting to come from a Chapter of Royal Arch Masons, at the City of Austin, in that Republic, called ‘Lone Star Chapter, No. 8,’ proposing a union with another body of Royal Arch Masons, at Matagorda, styling themselves ‘Cyrus Chapter No. 1,’ for the purpose of organizing a Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons for the Republic of Texas, This the Chapter at Galveston declined, and wisely refused to hold Masonic intercourse with said so-called Chapters at Matagorda and Austin, on the ground that the Companions composing these assemblages had no legal Masonic right to hold Chapters of Royal Arch Masons. And in this doubtless they are correct; for it is not pretended that they have any charter or warrant whatever, but are merely individual Royal Arch Masons who have, by their own unaided act, associated themselves together for this purpose, assuming the right so to do on account of the people of the country being politically separated from all others. How the minds of these respectable gentlemen, having a recollection of their Masonic obligations, could come to such a conclusion, it is difficult to conceive. They say that the General Grand Chapter has no jurisdiction over the territory of Texas, and therefore they owe you no allegiance. This is very true; but if a number of Masons residing in Texas, where there is no Masonic body to which they could apply for authority to open a Chapter, apply to the General Grand Chapter, as in the case of San Felipe de Austin, can it be doubted that, according to the Masonic usage of the whole world, you have a right to grant such authority? Or suppose they should apply to the Grand Chapter of Pennsylvania, or Virginia, neither of which are under your jurisdiction, have not either of those Grand Chapters a right to grant the authority? No one can doubt that such an act is in perfect accordance with Masonic usage, and that the Chapters and the members thereof are thereby placed under the parent body, the same as they would have been had they been located within the same political bounds. Under these circumstances and facts, the officers and members of San Felipe de Austin Chapter ask, first, that you will approve and ratify their removing their Chapter from S n Felipe de Austin to Galveston; and secondly, your advice and instruction touching their course towards the so-called Chapters at Matagorda and Austin.”

(See Proc. G. G. C. 1844, pp. 172-173.)

To those who have followed this narration of the history of Royal Arch Masonry in Texas, it will be unnecessary to point out the numerous sad and deplorable misstatements of facts set forth in the report of the General Grand Secretary.

In all fairness it must be assumed that the General Grand Secretary was led into error by the report he had received from Texas, as alleged to be shown by the unpublished “Document No. 1” attached to his report to the General Grand Chapter. (See pages 190-191, Proc. G. G. C. 1844.)

“Comp. Case from the committee to whom was referred the matter of Royal Arch Masonry in Texas, submitted the following report, which was accepted, and the accompanying resolution adopted:

*“To the M.:E.:General Grand High Priest, Officers and Members of the General Grand Chapter:*

“The committee to whom was referred sundry documents from certain Royal Arch Masons in the Republic of Texas, having given them careful consideration, respectfully report: That the General Grand Secretary be requested to write to the said Companions who have associated themselves under the name and style of ‘The Grand Royal Arch Chapter of the Republic of Texas,’ notifying them that this General Grand Royal Arch Chapter cannot recognize the legality of their present organization, and giving them such fraternal advice and instruction as may aid them in retracing their steps, and adopting such measures as may be necessary and proper, and as are consistent with correct Masonic practice.

“In respect to San Felipe de Austin Chapter, the Committee recommends the adoption of the following resolution:

“Resolved, that the removal of said Chapter from San Felipe de Austin to Galveston be approved and sanctioned by this General Grand Chapter.

(Signed) Albert Case,  
Benjamin Enos,  
Wm. Field.”

New Haven, Sept. 11th, 1844.

The adoption of the foregoing resolution was an attempt to legalize the irregular San Felipe de Austin Chapter and came six years after the three Chapters of Texas had been legally organized under Masters’ Warrants of the Lodges with which they were connected, and three years after the creation of the Grand Chapter of the Republic. It will be noted that the resolution sanctioned and approved the removal of said Chapter “from San Felipe to Galveston,” when, as a matter of fact, said Committee knew or should have known that no Chapter was so removed; that no such Chapter was ever opened at San Felipe; that another group of Royal Arch Masons at Galveston obtained the old charter granted to Samuel M. Williams in 1835, and proceeded to open an irregular Chapter under its dormant authority on June 2nd, 1840.

The report and recommendation of the Committee aroused much indignation in Texas. It will be remembered that San Felipe de Austin Chapter was granted a Dispensation by the Grand Lodge of the Republic of Texas in 1841, and acted with the other three Chapters in organizing the Grand Chapter of the Republic. They subsequently refused to submit to the jurisdiction of said Grand Chapter and made the report to the General Grand Chapter which precipitated a controversy which has plagued Royal Arch Masonry for the past century.

The tenor of the report, manifestly, remained unknown to the Grand Chapter of Texas until the publication of the Proceedings of General Grand Chapter in the latter part of 1844.

On January 30th, 1844, Comp. A. B. Shelby introduced the following resolution in the Grand Chapter of the Republic which was adopted:

“*Resolved*, that a Committee be appointed to correspond and communicate, in person, with San Felipe de Austin Chapter No. 2 at Galveston, in relation to their refusing due obedience, and proper recognition of the authority of this Grand Royal Arch Chapter.”

Companions Shelby, Darnell, Cazneau and Green were appointed on the Committee. (See p. 14, Proc. G. C. of Rep. 1844.)

One year later at the Convocation of the Grand Chapter held on January 22nd, 1845, the committee reported as follows:

“Your committee to whom was referred at the last Grand Annual Communication of this Chapter, the duty of conferring with San Felipe de Austin Chapter, at Galveston, with regard to their coming under the jurisdiction of this Grand Chapter, would most respectfully report that they endeavored to obtain an interview on the subject, and were denied that privilege; and any attempt to reconcile matters and bring said Chapter to acknowledge the jurisdiction of this Grand Chapter, they consider entirely fruitless and ineffectual.” (See p. 19, Proc. G. C. Rep. 1845.)

On the same day following the submission of the above report, Companion J. A. Greer, Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge, introduced the following resolution, which was adopted:

“*Resolved*, that no Companion belonging to this Grand Chapter, or to any Chapter working under this jurisdiction, shall visit any Chapter purporting to work, within the jurisdiction of this Grand Chapter, under any other authority; nor shall any Chapter, working by authority derived from this Grand Chapter, permit any Companions to visit the same, who do not recognize this jurisdiction; provided, that this resolution take effect from the first of April next.”

Copies of the resolution were ordered sent to all subordinate Chapters in the State, including San Felipe de Austin Chapter.

It is quite obvious from the records that the Grand Chapter of the Republic was still ignorant of the letter written to the Secretary of the General Grand Chapter, and of the action taken by that body. In those days when communication was slow, three months from the adjournment of the General Grand Chapter was scarcely sufficient time to publish its proceedings and allow time to transport them by water from New Haven to Texas. The interdiction pronounced by the Grand Chapter of the Republic was manifestly based upon the refusal of San Felipe de Austin Chapter to acknowledge the jurisdiction of the Grand Chapter which it had assisted in organizing. San Felipe was also, no doubt, conscious of the letter which had been written to the General Grand Secretary, and no doubt feared the unhappy and embarrassing position it would be found in, if and when it should be made known.

Notwithstanding that San Felipe had written the General Grand Secretary that they declined the invitation of Lone Star Chapter to join in the movement to organize a Grand Chapter, and had refused to hold Masonic intercourse with said so-called Chapters at Matagorda and Austin, on the ground that the Companions composing these assemblages had no legal Masonic right to hold Chapters of Royal Arch Masons, it will be presently shown that at the time and since, until the adoption of the resolution of interdiction in 1845, by the Grand Chapter, the members of Chapters in Texas frequently visited in San Felipe de Austin Chapter, and the members of the latter were frequent visitors in the subordinate Chapters of the Grand Chapter.

Apparently, the first information relative to the action taken in the General Grand Chapter reached Texas via Alabama in the month of September, 1845. A letter signed by Dugald McFarlane, Grand High Priest, bearing the date of September 12th, 1845, addressed to Comp. Moses Johnson, Deputy Grand High Priest, and published on pp. 42, 48 and 44, Proc. G. C. Rep. of Texas, 1846, is the earliest recorded reference to the subject. I present his letter in full for the information it contains:

“Preston, Matagorda Co., Sept. 12, ‘45.

“M. E. D. G. H. Priest, Moses Johnson:

“Worthy Companions - A few days ago my attention was drawn to an extract of a letter, from a Companion Royal Arch Mason residing in Wetumpka, Ala., stating that in reading over the proceedings of a late meeting of the General Grand Chapter of the United States of America, he there observed that there now existed in the Republic of Texas several bodies of Royal Arch Masons working without authority; and that all Masonic intercourse between the members of these irregular Chapters and those under the jurisdiction of the General Grand Chapter is prohibited and forbidden.

“As Grand High Priest, I deem it within the line of my duty to inform you of this strange intelligence - unholy and unrighteous - fraught with consequences of the most serious character that possibly could occur, particularly in the present juncture of our political affairs, and is much to be regretted by the Craft in general. Not that the Royal Arch Masons here have any reason to fear the anathemas of (what every R. A. Mason of intelligence knows to be true) the self-styled and self-created G. Grand Royal Arch Chapter of the United States of America, as they have not, as a body, transcended any ancient constitutional rule, regulation, usage or landmark of the Order of Royal Arch Masons, known to govern it beyond the political limits of the United States of the North, where a peculiar constitutional Royal Arch power has been assumed, and in existence for some time past. Yet that instrument does not arrogate to itself a supreme and universal sovereignty. Viewed literally as published in Webb’s Monitor, and other works of the same character, it is unexceptionable so far as the ostensible objects for which it was made is regarded, which are fully and satisfactorily explained in the history and circular of the convention which formed it, for the government of Royal Arch Chapters within the jurisdiction of the United States.

“The convention which formed the Constitution of the General Grand Chapter of the U. S. had too much Masonic knowledge, sound judgment and respect for the rights of similar paternities abroad and customs of inalienable rights, to assume any other position than that of local influence and control. The ground they occupied was a novelty in the traditions of the Order of R. A. Masons, as no such authority had previously existed, either in Europe or America. And this fact is admitted by Companion Thomas Smith Webb, one of the principal delegates and General Grand King of the new formed association, in his Monitor - part first, book second and third paragraph, and in the succeeding circular. Nor is any similar power assumed or known even now, to be acknowledged or in existence, as a precedency anywhere else. In the Republic of Texas, for exactly the same reasons which instigated their Companions of the New England States, a Grand Royal Arch Chapter was established shortly after the bonds of union with Mexico were severed. If, then, the Royal Arch Masons of Texas have violated any rule or usage, it is done in ignorance - taking the course pursued by their Companions of the United States, as a pattern for initiation, and as unchangeable as the principles of the Order are said to be, they followed what they deemed a laudable example. If the Masons of Texas are liable to censure, then is the General Grand Royal Arch Chapter of the United States self-condemned.

“Pennsylvania was the first to assume the guardianship of the Royal Craft; under the surveillance of the Grand Lodge, a Grand Chapter was formed. New England formed a General Grand Chapter for itself, and Companion Thomas Smith Webb, the ingenious Grand Lecturer, from these successful experiments, conceived the idea of extending the mantle of Masonic power to the utmost limit of the political organization of the United States. But who can peruse the new formed constitution without observing the extreme caution against foreign offense manifested throughout that document. The guarded use of the words ‘this jurisdiction’ - the United States - Article first, Section first; and ‘where there is no Grand Chapter established.’” Is it not a universal admitted fact, that unless it is voluntarily surrendered or delegated within some prescribed territorial limits, and not of force otherwise?

“I regret extremely that any collision or altercation should so unnecessarily and hastily occur as that alluded to; for wounds of this description are not so easily healed—or defects, if they exist, remedied. So far as I am informed, we are condemned ex parte, as a notice of charge has never reached us in this country. The course pursued by the Companions Royal Arch Masons is tenable against the position assumed by the late meeting of the General Grand Chapter and will be defended in the proper manner if the General Grand Chapter is pleased to condescend to a reasonable correspondence on the subject, so that amicable relations should be established between Companions of the same Order. I am led to believe that the uncourteous phrases in which this transaction appears arises from some tortuous misrepresentations made to the General Grand Chapter by local prejudice—or, perhaps a spirit of malicious retaliation. These may rest in the hallucination of a supposed victory for a short space of time.

“The most important point in question is - that there is, and has been, in successful operation for some years past, a Grand Chapter, exercising full authority over and within the jurisdiction of the Republic of Texas, which, it should have been recollected, possesses as full and ample power within its jurisdiction or political limits of the Republic, as the General Grand Chapter does or can justly exercise or enforce within the jurisdiction of the United States of America; but God forbid it should ever arrogate to itself a questionable authority. It is somewhat strange that during a period of the greatest diffusion of general intelligence and liberal sentiment, that an institution so exalted in its views in less favored ages, should, in the broad blaze of an enlightened era deteriorate and retragrade into potentatic despotism. But this is not the time for critical argument on a measure of such moment to those concerned, without an authentic information first obtained on the subject, in - all its relations. Even then it might become doubtful if a paper discussion farther would be prudent.

“The Grand Chapter of the Republic of Texas is capable of transacting all business that legitimately transpires within the limits of the Republic; and I, as High Priest of the Grand Chapter of Texas, with all due deference, hope that any interdiction passed against the Royal Arch Masons under this jurisdiction, may be rescinded; otherwise the Grand Chapter, at its next session, may act on the matter—one so unnecessary, inapropos, uncourteous not to say despotic in its nature. The General Grand Chapter has not the power to interfere in our concerns, even after the consummation of annexation to the United States. The affair, however, I hope will be agreeably arranged; and jealousy, if it does exist, be obliterated from among us forever.

Dugald McFarlane,  
G. H. P. the R. of T.”

The above letter and certain other correspondence was referred to a special committee at the Convocation of the Grand Chapter in January, 1846. The committee made an exhaustive report which is to be found on pp. 35, 36, 37 and 38, Proc. 1846, G. C. Rep. of Texas. I quote the following from the text as bearing upon the question now under consideration.

“By the published proceedings of the General Grand Chapter of the U. S. we discover that a representation Was made in 1842 by San Felipe de Austin Chapter in respect to us, which was almost entirely void of truth (we sincerely hope not maliciously so), and sincerely do we hope it is an error in the report by some inexplicable oversight; and most deeply do we deplore, for the sake of our sacred brotherhood of the Ancient Holy R. A.; with true and unalloyed devotion to our Companions throughout the world, we deplore the necessity of declaring it a most unpardonable and unholy act, be it through error or design. It is not true that the Grand Chapter of the Republic of Texas was organized by Chapters not pretending to act under authority of any head, nor is it true that they (San Felipe Chapter) continued to refuse intercourse with us, for we frequently met in their Chapter and they in ours.”

From another portion of the Committee Report we quote the following pertinent lines relating to the organization of the Grand Chapter:

“The E. Comp. Delegate from San Felipe de Austin, was President of the convention and assisted in drafting our constitution.

“The Chapter at Galveston refused to acknowledge our jurisdiction over them. The members of our subordinate Chapters continued to meet with them as long as they worked, and they met with us until at the last Grand Annual Convocation communication with them was interdicted, for sundry good reasons well known to this Grand Chapter.”

### **FURTHER ACTION BY THE GENERAL GRAND CHAPTER**

In September, 1847, the General Grand Chapter again acted upon the controversy with the Grand Chapter of Texas, presumably answering the defenses set forth in the Proceedings of the Grand Chapter of 1846 quoted above. On page 232, Proceedings of the General Grand Chapter, 1847, will be found the following resolution:

“Comp. MELLEEN, from the Committee on so much of the General Grand Secretary’s Report as relates to Royal Arch Masonry in Texas, made the following report and which was accepted, and the resolutions adopted:

“To the General Grand Chapter:

“The Committee to whom were referred the report and correspondence of the General Grand Secretary, relating to Royal Arch Masonry in the State of Texas, have considered the subject, and are of the opinion that this General Grand Chapter cannot recognize the organization of the so-called Grand Chapter of Texas as legal, nor the Royal Arch Masons, admitted under the authority of that body, as regularly exalted. The constituent Chapters of the said Grand Chapter were formed by a convocation of individual Royal Arch Masons; and, though residents of a State politically and Masonically foreign, it is not conceived by the Committee, that Royal Arch Masons have a right to form Chapters without a dispensation or charter issued from a Grand Chapter duly organized, or one of its officers, if out of the jurisdiction of the General Grand Chapter of the United States, or from this body or one of its officers. SAN FELIPE DE AUSTIN CHAPTER having received its charter from this body, is the only Chapter of Royal Arch Masons in Texas known to this body as having a legal existence.

“The view which this General Grand Chapter has heretofore taken of Royal Arch Masonry in Texas, which corresponded with the above, has been very clearly and ably presented, by the General Grand Secretary, to the body claiming the right to exercise supreme power over Royal Arch Masonry in that State; but no notice, though a long time has elapsed, has been taken of his communication. The Committee has no alternative to present for the further action of the General Grand Chapter. There is but the one course to pursue: the offending member must be cut off for the sake of the other members and body, painful as the operation may be. The Committee, therefore, submit the following resolutions for adoption:

“*Resolved*, That Royal Arch Masons under this jurisdiction are hereby forbidden to hold Masonic Intercourse with the said so called Grand Chapter of Texas, its subordinates, and those acknowledging the authority of said Grand Chapter.

*“Resolved,* That the General Grand Secretary cause a copy of the foregoing resolution to be published in some newspaper in the State of Texas.

*“Resolved,* That the General Grand Secretary transmit a copy of the first resolution to the so-called Grand Chapter of Texas, and inform that body that it is with great regret that this General Grand Chapter finds itself compelled to adopt this course; and, that, entertaining none but the most fraternal feelings towards their Companions of Texas, would hail with sincere pleasure an acknowledgment of their error, and the retracing of those steps which must inevitably lead to much discord, and do inconceivable injury to that cause for which they, as well as ourselves, profess the warmest friendship.

“Which is respectfully submitted,

(Signed) Wm. H. Ellis,  
Wm. P. Mellen,  
F. Bradford.”

Texas was not the only state with which the General Grand Chapter had such a controversy, and on similar questions of jurisdiction and regularity.

Grand Chapters created by authority of Grand Lodges in the States of Alabama and Louisiana were challenged by the General Grand Chapter with the final result of each yielding to pressure and abandoning the field to the General Grand Chapter. The Grand Chapter of Florida was created by three Chapters, two of which were chartered by the Grand Chapter of Virginia, and one by a Chapter in another state which itself was a subordinate of the C. G. C.. The General Grand Chapter challenged its regularity, but they waited a very long time for Florida to join the confederation, and only after it recognized the regularity of the Grand Chapter of Florida and received it without requiring its members to be healed, Texas was no exception to the aggressive campaigns waged to bring the entire country under the banner of the national organization. It will be remembered that Texas, with 783 armed farmers, defeated the flower of the Mexican Army, greatly exceeding that number. In order to make sure of their victory and to maintain their newly-won freedom, Texas was willing to surrender its sovereignty as an independent Republic by annexation as a state to the United States, On account of certain treaty obligations with Mexico, and because of opposition of certain Northern states opposed to slavery and the principles of free trade, the request to be annexed was refused by the Congress of the U.S.A. in 1837. It was defeated a second time later, but in 1845, the annexation was finally accomplished.

During this period there was a large influx of immigration. Texas was extremely anxious to remove every cause of contention in order to promote amity and good will between itself and all the sister states of the Union. The leaders of the Government were also the foremost Masonic leaders of Texas. They saw in the interdictions indulged by the Grand Chapter of Texas and of the General Grand Chapter, forbidding the members of each from visitation or holding Masonic communication with each other, a potential handicap against good will in the hearts and minds of new settlers belonging to the Craft, as well as antagonizing many Royal Arch Masons now well established in Chapters throughout the Nation.

The Texans who had willingly sacrificed their sovereignty as an independent Republic for the advantage of security against any foreign power or any of the group of foreign governments which might threaten her future existence as a land of freedom, decided to make another sacrifice in the cause of amity and good will among the ranks of a fraternity which had exercised such a potent influence in establishing a settled and well ordered society among those hardy pioneers who had settled on the frontiers of a wild, savage and foreign land.

Not because they deemed their Grand Chapter illegally organized, but consistently maintaining its regularity according to well established principles of Masonic jurisprudence as well as ancient custom and usage, and solely for the laudable purpose of establishing peace and harmony in the ranks of Capitular Masonry, within the new-born state, they decided to dissolve the Grand Chapter of the Republic, and yield the field to the jurisdiction of a Grand Chapter to be organized under the jurisdiction of the General Grand Chapter.

At the Grand Annual Convocation of the Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Texas, held in the City of Houston on the first Tuesday after the third Monday of January, A. D. 1849, with all Grand Officers present and the representatives of Jerusalem Chapter No, 7, Brenham Chapter No. 12, Houston Chapter No. 8, and Trinity Chapter No. 13. The only business transacted was the unanimous adoption of a resolution dissolving the Grand Chapter.

“To the M. E. Grand Chapter of Texas:

“The special committee to which was referred the documents and correspondence relative to the unhappy controversy now existing between this and the General Grand Chapter of the United States, report (in part as follows):

“At the Grand Convention (of the G. G. C.) in September, A.D. 1847, the following resolutions were adopted:

“*Resolved*, That Royal Arch Masons under this Jurisdiction are hereby forbidden to hold Masonic intercourse with the said so-called Grand Chapter of Texas, its subordinates, and those acknowledging the authority of said Grand Chapter.

“*Resolved*, That the G. C. Secretary cause a copy of the foregoing resolution to be published in some newspaper in the State of Texas.

“*Resolved*, That the G. C. Secretary transmit a copy of the first resolution to the so-called G. Chapter of Texas, and inform that body that it is with great regret that this G. G. Chapter finds itself compelled to adopt this course, and that entertaining none but the most fraternal feelings towards their Companions in Texas, would hail with sincere pleasure an acknowledgment of their errors and the retracing of those steps which must inevitably lead to much discord, and to inconceivable injury to that cause for which they, as well as ourselves, profess the warmest friendship.’

“The effect of the foregoing resolutions has been to cut off Royal Arch Masons in Texas from Masonic communication with Companions in other portions of the Union. New Chapters have been formed within the limits of this State, under Charters emanating from the G. G. Chapter of the United States, and the members of these respective Chapters are mutually debarred from entering the others. Repeated and persevering efforts have been made, and an extensive correspondence carried on with the G. C. Secretary, for the purpose of settling this unhappy controversy. Your Committee are decidedly of opinion, that for the sake of peace and harmony among the Craft, it is advisable for this Grand Chapter to concede to the demands of the G. G. Chapter, abandon the position it has assumed, and dissolve. We offer and recommend for adoption the following resolutions:

“*Resolved*, That this Grand Chapter do hereby make a donation to the Grand Lodge of Texas, of all moneys, jewels and other property belonging to this Grand Chapter, to be held in trust as follows: The interest thereon accruing to be applied to charitable purposes, the principal of the moneys and all other property to be delivered up to any legally constituted Grand Royal Arch Chapter organized in the State of Texas, whenever the same shall be demanded by the proper officers.

*“Resolved, That the several Subordinate Chapters be advised to make a similar disposition of their funds and property to the Subordinate Lodges.*

*“Resolved, That on the 1st day of March, A. D. 1849, A. L. 5849, the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Texas dissolve.*

*“Resolved, That the Grand Secretary immediately transmit to the Subordinate Chapters and Grand Officers a copy of the foregoing report and resolutions.*

John Sayles,  
A. S. Ruthven,  
Geo. Fisher,  
W. D. Smith,  
Committee.

*“January A. D. 1849, A. L. 5849.*

*“I, A. S. Ruthven, Grand Secretary of the Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Texas, certify that the foregoing is a true copy from the minutes.*

A. S. Ruthven,  
Grand Secretary.”

The greatest blunder made by the General Grand Chapter in dealing with the Grand Chapter of the Republic was the declaration that it and its subordinate Chapters were irregular and their members were declared to be clandestine Royal Arch Masons. It is more than evident from the records that the requirement in 1850, when the Chapters received dispensation and charters from the G. G. C. that all former members of Chapters under the Grand Chapter of the Republic be healed before being allowed to affiliate in the new Chapters, was an unfortunate blunder. It created resentments and bitterness which lasted for decades. Many of those proud and high-spirited old pioneers refused to conform to the formula and remained aloof.

While the leaders of G. G. C. in that early day affected a superior knowledge and understanding of Masonic jurisprudence, yet their very act in demanding that those Companions go through the humiliating ceremony of being healed, appears to have been an illegal requirement. It would appear that if those Companions were in fact “clandestine” no act of healing could have cleansed them of the stigma. Nowhere in Masonic jurisprudence is it recognized that “healing” will qualify a clandestine Mason to be affiliated in any body of Masons. The only way that he can become legally qualified is by petition for the degrees and initiation, as if he had never received the degrees.

However, in this enlightened era, it would be unfair to presume that our members still harbor resentments for blunders committed 94 years ago by overzealous pioneers in Masonry. It would have, perhaps, aided in improving past relations, had the G. G. C. admitted their error and offered appropriate amends. The Grand Chapter of Pennsylvania was created by the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania precisely as the Grand Chapter of the Republic. They have a standing invitation to affiliate with the G. G. C. If, and when, they elect to accept it, do you think it possible that any intelligent leader of the G. G. C. would demand that the Grand Chapter first dissolve, and then all the Royal Arch Masons of Pennsylvania be healed before being received? The explosion which would follow such a demand, if any were so foolish as to make it, would be heard all the way to Texas.

At the first Conclave of the General Grand Chapter in 1850, after the dissolution of the Grand Chapter of the Republic, a report of the action was made by Companion Willis Stewart, General Grand King, who seems to have conducted the negotiations on behalf of the General Grand Chapter.

As an evidence of the impression made by the Texas craftsmen upon the General Grand King, I quote the following from his report to the General Grand Chapter:

“It is with peculiar pleasure that reference is made to the amicable adjustment of all difference with our Companions of Texas. For the sake of peace and harmony they have, in a spirit worthy of all commendation, dissolved their independent organization, and there is no less than nine Chapters working under authority from this Most Excellent General Grand Chapter.

“The undersigned, from personal observation, bears testimony to the zeal, fidelity, and ability with which they discharge their Masonic duties. Perhaps there is no State in the Union where the benign influences of our much loved Institution have been more extensively felt, and the genuine principles of the Order more faithfully carried out in practice.

“The undersigned most respectfully suggests the propriety of refunding the fees received for all dispensations for Chapters, at places where Chapters existed under authority from the late Grand Chapter of Texas.

“In the West and Southwest generally, Masonry has never known a brighter or more auspicious day than the present. Everywhere prosperous, there seems to be no contention, except that noble contention, or rather emulation, of who can best work and best agree. And thus may it remain, circumscribing our desires, keeping our passions within due bounds, correcting our morals, expanding our hearts with true benevolence towards all mankind, until that glorious day when the lion and the lamb shall lie down in peace together, and there shall be no longer any necessity for its continuance.”

## **THE SECOND GRAND CHAPTER OF TEXAS**

After the dissolution of the Grand Chapter of the Republic in January, 1849, eight of the nine Chapters under its jurisdiction accepted dispensations from the General Grand Chapter.

On June 24th, 1850, the representatives of seven of these Chapters and San Felipe de Austin Chapter, met at Houston for the purpose of drafting a constitution and organizing a Grand Chapter to be under the jurisdiction of the General Grand Chapter. This was accomplished. The convention then adjourned to await the sanction of the General Grand Chapter, and certain other essential actions by the General Grand Chapter, to meet again at Galveston, December 27th, 1850. At this meeting, on December 30th, 1850, the organization of the Grand Chapter of Texas was completed, with Companion S. M. Williams installed as Grand High Priest. He was the same Companion to whom the original charter was issued in 1835, authorizing the establishment of a Chapter at San Felipe de Austin, Province of Texas; which, as you have heretofore seen, was never opened at the place designated. All the Chapters which had received dispensations from the General Grand Chapter were granted charters by the new Grand Chapter of Texas, except San Felipe de Austin, which as will be hereafter seen, continued to work under its old charter from the General Grand Chapter, notwithstanding it functioned as a full-fledged member of the Grand Chapter of Texas without receiving a charter from it.

## **ERA OF PEACE, PROSPERITY AND PROFICIENCY**

From the reorganization of the Grand Chapter of Texas, until the year 1859, Royal Arch Masonry in Texas enjoyed an era of peace and prosperity under the jurisdiction of the General Grand Chapter. The population of Texas greatly increased. The number of Chapters increased from nine to sixty-two in a period of ten years.

The proficiency in conferring the degrees showed general and notable improvement. The future appeared promising and nothing of note occurred to upset the tranquility of the Craft until the year 1856.

## 1856

The Triennial Convocation of the G. G. C. was held at Hartford, Conn., beginning on Tuesday, September 9th, 1856. It was a momentous meeting, at which certain Constitutional amendments were proposed by Illustrious Companions Albert Pike and Albert G. Mackey, which were calculated to change the character of the General Grand Chapter from a supreme and sovereign Grand Body to a Confederation of State Grand Chapters with the G. G. C. demoted to a position subordinate, in all essential respects, to the State Grand Chapters. The subsequent adoption of the principle stated was the beginning of the movement which led the Grand Chapter of Texas to cancel its membership with the Confederation.

On Friday, September 12th, 1856. Comp. Albert Pike, like a flash of lightning out of a clear sky, introduced his famous resolution as follows:

*“Resolved, That it is the sense of this Grand Chapter, and is declared to be the law of Royal Arch Masonry, and of its own powers and prerogative –*

*“1st. That the General Grand Royal Arch Chapter derives all its powers, by grant and delegation, from the respective Grand Royal Arch Chapters which created it, and are its constituents; and it is therefore hereby solemnly declared, that it can never exercise or assume any other or greater powers than such as have been, or may be, delegated to or conferred upon it by such Grand Royal Arch Chapters; nor can claim or exercise any doubtful powers, or powers by implication merely, and that any future constitution of the General Grand Royal Arch Chapter, and any future additions to, or changes in, the present, or any such future constitution, can become operative and be in force only when they shall have been formally approved by two thirds, at least, of the Grand Royal Arch Chapters under the jurisdiction of the General Grand Royal Arch Chapter, and when such approval shall be Formally promulgated by proclamation of the General Grand High Priest.”*

There were three additional sections to the resolution but since they covered matters of procedure and are not pertinent to the main subject under discussion they are omitted. (For a full text of the resolution, see Proceedings G. G. C. 1856, p. 378.)

Companion Andrew Neill, Grand King of the Grand Chapter of Texas, promptly moved that the resolution be laid on the table, which motion was defeated. After some debate Companion Neill made a motion to postpone further consideration until the following day, which was adopted. On the following day, after considerable debate, the resolution was amended so as to read:

*“Resolved, That the General Grand Royal Arch Chapter derives all its powers, by grant and delegation, from the respective Grand Royal Arch Chapters.”*

In this modified form the resolution was adopted by a vote of 53 ayes, 30 noes. Texas voting her four votes against the amendment. Companion Pike, being dissatisfied with the amendment to his resolution, as adopted, we find that two days later the proceedings of 1856, p. 396, reads: “Companion Mackey, on behalf

of Companion Pike, submitted to the General Grand Chapter the following amendments to the Constitution, which were read, and laid over to the next triennial session.”

The fifteen amendments proposed contained the same general principle embodied in his first resolution. Also there were other amendments designed to reduce the General Grand Chapter from a Supreme Sovereign Grand Body to a Confederation of State Grand Chapters, with each supreme and sovereign in its own jurisdiction. (For a full text of the amendments, see pp. 396-398, Proc. G. G. C., 1856.)

It will serve the purpose to set forth the principle amendments proposed by Companions Pike and Mackey:

“*Resolved*, that the Constitution of this General Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons for the United States of America be altered and amended as follows, that is to say: Strike out Section 2 of Article I of the present Constitution, and insert in lieu thereof:

“The General Grand Chapter receives all its powers, faculties, and prerogatives, by grant and delegation, from the several State Grand Chapters; and it can have and possess no other powers than such as are expressly granted and delegated to it by them, or as are indispensably necessary to the exercise of its general powers, and consistent with the nature of the Confederation between the State Grand Chapters. It can exercise no doubtful powers, nor any powers by implication merely; and all Masonic powers not hereby granted to it are reserved to the Grand and Subordinate Chapters of the several States.

“It shall have and maintain jurisdiction over all Chapters established by itself in those States, Districts, Republics, and Territories, which recognize this jurisdiction, and where there is no Grand Chapter established.

“It shall have power to decide all questions of Masonic law, usage, and custom, which may arise between any two or more Grand Chapters, or in any of the Subordinate Chapters under its Own immediate jurisdiction, and all that may be referred to it for decision, by any Grand Chapter, by formal vote; and its decisions so made shall be deemed and regarded as those of the supreme judicial tribunal of Royal Arch Masonry in the last resort.

“It shall have no power of discipline, admonition, censure, or instruction over the Grand Chapters, nor any legislative powers whatever not hereby specifically granted; nor shall entertain any complaint against a Grand Chapter, prepared by any Subordinate Chapter or individual Mason, in that jurisdiction or elsewhere; but it may, upon proper reference to it of any matter of con- oven between any two or more Grand Chapters, and even where the question is not one of Masonic law, custom, or usage (both or all such Grand Chapters consenting to such reference) act as final arbiter between them, and settle such controversy.

“It shall judge of the qualifications of its own members. It shall see that the ancient work of the Order is preserved in the several degrees; and establish uniform formulas for the installation of its own Officers and those of Grand and Subordinate Chapters; for the Consecration and Constitution of Chapters and the opening of Grand Chapters. And it may suspend the proceedings of any Chapter under its own immediate jurisdiction, in any State, District or Territory where there is no Grand Chapter, for any willful violation of any of the provisions of this Constitution, or for gross un-Masonic proceedings or conduct.”

(For the full text of all the amendments proposed see Proc. G. G. C. 1856, pp. 396-398.)

As might have been anticipated, the proposed constitutional change created an upheaval and disunity in the G. G. C. In 1857 Kentucky and North Carolina gave notice of their withdrawal from the G. G. C.

The Grand Chapter of Texas met at Huntsville on the 22nd of June, 1857, following the Triennial of the G. G. C. in 1856. The Pike and Mackey amendments had been laid over to the Triennial of 1859 in order to give the State Grand Chapters an opportunity to consider them, and instruct their delegates how to vote thereon. In 1857 the Committee on Grand Officers' Reports of the Grand Chapter of Texas commented on the proposal in a lengthy report. (See Proc. G. C. of Texas 1857, pp. 241-242, Vol 1, Ruthven Reprint.)

The committee expressed the view that the G. G. C. had utterly failed to accomplish the objects of its organization, they can see no further necessity for its existence, and closed their report with the following resolutions, which were adopted:

*“Resolved, That this Grand Chapter is reluctantly forced to the conclusion that the G. G. Chapter of the United States has failed to accomplish the objects of its organization and therefore it is the opinion of this Grand Chapter that the further existence of that body can be productive of no good.”*

*“2. Resolved, That this Grand Chapter requests all other State Grand Chapters who concur with it in opinion, to join with this Grand Chapter in a memorial to the G. G. Chapter to be presented at its next Triennial Convention respectfully and fraternally asking the dissolution of the G. G. Body.”*

There is nothing in the later proceedings of the G. G. Chapter or of Texas to show any action taken pursuant to the above resolutions or that they ever reached the other Grand Chapters or the General Grand Chapter. However, the Proceedings of the G. G. C. for 1859 does show that the Grand Chapter of Texas voted against each of the 15 amendments, and when the most objectionable one quoted heretofore was adopted, our Grand High Priest, A. Neill, presented a memorial on behalf of our Grand Chapter, asking consent for the withdrawal of our Grand Chapter from the Confederation. The request was denied on a technicality as will hereafter be shown.

It is to be regretted that the Proceedings of the G. G. C. in both 1856 or 1859 give no account of the extensive debates on the Pike and Mackey amendments. The record is absolutely silent on the reasons why those revolutionary amendments were deemed desirable or for the benefit of the General Grand Chapter. One is left entirely to conjecture, which is unfortunate.

Since the events at the Triennial of the General Grand Chapter in 1856 were the proximate cause of the subsequent withdrawal of the Grand Chapter of Texas from the General Grand Chapter in 1861, and since the action of the General Grand Chapter on a certain resolution offered by Illustrious Companion Albert Pike in 1856 was the opening of a movement to change the constitutional structure of the General Grand Chapter, reducing it from a supreme and sovereign Grand Body to a position subordinate in its powers to the State Grand Chapters, we should examine carefully the history of this period.

## **ILLUSTRIOUS COMPANIONS ALBERT G. MACKEY AND ALBERT PIKE AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE HISTORY OF THE GENERAL GRAND CHAPTER**

Perhaps no two men exerted a more far-reaching influence on the history of the General Grand Chapter than Companions Albert C. Mackey and Albert Pike. Therefore, some notice must be given to the history of these two most distinguished Masons, if we are to have an accurate picture of the general subject under discussion. I deem it unnecessary to call attention to the fact that these two illustrious Masons were generally credited with being the foremost Masonic scholars, writers, ritualists, and historians of their time. Each

attained exalted rank and honors in the Supreme Council of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, Southern Jurisdiction, as well as in the various branches of the York Rite.

## **ALBERT GALLATIN MACKEY**

Albert Gallatin Mackey was born in Charleston, S. C., on March 12th, 1807, youngest son of Dr. John Mackey, also a native of South Carolina. He received a good English education and an elementary classical one which he later extended himself. After teaching school for a time, he entered the South Carolina Medical College at Charleston and graduated in 1832. He received first prize for his Latin thesis. For about a decade he practiced medicine in his native city, and taught it in his *Alma Mater*, a demonstrator of anatomy. Meanwhile, in 1836, he was married to Sarah Panula Hubbell and from about 1842 on, he devoted himself largely to writing and lecturing. Dr. Mackey's Masonic career began with his initiation in St. Andrews Lodge No. 10, at Charleston, in 1841. He affiliated shortly afterward with the Premier Lodge (Solomons) of which he was elected Master. At the close of his term he was presented with a Past Master's jewel in a resolution mentioning "his attention every Lodge night" and "thorough knowledge of its ritual." In 1851 he helped to form Landmark Lodge No. 76. He became Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge in 1843, and served until 1867.

Companion Mackey became a Royal Arch Mason in 1841, in Union Chapter No. 3, of Charleston. He served as High Priest of it from 1845 to 1850. In 1847 he became Grand Lecturer of the Grand Chapter. From 1848 to 1855, he was Deputy Grand High Priest and from 1855 to 1867 he was Grand High Priest.

In 1853 he was a delegate to the General Grand Chapter, and as stated, in 1856, together with Pike, sponsored the amendments to the constitution of the General Grand Chapter. After their adoption in 1859, he was elected General Grand High Priest, which office he held until 1865, but he never presided as such over the General Grand Chapter. On account of the Civil War the Triennial of 1862 was not held, and at the Convocation in 1865 at Columbus, Ohio, he was unable to be present on account of his new duties as Internal Revenue Collector at Charleston.

He was Grand Master of the Grand Council of Royal and Select Masters of South Carolina from 1860 to 1870. He was Eminent Commander of the South Carolina Encampment, K. T., from 1851 to 1866. In 1853 he was a delegate to the Grand Encampment of the U. S.

Dr. Mackey was elected an active member of the Supreme Council of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, Southern jurisdiction, in 1844, and by December of that year was Secretary General, in which position he continued until his death in 1881.

His services to the Supreme Council were of incalculable value and that body went on record in pronouncing him "the real custodian of the Rite for over a quarter of a century."

It was Mackey who discovered Pike, as possessing the qualifications of leadership necessary to resurrect the Supreme Council from a state of inactivity and dormancy. For more than fifty years from the date of its organization in 1802, the Scottish Rite, claimant of 53 degrees, including jurisdiction over the Chapter and Council degrees, made very little progress. Most of the era was occupied in efforts to suppress several spurious Supreme Councils of the Rite, established in this country by the Grand Orient of France.

What few degrees that were conferred was by communication. The candidates, in the main, were Masons of the York Rite Bodies, who had attained distinction as leaders or officers therein. Mackey saw in Pike a gifted writer and leader capable of revising their numerous degrees and one who might bring order out of the chaos then existing in the Scottish Rite.

While Dr. Mackey earned distinction serving in many Masonic offices, his greatest claim to fame must rest upon his Masonic writings.

In 1845 he published his first Masonic work, entitled "A Lexicon of Freemasonry"; in 1849, he published "The Mystic Tie"; "Principles of Masonic Law" in 1856; "Book of the Chapter" in 1858; "Text-Book of Masonic Jurisprudence" in 1856; "Manual of the Lodge" in 1867; "Symbolism of Freemasonry" in 1869; and "Encyclopedia of Freemasonry" in 1874. These are only a part of his voluminous writings, among which was his standard reference works, "History of Freemasonry," which was unfinished at the time of his death.

In 1881 Albert Mackey ceased his labors on earth and in passing to higher realms bequeathed to posterity one of the most illustrious names in the annals of Masonic history.

## **ALBERT PIKE**

The life and works of Illustrious Brother Pike are too well and favorably known to require any extended biographical sketch in this historical narration. Indeed, were it deemed necessary to attempt it, the entire scope of this pamphlet would not be adequate to contain the varied experiences of this eminent traveler, pioneer, soldier, savant, jurist, linguist, scholar, author, philosopher, Mason and fraternal leader.

Albert Pike was born at Boston on the 29th of December, 1809. His father moved to Newburyport, in the same state, in 1812. Albert Pike was reared there and received his education, in part, in the primary and grammar schools of that little city.

In 1824 he entered the freshman class at Harvard and passed two years' work in one year. When he sought to enter the junior class they demanded that he pay tuition for two years. Pike declined to pay for the year he had saved and left college. His future education was obtained in the school of hard knocks, and by self education while teaching school. He spent several years in mastering Greek and Latin and taught it for several more.

Pike left New England in March, 1831. His wanderings took him to Boston, Albany, Rochester, Buffalo, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Nashville, St. Louis, Independence, where he joined an ox team caravan of traders to New Mexico. From the Indian village of Taos, New Mexico, the caravan moved eastward through the Indian country of what afterwards became the State of Oklahoma. From there he headed for Louisiana, where Pike hoped to secure enough money to sail for South America. The route Pike's company had followed was not the one they had planned.

In later years Pike said; "Our intention was to go to Louisiana, and we had no idea of going to Arkansas. We had heard a good deal about Louisiana, about the rich people there. I had formed a purpose which drew me towards Louisiana. I wanted to get some money and go to South America. We struck this road in the morning, and it was a cloudy day. We were puzzled, for we did not know which end of the road went to Ft. Smith and which end to Fort Towcan... The consequence was that we took the wrong end of the road, and when we got up in the morning and saw we were mistaken, we were all so tired out that we concluded to give up Louisiana - we concluded to go to Arkansas. If it had been fair weather when we struck that road, I should never have been in Arkansas."

Thus a cloudy day and the accidental taking of the wrong course on a primitive road, may well have influenced the history and destiny of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry as well as of the General Grand Chapter.

Pike continues; "At last we came to the Choctaw Agency, sixteen miles from Ft. Smith ... Capt. John Rogers kept a tavern, where we stayed ... we had no money and we had no clothes. I had a pair of buckskin pantaloons - and they were very handsome when I first got them. I had them made out of sheep skin—by Moqui Indians. But when I got east of the mountains, I wanted to get some fir balsam, and in my efforts to get it, I got the legs of my pantaloons wet. And they stretched out so that they got tangled about my feet, and I had to take them off and put them out to dry. When I got them back and dried, they drew up until they were around my knees." (See "Supreme Council," 1931, pp. 205, 207.)

Pike landed across the river from Ft. Smith, and lived for some time on a farm where he split rails and did general farm work until he got a job as a school teacher. He taught at several places in the Ozarks.

He went to Little Rock in 1833 and took a job on a newspaper. He learned to stick type. He bought the paper which he continued to publish for two years and a half. He sold it out for what he could get. He then tried to collect the accounts and could not. He sent some of the accounts to an agent who kept the money he collected. The remainder of the accounts he bundled up and put them in a stove. Thus ended his newspaper career.

On the 10th day of October, 1834, he was married to Mary Hamilton. The union lasted nearly forty years, and seems to have been a happy one. Ten children were born to them, but several of them died in infancy.

The fine old Colonial mansion which Pike erected at Little Rock became the center of social activities, where Pike is said to have spent the happiest years of his life.

Pike recruited a cavalry squadron, and served under General Taylor in the war with Mexico, and fought in the Battle of Buena Vista. In this battle Colonel Yell, the commanding general, was killed at the head of his regiment. General Pike succeeded him, and was twice officially commended for gallantry and good judgment.

Pike was opposed to secession and spoke against it. But when war broke out he followed his state in secession and accepted the office of Commissioner to the Indians. In October, 1861, he accepted a commission as Brigadier General to command in the Indian country. He resigned after participating in the battle of Elkhorn, because, contrary to agreement, the Indians were ordered to appear and fight in territory outside of the Indian territory.

After his retirement he lived for a time in private in Fannin County, Texas.

On August 30, 1865, he 'vas granted amnesty by President Andrew Johnson.

## **PIKE'S MASONIC RECORD**

From a biographical history of the Supreme Council, published in 1931 we present the following references to Albert Pike;

'Strange is it that 'the greatest Mason of this or any other age' never entered a Masonic Lodge until he was past forty. Indeed, he associated himself with the Odd Fellows some years earlier, and in eulogizing an old friend (William K. King) then just deceased, he said:

“To his promptings and persuasion I owe it that I became an Odd Fellow, which led to my afterwards becoming a Mason; and I owed him for that, a great debt.”

Pike was initiated an Entered Apprentice in Western Star Lodge No. 1, at Little Rock, Ark., in 1850, passed a Fellow-Craft in the same month, and raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason in the following month. This was a period of rebound from the depression caused by the Anti-Masonic Movement which “clothed our banners in mourning and brought disastrous eclipse over the Great Light.”

In 1852, Pike was one of seventeen who obtained a charter, issued November 4, for Magnolia Lodge No. 60, represented it in the Grand Lodge of the following year and was its Master in 1854 and 1855.

During the month of November, 1850, Pike, according to his own statement, received all of the Capitular Degrees in Union Chapter No. 2, B. A. M., at Little Rock, of which he soon became King; for we find him representing it in that capacity at the Convention which assembled at the same place on April 28th, 1851.

Under authority granted by the General Grand High Priest of the United States, a Grand Chapter was Constituted, of which Pike was elected Grand Scribe. In the following year he became High Priest of his Chapter, and also chairman of the Grand Chapter Committees on Foreign Correspondence, on Masonic Law and Usage, and on Library.

In the early fifties and for some years thereafter, no Council of Royal and Select Masters or Commandery of Knights Templar existed in Arkansas. Pike received the degrees of both of these bodies in Washington City, the former in Columbia Chapter on December 22, 1832, and the latter in Washington Encampment No. 1, K. T., on February 9th, 1853.

He also took part in the organization of Hugh de Payens Commandery No. 1, of Little Rock, of which he was the first Commander.

Whatever may have been his contribution to the York Rite bodies, Pike's fame and claim to Masonic immortality must necessarily rest upon his service to the Supreme Council of the Scottish Rite. His revision and coordination of the Ritual; the composition of its Liturgies; the compilation and authorship of his Morals and Dogma; his leadership as Grand Commander raised the Rite from a state of dormancy to a great power in the Masonic world. It is difficult to picture what might have been the destiny of the Scottish Rite had Pike not taken the wrong end of a road, and had gone to South America.

It will be recalled that Pike was initiated an Entered Apprentice in the year 1850. Pike, himself, said: “I never heard of the Scottish Rite until 1853.”

On March 20th of that year, the degrees from the Fourth to the Thirty-second were communicated to him by Albert C. Mackey, to whose sagacity, adds Gould, “is doubtless due his promotion to the Thirty-third degree and his election as Grand Commander. For between these great leaders a close friendship sprang up, which, despite the fact that they took opposite sides during the Civil War, lasted until death.”

The very next year after he received the Thirty-second degree, we find Mackey writing to him that, but for the absence of the Grand Commander (Honour), whose signature was necessary, he “would send you the Commission you desired as Deputy Inspector for Arkansas.” Pike's elevation to the Thirty-third is thus described by Frederick Webber, long Secretary General of the Supreme Council:

“On motion of Brother Laffon de Ladebat it was further Resolved that as Brother Albert Pike Was in Washington D. C., and it was impossible for him to be present, the Deputies of the Supreme Council were authorized upon his return to New Orleans to confer the degree upon him. On the 25th of April, 1857, the Supreme Council again met, and as previously decided, conferred the Thirty-third and last degree on Sir Knights, K.:H.: Albert Pike and Willis P. Coleman.”

On April 29th, 1857, Pike wrote from New Orleans to Mackey:

“I have duly received the Thirty-third degree, and Laffon resigning for the purpose, have been elected a Deputy of the Supreme Council. Tonight I am to be installed Grand Commander of the Consistory.”

“You were elected an active member, 20th March, 2858,” wrote Mackey to Pike, about a year later, “the vacancy occasioned by the death of Illustrious Brother J. C. Norris was filled” in that way.

On July 7th, 1858, Mackey, after informing Pike officially that his “ardent wish for so many years (to elect the latter an active member) has at length been accomplished,” added:

“I am not yet done, however ... you must and shall be at its head. McDaniel of Virginia is of the same opinion, and has written me to that effect. If Rockwell declines the vacant office, as I think he will, you are most entitled to it. I waive absolutely my own claims as the oldest member now living.”

On January 2nd, 1859, Pike was elected Grand Commander of the Supreme Council.

Thus within six years from taking the Scottish Degrees he had wrought a revolutionary change in the Constitutional structure of the General Grand Chapter, had become a 33° and active member of the Supreme Council and in the year of adoption of said constitutional amendments was elevated to the office of Grand Commander which he filled with great distinction until his death in 1891.

On January 5th, 1859, Pike wrote Mackey: “I shall accept the office of Sov. Grand Commander with reluctance, since I know that, if the duties of the office are *well* performed, they involve both labor and responsibility. But I have the advancement of the Scottish Rite too much at heart to decline to accept an office, how responsible soever, conferred upon me by so flattering a vote; and I can only promise that I will omit no exertion to propagate and extend the Scottish Rite, and also to make it *worthy* to be propagated and extended among Masons of intellect and learning.”

In the course of time Pike became an Honorary Member of most Supreme Councils and many other Scottish Rite bodies throughout the world; but in the Mother Supreme Council, already venerable, in age if not in achievement, whose destinies had thus accidentally (or shall we say providentially?) been committed to his hands, Albert Pike saw the opportunity for his life work. Henceforth his highest energies were to be devoted to the Supreme Council. (Supreme Council (1931), p. 251).

Strange as it may seem that after launching the General Grand Chapter in 1859, on the experimental sea of a new order, reduced from its position of a Supreme and Sovereign power to that of a subordinate to the State Grand Chapters, Mackey, though elevated to the position of General Grand High Priest, never presided at any subsequent Convocation, never attended a Convocation until 1868, and does not appear to have taken any active part in the business of that Convocation.

## 1859

In 1859 the General Grand Chapter met in Chicago. A heated debate was held on the Pike amendments, when the vote was taken on the important amendment, making the General Grand Chapter subordinate to the State Grand Chapters, it failed of adoption by four votes. The session was adjourned overnight and the next day after long and bitter argument, enough votes were won over to adopt the amendment. Some of the other amendments proposed were adopted and some were defeated.

At the conclusion of the balloting on the 17th day of September, 1859, Companion Neill, Grand High Priest of the Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Texas, presented a communication in behalf of the Grand Chapter of Texas, asking permission to withdraw from the confederacy of Grand Chapters, which, on motion of Companion English of Arkansas, was referred to the Committee on Jurisprudence.

The Committee on Jurisprudence later made its report as follows:

“As to the application of the Grand High Priest of Texas, that the Grand Chapter of Texas be permitted now to withdraw from the jurisdiction of this General Grand Chapter, your Committee find that that Grand Chapter has not yet passed any resolution or taken any action directly authorizing such application to be made.

“In the opinion of your Committee this General Grand Chapter cannot properly and lawfully act upon the application on the subject, until the Grand Chapter of Texas shall, by its own solemn act, first authorize directly such an application to be made.”

Thus the matter of withdrawal was, by a technicality, put off for three years. However, as will be seen hereafter, the Grand Chapter of Texas was never again represented in any Convocation of the General Grand Chapter.

Companion Neill made an extensive report of the proceedings in his annual report as Grand High Priest in 1860. (For those who may desire fuller details and commentaries, I refer you to the Proceedings of our Grand Chapter 1860, pp. 323-325, Ruthven reprint.)

The consensus of opinion of those who opposed the Constitutional Changes was that by the adoption of the amendments the General Grand Chapter had destroyed its usefulness, and had reduced itself to a position subordinate to the several Grand Chapters and was no longer the Supreme and Sovereign governing body of Royal Arch Masonry in this country.

As heretofore pointed out, the Proceedings of the General Grand Chapter for 1856 and 1859, or any other year, do not contain any of the debates on these important amendments. There is not the slightest hint reported as to why they were deemed necessary or desirable. The results of the balloting on each of the amendments are given, but none of the arguments.

We are compelled to resort to contemporaneous newspaper comment and individual comment for an account of the excitement attendant upon the balloting, but even then we find no reasons stated of why these amendments were proposed by Companions Mackey and Pike.

On the question of the adoption of the Pike and Mackey amendments, I quote a statement of Past General Grand High Priest Drummond, as reported in the History of the Supreme Council, 1931, p. 246, as follows:

“There was evidently a high degree of interest in relation to the probable action of the General Grand Chapter, and the consideration of the amendments was specially assigned for the second day of the session. The first (amendment and the important one now under consideration) was earnestly and ably debated by Companions Pike and Mackey, in its favor, and Companions Lewis of New York and Fellows of Louisiana, in opposition. Companion Fellows is the only one now living and the tradition is that his speech in opposition was exceedingly able. The question came to a vote on the evening of the third day. There were sixty-three votes in favor to thirty-four in opposition, but as a two-thirds vote was required, the amendment was defeated. It will be noticed that five more votes, or a change of two votes, would have carried it. The excitement is said to have been intense - so intense that it appeared at one time that the session would break up, and with it the General Grand Chapter. The

most earnest appeals were made, to the minority to submit to the will of the majority, and fearing that unless concession was made, the dissolution of the General Grand Chapter would probably take place at once, Governor Dunlap, of Maine, then Junior Past General Grand High Priest, counselled concession, and though opposed to the amendments, favored adopting them for the sake of saving the General Grand Chapter, and the motion whereby the amendment was defeated was reconsidered, and upon taking the vote again it was carried by seventy-seven to twenty-three.

“Two officers of the body changed their votes to the affirmative, and other affirmative votes as follows: One from Maine; four from New Hampshire (which had not voted at all till then); four from Massachusetts; two from New York; and one from Minnesota. Then followed the proposed amendment in relation to future changes in the constitution, and it was defeated by a vote of forty-four to fifty-three ... I speak of this the more freely because Companion Pike, that great leader of men, afterwards, on the floor of this body, declared that this change in the constitution was a mistake, made under a misapprehension of the facts of history.”

Masonic publications of the era gravely predicted the early dissolution of the General Grand Chapter. The Mirror and Keystone commented as follows:

“A great good has been indirectly effected, for the body remains without a spark of vitality, a bundle of rattling bones. It can never be galvanized into life, but remain a collection of ancient fossils. What a most ridiculous position to occupy, venerable brethren of the board! Ye can hob-nob together, apostrophizing each other grandiloquently; exchanging titles; enjoying a good time generally. But no mandate ye may issue will be obeyed; no instructions be regarded. The General Grand Chapter is effectually shorn of all power as an executive body.”

The Masonic Chronicle commented as follows:

“In the General Grand Chapter, the interest turned on the proposed amendments to the constitution by which the General Grand Chapter declares that it has no powers except such as are expressly delegated to it by the State Grand Chapters: that it may not discipline nor interfere with them except by their consent; thus making itself a nonentity, subordinate to and dependent on the State bodies for its existence The adoption of these amendments was but another name for the destruction of the General Grand Chapter; and as there are still some men in the country who dislike to put away the ancient land marks, and substitute new ways for the old, it is not to be wondered at that the discussion conducted by Pike, Mackey, Tucker, Lewis and others of like calibre, should occupy the larger portion of the session to the exclusion of all other business, and that on the final adoption, men should feel that it mattered but little what else was done, for henceforward the General Grand Chapter of the United States exists but in name—a concentration of emptiness, a balloon, needing but the puncture of a pin to exhaust its remaining vitality and bring it to earth forever.”

Companion A. Neill, Grand High Priest of Texas, was present in the G. G. C. in 1859 and fought all the Mackey-Pike amendments. In his address to the Grand Chapter in 1860 he reported as follows concerning the proceedings adopting the amendments:

‘Had the General Grand Chapter been of utility heretofore, under the old Constitution, it might have survived; but so soon as it destroyed its own vitality we can have no further use for it. Such are the views of your present presiding officer, and were he to recount the shameful farce enacted at Chicago, on the adoption of the proposed amendments, by the brow-beating and intimidating of a few to obtain a change of vote when the proposition was lost and in order to effect a reconsideration; were we to detail the applause that ensued to encourage the faint hearted, and the frowns more effective than the hisses of a crowd to overcome the stern and loyal who stood by their rights - were these scenes portrayed as they did occur, there is not a Royal Arch Mason in the country but would hang

his head with shame, and acknowledge at once that allegiance to such a body is little less than treason to God. It then becomes you to choose whether you shall continue to have a head above your own Grand Chapter, which head admits it has no power and is useless for any practical purpose, or be independent as a supreme governing body in Royal Arch Masonry, equal with her sisters and above the discipline, censure or instruction of any but the enlightened of all countries who may labor with us in the great cause in which we hope all are as ardently engaged as we pretend ourselves to be.”

Such was the tenor of individual comment following the adoption of the amendments of 1859. The feeling engendered led Grand High Priest Neill into the error of wishing to rid Texas of “the discipline, censure or instruction” of the G. G. C. by severing relations with it, when as a matter of fact the amendment adopted, of which he so bitterly complained, deprived the G. G. C. of those very powers. A part of Section 2 of Article One of the Constitution adopted in 1859 provided that the G. G. C. “shall have no power of discipline, admonition, censure, or instruction over the Grand Chapters, nor any legislative powers whatever not hereby specifically granted.”

Grand High Priest Neill recommended that a formal resolution be adopted and carried into force without further parley, dissolving our connection with the General Grand Chapter. He also recommended that a committee be appointed to draft a new Constitution for submission the following year in which all reference to the General Grand Chapter should be stricken out.

The Committee on the Reports of Grand Officers, after considering the recommendation of the Most Excellent Grand High Priest reported as follows:

“Upon a careful examination of the relative position between the Grand Chapter and the General Grand Chapter of the United States, the committee cannot recommend the immediate severance of the connection which exists between them, by the act alone of this Grand Chapter. That although the organization of the General Grand Chapter cannot in future promote the welfare of Royal Arch Masonry, yet this Grand Chapter, having been created by, and having acknowledged the authority and jurisdiction of the General Grand Chapter, it is to be desired that the dissolution of the connection should be by mutual agreement. The committee therefore recommend that the Grand Chapter resolve, that since it would be for the benefit of Royal Arch Masonry in this State, that all future connection between the General Grand Chapter and this Grand Chapter be dissolved, the delegates to the next General Grand Convocation be instructed to request of the General Grand Chapter of the United States an acquiescence in the dissolution of this connection.”

The committee also recommended that the foregoing resolution be referred to the subordinate Chapters.

## 1861

On the 12th day of June, 1861, Grand High Priest W. T. Austin, in his annual address, referred to the question of declaring the independence of the Grand Chapter, and recommended the immediate severance of all connection with the General Grand Chapter without seeking their acquiescence.

On June 17th, 1861, the committee on Grand Officers’ Reports reported thereon as follows:

“In regard to our severance from the General Grand Chapter, your committee unhesitatingly concur in the sentiment expressed in the report of the M. E. Grand High Priest. This subject has been discussed in this Grand Chapter for four sessions, and at the last a resolution was adopted, requiring our representatives to apply at the next triennial meeting of the General Grand Chapter for a peaceful

withdrawal from our allegiance and connection with that body. This resolution was referred to the subordinate Chapters for their action. Since that time, however, so great have been our political changes, that in the opinion of your committee, it is unnecessary to institute an inquiry into the action of the subordinates on the subject. In addition to the hitherto justifiable causes for a withdrawal, we now find ourselves severed politically, and we think perpetually, and in actual hostility and war.

‘We therefore recommend that all allegiance to, and connection with, the General Grand Chapter of the United States of America be, from this day forward, dissolved.’

Thus on the 17th day of June, 1861, our connection with the General Grand Chapter was terminated. Texas Grand Chapter has never since been represented in the Convocations of the General Grand Chapter.

## **REASON FOR SEVERANCE**

It will be seen from this record that in 1859, the Grand High Priest of Texas requested to withdraw our Grand Chapter from the Confederation caused by the amendments adopted by the General Grand Chapter. We have seen how that request was refused by a technicality. We have seen how the Grand Chapter referred the question in 1860 to the subordinate Chapters of Texas. We have seen that at the Convocation of 1861, war had been declared and Texas had seceded from the Union, and since Texas was no longer a part of the Union, our relation with the General Grand Chapter was summarily severed.

The charge has been frequently made that the reason for the withdrawal of Texas was occasioned by the prejudices and bitterness growing out of the Civil War. This record should henceforth silence those claims. The real reasons, in addition to the constitutional changes, extended back to the days of the Grand Chapter of the Republic of Texas. The aggressive methods employed in bringing about its dissolution; the denunciation of its initiates as clandestine; the requirement of healing of such members before being admitted members of Chapters under the Second Grand Chapter; the adoption of the Pike and Mackey amendments to the constitution, all took place long before the Civil War brought an abrupt end to the relationship. The Civil War was not the cause of the severance of our relations, it merely provided the *opportunity*.

Since the right of the Grand Chapter of Texas to withdraw from the General Grand Chapter in 1861, without awaiting the consent of the General Grand Chapter, has been so vigorously challenged by the General Grand Chapter and certain of its distinguished leaders, that question should receive some notice here.

When the Grand Chapter of the Republic of Texas dissolved under pressure by the General Grand Chapter and reorganized under the sanction and jurisdiction of that General Grand Body, the General Grand Chapter was the recognized constitutional head of Capitular Masonry in those states whose Grand Chapters were affiliated with it. It was supreme and sovereign, and its constitution and laws were the controlling power over all such Chapters, Grand and subordinate.

In 1859, when it amended its constitution, over the protest and votes of the Grand Chapter of Texas, changing its status from that of a Supreme and Sovereign Grand Body to that of an organization of delegated powers, limited severely in jurisdiction; and in effect making itself subordinate to the State Grand Chapters; divesting itself of all power to legislate; counsel or discipline, the State Grand Chapters in any matter affecting them in their respective jurisdictions; such action seems to have automatically dissolved the original contract of allegiance between it and its affiliated members.

When the State Grand Chapters became sovereign and the General Grand Chapter a subordinate, the question of allegiance appears to have been liquidated for such Grand Chapters as may have determined to dissolve their connection with the General Grand Chapter.

No one ever heard of the king swearing allegiance to a subject of his realm. He may owe the subject certain duties, but to say that the sovereign must be bound to the subject by an oath of allegiance, is contrary to all logic and reverses the facts of history.

The conditions upon which the Grand Chapter of Texas became subordinate to the General Grand Chapter in 1850, were so materially altered by the action of the General Grand Chapter, as to constitute a breach of contract of affiliation.

The Grand Chapter of Texas, never at any time, or in any way bound itself to maintain its membership in the General Grand Chapter, regardless of any actions it may take, especially constitutional changes which wrought a revolutionary change in its type of government. Texas consistently opposed these changes from the time they were first proposed in 1856, to their adoption in 1859. By their adoption the constitution of 1850 was nullified and with it the binding effect of the contract to support the amendments thereto. For example, suppose the General Grand Chapter should have amended its constitution so as to permit profanes to petition for the degrees without the necessity of taking the Blue Lodge degrees. No one would seriously contend that such a change would not destroy the binding effect of any obligation to support and maintain such a constitution.

When the Grand Chapter of Texas became a subordinate of the G. G. C. in 1850 it obligated itself to support the constitution of 1850 and that obligation was certainly binding so long as it was in force. There was nothing in the obligation which bound us to support "any and all amendments thereto," especially when such amendments changed the G. G. C. from a sovereign Grand Body to one of a subordinate character, adopted over our consistent protest and opposition. The action of the G. G. C. appears to have been a clear breach of the conditions under which we became an affiliate in 1850 and vitiated the contract. Such contracts are not unilateral.

Moreover, there is no specific provision in the Constitution of 1859, nor has there ever been, requiring the consent of the General Grand Chapter before a Grand Chapter may withdraw its membership therefrom. The principle may have been sound before the amendments of 1859, while the General Grand Chapter was supreme and sovereign, but, when it reduced its status to that of a subordinate, it was left without the constitutional power or authority to enforce such a rule. If consent of the General Grand Chapter after 1859 was still regarded as a necessary prerequisite to withdrawal, it existed by implication only, and the Constitution of 1859 expressly prohibited the General Grand Chapter from exercising any "doubtful powers, nor any powers by *implication merely*."

The Constitution also provides that the General Grand Chapter "shall have no power of discipline, admonition, censure or instruction over the Grand Chapters, nor any legislative powers whatever, not hereby specially granted, nor any authority to suspend the proceedings of any State Grand Chapter." Thus it would appear thereby to have cancelled all implied obligations existing between such bodies.

It is certain that the Constitution of 1859 changed radically and materially the constitutional nature, powers and jurisdiction of the General Grand Chapter. It changed its status from a Supreme and Sovereign General Grand Body to an organization which it, itself, described as "a confederation of State Grand Chapters." The General Grand Chapter serving merely as the center of the union, exercising only delegated powers.

It would therefore appear that if consent were deemed necessary to withdraw from the confederation, the question would, necessarily, have to be addressed to the several State Grand Chapters, the peers in the confederation, and not to the General Grand Chapter, as there is no specific provision of the Constitution

delegating power to the General Grand Chapter to grant or refuse any such consent, or to otherwise change, diminish, impair, or lessen the constituent membership of the confederation.

## **SAN FELIPE DE AUSTIN CHAPTER No. 1**

The dramatic history of the introduction of Capitular Masonry into the territory of Texas would not be complete without recounting in a connected way the strange and significant part played by San Felipe de Austin Chapter No. 1. A Chapter which, apparently did more to bring about the trials and difficulties which marked our early history than any other agency.

It has been seen that in the year 1885 the General Grand Chapter issued a charter to two Companions to establish a Chapter at San Felipe, situated in the Austin Colony of the Province of Texas. This was the first serious attempt of the General Grand Chapter to 'expand its jurisdiction beyond the limits of the United States of America, into a foreign country.

It has been seen that no Chapter was established at San Felipe, but in the year 1840, a group of Royal Arch Masons obtained the old dormant charter, filled in the names of the necessary officers and proceeded to function in this irregular manner as a Chapter.

In 1841 it received a dispensation from the Grand Lodge of the Republic and met with three other Chapters operating under like warrants granted by the Grand Lodge of the Republic for the purpose of adopting a constitution and organizing a Grand Chapter.

One of the Companions of San Felipe de Austin Chapter sided at the Convention which adopted the constitution adjournment of the Convention that Chapter refused to the constitution and withdrew.

In 1841 or early in 1842 that Chapter, or some one connected with it made a report to the General Grand Chapter, in which they reported the organization of the Grand Chapter of the Republic, and erroneously, or deceptively, charged that it was an irregular body, in that it was composed of Chapters which had voluntarily created themselves without a warrant from any higher source. They were also apprehensive as to their own regularity, having acted under this old charter, without prior sanction of the G. G. C., and requested that their irregular proceedings in opening the Chapter at Galveston be ratified and approved, to which the General Grand Chapter acceded at their triennial in 1844.

The erroneous report was used as a basis by the General Grand Chapter to declare the Grand Chapter of the Republic irregular and clandestine. The controversies which followed led to the dissolution of the Grand Chapter of Texas in 1849.

In 1850, as heretofore set forth, a Convention was held to adopt a constitution and organize a new Grand Chapter under the jurisdiction of the General Grand Chapter. San Felipe de Austin Chapter No, 1 was represented in that Convention. It was also represented in the first meeting of the new Grand Chapter at Galveston in 1851. It acted as host on that historic occasion. It participated in the meeting, voted on all questions, and assisted in electing one of its own members, Companion Samuel M. Williams, as the first Grand High Priest. It continued to participate in all the Convocations thereafter, and paid dues to it, until the year 1861. Yet, it had never received a charter from the Grand Chapter. All the while it operated under the old charter and was a subordinate of the General Grand Chapter. It never, at any time from 1841 to 1861, held a charter from either of the two Grand Chapters of Texas.

In 1861, when the Grand Chapter severed relations with the General Grand Chapter, San Felipe de Austin Chapter was represented. The High Priest, realizing that it had no charter from the Grand Chapter, sensed that

his Chapter was about to be left out in the cold. He addressed a memorial to the Grand Chapter, on which the Committee on Petitions reported as follows:

“Your Committee on Petitions beg leave to report that: They have under consideration the memorial of the High Priest of San Felipe de Austin Chapter No. 1, praying in behalf of that Chapter that a charter be issued to said Chapter with the privilege of retaining their old charter as an interesting relic of the early history of Royal Arch Masonry in Texas, and to be kept in their archives It seems that while San Felipe de Austin No. 1 was one of the Chapters which originally formed this Grand Chapter and consequently has always had equal rights herein with each of the other Chapters, yet for some reason no charter has ever been made out to it by this Grand Chapter. This has been probably through a disinclination of that Chapter to lose possession of their original charter. It is a question of interest whether the work done by that Chapter since the formation of this Grand Chapter has been legal. It is, however, a technical question, San Felipe de Austin having always recognized the authority of the Grand Chapter of Texas (the second G. C. 1850), participated in its labors, and been in fact as much of us as any Chapter under our jurisdiction. The discussion of a mere technicality is always trivial in Masonry. We therefore recommend that a charter be issued to San Felipe de Austin Chapter No. 1, having endorsed on the same the date of its connection with the Grand Chapter of Texas, and that its original charter be presented to it for preservation in its archives.”

(Sec Proc. G. C. of Texas, 1861, pp. 335-336.)

Thus after a career of doubtful regularity and many irregular actions during which it was never legally a part of the Grand Chapter of the Republic, or of the second Grand Chapter until 1861, it was finally started out as a duly chartered and legally constituted Chapter. We note that in 1861, when it received its charter as San Felipe de Austin Chapter No. 1, the Grand Chapter had already chartered 64 other Chapters before it warranted the charter to it. Whatever may have been its early tow and its contribution to the unhappy experiences of early Capitular Masonry in Texas; since 1861, it has undoubtedly borne the banner as the No. 1 Chapter of Texas with great honor, decorum and circumspection. It has given to all the Bodies, both York and Scottish Rite, many of their outstanding leaders: Grand Masters, Grand High Priests, Grand Commanders, and 33<sup>o</sup> members of the Scottish Rite. Such names as Philip Tucker, Marcus F. Mott, J. J. Davis, Fred M. Gilbough, Albert Shafer, George Clampitt, and many others have added lustre to her history and renown to her annals.

## **AFTERMATH**

### **1865**

No Convocation of the General Grand Chapter was held in 1862, which had been scheduled for Memphis, Tenn., on account of the Civil War.

In 1865 the General Grand Chapter met at Columbus, Ohio, September 8th, 1865. Companion Albert G. Mackey, the General Grand High Priest, who had held over from 1859, was not present. He had just been appointed U. S. Internal Revenue Collector for South Carolina, and the organization of his office following the close of the Civil War, was presented as the reason for his absence.

Companion John L. Lewis, the Deputy General Grand High Priest as acting General Grand High Priest, during the course of his address, evidently referring to the constitutional changes of 1859, and their effect upon the fortunes of the G. G. C., said:

“It has bravely survived the fears of the timid and the doubts of the credulous. Unhappily for its prosperity in times past, its most dangerous foes have been those of its own household. If neither gratitude could warm, nor solemn vows could bind, then it were vain to hope for support and sympathy from such.

“But the undersigned has no alarm upon the purport of the horizon of the future. The General Grand Chapter has not been dissolved, and will not be in the coming time. While there is a plurality of jurisdictions left to bear up the staves of its Arch upon their shoulders (as he knows there is and will be), its ministering spirits may ever cross the Jordan of doubt and difficulty dry-shod, without even a wave to moisten theft garments in passing.

“It has only to be just, but firm; conciliatory, but decided; true to its mission and faithful to its trust - and the Companions of the land, the old who have so many hallowed memories connected with it, and the young who catch the glow of feeling from their elders, will gather around it as the center of the sacred circle whence flows a union of hearts and hands.”

(Proc. G. G. C, 1865, p. 24.)

Companion Austin of New York gave notice of an amendment to the Constitution, to be voted on at its session in 1868, proposing the striking out all of Section 2, Article I, and inserting as follows:

“Section 2. The General Grand Chapter shall have and maintain jurisdiction over all State Grand Chapters, and over all Chapters in those States, Districts, Republics or Territories, which recognize this jurisdiction, and where there is no Grand Chapter regularly established, agreeably to the provisions of this Constitution; and shall have authority to suspend the proceedings of such State Grand Chapters, and such Chapters in States where there is no Grand Chapter, as may knowingly violate any of the provisions of this Constitution; to settle all difficulties which may arise, and to give such advice and instruction as may seem most conducive to their peace, and to the advancement Of the great cause of benevolence and virtue.”

The obvious purpose of the proposed amendment was to rescind the most important of the Pike and Mackey Amendments of 1859, in an effort to restore the sovereignty it surrendered at the time. Companion Pierson, of Minnesota, presented the following:

“*Resolved*, That a committee of five be appointed by M. E. G. C. H. F., to report at the next triennial Convocation any amendments to the Constitution of the G. C. Body, that may be necessary to gather under our banners all the Grand Royal Arch Chapters of the United States.” This motion was laid on the table. Companion Seymour H. Stone, of New York, submitted an amendment to the Constitution, to be voted on in 1868, striking out the fourth clause of Sec. 2, Art. 1, as to the General Grand Chapter, which is as follows:

“It shall have no power of discipline, admonition, censure or instruction over the Grand Chapters, nor any legislative powers whatever, not hereby specifically granted, nor shall entertain any complaint against a Grand Chapter or individual Mason in that jurisdiction or elsewhere; but it may, upon proper reference to it of any matter of controversy between any two or more Grand Chapters, and even where the question is not one of Masonic law, custom or usage (both or all such Grand Chapters consenting to such reference), act as final arbiter between them and settle such controversy.”

The above was another of the Pike and Mackey amendments of 1859 now proposed to be stricken out of the Constitution. The proposed amendment went over until 1868 under the rule.

Companion Wintersmith, of Kentucky, addressed the General Grand Chapter, adverting upon the importance of Masonic Union throughout the United States. Companion Pike is not recorded as having attended the Triennial Convocation of 1865.

## 1868

At the Triennial of the General Grand Chapter held in St. Louis, Mo., commencing September 15th, 1868, the following pertinent events are noted. The General Grand High Priest, John L. Lewis, of New York, delivered an able address in which he sets forth some of the historical facts and general objectives of the General Grand Chapter.

On the proposed amendments to the Constitution submitted by Companions Austin and Stone in 1865, proposing to reclaim the sovereignty of the General Grand Chapter, the following action was taken. The Austin amendment was laid on the table by a vote of 51 ayes, 35 nays.

The Stone amendment was postponed indefinitely. Companion Mackey is recorded as attending the Convocation of 1868.

The foregoing was the first, last and only effort made by the G. G. C. to repeal the Mackey-Pike amendments and to restore the Sovereignty of the G. G. C. Since that single effort the G. G. C. seems to have gracefully accepted its changed status and proceeded to build the order on that foundation.

### EFFORTS TOWARD REUNION

As a result of the amendments of 1859 and the controversies arising therefrom the Grand Chapters of the States of Vermont, Rhode Island, North Carolina, Iowa, Kentucky, Alabama, Texas and Georgia withdrew from the G. G. C.

At the Convocation of 1868 of the G. G. C. a select committee presented the following report which was adopted:

“The committee, to whom was referred so much of the address of the M. E. General Grand High Priest as relates to the renewal or opening of relations with Grand Chapters with this General Grand Body, which have been interrupted or prevented from any cause, would respectfully report:

“That the M. E. Grand Chapters of Vermont, Rhode Island, Iowa, Kentucky, North Carolina, Texas, Georgia and Alabama, have assumed to withdraw from the jurisdiction of this Supreme Body. Originally, this Body was a National Grand Chapter, having jurisdiction over subordinate Chapters only. It then formed Deputy Grand Chapters, and continued to do so for several years, when it assumed the form of a General Grand Chapter, and State Grand Chapters were formed thenceforward.

“No Grand Chapters have been formed by any other authority within the United States, with the exception of those of Pennsylvania, Virginia, Florida, and Delaware.

“This Body holds the first-named Chapters of Vermont, Rhode Island, North Carolina, Kentucky, Georgia, Alabama, Texas and Iowa, subject to its jurisdiction, and is anxious that they set aside their acts of withdrawal, and return to their allegiance, and be represented here without the further action of this Supreme Body.

“Your committee therefore recommend the adoption of the following resolutions:

“1. *Resolved*, That no State Grand Chapter, organized by the authority of this M. E. General Grand Body, or which at any time has become a constituent member of this Body, can lawfully sever its connection with

the General Grand Royal Arch Chapter of the United States of America without its consent, but the allegiance of said Grand Chapters is inalienable and now due.

“2. That the M. E. Grand Council of this M. E. General Grand Chapter open correspondence with the Grand Chapters of Vermont, Rhode Island, North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Texas, Kentucky and Iowa, and to induce, if possible, such acts on their part as shall restore harmonious and fraternal relations as constituent members of this Body.

“3. That the Grand Chapters of Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Florida, be requested to send delegates to the next Triennial Convocation of this M. E. General Grand Body, as a committee of conference to arrange terms of union, if practicable, with this M. E. General Grand Chapter.”

During the course of the next few years, the Grand Chapters of Vermont, North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Kentucky and Iowa reaffiliated with the G. G. C. and Florida also for the first time joined the confederation. Pennsylvania, Virginia, Texas and Rhode Island remained outside.

The G. G. C. has never ceased its efforts to secure the union of all Grand Chapters into the confederation. To that end they have kept standing invitations alive to the Grand Chapters of Pennsylvania, Virginia and Texas.

Texas may well feel complimented by the number of visitations with which it has been honored by the General Grand Officers and representatives of the G. G. C. and the special invitations courteously extended to rejoin the confederation.

The numerous and continuous efforts put forth to this end, is a fitting illustration of the example found in the Scriptures wherein it is said: “What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulder, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.” (St. Luke XV, vs. 4, 5 and 6.)

It will be remembered that at the Triennial of 1868 the, General Grand High Priest was directed to open correspondence with the several Grand Chapters which had withdrawn from the confederation, including Texas.

In 1869 a select committee sent out an elaborate circular letter to all such Grand Chapters which closed with the following appeal:

“For the General Grand Chapter of the United States, the Companions at large and for ourselves, humble but loving Companions, we plead for you to re-enter the portals which we have thrown wide for your reception; to pass along with us, with linked hands and united hearts, three by three, beneath the Grand Arch of the Temple, and unite with us in the decoration afresh of the pillars which represent the wisdom, the strength and the beauty of our ancient and sacred Order, Nothing of these can be gained by isolation of any one of our State Grand Chapters; all are secure when we march together in solid phalanx, an army of brethren, the elbow-touch of whom on every side assures us of a companionship of which we need never be ashamed, of a brotherhood in which we always place our trust in the days of strife, and storm and tribulation. It is the language of *appeal*, dearly beloved Companions, which we now address you, not that of *argument*. We leave it to your own hearts, seconding our appeal, to find the proper argument equally for head and heart which shall bind us all once more together.

“Submitted to our beloved Companions, severally and collectively, of the several jurisdictions of Vermont, Rhode Island, North Carolina, Kentucky, Alabama, Texas, and Georgia, this twentieth day of November, 1869.”

(See Proc. G. G. C. 1871, page 25.)

Following this appeal Iowa, Vermont, and North Carolina reunited with the G. G. C., and Florida was admitted to the confederation for the first time. At the Triennial of 1874 General Grand High Priest Josiah H. Drummond, in his address, made a lengthy report in which he recounted his efforts toward reuniting the Grand Chapters still remaining aloof. The Grand Chapter of Kentucky was received during this period.

Georgia and Alabama rescinded in 1875, which left Texas the only former member of the G. G. C. remaining outside the fold.

General Grand High Priest English, at the Triennial of 1877, in his address reported the return of Georgia and Alabama, and said:

“The return of these two Grand Chapters, and of others which came back before them, is the result of that policy of fraternal kindness and forbearance ever pursued by the General Grand Chapter toward such of its constituents as thought proper during periods of excitement, without its consent, to adopt resolutions of withdrawal. Thus, stone by stone, the great American Royal Arch Temple - The Temple of Fraternal Union—is being rebuilt, and the breaches thereof permanently repaired!

“Texas. But yet there is something wanting. A beautiful *Pleiad* is still missing from the Royal Constellation; The Grand Chapter of Texas yet wanders in her path of isolation. Texas wants to be left alone, but the General Grand Chapter never has, and does not intend to let her alone.”

## 1877

It was in the year A. D. 1877 that the Grand Chapter of Texas took official notice of the numerous communications and invitations received from the G. G. C.

In that year San Felipe de Austin Chapter No. 1 presented a resolution to the Grand Chapter providing by its terms the rescinding of the resolution of 1861 severing our relations with the G. G. C. Companion W. F. Swain, M. E. Grand High Priest in his address presented an elaborate report recommending that such action be taken and that we rejoin the G. G. C.

I quote the following extracts from his address:

“The subject of resuming our connection with the General Grand Chapter of the United States will probably be brought up for your consideration at this Convocation. A resolution adopted by one of our subordinates has been forwarded to me and also to this Grand Body, asking that you rescind the resolution adopted by this Grand Chapter in 1861, severing us from the General Grand Chapter, and so far as I have observed, the prevailing sentiment throughout the jurisdiction seems to favor the movement... However justifiable this action may have been at that time, the causes which led to the severance no longer exist, and to my mind there are many reasons why we should renew our allegiance ... Companions, there is a link yet missing in that great chain of fraternal union. Shall we longer stand aloof? I leave the matter to your wise consideration, believing, however, that we should accept the proffered seat at that Grand Triennial Feast of the Tabernacles and let the Lone Star once more sparkle in the ‘Royal Constellation’.”

The Committee on Grand Officers' Reports brought in the following recommendation on the resolution of San Felipe Chapter and the report of the Grand High Priest:

“In regard to the question of the resumption of connection with the General Grand Chapter, we have, in this connection, in addition to the address, the memorial of San Felipe de Austin Chapter No. 1, before us. The committee find that it has not been generally discussed by the Chapters, and it is believed that it is of too much importance to be acted on inconsiderately and without due deliberation. They, therefore, recommend that the subject be referred to a committee to consist of five Past Grand High Priests, to be reported on at the next annual Convocation.” (Proc. G. C. of Texas 1877, p. 184.)

## 1878

At the Convocation of the Grand Chapter of Texas in 1878 the question of reunion with the G. G. C. was fully considered.

Companion Win. Bramlette, M. E. Grand High Priest, in his address expressed opposition to the movement. (See Proc. G. C. 1878, pp. 207-208.) The special committee could not agree and presented elaborate majority and minority reports covering 17 printed pages, which on account of their length cannot be reproduced here. The two reports review much of the history of the controversy and I suggest that our committee, and the members of the Chapters, read it. (See Proc. G. C. 1878, pp. 222 to 238, Vol. II, Ruthven reprint.)

The result of the ballot was that the motion to rescind the resolution of 1861 and resume relations with the G. G. C. was not adopted.

## 1879

On the 4th day of December, 1879, M. F. General Grand High Priest John Frizzell of Nashville, Tenn., addressed a letter to the Grand High Priest of the Grand Chapter of Texas, in which he expressed surprise at the action of our Grand Chapter in 1878 and requested a reconsideration of the question. The Grand Chapter decided that the reopening of the question “would not result in any good to the Order, or change the decision arrived at one year ago.” (For the full text of the correspondence see Proc. G. G. C. 1880, pp. 23, 24, and 25, Reprint 1880-1889.)

## 1880

The Twenty-fourth Triennial Convocation of the General Grand Chapter was held in Detroit commencing on the 24th of August, A. D. 1880, with M. E. Companion John Frizzell, G. G. H. P., presiding. The action taken by the Grand Chapter of Texas in 1878 and 1879 in declining the invitation to rescind the resolution of 1861, or to reconsider the action of 1878 came in for extended discussion.

The General Grand High Priest in his address reviewed some of the history of the controversy and the action of our Grand Chapter in 1878, and closed his statement with the following recommendation:

“Under all the circumstances the conviction is forced upon the mind that forbearance has ceased to be a virtue, and that nothing is now left but to take decisive action.

“It is, therefore, recommended:

“1. That the General Grand Chapter take such steps as will forbid and prohibit all Masonic intercourse, as Royal Arch Masons, between those in its jurisdiction and the Grand Chapter of Texas, and its subordinates, and those adhering to the jurisdiction of said Grand Chapter.

“2. This prohibition to be removed whenever said Grand Chapter shall resume its allegiance to the jurisdiction of the General Grand Chapter, and shall revoke and annul the legislation, of 1861, and subsequently, by which it was attempted to sever that allegiance.

“3. That in the meantime such steps be taken as will secure and protect in theft allegiance those Chapters and Companions in Texas still adhering or preferring to adhere to the jurisdiction of the General Grand Chapter.”

The recommendations of the G. G. H. P. were referred to the Committee on Jurisprudence. Since the report of that committee sets forth the position of the G. G. C. at that time rather fully, the report is presented in full, as follows:

“Comp. Lewis, of the Committee on Jurisprudence, submitted the following report relative to the Grand Chapter of Texas:

“To the General Grand Chapter of the United States:

“The Committee on Jurisprudence, to which was referred so much of the address of the M. E. General Grand High Priest, at its present Convocation as relates to the acts and position of the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of the State of Texas, respectfully submit this their report:

“That we have fully and carefully considered and discussed in committee and in the most kindly and fraternal spirit toward our respected Companions of Texas, the attitude of that Grand Chapter in its relations to the General Grand Chapter, as it appears to the committee, in view of the facts so carefully and truthfully, as well as correctly and impartially presented in that address. Nor have they forgotten to weigh and consider the motives and misapprehensions so constantly occurring in the conduct and management of all human affairs, even among brethren, nor omitted to give prominence in theft thoughts to that well established truth, that domestic contentions frequently arise from slight causes, and give rise to the most embittered and angry feelings.

“The facts referred to are briefly these:

“First, That the Grand Chapter of Texas was constituted in December, 1850, under the recognized authority of this General Grand Chapter, and derived all its powers, as well as its very existence, as a legal and regular Grand Chapter, from it. This is evinced, not only by its taking all the requisite steps to its organization in obedience to the requirements of the General Grand Constitution, but in incorporating in its own Constitution a declaration that it was subordinate to the General Grand Chapter, and being represented at the three next following Triennial Convocations.

“Second. That the Grand Chapter of Texas, notwithstanding these acts, and the fact that every officer and member had taken upon himself, prior to June, 1861, the obligations prescribed to support and maintain the General Grand Chapter, Resolved, at the period last named, that all connection between it and the General Grand Chapter was dissolved and forever annihilated, by the separation of the State of Texas from the government of the United States. Subsequent events have proved that the reasons assigned for the attempted separation were as fallacious in fact as they were unsound in theory. The relations between the Grand Chapter of Texas and this General Grand Chapter were such that they could not be dissolved, much less annihilated, without the consent of both, or, by way of penalty for a Masonic offense, or in consequence of

some gross act of injustice or oppression on the part of the governing body, which would render further connection with it injurious or destructive of its rights and welfare.

“Third. No such acts on the part of the General Grand Chapter towards the Grand Chapter of Texas are pretended, or can be shown to have been committed, but, on the contrary, those of leniency, forbearance and good will have always been exhibited; regardless of which, however, the Grand Chapter of Texas persists in its attempt to sever the connection, and in its refusal to admit its lawful authority, to which it had voluntarily submitted and by which it was solemnly and irrevocably bound, unless this Body to which it was so bound had committed some act by which allegiance was forfeited or its obligations released.

“Such is the precise question as it exists today, and hence this Committee cannot but concur in the conclusion of the General Grand High Priest, as expressed in his address; to do otherwise, would be to shut its eyes both to ‘the law and the testimony.’ We only differ with him as to the supposed necessity of the application of the proposed remedy now, when hearts are still burning with bitter memories of the past enkindled upon other fields of action, and which, unconsciously to the actors, perhaps sway their judgment and control their conduct. We are unwilling to part with our Companions of Texas; we cannot bring our minds, as yet, to the conclusion that they are in future to be excluded from the sympathies which cluster around our National Royal Arch Union, and that all the sacred memories of the past are to be buried, and that we are henceforth ‘to hold them as we hold the rest of mankind, enemies in war, in peace friends.’ ‘We cannot resist the belief that a stronger, a deeper, a holier cord of sympathy and bond of union still unites us, as the courteous and fraternal tone of the communications between us still evince, and that they unaccountably labor under some misapprehension as to the position, purposes, and motives of this General Grand Chapter in the premises; and are unaware that its strongest and most earnest motive is, that while mildly, but firmly, re-asserting its claim of rightful jurisdiction, and denying that it may be cast off at pleasure, its strongest and most earnest desire is, that not one link in the golden chain of union may be severed.

“The Committee therefore respectfully propose, that all action upon the recommendations of the General Grand High Priest, in his address, be suspended until the next Triennial Convocation of the General Grand Chapter, unless some emergency should arise rendering other action imperatively necessary; and which they are willing to commit to the judgment and discretion of the General Grand High Priest, guided by the judgment and conclusions expressed in his address. And that we exhort every officer and Companion expressly acknowledging our jurisdiction; we exhort our still loved and honored Companions of Texas, so to conduct and act mutually to and with each other, with all causes of difference in the past as minor considerations, when another Triennial Convocation of this General Grand Chapter shall be held, we and they together may be found, with clasped hands and melted hearts, kneeling with our beloved Companions from every jurisdiction of Royal Arch Masonry in this broad Republic at one common altar, and sending up our united invocations to the Great I AM, that we are firmly united together in one common faith, one undying hope, and one glorious destiny.

‘We subjoin the following resolution, expressive of our conclusions:

“*Resolved*, That all action upon the recommendations of the General Grand High Priest, contained in his address, respecting the Grand Chapter of Texas, be deferred until the next Triennial Convocation; unless some emergency shall meanwhile arise requiring definite action, and which, in such case, the General Grand High Priest is hereby fully authorized and empowered to take.

“Respectfully and fraternally submitted,

JOHN L. LEWIS,  
JAMES M. AUSTIN,  
JOSIAH H. DRUMMOND,

AZARIAH T. C. PIERSON,  
JOSEPH P. HORNOR,  
ENOS WASGATE.”

There was a minority report by a single member of the committee, Illustrious Companion Frederic Speed of Mississippi.

Comp. Speed exhibited more vision, judgment and understanding, in his short report, than has been shown by all the distinguished Companions who have attempted to deal with this subject in the G. G. C. put together. His minority report follows:

### “MINORITY REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON JURISPRUDENCE

“Comp. Speed, of the same committee, submitted the following report of the minority, and moved that it be substituted for the report of the Committee:

“To the General Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons:

“The undersigned, a minority of the Committee on Jurisprudence, with much diffidence and entertaining a profound respect for the opinions of the distinguished Companions with whom he has the honor to be associated, concurring in the statement of facts set forth in the report of the majority, respectfully dissents from the conclusions reached by them- lie is unwilling to entrust the General Grand High Priest with the exercise of a power which is denied to the General Grand Chapter itself. Under the Constitution (Art. 7) the power of discipline, admonition, censure, or instruction, over Grand Chapters, is expressly denied to the General Grand Chapter.

“The Grand Chapter of Texas is a sovereign Body, vested with all the rights, powers and privileges attaching to a Supreme Masonic Power. It is regular in its constitution and organization, and perpetuates, through its subordinates, the true work and principles of the Royal Craft; and is entitled to the full measure of protection which the well-established law of absolute jurisdiction, within the State or Territory in which it exists, affords against the encroachment of this, or any other, Masonic Power. When it shall recognize the moral force of its Masonic obligations to the great body of Royal Arch Masons throughout the Union, and of its own volition, resume its relations as one of the component parts of the confederation of Grand Chapters existing under the name of General Grand Chapter, it will not come as a Prodigal Son, but standing erect in the full measure of its manhood, as becomes a Sovereign among Sovereigns.

“Let us, by every fraternal method which love and affection can devise, pave the way to her return, and carefully avoid placing any stumbling block in her path. In my humble judgment the silken tie of love will prove far stronger in causing the resumption of the relations formerly existing between the Grand Chapter of Texas and the General Grand Chapter, than all the thunders you can fulminate in the shape of implied threats, such as is contained in the resolution presented by the majority of the Committee, and I therefore submit the following resolution:

“*Resolved*, That it is inexpedient to take any action regarding the Grand Chapter of Texas at this time.

“Respectfully and fraternally submitted,  
FREDERIC SPEED.”

### **SUBSTITUTE RESOLUTION**

Comp. Innes of Michigan offered the following as a substitute for the conclusions embraced in both reports from the Committee on Jurisprudence:

*“Resolved, That until the Grand Chapter of Texas shall by her action acknowledge her allegiance to this Grand Body, that all Masonic intercourse as Royal Arch Masons between those in its jurisdiction and the G. G. C. shall be and is hereby prohibited. This prohibition to be removed whenever said Grand Chapter shall resume its allegiance to the jurisdiction of the General Grand Chapter, and shall revoke and annul the legislation of 1861 and subsequently, by which it was attempted to sever that allegiance.”*

The question was taken on the above substitute on a call of yeas and nays by the following vote: Yeas, 1, Comp. Innes; Nays, 146.

The Committee on jurisprudence asked and obtained leave to amend then- resolution by striking out all after the word “Convocation.” The vote was then taken on motion of Comp. Speed to substitute the report made by him for the report of the Committee and same was lost by the following vote: Yeas, 67; nays, 81. A change of eight votes would have adopted the commendable Speed report.

On motion of Comp. Pillans of Alabama, further action on the report of the Committee on Jurisprudence was postponed until the next Triennial Convocation. That particular report was never revived. In the Triennials of 1883, 1886 and 1889 no mention of the subject of Texas can be found.

The next reference to the subject in the G. G. C. appears to have been in the year 1892. Likewise the Proceedings of the Grand Chapter of Texas remained silent on the subject from the year 1879 to 1892.

## **1881**

On the 20th of June, 1881, the whole Masonic world was saddened by the death of Illustrious Companion Albert Gallatin Mackey, full of years and honors. He left an imprint on the body of Masonry second to none in the history of American Freemasonry. He taught the philosophy, recorded the history and expounded the jurisprudence of Masonry in a manner which may have been equaled by others, but certainly not surpassed by any, The amendments offered by him and Illustrious Comp. Albert Pike to the Constitution of the G. G. C. in 1859 were the cause of the severance of our relations with it, as heretofore shown.

## **1891**

On April 2nd, 1891, at the age of 82, Illustrious Companion Albert Pike ceased his monumental labors on this earth. No comment which I can make would add to his fame and accomplishments as a man or Mason. His name is forever engraven on the monument of his works. His service to the Supreme Council of the Scottish Rite as Grand Commander; as the revisor and perfecter of its Rituals; his authorship of “Morals and Dogmas,” the Liturgies and Readings, and many other notable works; his leadership of the Rite, has stamped him as one of the very greatest Masonic scholars, philosophers, authors, and leaders of all time. His brief attendance upon the Convocations of the G. G. C. revolutionized the Constitutional structure of that Grand Body.

## **1892**

The Convocation of the Grand Chapter of Texas was held at Houston on December 6th, 1892, with M. E. Grand High Priest John McDonald of Austin presiding. He was the second Grand High Priest to recommend reaffiliation with the G. G. C. In his address he called attention to the fact that the G. G. C. in its Triennial held at Minneapolis July 22nd, 1892, had again considered the relations of the G. G. C. with the Grand

Chapter of Texas. The M. E. General Grand High Priest, in his address, referred to the question and set forth a letter dated December 2, 1890, which he claimed was sent to the Grand High Priest of our Grand Chapter. If the Grand High Priest received the communication, no record of it appears in the Proceedings of 1890 or 1891. Grand High Priest McDonald, however, includes the letter in his address of 1892.

The letter was signed by David F. Day, General Grand High Priest. It is too lengthy to quote in full. The address of Grand High Priest McDonald and the letter of Comp. Day, G. G. H. P., may be found in the Proc. G. C. of Texas, 1892, pp. 45-50 (Ruthven reprint).

The letter of Comp. Day opens as follows:

“Buffalo, N. Y., Dec. 2, 1890.

“To the M. E. Grand High Priest, Officers and Companions of the Grand Chapter of Texas - Thrice Greeting:

“Dear and Honored Companions:

“It has become my duty to renew the appeal which has heretofore been addressed to you by several of my predecessors in office, to consider the action by which you have endeavored to sunder the ties which unite you with the General Grand Chapter, and to ask you to take such steps as may be necessary in order that your Grand Chapter may be represented in our Convocations. I beg leave to assure you that in making this communication I am animated by no other than the kindest and most fraternal sentiments towards my Companions of Texas; and that in this respect I represent the feelings of all the members of the General Grand Chapter.

“I do not know of any reason why the relations which formerly existed between the General Grand Chapter and the Grand Chapter of Texas should not be at once restored; but I do know that if such relations should be restored the satisfaction occasioned by the happy event would spread at once through the entire jurisdiction of the General Grand Chapter. And I can give you the most confident assurances that if the Grand Chapter of Texas should send representatives to the next Convocation of the General Grand Chapter, they would meet with a cordial and most fraternal welcome.

“I fail to discover any advantage to the Royal Arch Masons of Texas, which should cause them to prefer to remain in their present condition of isolation. On the contrary, many reasons present themselves to my mind, which, it seems to me, should persuade them to resume their place as honored constituents of the General Grand Chapter. As you are well aware, the powers of the General Grand Chapter are confined to a narrow compass. But, notwithstanding such limitations, its value in the American Masonic system can hardly be questioned by the intelligent and judicious Companion.”

Companion Day then proceeds to point out several matters in which he regarded the G. G. C. as highly important and useful. He then reviews some of the history already covered, and closes his letter with a strong appeal to reunite in which he said:

“Why may not the Grand Chapter of Texas yield to the many considerations which must invite her to leave her position of isolation and again occupy an honored place in the General Grand Chapter?.. The General Grand Chapter is prosperous. It is known and honored throughout the world. Its treasury is ample. No discordant element disturbs its councils It is the return of your Grand Chapter that is sought, and that only, in order that the family circle may again be unbroken.”

The General Grand High Priest in 1892 recommended the appointment of a committee to visit the Grand Chapter of Texas and personally urge the affiliation. Grand High Priest McDonald in closing his address said:

“I have considered the question from all the reports upon the subject, and I feel it to be my duty to recommend that the M. E. Grand Chapter of Texas shall renew its allegiance to the General Grand Chapter of the United States of America.”

## **DISTINGUISHED VISITORS**

The Convocation of the Grand Chapter of Texas of 1892 was notable for a visitation by two distinguished members of the General Grand Chapter, Companions R. C. Lemmon of Ohio, General Grand King, and Frederic Speed of Mississippi. They were graciously received and welcomed with full honors befitting their exalted rank.

Both delivered addresses and renewed the invitation to reunite with the G. G. C. However, Companion Lemmon made the usual tactical error of attributing the withdrawal to the exigencies of the Civil War. Among other things he said: “It is also true that the Grand Chapter of Texas withdrew her allegiance to the General Grand Chapter without any quarrel or contention having arisen between them, and, therefore, solely moved thereto by causes outside of the fraternal relations which had existed between the respective Chapters. I may, therefore, fairly assume that the withdrawal of the Grand Chapter of Texas was caused by the secession of the State of Texas and the state of war which followed, as no other cause can be assigned.” (For the full text of the address see the Proc. G. C. of Texas, 1892, pp. 61, 62, 63 (Ruthven reprint).)

## **REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEE**

That portion of the address of the M. E. Grand High Priest relating to the present subject was referred to a select committee. Like the committee of 1878 they divided and presented majority and minority reports in which much of the history of the controversy was restated. The two reports cover 21 printed pages of the Proceedings, and for that reason cannot be reproduced here. (The full texts will be found on pp. 70 to 91, Proc. 1892.) After full discussion neither report was adopted but were ordered printed in the Proceedings for the information of the Companions.

## **1893**

In 1893 the Grand High Priest, Comp. S. J. Morriss, addressed a circular letter to the subordinate Chapters calling attention to the reports published in the Proceedings of 1892, requesting that they be read so that the Chapters may instruct their delegates on how to vote on the question of reuniting with the General Grand Chapter. The Grand High Priest also commented at length on the subject and expressed his opposition to reunion. The full text thereof will be found on pages 108-111, Proc. 1898. (Reprint.)

The Grand Chapter, by resolution, appointed a special committee to visit the General Grand Chapter at Topeka in August, 1894, for the purpose of ascertaining upon what terms and under what conditions a union between the two bodies could be effected, in the event this Grand Chapter should desire such union.

A very distinguished committee was appointed consisting of Past Grand Master and Past Grand High Priest Frank B. Sexton, of Marshall; Past Grand Master and Past Grand High Priest James F. Miller, of Gonzales; Past Grand High Priest John McDonald, of Austin; Past Grand Master Marcus F. Mott, of Galveston; and Companion Charles S. Morse, of Austin.

## 1894

At the Convocation of the Grand Chapter of Texas in 1894, Most Excellent Grand High Priest Frank Nusom, in his Annual Report to the Grand Chapter of Texas, under the heading "The General Grand Chapter," said:

"Now, Companions, we come to that very important question which has been prominently before you for the last two years, and stands today as it was in the beginning, unsettled.

"Every interest of this Grand Chapter, and of the craft at large, demands that it should no longer remain in that condition. Then why longer delay? What more do you need than you have already? Two of my predecessors, Companion McDonald, in 1892, and Companion Morriss, in 1893, have made recommendations upon this subject, the one in favor of, the other against, returning to the General Grand Chapter. You have had the benefit of very able reports made by committees composed of our most intelligent Companions which cover both sides of the question. In addition to this, your special committee, appointed at the last annual Convocation to visit and confer with the General Grand Chapter at its Triennial Convocation, will no doubt report at this time the result of that conference. Now, Companions, I leave this subject with you, and while, as is well known to many of you, I am in favor of returning to the General Grand Chapter, I shall to the best of my ability, try to give both sides of this question full and impartial justice."

Companion Nusom thus became the third Grand High Priest since 1878 to recommend a reunion with the G. G. C.

### **REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEE**

The special committee duly appointed to visit the G. G. C. performed their duty, and made a report to the Grand Chapter in 1894.

It seems that only three members of the committee made the trip, as Companions James F. Miller and Frank B. Sexton did not sign the report. It appears that the committee took the position that they were merely the bearers of a message of inquiry and were, therefore, careful not to commit the Grand Chapter in any way.

### **"MEMORIAL**

"Topeka, Kansas, August 22, 1894.

"To the General Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons:

"Companions: We respectfully represent that at the Forty- fourth Annual Convocation of the M. E. Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Texas, held at the City of Houston, in December, 1893, the following preamble and resolutions were adopted:

"Whereas, at the last stated Convocation of the General Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons, held in the City of Minneapolis, Minnesota, in 1891, a committee was appointed to visit the Grand Chapter of Texas, for the purpose, as stated in the resolution adopted, to 'seek by fraternal endeavor to induce the Grand Chapter of Texas to renew its relation to the General Grand Chapter;' and

"Whereas, Companions Lemmon and Speed, as the representatives of said General Grand Chapter, visited the Grand Chapter of Texas at its last Annual Convocation, and presented, in person, the resolution so adopted; therefore be it

“Resolved, That a committee of five members of the M. E. Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Texas be appointed to visit the General Grand Chapter at its next Stated Convocation, to be held in the City of Topeka, Kansas, on July 18, 1894, for the purpose of ascertaining upon what terms, and under what conditions, the General Grand Chapter will receive the Grand Chapter of Texas, provided, said Grand Chapter should decide to accept the invitation to unite itself with said General Grand Chapter; and that said committee make a full report back to this Grand Chapter at its next Annual Convocation.

“We were appointed on said committee, and now beg leave to present the said resolution to the General Grand Chapter for its consideration; and we will be pleased to report to the Grand Chapter of Texas such action as the General Grand Chapter may deem it advisable to take in response to said resolution.

“Fraternally,  
MARCUS F. MOTT,  
JOHN McDONALD,  
CHARLES S. MORSE.”

## **REPLY OF THE GENERAL GRAND CHAPTER**

“In General Grand Chapter,  
Topeka, Kan., August 24, 1894.

*(Extract from Official Proceedings)*

“Companion John P. Shannon, of the select committee, to which was referred the Memorial of the Grand Chapter of Texas, submitted the following report, which was received and the recommendations adopted:

### **“REPORT**

“To the General Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons:

“We, as the committee to whom was referred the Memorial from the Grand Chapter of Texas, having given the matter consideration, respectfully beg leave to report:

They prepared a memorial on behalf of the Grand Chapter of Texas which was presented to the G. G. C. by Companion Frederic Speed on behalf of the Texas committee. The memorial was received by the G. G. C. and was promptly referred to a select committee. The memorial, the action of the G. G. C., and the report of the special committee were as follows:

“We recommend that the General Grand Chapter, as an expression of the great pleasure it feels upon receiving from the Grand Chapter of Texas, through its authorized committee, an inquiry as to the terms upon which it may be admitted to membership in the General Grand Chapter, courteously welcomes the Companions appointed by that Grand Body to present the same, as most acceptable visitors to the General Grand Chapter.

“We further recommend that, in response to the inquiry contained in said Memorial, the General Grand Chapter, anxious to promote the common interests of Royal Arch Masonry, cordially and fraternally invites the Grand Chapter of Texas to become a constituent of the General Grand Chapter upon a perfect equality with its peers which now compose the General Grand Body, with no terms, conditions or restrictions imposed differing in any respect from those observed by all; that the payment of dues and other constitutional requirements shall only become operative upon her admission to membership in the General Grand Chapter;

that such membership shall neither alter nor abridge the powers now exercised by the Grand Chapter of Texas over the ritual used and degrees conferred under the authority of said Grand Chapter, and that the General Grand Chapter will greet the Grand Chapter of Texas with the right hand of fellowship and the warm heart of perfect love, whenever she shall seek admission to membership in the General Grand Chapter, which recognizes her now, as always heretofore, as a Sovereign Grand Body, and her Companions as brethren justly entitled to and deserving of fullest Masonic fellowship.

“We further recommend that this report, when adopted by the General Grand Chapter, shall be delivered to the Grand Chapter of Texas, through the medium of the distinguished Companions who bore to the General Grand Chapter the Memorial of that Grand Body.

“We further recommend that if the Grand Chapter of Texas shall seek admission into the General Grand Chapter, in accordance with the terms set forth in this report, the Council of General Grand Officers be authorized and directed to issue a proclamation to the Grand Chapters composing the. General Grand Chapter, admitting tile Grand Chapter of Texas to membership in the General Grand Chapter. All of which is fraternally submitted.

(Signed) JOHN P. SHANNON,  
JOHN W. CHAMBERLIN,  
FREDERICK C. WINSLOW.”

The special committee of the Grand Chapter of Texas continued its report as follows:

“We learned that this report was adopted unanimously by a rising vote.

“Attached hereto we present an official copy of the proceedings pertaining to the subject matter of our mission, attested under the hand and seal of the General Grand Secretary. ‘Your committee desire to say that they were particular not to commit this Grand Chapter. On the contrary, in conversations with the officers and distinguished Companions, they expressly disclaimed any power or authority to treat for or on behalf of your Grand Body, contenting themselves with the declaration that they were simply the bearers of a communication from the Grand Chapter of Texas to the General Grand Chapter of the United States. Your committee, having discharged its duty, now lays before you the result of its mission for such action as your wisdom may dictate.

“We would be doing violence to our own feelings, as well as an injustice to the General Grand Chapter, if we failed to say that we were received with distinguished consideration by the last named body, and were the recipients of continued fraternal courtesies from its distinguished members. Nothing was left undone to make our visit pleasant, and every attention was shown us by the General Grand Officers, and, in fact, by all with whom we came in contact.

“Our thanks, however, are especially due to Companion Frederic Speed, of Mississippi, who presented for us the resolutions of this Grand Body, and who constituted himself the special friend of your committee. We shall not soon forget his many acts of kindness.

“Your committee did not receive the many courtesies bestowed upon it as personal to itself, but regarded them, as they were doubtless intended, as so many expressions of the General Grand Chapter of its good will and fraternal consideration towards the Grand Chapter of Texas, which it recognizes as a Sovereign Grand Body.

“All of which is fraternally submitted,

(Signed) M. F. MOTT,

JOHN McDONALD,  
CHAS. S. MORSE.”

It will be observed that the above committee made no recommendation on the question of the acceptance of the invitation from the G. G. C. Whether there was any discussion of the report is not shown by the Proceedings.

The only matter reported was the following:

“M. E. Companion F. B. Sexton presented the following resolutions, which were read and adopted by an overwhelming majority:

“*Resolved*, That the Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Texas returns its thanks to the General Grand Chapter of the United States for its courtesy to the committee of this Grand Chapter, which visited that body at Topeka in August last.

“*Resolved*, That while entertaining the highest respect and most cordial brotherly feeling for the Royal Arch Masons who are members of the General Grand Chapter of the United States, as well as for all those Grand Chapters which acknowledge its jurisdiction and supremacy, the Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Texas deems it inexpedient to surrender its own sovereignty as an independent Masonic body, and believes that the true interests of Capitular Masonry will be best promoted by adhering to the action it has already taken toward the General Grand Chapter of the United States.”

Thus ended, for another 18 years, the most serious effort to reunite the two Grand Bodies.

There was only one ground stated which was as follows:

“The Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Texas deems it inexpedient to surrender its own sovereignty as an independent Masonic body, etc., etc.”

It is difficult to harmonize the reasoning of this declaration with the facts of history. We severed our relations with the G. G. C. because of the amendments to the Constitution of the G. G. C. in 1859, whereby the G. G. C. was deprived of its sovereignty and supremacy, and each State Grand Chapter was thereby made supreme and sovereign over Capitular Masonry in its jurisdiction.

It is universally conceded, and the G. G. C. recognizes the fact, that each State Grand Chapter is sovereign and supreme, over Capitular Masonry in its own jurisdiction. The General Grand Chapter has no power of legislation, discipline, admonition, or otherwise, over any Grand Chapter in its jurisdiction. Therefore it is impossible to comprehend in what respects the Grand Chapter of Texas would have lost its sovereignty as an independent Grand Body over Capitular Masonry in Texas had it, in its wisdom, acted otherwise.

I do not offer these suggestions as any criticism of the action taken by our Grand Chapter at that time, but only for the purpose of pointing out the weakness of the reason assigned in support of the action taken.

Texas does not appear to enjoy any more independence or sovereignty over her territory than other State Grand Chapters have the right to exercise in theirs. This must be conceded in all fairness to the question.

The only supreme and sovereign power really exercised by the G. G. C. is the right to establish Chapters in territory where no Grand Chapter exists. A power, it is believed, none of the State Grand Chapters care to exercise.

## 1912

After the adoption of the Sexton resolution in 1894, eighteen years passed before the subject was again revived.

The Convocation of the Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Texas was held at Waco, Texas, on December 2nd, 1912, with Companion C. L. Alderman, M. E. Grand High Priest, presiding.

In his address the Grand High Priest said:

“One more matter I wish to bring before this Grand Chapter. At various times in the past the question of the affiliation of this Grand Chapter with the General Grand Chapter of the United States has been brought to the notice of the Convocations of this Grand Chapter.

“At each time conditions were not favorable to the consideration of the subject, and it was passed over, with the result we did not affiliate. In the past, circumstances were different than at this time. The world has changed in many ways, and all Masonic bodies are now trying to get together, as in that way our interests are best furthered. I have carefully read the correspondence and matter printed in the Proceedings of this Grand Chapter on this subject. I have lately talked with some of the officers of the General Grand Chapter, and find them still desiring that this Grand Chapter consider favorably the invitation to join with them in the work of promoting Royal Arch Masonry. I feel sure that conditions satisfactory to this Grand Chapter can be secured, and so recommend that a committee be appointed to consider this subject, to correspond with the General Grand Chapter, with a view to the ultimate union of this Grand Chapter with the General Grand Chapter of the United States.”

Grand High Priest Alderman became the fourth to recommend reuniting with the G. G. C.

The Committee on Grand Officers' Reports in considering the recommendation of the Grand High Priest, commented on the number of times the question had been considered, but Companion Ed R. Bryan, Past Grand High Priest, speaking for the committee, said:

“Your committee is aware of the fact that this question has been before this Grand Body at least twice, and has been thoroughly discussed pro and con by some of the ablest and most distinguished Masons that this Grand Chapter has ever produced, and it may occur to some of the Companions that this question has been settled, and ought to stay settled. However, in the opinion of the writer, at least, the question was not settled right, and no question that is not settled right will stay settled.”

The committee approved the recommendation of the Grand High Priest that a committee of five be appointed to consider the question. The incoming Grand High Priest appointed Companions Sam P. Cochran, J. C. Kidd, Chas. L. Alderman, J. J. Gallaher, and Joe Adams, all Past Grand High Priests, on the committee. (See Proc. G. C. of Texas 1912, pp. 20 and 66.)

## 1913

The committee reported progress and asked for further time, which was granted.

## 1916

The special committee appointed in 1912 made no report until the year 1916. In August, 1915, at the Triennial of the G. G. C. a resolution was adopted instructing the M. E. General Grand High Priest "to appoint a committee to visit the Grand Chapter of Texas and discuss with it all questions relating to the reaffiliation or re-alignment of the Grand Chapter of Texas with the G. G. C."

Most Excellent Grand High Priest W. Madden Fly learned that Companion George F. Corson, M. F. General Grand High Priest, and party desired to visit the Grand Chapter in 1916. In keeping with his well known courteous and hospitable disposition, Companion Fly addressed a gracious letter to him, giving assurance of a cordial and sincere welcome, both personally and officially.

Companion Corson replied with a letter of appreciation and anticipation of a pleasant visitation. On December 4th, 1916, Companions George F. Corson, General Grand High Priest; Henry Banks, General Grand Royal Arch Captain; Henry K. Simpson, Past Grand High Priest of the Grand Chapter of the District of Columbia; and Nelson Williams, Past Grand High Priest of the Grand Chapter of Ohio, were received in the Grand Chapter of Texas with the honors due their exalted stations. The General Grand High Priest addressed the Grand Chapter. He extended a renewed invitation to reunite with the G. G. C. Among other things he said:

"We want the Grand Chapter of Texas to have some part in this great work, not merely as Royal Arch Masons, but as an active participant with their Companions of forty-five of her sister Grand Jurisdictions in this great Republic."

(For the full text of his address see Proc. G. C. of Texas, 1916, pp. 40, 41, 42 and 43.)

On the following day the report of the committee of 1912 was presented. Like those of 1878 and 1893 the committee divided and presented two reports, a majority report signed by Companions J. C. Kidd, J. J. Gallaher and Joe Adams, against affiliation, and a minority report in favor of affiliation signed by Companions Sam P. Cochran and C. L. Alderman.

These two reports restate the historical facts found in the committee reports of 1878 and 1893. However, it can be said that the reports of 1916 are, perhaps, more extensive and in some respects more accurate than those previously submitted to the Grand Chapter. They cover 23 printed pages, and for that reason cannot be included in this treatise. However, since every Chapter library should possess the Proceedings of 1916, I trust you will find it agreeable to review same. They will be found recorded immediately following page 84, Proceedings G. C. of Texas, 1916.

The majority report, which carried a duplicate copy of the Sexton resolution of 1894, was adopted on December 5th, 1916. Thus for the third time the Grand Chapter of Texas respectfully voted to decline the invitation of the G. G. C. to reunite with it.

## 1942

Following the action of the Grand Chapter in 1916, the subject under discussion lay dormant for 26 years, except for an occasional unofficial visitation by some of the distinguished officers and members of the General Grand Chapter. Such visitations were purely social and fraternal and were highly appreciated and enjoyed by the Companions of our Grand Chapter.

At the Triennial of the G. G. C. convened at Salt Lake City, Utah, on August 26, 1942, a movement was inaugurated to extend the General Grand Chapter into a hemispherical organization by seeking the affiliation

of all Grand Chapters of the United States and Canada not now a member of the confederation. The proposal is incorporated in the resolution set forth at the opening of this document.

Upon notice that such a resolution had been adopted by the G. G. C. and that the General Grand High Priest had been authorized to extend the invitation to each of the Grand Chapters of Pennsylvania, Virginia, Texas and those of Canada, and visit them at their invitation, Comp. W. J. Chesney, M. E. Grand High Priest, dispatched a cordial invitation to M. E. Ray V. Denslow, General Grand High Priest, to visit the convocation of our Grand Chapter in December, 1942, where he would be accorded an opportunity of presenting the aforesaid invitation and program.

Illustrious Companion Denslow accepted the invitation and was received with full Masonic honors on Monday, November 30<sup>th</sup>, 1942. His able and enlightening address will be found on pages 69-74, Proceedings 1942, which you are respectfully and fraternally requested to review.

In the course of his address Companion Denslow said:

“At one time Texas was a part of this great national organization. In 1859, certain high Masonic dignitaries presented resolutions at the Triennial meeting held in Chicago, Illinois; these resolutions had the effect of depriving the General Grand Chapter of much of its power and authority.

“Texas concluded that by thus stripping the organization of this power and authority, it had weakened its structure to such an extent that it had no more authority than did the Grand Chapter of Texas, or any other Grand Chapter in these United States. Personally, I don’t blame my Companions of Texas for the action they took on that occasion.

“It was all unfortunate act in depriving General Grand Chapter of that authority by which it might act when necessity demanded.”

It is worthy of note that Illustrious Companion Denslow is the first, and so far as I have been able to find, the only General Grand High Priest who has had the understanding to state the true and effective reason underlying the withdrawal of the Grand Chapter of Texas from the confederation, and who has had the frankness and courage to declare that he attached no blame to our action in so doing.

Following the address of the General Grand High Priest, a resolution was adopted authorizing the incoming Grand High Priest to appoint a special committee to study the question in all its phases and make a report to the Grand Chapter at its next Annual Convocation.

Pursuant to the resolution, Companion John Temple Rice, M. E. Grand High Priest, appointed the committee, consisting of all the living Past Grand High Priests and all the elective officers of the Grand Chapter.

## **RESULTS OF CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE OF 1859**

Whatever may have been the purpose of the change of the constitution in 1859, and however deep and gloomy were the forebodings of the friends of the General Grand Chapter, there should be no disappointment in the results which followed.

The General Grand Chapter survived the Civil War, the State Grand Chapters settled back, each Supreme and Sovereign in its own jurisdiction, with the General Grand Chapter busy luring back into the fold those that had rebelled and withdrawn. The G. G. C. thereafter busied itself by exercising its one effective attribute

of sovereign power delegated to it; that was, to establish Chapters in unoccupied territory where no Grand Chapter existed.

From the year 1865 under the leadership of John L. Lewis, Jr., General Grand High Priest, and others, a new era was begun. All of the State Grand Chapters prospered and new ones were created until by the turn of the century 46 States, including the District of Columbia, had Grand Chapters under the banner of the General Grand Chapter, with only the States of Pennsylvania, Virginia and Texas not included in the organization.

The growth of Capitular Masonry was progressive and steady as will be illustrated by official reports, some of which I have before me.

| <i>Year</i> | <i>No. of subordinate Chapters</i> | <i>Total Membership</i>     |
|-------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1865.....   | 1083.....                          | <i>Only partial figures</i> |
| 1868.....   | 1636.....                          | 75,478                      |
| 1871.....   | 1777.....                          | 104,715                     |
| 1874.....   | 1873.....                          | 112,492                     |
| 1877.....   | 1989.....                          | 118,216                     |
| 1939.....   | 2901.....                          | 405,039                     |

I do not have the proceedings at hand for the years between 1877 and 1939, but the figures for 1939 show a steady and marvelous growth for that period. During the years of 1940-41 there has been a decline in membership experienced by all the bodies of Masonry. However, on July 1st, 1942, the 46 Grand Chapters under the jurisdiction of the General Grand Chapter had a combined membership of 367,551 with resources of \$1,563,643.19, which constitutes the largest membership of any single Grand or Supreme Masonic body in the world.

In addition to the 46 State Grand Chapters, the General Grand Chapter has established the following subordinate Chapters in other lands, carrying and diffusing Capitular light and knowledge to other peoples where otherwise they would still be in darkness and ignorance of the fundamental truths which complete the glorious system of Ancient Craft Masonry.

#### SUBORDINATE CHAPTERS

|                      |                        |                      |
|----------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| Honolulu No. 1       | Honolulu, T. H         | Chartered 9-14-1859  |
| King Cyrus No. 1     | Valparaiso, Chile      | Chartered 9- 8-1865  |
| Keystone No. 1       | Shanghai, China        | Chartered 9-20-1871  |
| Borenquin No. 1      | San Juan, Peurto Rico  | Chartered 10-8-1903  |
| Luzon No. 1          | Manila, P. I           | Chartered 6-22-1906  |
| Island No. 1         | Havana, Cuba           | Chartered 11-12-1909 |
| Fairbanks No. 1      | Fairbanks, Alaska      | Chartered 11-12-1909 |
| Canal Zone No. 1     | Ancon, Canal Zone      | Chartered 9-12-1912  |
| Seward No. 2         | Nome, Alaska           | Chartered 9-12-1912  |
| Santa Fe No. 2       | Nueva Gerona. I. of P  | Chartered 9- 2-1915  |
| Christohal No. 2     | Christobal, Canal Zone | Chartered 10-13-1918 |
| Anchorage No. 3      | Anchorage, Alaska      | Chartered 9-29-1921  |
| City of Mexico No. 1 | Mexico City, Mexico    | Chartered 9-11-1924  |
| Tampion No. 2        | Tampion, Mexico        | Chartered 9-11-1924  |
| Monterey No. 3       | Monterey, Mexico       | Chartered 9-29-1927  |
| Cordova No. 4        | Cordova, Alaska        | Chartered 8-29-1930  |

## **ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE GENERAL GRAND CHAPTER IN THE 145 YEARS OF ITS EXISTENCE**

It would require much more time and space than, I feel, can be indulged to summarize all the claims to constructive service which may be properly accorded the General Grand Chapter throughout its long history. However, a brief reference to it is necessary if we are to correctly appraise its service to Capitular Masonry.

In the light of history, even the most ardent opponent of the General Grand Chapter would be compelled to agree that it was entitled to credit for the following accomplishments:

1st. It was the first Grand Chapter formed exclusively by Royal Arch Chapters.

2nd. It created what is known as the "American Rite" Royal Arch Masonry, by combining the degree of Mark Master with the Blue Lodge degree of Past Master and fabricating the most Excellent Masters degree as a preliminary to the Holy Royal Arch Degree.

3rd. It formulated the laws creating a system of jurisprudence for Capitular Masonry in this country.

4th. By its persistent, zealous, and sometimes arbitrary, administration, it lifted the Royal Arch and Mark Masters degrees out of the jurisdiction of Provincial Lodges and Grand Lodges, and firmly established them in a separate Grand Body of Chapter jurisdiction.

5th. It secured the abandonment by the Supreme Council of the Scottish Rite, of its claims to jurisdiction over the Mark Master, Royal Arch, and the Royal and Select Masters degrees of the Council.

6th. It expanded Capitular Masonry into all the territory of the U. S. A., where no Grand Chapters existed and into territory extending from Alaska to Chile and from Puerto Rico to China.

7th. When stripped of its Sovereign powers in 1859, it gracefully accepted its position as the center of a Confederation of Sovereign State Grand Chapters, has never overstepped its authority in its position of subordination, nor has it attempted to exercise any authority, except those left to it by the Constitutional changes.

8th. It has consistently, for 84 years, since 1859, maintained its dignity as an organization exercising only its delegated powers.

9th. It has proposed a new and progressive program wholly within its delegated powers, which comprehends the union of all Grand Chapters on this continent, in the Confederation for the laudable purpose of extending Capitular Masonry throughout the Western Hemisphere, bringing its beneficent light to all the nations therein.

It is visualized that such a movement will be the means of promoting a spirit of understanding and international good will among the peoples in North and South America, and will thereby contribute to the new era of cooperation and friendship which should follow the present war. In this movement it appears to be the desire of the G. G. C. that all Royal Arch Masons should have a voice and part in this ambitious movement. To that end they have invited all Grand Chapters of this country, not now affiliated with the G. G. C., including those of Canada, to join the Confederation. It is my understanding that one of the Canadian Grand Chapters has indicated its intention to accept the invitation and the others are giving the question consideration.

## LEGAL EFFECT OF AFFILIATION

In giving consideration to the question under discussion, several questions will naturally arise, which will need to be answered. Having given careful investigation to the subject, and having discussed them with the General Grand High Priest following his address at Waco, and since, I will attempt to anticipate some of the questions and believe that my answers thereto are in accordance with the Constitution and laws of the G. G. C. It must be understood that these views are confined strictly to an interpretation of the laws and are not intended as an attempt to influence the action of any Companion on the main subject under consideration.

1. Will the affiliation with the Confederation alter or affect the sovereignty or supremacy of the Grand Chapter of Texas over Capitular Masonry within its jurisdiction? Answer, No.

The Constitution of the G. G. C. provides that the G. G. C. “shall have no power of discipline, admonition, censure or instruction over the Grand Chapters, nor any legislative powers whatever, not hereby specially granted, nor any authority to suspend the proceedings of any State Grand Chapter, nor shall entertain any complaint against a Grand Chapter, preferred by any subordinate Chapter or individual Mason in that jurisdiction or elsewhere.” (See Sec. 7, Const. G. G. C.) The G. G. C. has construed its Constitution on the subject of jurisdiction of Grand Chapters.

In 1891 the General Grand Chapter approved the following decision:

“A Grand Chapter is, and of a right should be the final arbiter of all questions arising within its jurisdiction (excepting such questions as may be taken to the General Grand Chapter), and subject only to the restrictions of the Constitution of the General Grand Chapter, and the force of the Ancient Landmarks, it has the power to make and unmake all the law for the government of Royal Arch Masonry within its territory.”

(Proc. 1891, p. 41.)

Again, in Proc. 1909, p. 128, it was held:

“When a Grand Chapter has been formed it has exclusive jurisdiction over all the Chapters in the State where it is created and it becomes the duty of such Chapters to submit to and obey such Grand Chapter, or the Grand High Priest in all respects theft lawful authority as provided by their constitution and Laws.”

2. Will affiliation require any amendments to our Constitution or Laws? Answer is No. Each Grand Chapter is sovereign in its own jurisdiction and the G. G. C. has no power of legislation delegated to it, whereby it may regulate the affairs of Capitular Masonry within the territory of any State Grand Chapter. General Grand High Priest Denslow has stated in writing that no amendments to our Constitution or Laws are necessary or would be required.
3. Will affiliation give the G. G. C. any control over our Ritual or our method of dissemination of the work? Answer is No.

While one of the two powers delegated to the G. G. C. is to “see that the ancient work of the Order is preserved in the several degrees,” this power has only been exercised in providing a uniform Ritual for the subordinate Chapters under its immediate jurisdiction. State Grand Chapters are privileged to use the Ritual adopted by the G. G. C. if they so desire and many of them do so, but there is no regulation of the G. G. C. requiring it. The work is fairly uniform in all parts of the

country, but some vary in slight particulars, indeed, Companion Denslow informs me that the work in his own State of Missouri does not conform in all respects to the Ritual of the G. G. C., and that the G. G. C. does not concern itself on the question. Even so the question has long since been settled regarding the work in Texas. It will be remembered that in 1894 when our committee visited the G. G. C. at Topeka, for the purpose of ascertaining upon what terms and conditions Texas might reunite with the G. G. C., one of the conditions expressed in the reply of the G. G. C. was as follows:

“That such membership shall neither alter or abridge the power now exercised by the Grand Chapter of Texas over the Ritual used and degrees conferred under the authority of said Grand Chapter.”

This stipulation has never been revoked or rescinded and should the Grand Chapter decide to affiliate, it would constitute one of the binding conditions upon which any such application would be predicated. On this point Companion Denslow has stated in writing as follows:

“We do not control your Ritual. We have about eleven States that use the General Grand Chapter Ritual, but they do so because it is cheaper to purchase these Rituals than to print them and it is usually the smaller States which have no facilities for publishing a Ritual. We do control the Ritual in our subordinate Chapters, that is, Chapters working directly under the General Grand Chapter, such as the Philippine Islands, etc. In fact, my own Grand Chapter does not use the General Grand Chapter Ritual, although it is closely akin to it. We have nothing to do with the method of teaching the Ritual in any jurisdiction. In fact nearly all the States have different policies in that respect.”

4. How would the Grand Chapter of Texas be represented in the G. G. C? Answer: All Past Grand High Priests of the Grand Chapter, and the four elective Grand Officers in the East, during their terms of office, would be entitled to a voice and vote.
5. What would be the cost to the Grand Chapter? Answer: The dues are one cent per member, annually, on all members carried on the rolls of the Grand Chapter. Based upon our present membership, the dues would amount to less than one hundred and ninety dollars annually. The dues would be the total expense, unless the Grand Chapter desired to defray the expenses of any of its delegates.
6. Is there any probability that these dues will be raised? Answer: The present dues have been in effect over fifty years. Only one attempt has been made to increase them, many years ago, but the proposition was defeated. I understand that the treasury of the G. G. C. is ample and there is no necessity for any increase in their resources. On this subject Companion Denslow says:

“The annual cost is 1¢ per member; in your case approximately 8190.00 per year, which is a small amount in view of the good which may be derived by Texas from such an association, not taking into account the fact that you will be assisting in carrying on Royal Arch activities in far-flung countries. You will also be assisting in the publication of a magazine, the publication of a history, educational material, and many other things I shall not here discuss. When you realize the Grand Encampment gets 10¢ per capita, and at one time had an assessment of \$1.00 per capita for nine years, I think you will agree the amount is not excessive. The probabilities are the more affiliations we have of other Grand Chapters, the less the expense of operation.”

7. What benefits to Royal Arch Masonry in Texas would be gained by affiliation? Answer: Aside from the interchange of ideas and the joys of fraternal communication at the Triennials it is doubtful that the G. G. C. can do much to aid Capitular Masonry in Texas, except through its

magazine and other educational matter. The jurisdiction of Texas is well covered by Chapters, the ritualistic work is perfected and unexcelled, and its jurisprudence is well established, and adequate. Besides, the G. G. C. has no powers in such activities and does not attempt to exercise any.

8. Can affiliation help the cause of Capitular Masonry elsewhere? Answer: While it is doubtful that the G. G. C. can do much to advance the cause of Capitular Masonry in Texas, due to its already highly developed state, yet, there may be a sound reason urged why the Grand Chapter of Texas might be helpful by membership in the G. G. C. At least the G. G. C. has manifested such an idea for 82 years in its persistent efforts to induce our Grand Chapter to reunite. It cannot be for the small amount of annual dues. Perhaps there is a value in presenting a united Masonic front, especially in these days when Masonry is being destroyed in many parts of the world. The power for good, which may be exercised by the largest single Masonic order in the world, might well be enhanced and advanced, if augmented by the strength of Pennsylvania, Virginia, Texas, and our Canadian Companions.

It may well be worth careful consideration, that if all or a major part of the other Grand Chapters named should determine to enter the Confederation, whether Texas would enjoy the position of a complete isolation from all other Grand Chapters, confining all of our Capitular interest and activities to the confines of our own fine jurisdiction, and have no part in the wider field of hemispherical diffusion of Capitular light and knowledge. That is the real question. Another question in which you will doubtless be interested is the state of Masonry in the conquered lands, and whether such a hemispherical organization as the G. G. C. have hopes of becoming, can be of service at the peace conference in seeing to it that the interests of Freemasonry are safeguarded in such countries, thereby enabling them to relight the holy fires upon their overturned and extinguished altars. If so, does Capitular Masonry in Texas desire a voice or part in such an important matter?

9. What procedure would be required to be admitted to the Confederation of State Grand Chapters? Answer: On this point Companion Denslow has answered in writing as follows:

“I think a simple resolution on the part of Texas acknowledging receipt of the resolution adopted at Salt Lake City, and setting forth that in view of the above invitation and that no material changes would be involved in such affiliation, either in Constitution or Ritual, that Texas would accept the invitation in the spirit intended and cooperate with us in the work of the General Grand Chapter, in other words, merely take up where you left off in 1859.”

It appears to be as simple as that from the standpoint of the G. G. C. It will be observed that the Most Excellent General Grand High Priest does not suggest that as a condition precedent to the resumption of relations, we should rescind the resolution of 1861, severing our relations with the G. G. C. as several of his predecessors have done.

The General Grand Chapter in 1894 suggested that Texas would be received with the reservation of our control of our own Ritual and method of conferring the work, which as has been noted is still effective. Under the Constitution of the G. G. C. the Grand Chapter of Texas, and all other State Grand Chapters, are recognized as sovereign and supreme over Capitular Masonry in their respective jurisdictions. Texas has heretofore declined the invitations to rejoin the Confederation in 1878, 1894 and 1916 on the grounds that it “deems it inexpedient to surrender its own sovereignty as an independent Masonic Body.” It would appear logical and it would seem proper that if the Grand Chapter of Texas sees fit to accept the invitation extended it could make another reservation which should be acceptable to the G. G. C. That is “that the application of affiliation is predicated upon the

provisions of the present Constitution, and that no amendment thereto shall be adopted which shall abridge or change the rights of the Grand Chapter of Texas as a sovereign and independent Masonic Body, in its exclusive jurisdiction over Capitular Masonry in its jurisdiction and territory, without its sanction and approval.”

Such a reservation would appear to remove the obstacles heretofore considered a barrier, towit: that the G. G. C. might hereafter change its Constitution in a way to deprive the State Grand Chapters of their sovereignty and independence as now enjoyed.

## THE PROGRAM OF THE GENERAL GRAND CHAPTER

M. E. Grand High Priest Ray V. Denslow presented a portion of the constructive program being developed for the G. G. C. before our Grand Chapter in 1942. It was deemed to be a proper courtesy to the illustrious head of that organization to invite any additional information he might desire to offer, to be included in this communication.

He has very graciously added some ideas to his address of 1942, which are respectfully transmitted for your consideration.

His response is as follows:

General Grand Chapter  
-----OF-----  
Royal Arch Masons  
-----OF THE-----  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
ORGANIZED OCT.24,1797

SAY V. DENSLow  
GENERAL GRAND  
HIGH PRIEST  
TRENTON, MISSOURI

July 26, 1943.

“Mr. Jewel P. Lightfoot,  
“1316 Waggoner Bldg., Fort Worth, Texas.

“My dear Jewel:

“With reference to your letter of July 24th and the matters to be considered by your committee on General Grand Chapter.

“Let me set forth some interesting things which are occurring, or have occurred, and which may give your committee an idea of what we are trying to do as a national organization.

“In the first place, we are attempting to secure that long put off objective--Masonic Unity. I don't know whether you realize the effect of your reaffiliation upon Masonic groups in this country. The announcement of your reaffiliation would be almost electric. For years we have all longed for the time when Texas might take up the work with us. You have a large number of subordinate Chapters of Royal Arch Masons and we need their cooperation and support in the things we are attempting to do. The situation has changed materially since Texas withdrew and, as I have said on several occasions, I think your Grand Chapter was amply justified in their action at that time, but today we are living in a new era, we are living at a time when we require the continuous support and cooperation of every group to accomplish anything worth while. The General Grand Chapter, which, a few years ago, was failing to meet with the wishes of its supporters, is now becoming a militant organization, ready and willing to do the wishes of its membership.

“What I am saying may not be new to you, but it may be to other members of your committee. We have put forth an honest attempt to unite all Grand Chapters of this country and Canada. We have already had the addition of one Grand Chapter and expect others as they become acquainted with the situation.

“Only a few weeks ago you sat on the floor of the Grand Encampment and witnessed an attempt to do away with Royal Arch membership as a requirement for Templar standing. You may not have realized it, but I think the General Grand Chapter played a considerable part in the withdrawal of the resolution, and I think we are going to play a greater part in seeing that it never happens again. This office has recently sent out a letter to all its constituent bodies calling attention to the proposed Grand Encampment amendment, the evil it might have caused and its eventual withdrawal. We are urging upon all our membership to create a greater feeling of harmony between the bodies of our Rite and we are already having results. Only a week ago I had a visit from a Grand High Priest and Grand Secretary, who drove all the way to Trenton to assure me of their desire to carry out this policy.

“Another thing we feel is going to help preserve interest, and even unity, in Royal Arch Masonry is the Royal Arch Mason magazine. You probably know there was no national Masonic publication and that is the reason for the establishment of our magazine. It is to be devoted to Ancient Craft Masonry, which will insure a closer tieup with the Lodge membership. It will be the official organ of General Grand Chapter and Royal Arch Masonry. It is being sent, with the compliments of the General Grand Chapter, to each Past Grand High Priest. To show you how well it is filling the demand, may I say that when we mailed out the first issue, it went out to less than 4,000 subscribers, but shortly thereafter the full edition of 5,000 copies was exhausted. We issued 6,000 copies of the next number, which went out to 5,000 subscribers, but since that time practically all the June issue has been exhausted. We are printing 7,000 copies of the September number.

“I have previously mentioned the matter of General Grand Chapter history, not of the General Grand Chapter alone, but of Royal Arch Masonry. We have already spent a thousand dollars on this work and the members of the committee are working without any expense to the General Grand Chapter. We expect to have something to offer worth while, a task which could not have been accomplished by any individual Grand Chapter. As you know, it will contain a story of Royal Arch Masonry in Texas. This work is being done by 150 Masonic writers all over the United States, and in getting this group together we feel we have made a contribution to Masonic literature, and especially Masonic enthusiasm in getting this list of writers to take up the question of Royal Arch subjects.

“We are planning for a great international Royal Arch gathering in New Orleans in 1945, to be held in connection with our triennial meeting. If the war is concluded by that time, and we hope it is, Grand Chapters of all over the world will be represented and it will be possible to plan on great things for the future. I think you can readily see that no one Grand Chapter could have sufficient influence to arrange for such a meeting, yet by combining our groups we can secure almost unanimous support. Those of your members who have ever attended a triennial, I am sure, will have gone away with a finer conception of what ‘ye are trying to do and of the high character of the men who represent the organization.

“Your John Temple Rice will become head of a great national organization in a few years. How much better position he will be in should he come in at a time when all the Grand Chapters are united and are willing to work with the Grand Encampment in the advancement of Masonic interests.

“May I also add, as a bit of advance information, that we are already laying plans for postwar work and rehabilitation, as well as many other plans for the improvement of our bodies in the U. S. A.

“I can see every reason in the world for Texas uniting with us and no reason for her staying without the fold. As General Grand High Priest of this organization I again extend our invitation and hope that in 1945 I may greet all of my fellow-Past Grand High Priests of Texas at our triennial meeting in New Orleans.

“Sincerely,

“RAY V. DENSLOW.”

It is noteworthy that three of the elective officers of the official line of the General Grand Chapter are Honorary Members of the Grand Chapter of Texas, namely:

Ray V. Denslow, General Grand High Priest; Fred H. Pocock, General Grand Principal Sojourner; and Earl E. Dusenbery, General Grand Royal Arch Captain.

Each of them has visited our Grand Chapter and number many friends among our members.

The presence of these Illustrious General Grand Officers among the Honorary Members of our Grand Chapter is indicative of the cordial relations now existing between the two Grand Bodies. They represent a certain degree of fraternal connection between us, and is an assurance of the continuation of the spirit of amity and good will between the two Grand Bodies, which has been steadily growing and improving for more than half a century.

In concluding this Review, it would be an unpardonable omission to fail to say that the present Grand Officers of the General Grand Chapter are men of exalted vision, inflexible fidelity, and commendable zeal.

They are universally numbered among the distinguished, enlightened and capable leaders of Freemasonry in this country.

They should be found agreeable and easy to cooperate with, by any of the few remaining Grand Chapters which may wish to join the Confederation. In seeking to establish unity, joint action and a solid front for Capitular Masonry, we need no assurance of the unselfish and noble quality of their efforts.

It is more than apparent that they are animated by a sincere desire to elevate Royal Arch Masonry to a loftier position of power and influence in the field of post war rehabilitation and Masonic humanitarianism.

It is a well known fact that Masonry has been unjustifiably suppressed and obliterated in all the Axis dominated countries. When the peace conference gathers to establish the new freedoms of mankind, will there be a voice there to speak for the rights of our Masonic brethren in the oppressed countries? Only an organization, national or international in scope, could receive such recognition. No single Grand Lodge or Grand Chapter can expect any such privilege.

It is merely stating a fact, when it is said that the General Grand Chapter is, perhaps, the only York Rite Grand Body with international jurisdiction with an organization set up, and which has evinced an interest in such a program.

If there is to be any serious effort made in the future to diffuse Capitular light and knowledge in the other countries of this hemisphere, it appears that the General Grand Chapter is the appropriate agency to undertake it. None of the State Grand Chapters of the G. G. C. have the necessary jurisdiction. The G. G. C. has recently had the Ritual printed in Spanish. As I see it, the principal questions to be considered by our Grand Chapter appear to be the following:

1. Do we feel any duty or interest in extending Capitular Masonry and its beneficent influence into other countries on this hemisphere?

2. Do we owe any duty or obligation toward our oppressed Brethren of other lands, which the General Grand Chapter may efficiently serve in the post war era?

3. Are we interested in aiding in the creation of unity, and greater solidarity in the organization of Capitular Masonry, to the end that more constructive programs may be carried out, and a "solid front" presented?

4. Is the Grand Chapter of Texas willing to rejoin the Confederation for the purpose of aiding and cooperating in such a program, if same can be effected without abridging or affecting its supremacy, sovereignty and exclusive control over all the affairs of Royal Arch Masonry in Texas?

## IN CONCLUSION

In presenting the foregoing treatise on the origin of Royal Arch Masonry, and its introduction into America and Texas, together with a history of the relations of the Grand Chapter of Texas with the General Grand Chapter, I sincerely hope, will not be construed as an attempt to be officious, or a presumptuous desire to give instruction. I have been actuated by a single purpose, namely, an endeavor to be helpful to our committee and the members of our Grand Chapter, by presenting a comprehensive review of the history of these important and interesting subjects. Truth and sound judgment can be established only by a knowledge of the facts.

I have only been able to set forth the high points of the record, and to give some of the background of the principal characters who figured prominently in the history as it developed, but these should be sufficient to present a true story of the subject.

I have endeavored to set forth the essential facts, including the good with the prejudicial, letting the chips fall where they may, in order that a clear and correct picture of the whole subject might be presented.

I have endeavored to refrain from personal comment, or the expression of private opinion, as far as possible, and where indulged, I hope it will be found that they were intended only for the purpose of correcting errors, misconceptions, and improper interpretations of the facts as shown by history.

This is the fourth time the Grand Chapter has given consideration to this subject since 1878. The decisions of 1878, 1894 and 1916, were based upon issues raised in 1849, when we dissolved the Grand Chapter of the Republic, and in 1859 and 1861, when we severed our relationship with the General Grand Chapter. These events occurred 94 and 82 years ago. All of the distinguished actors, loved and honored, have passed to a higher life and a more blessed reward; leaving the records of their actions for the enlightenment of posterity. During this period the country has survived three wars and is now engaged in a death struggle in the fourth. It cannot be gainsaid that many changes have taken place during such an era. The fact that the Grand Chapter of Texas, by a resolution regularly adopted, authorizing the appointment of a Special Committee, consisting of all the Past Grand High Priests and the elective officers of the Grand Chapter, must be interpreted as the indication of a sincere desire on the part of the Grand Chapter to re-examine the entire subject in the light of present day developments, and to determine whether it will be found desirable to renew our former relations with the General Grand Chapter, in order to have a part in a wider field of service in the future development and extension of Capitular Masonry.

The controversial issue between the General Grand Chapter and the Grand Chapter of Texas, covering the period of our withdrawal in 1861, to the year 1916, the last time the question of reuniting was considered, related to the right of a Grand Chapter to withdraw from the Confederation without the mutual consent of both parties.

For the past 27 years that issue appears to have become dormant, and is no longer a matter of contention.

The invitation now presented, is predicated upon the desire to create national unity in the ranks of Capitular Masonry for a loftier and more exalted service. It is strongly urged, and with considerable logic, that the Grand Chapter of Texas, for many years, has been closely associated with the 46 members composing the General Grand Chapter, through congenial fraternal relations with each of them.

It is pointed out that we exchange Grand Representatives with each of the other Grand Chapters, and annually, receive them at our Convocations with high honors, evidencing the cordial relations prevailing among all the Grand Chapters of the United States.

If the relations outside the Confederation can be so congenial, is there any good reason to suppose that they would be less happy within the Confederation? It must be remembered that the invitation we are now considering was extended by these same Grand Chapters, through their representatives in the G. G. C. It is difficult to explain why we are happy to fraternize with each singly, and exchange representatives with them, yet, have not found it agreeable to associate with them collectively in their Confederation.

The question is then asked, "In view of this situation, is there any good and valid reason why the strong and worthy Grand Chapter of Texas should deem it necessary or desirable to longer stand aloof and occupy a position of official isolation?" The simple process of enrolling its name with the Confederation, it is contended, would materially aid in establishing a solid Capitular front. Moreover, the Grand Chapter would gain thereby, a voice, vote and have a part with its 46 other sister Grand Chapters in promoting constructive programs and policies for the future progress and well-being of Royal Arch Masonry on the Western Hemisphere.

I sincerely hope that you will find this Review an aid in your study of the questions presented.

You are cordially invited to submit, in advance, any comments or suggestions on the subject, should you desire to do so.

Fraternally submitted,  
JEWEL P. LIGHTFOOT,  
*Chairman of the Committee.*