

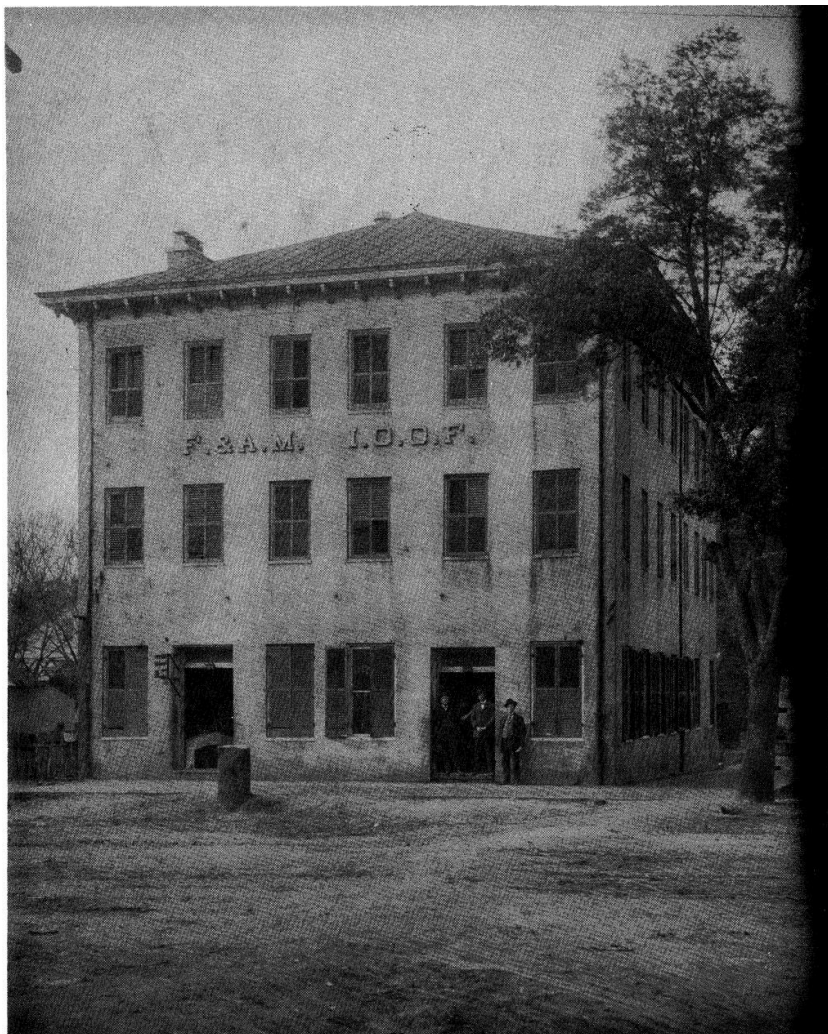
# *History of Freemasonry in Florida*

Volume 1

5830 – 5852 A. L.

830 – 1852 A.D.

Grand Lodge of Florida Free and Accepted Masons



PRESENTED

— to the —

R.:W.: GRAND LODGE of FLORIDA

— by —

JACKSON LODGE NO. 1, F. and A. M.

— Tallahassee —

The oldest Masonic Lodge in Florida,  
M. W. Grand Lodge of Florida organized in  
this building July 6th, 1830.

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# REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON MASONIC HISTORY

Most Worshipful Brother Charles R. Lucas presented the following report on behalf of the History Committee:

*To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge, F. & A. M. of Florida:*

Pursuant to the instructions and recommendations of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Florida at its Annual Communication last April that a Committee be appointed to assimilate documentary evidence necessary to reveal the history of Masonry in Florida and that a draft of this information be written suitable for publication, we are happy to report that these instructions and recommendations have been followed and obeyed. The History of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Florida is ready to be published.

Through the untiring efforts of R.:W.: Brother Dan Partin and Brother W. D. Dampier, who have spent many long hours in searching out bits of information in various writings and records scattered in several states, the facts have been compiled and an original draft has been written and is in suitable editorial form for publication.

The Committee was amazed at the tremendous contributions to Florida Masonry by R.:W.: Brother Dan Partin and Brother W. D. Dampier, and wish to take this opportunity to extend its gratitude and highest commendation to these two Brothers for their labors; through their zeal and devotion they have produced fruit for us, and for all time to come. They truly deserve the thanks of every Mason of this Grand Jurisdiction.

After careful study and deliberation, the Committee on Masonic History recommends that 1,000 copies of the "History of Masonry in Florida" be published and that the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Florida appropriate sufficient funds to cover this publication.

The Committee on Masonic History further recommends that this publication, the "History of Masonry in Florida" be distributed by the Grand Secretary's Office and be reimbursed for the cost of this publication by the individual Lodges and/or members.

The members of the Committee on Masonic History would like to take this opportunity of expressing appreciation and gratitude to the Most Worshipful Grand Master of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Florida for the privilege of serving on the Committee on Masonic History.  
APRIL 1962

Charles R. Lucas, P.G.M., Chairman  
Fred G. Lawrence  
Emmett M. Ferrell  
Thomas A. McQueen  
(Wm. D. Dampier, Honorary Member)

*(Report adopted upon motion duly seconded and carried.)*

## FOREWORD

We are happy to present the first volume of the "History of Freemasonry in Florida"

A great deal of research and preparation has gone into this effort. The work was begun during the administration of R.:W.: J. Edwin Larson in 1960 with the original manuscript having been prepared by Brother Dan Partin, Past R.R. Grand Chaplain of the Grand Lodge of Florida and Superintendent of our Masonic Home in St. Petersburg. Brother W. D. Dampier, under the direction of the History Committee, worked with Brother Partin in re-writing the manuscript and checking all dates and details. It was necessary to read all proceedings of all Grand Lodge Sessions that were available going back to the first one.

The 133rd Annual Grand Communication again approved the manuscript and authorized its printing. (See report of History Committee, Grand Lodge Proceedings 1962, page 337.)

William S. Christian  
Grand Master

## APPRECIATION

The Committee wishes to express their appreciation to M.:W.: J. Edwin Larson, Past Grand Master, for his outstanding work which made this publication possible.

Charles R. Lucas, P.G.M., Chairman  
Fred G. Lawrence  
Emmett M. Ferrell  
Thomas A. McQueen  
(Wm. D. Dampier, Honorary Member)



Jackson Lodge No. 1 – Fire Damage Early 1920's

# CHAPTER I – THE ORIGIN OF FREEMASONRY

The history of Freemasonry is a record of the search for truth and the adherence to certain principles ordained by God. The Masonic order we know today can be traced to dedicated men who, through their love for God and for the principles of Freemasonry, gave of their time, efforts and material wealth to salvage this order from the depths of oblivion and despair.

The principles of Freemasonry can be traced to their origin, although on many occasions some men have attempted to refute the source, while others have attempted to give credit to a race, a sect or a guild. There is no authority for their claims, because what they have presented is fictional, base and false when placed beside the true source, the written Word of God. The Holy Book was inspired by God. It is irrefutable, and those who would deny the Holy Bible deny the deity of God. The physical works were performed by Saints chosen and endowed by Him to record a story of love, devotion and duty. This story, beautifully written, in simple words and phrases, is as fresh today as it was when it was recorded, and within it are to be found the principles of Freemasonry and the key to Masonic Truth.

Some writers of the past who attempted to trace the history of Masonry found broad avenues of supposition and fictional records that led to doubt. At the same time, much of the early and true history of Masonry had been lost and much of that which was available was so distorted that it shall always remain questionable. As time went on, however, authentic records were prepared, many of which have been preserved through the ages. From these records, we can visualize Masonry at work during those early days and draw the conclusions that the members of the fraternity, through their love of God, devotion to duty and desire to serve their fellowman, were true and dedicated members of the Craft.

The Masonic world today agrees that Masonry in its early days was known as Operative Masonry. During the early Seventeenth Century, however, the transition from Operative Masonry to Speculative Masonry began when the various lodges commenced to admit honorary members, who, while prominent in the fields of science and architecture, were not craftsmen with the building trade. As the honorary membership increased and entered into full membership as Accepted Masons, the control of the fraternity was finally lost by the elements of Operative Masons. Accepted Masonry had a definite attraction. It was eagerly sought after and became a fashion. The purpose for which Operative Masonry had been established and the close fraternal bond that had held the Craft together disappeared. During the latter part of the Seventeenth Century, the Masonic Societies became social clubs and Operative Masonry fell into moral decay.

The decline of Operative Masonry was hastened by the revolution that placed William III on the throne of England. The Masonic Societies became embroiled in the struggle for power and lost what semblance of influence that may have remained.

Masonry had received another mortal blow, particularly in Southern England, but what was founded on Faith and the Word of God and was inspired by Him could not long be dominated by the stigma of failure.

As the years passed, Operative Masonry declined and finally passed into oblivion. Since that time, there have been attempts to separate Speculative Masonry from Operative Masonry, however, it has

become a proved and accepted fact that Speculative, or Freemasonry, was established on the basic foundation of Operative Masonry.

Speculative Masonry is a system of ethics based upon three principal doctrines: the Moral, which is the adherence to and the complete support and practice of the teachings of the Golden Rule; the Religious, which is the belief in eternal life; the Philosophical, which is the study and search for Masonic truth and its application to the enlightenment of the Master which in turn supports and promotes the betterment of mankind.

During the course of its history many alterations have been made in the Masonic Fraternity. Masonic law has been changed, the ritualistic work has been revised, membership requirements have been altered and the general concept of Masonry has taken on new forms. Yet, through it all, the real purpose for its existence and the true principles of its foundation still stand. Its principles are the gift of the Almighty God. They are not a secret document handed to the Masons by Him, for they are to be found in His Holy Word. Masonry provides the key to those teachings which when followed shall revolutionize the world and bring forth the eternal glories of God.

Inspired men began it, dedicated men preserved it, perfectionists refined it, and the Craft followed it. As it withstood the tests of time, it has grown stronger. Today it is a common bond that reaches into the farthestmost parts of the world and links together those who have embraced the precepts of Masonic truth.



Jackson Lodge No. 1 – New Lodge building on the same site 1926

## CHAPTER II – THE EARLY HISTORY OF FREEMASONRY IN THE BRITISH ISLES

The history of Masonry in Florida cannot be traced properly until the source from which it derived its authority has been firmly established. Inasmuch as Masonry in Florida and in the various states of the Union was established by authority from Masonry in the British Isles, a brief review of the early Masonic activities there should be reported.

The City of York, in the northern part of England, was the cradle of Masonry from 926 A.D. to 1792. The history of Masonic activities in this region is referred to as the "York Legend." Through the efforts of King Athelstan, the eighth Anglo-Saxon King of England, peace and prosperity were restored to his realm and a vast building program was launched which required the services of skilled craftsmen. The talented workmen, who came to England from the various countries of the continent of Europe, introduced Operative Masonry in England. Prince Edwin, brother of King Athelstan, who had been educated in liberal arts and geometry, was captivated by their work and their fraternity. He was extended an invitation to become a member of the Craft and after his acceptance into the fraternal brotherhood, soon became a leader. Subsequently, in 926 the Prince obtained from his brother, the King, the first charter granted in England to Masons, as a body, and summoned all the Free and Accepted Masons in the realm to meet him in the Congregation at York and formed the Grand Lodge under him as their Grand Master. They brought with them many old writings and records of the Craft, some in Greek, Latin, French, and other languages and from these framed the Constitutions of the English Lodges which functioned until the Masonic Fraternity was turned into a social order and the true Masonic principles were abandoned. Operative Masonry, however, eventually declined beyond the state of recovery, but because its foundations were firm, a new structure emerged. Although the new structure differed in many respects from the old, the fundamental concept remained the same. From the foundation of the old Masonry came the doctrine and the principles of Freemasonry; from its history came the Ancient Landmarks; from its rituals came the significance of Masonry; and from the Craft came the bonds of brotherly love and the responsibility to assist the less fortunate.

Masonry recovered with such vigor, and its growth was so steady and firm that the tyrannical forces and dictatorial powers of the world completely failed to eradicate or even arrest the belief of Masons and their adherence to its principles.

In the Eighteenth Century, dedicated members of the four lodges in London recognized the need for organization and firm leadership and for a close bond between the various lodges. Thus, in February 1717, representatives of the four lodges met in the Apple Tree Tavern, and the Grand Lodge of England was formed. The structure of this new organization was based upon a constitution which provided for regular communications and a revival of the assembly and the feast. Its object was to provide mutual help and promote brotherly feeling among the members of the affiliated lodges. A new ritual coupled with a system of secret signs added strength to this structure of Freemasonry. As provided in its constitution, the Grand Lodge adopted rules and regulations which clarified the rights and the responsibilities of the individual lodges. In addition, the rules and regulations set limitations on the powers of the new body and provided for its operations. On St. John the Baptist Day, 1717, the annual assembly and feast was held at which time Mr. Anthony Sayer was proclaimed Grand Master.

Then in 1725 the Grand Lodge of All England was formed in York, England, and like the Grand Lodge located in London, was constructed on the foundation of Operative Masonry, which had passed into history.

Masonry was introduced into Scotland by the architects and Master Masons who built the Abbey of Kilwinning and the village from which its name was derived. During the reign of James II, the office of Grand Patron of Scotland was granted to William St. Clair, the Earl of Orkney and Caithness and Baron of Roslin, and to his heirs and successors. St. Clair who held the office of Grand Patron in 1736, was a true and dedicated Mason, and held the interest of the Craft at heart; but he surrendered the office of Grand Patron to the Craft and renounced the claim of his heirs and successors to the title.

The origin of Masonry in Ireland is veiled in secrecy. The earliest authentic record of Operative Masonry is a paper dated June 1725, which gives an account of the installation of the Earl of Rosse as Grand Master of Ireland. In 1731 Lord Kingston was elected Grand Master of Ireland and also the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Munster. Apparently, there was a reorganization of the Grand Lodges in Ireland under the leadership of Lord Kingston which possibly was the transition from Operative to Speculative Masonry. Previously, Lord Kingston was Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of England, having served in that capacity in 1729.

In 1751 a group of Irish Masons who had settled in London established a Grand Lodge which they called the "Grand Lodge of England according to the Old Institutions" This Grand Lodge was styled "Ancients" in contrast to the Grand Lodge of England, which was styled "Moderns." There was a wide gulf between the two Grand Bodies, and not until 1813 were the differences resolved. During 1813, under the leadership of the Duke of Sussex, and his brother H.R.H., the Duke of Kent, the two Grand Lodges located in London merged into the "United Grand Lodge of Ancient Freemasons of England." The Duke of Sussex was the first Grand Master.

The Grand Lodge of Scotland and the Grand Lodge of Ireland both recognized the "Grand Lodge of England according to the Old Institutions" shortly after it was formed. The influence and authority of this progressive Grand Body were extended into foreign countries including the British Colonies in America. So, provincial Grand Lodges were established in the colonies of Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and South Carolina.



Jackson Lodge No. 1 – 1945



## CHAPTER III – MASONRY IN AMERICA

Freemasonry was brought to America by those Master Masons who sought a better way of life in the new world. Here again this review will deal only with that portion of the early Masonic history that has a bearing on Masonry in Florida. Inasmuch as Masonry in the United States is organized and operates according to Grand jurisdictions it will be necessary to deal with the early history in the states.

### PENNSYLVANIA

The first known record of Masonic activity on this new continent was in 1730 when Thomas, Duke of Norfolk, the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of England (Moderns) , appointed Daniel Coxe as "Provincial Grand Master of the Provinces of New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, in America." The appointment, made on June 5, 1730, established a Grand Lodge in North America. There is evidence, however, that Masonry and Masonic Lodges were in existence prior to that date.

The appointment of Daniel Coxe as Provincial Grand Master was for a period of two years, but there is no known record as to his activities. Neither is the fate of the Provincial Grand Lodge known. It is assumed that it went out of existence, and a Provincial Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania was established since certain records have been found in the archives of the present Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, and in copies of the Pennsylvania Gazette which was owned and edited by Benjamin Franklin, the celebrated patriarch and statesman.

Benjamin Franklin became a member of the Masonic fraternity in 1731. He was elected Junior Grand Warden of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania in 1732 and Grand Master in 1734. The history of this Grand Lodge from 1734 to 1743 is vague. In 1743, Thomas Oxnard of Boston, was appointed Provincial Grand Master of America, and in 1749 he appointed Benjamin Franklin the Provincial Grand Master of Pennsylvania.

There were three Lodges (Moderns) in the City of Philadelphia. In 1758, a warrant was granted by the Grand Lodge of England (Ancients) to form a lodge. The second lodge (Ancients) was warranted in 1761. The Grand Lodge of England (Ancients) in 1764 authorized the establishment of a Provincial Grand Lodge of Philadelphia. This Grand Body became the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania in 1786.

### GEORGIA

Organized Masonry came into the territory of Georgia in 1735. The early history of Masonry in this Grand jurisdiction is vague because its records have been destroyed. In 1786, however, the Masonic Lodges of this Grand jurisdiction declared their independence and formed the Grand Lodge of Georgia.

## SOUTH CAROLINA

Masonry was introduced into South Carolina when Solomon's Lodge of Charleston was organized October 28, 1736. This lodge was warranted in 1735 by Lord Weymouth, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of England (Moderns) ; and in 1736, John Hammerton was appointed Provincial Grand Master by the Earl of Landown, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of England (Moderns).

In 1738, a Lodge was established in Charleston by St. John's Grand Lodge of Boston. However, it was not in existence very long. The fate of the first Provincial Grand Lodge is not known, but in 1738 a second Provincial Grand Lodge was created by the Marquis of Carnavon, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of England (Moderns). This Grand Body declared its independence in 1787, and the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of South Carolina was formed.

In 1783, the Grand Lodge of England (Ancients) granted a charter for a lodge in Charleston, South Carolina. By 1787, five lodges had been chartered by this Grand Lodge. These five lodges joined together and in 1787 organized the Grand Lodge of Ancient York Masons of South Carolina.

Distrust and hostile feelings between the two Grand Lodges existed until 1817 when they merged and adopted the name "Grand Lodge of Ancient Freemasons of South Carolina."

On May 31, 1801, the Supreme Council of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry was opened in Charleston. This Council is the Mother Council of the world. The seat of the Council remains in Charleston, but the physical outlay and its operations are located in Washington, D. C.

## ALABAMA

Organized Masonry came to Alabama in 1811 during the time that this land was still a part of the Mississippi territory. The Grand Lodge of Kentucky, a product of the Grand Lodge of Virginia, chartered Madison Lodge No. 21 in 1811. This lodge worked under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky until the Grand Lodge of Alabama was formed in 1821.

From 1818 to 1821 the Grand Lodge of Tennessee, which originated from the Grand Lodges of both North Carolina and Kentucky, chartered some twelve lodges in Alabama. When the Grand Lodge of Alabama was organized on June 14, 1821, these lodges were also absorbed into that body.

## CHAPTER IV – MASONRY IN FLORIDA

The historical records of Freemasonry in Florida were for many years hidden from the world, lying dormant in unmarked and forgotten files. Historians made various attempts to report the early Masonic activities of this territory. Their efforts were in vain. In 1898 the first authoritative record on Masonry in Florida came to light. This record was a rare and very old copy of "Preston's Illustration" which was presented to the Grand Lodge of Florida by Doctor F. F. Bond, of Thorncliff, Brighthouse, England.

On the title page of the prized gift the following words were inscribed: "The Gift of James Murray to St. Andrews Lodge No. 1, West Florida, June 27, 1776." This was the first reliable information that a Masonic Lodge had existed in Florida at such an early date and was the spark that kindled the interest to search for the history of Masonry in the Grand Jurisdiction of Florida.

R:W:: James M. Hilliard, Grand Master, in 1898, appointed R:W:: Silas B. Wright, Deputy Grand Master, to search for any additional information that might have a bearing on the history of Florida Masonry and to make a written report of his findings to the next Grand Lodge. Brother Wright made two appeals, one to the Board of Editors of the "History of Ancient and Honorable Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons and Concordant Orders," and the other to the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania. The Board of Editors was unable to furnish any information that would be beneficial or that would support historical facts about Masonry in Florida, but the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania reported that there were documents and records in possession of that Grand Lodge that would prove the existence of Masonry in Florida during the early period of this country.

The records, so the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania reported, had been found among the old records of that Grand jurisdiction which had been boxed and placed in storage. These records were compiled by the Library Committee of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania under the title, "Old Masonic Lodges of Pennsylvania, Moderns and Ancients, 1730-1800." A portion of this history as reported by the Library Committee is as follows:

*"Heretofore it was believed that at the burning of the Masonic Hall in Philadelphia, on the night of March 9, A.D. 1819 A.L. 5819, that all the records of the present Grand Lodge were destroyed. "Many of these old records and papers were saved on that eventful night by the then Grand Secretary, R:W:: George A. Baker, Jr., . . . and were listed and securely locked and sealed in six strong wooden boxes, by R:W:: Bernard Bahlgren, Brother Baker's successor, in February, 1824."*

*"These boxes were removed from Hall to Hall, through the years and lastly stored in one of the vaults of the new Masonic Temple, at Broad and Filbert Streets, in 1873."*

*"Here these boxes remained for years, unknown and forgotten until 1896, when it occurred to Brother John A. Perry, Deputy Grand Secretary, to open them and investigate their contents."*

The Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, through its Grand Secretary, made the records and documents available to R:W:: Brother Wright, who studied and copied documents and papers pertinent to Florida. Authentic copies of these papers are now filed in the archives of the Grand Lodge of Florida and are a part of its permanent records. Among them was a certified copy of the original charter of St. Andrews Lodge No. 1, of West Florida and other documents which cover portions of the period from 1768 through 1785. Brother

Wright prepared and gave a detailed report on his findings which was included in the 1899 Grand Lodge Proceedings.



Replica of Florida's first Capitol built by Boy Scouts in 1924 and modeled after the 1824 version.

## CHAPTER V – EARLY LODGES IN FLORIDA

The charter of St. Andrews Lodge No. 1 of West Florida was issued on May 3, 1771, by the "Provincial Grand Lodge of the Southern District of North America." The petitioners for this Lodge were members of Lodge No. 108 of the register of Scotland and were attached to the 31st Regiment of Foot of the British Army stationed at Pensacola.

Ten Master Masons applied for the charter and are listed as charter members. The charter was signed by James Grant, Provincial Grand Master of the Provincial Grand Lodge of the Southern District of North America, and other officials of the Provincial Grand Lodge. In addition to the certified copy of the charter of St. Andrews Lodge, there were other documents and papers relating to early Masonry in Florida. There were records and minutes of St. Andrews Lodge which revealed the plight of this lodge and its ties with its Provincial Grand Lodge.

These historical records were definite proof of the activities of the Masonic Fraternity in Florida and further revealed that this activity had emanated from the Grand Lodge of Scotland. Brother Wright immediately wrote that Grand Lodge requesting confirmation of the authenticity of these records and any other information from the records of that Grand jurisdiction. Their records not only confirmed the accuracy of the records found by the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, but also shed light on the Provincial Grand Lodge of the Southern District of North America. The following excerpts are taken from the reply of R.:W.: Brother Lyon:

*"In searching our Grand Lodge records, I find under date of March 15, 1769 . . . 'Having read a petition from James Grant, Esq., Governor of the Province of East Florida, Henry Cunningham, late Senior Warden of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, and many other brethren residing in the province aforesaid, craving a charter for holding a Lodge there by the stile and title of Grant's East Florida Lodge, and also entreating that the Grand Lodge would appoint the said Governor, James Grant, Provincial Grand Master over the lodges in the Southern District of North America.' The Grand Lodge granted the desire of that petition and authorized a charter to be made out accordingly, and likewise a commission appointing Governor James Grant, Provincial Grand Master, over the lodges in the Southern District of North America."*

On March 15, 1768, a charter was issued by the Grand Lodge of Scotland to "Grant's East Florida Lodge No. 143," to be located in St. Augustine, in the Territory of Florida. This was the first Masonic Lodge to be established in what is now the State of Florida. On this same date the "Provincial Grand Lodge over the Lodges in the Southern District of North America" was created and located at St. Augustine, in the Territory of Florida. Honorable James Grant, Governor of the Territory of Florida, was named Provincial Grand Master.

This Grand Body functioned until 1783 when it was suppressed by the Dominican Priesthood and the Spanish Government. All records of this Grand Lodge were destroyed or were carried away and are still missing. The meager information that is available was found in the archives of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania and the Grand Lodge of Scotland.

The fate of the first Masonic Lodge, "Grant's East Florida Lodge," in the Territory of Florida, is not known, but it is assumed that it was suppressed at the same time as the Provincial Grand Lodge.

## CHAPTER VI - ST. ANDREWS LODGE OF PENSACOLA

The records found in the archives of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania gave a clear picture of the operations and the fate of Florida's second Masonic Lodge, St. Andrews Lodge of Pensacola.

Pensacola and the Territory of West Florida were captured by the Spanish in 1781. The Masonic Fraternity again was suppressed by the Dominican Priesthood and the Spanish Government and the Masons were forced to flee. Even though the Masonic brethren faced grave dangers they did not leave until they had obtained the charter and records, which included the minutes of every communication that had been held since the Lodge was chartered. After they reached the safety of Charles Town, the plight of St. Andrews Lodge No. 1 was reported to the Provincial Grand Lodge, on February 9, 1782. This report was assembled and prepared by the Worshipful Master, Thomas Underwood, the Junior Warden, H. Beaumont, and three other members, and forwarded to the Provincial Grand Master in St. Augustine.

The Provincial Grand Lodge at St. Augustine acknowledged receipt of the communication, and on March 14, 1782, issued a dispensation to the brethren of St. Andrews Lodge to work at Charles Town, South Carolina. This authorization stated: "Under your charter until it shall please God to restore you to the Ancient seat of your lodge in West Florida, provided you have the Master and a sufficient number of members of the same to form a lodge." It was signed by R.:W.: John Forbes, Deputy Grand Master, the Senior and Junior Grand Wardens and the Grand Secretary.

In compliance with the Dispensation and to assure adequate and proper Masonic protection, a meeting was called, and all Masters of the Ancient Lodges of Free and Accepted Masons of Charles Town were summoned. The stated business of this meeting was set forth in the call: "to examine into their regularity and their right to work as Masons." A "Clear Bill of Regularity" was duly issued and signed by the Masters and Past Masters of four lodges. This action cleared St. Andrews Lodge No. 1 of any doubt, and their labors as a regular lodge were resumed in Charles Town, South Carolina.

When the "Provincial Grand Lodge over the Lodges in the Southern - District of North America" was suppressed in 1783 by the Spaniards, St. Andrews Lodge No. 1 of West Florida, working under Dispensation in Charles Town, was without authority to function. A new charter from an active Grand Lodge was essential. The officers and members of St. Andrews Lodge No. 1 turned to the Grand Lodges of Philadelphia (Ancients), and on July 12, 1783, the lodge was re-chartered as Lodge No. 40 of Charles Town, South Carolina. There is no explanation as to why the original name was dropped, but apparently the decision was made by the Grand Lodge of Philadelphia.

Lodge No. 40 of Charles Town continued to work under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Philadelphia until 1787, when it surrendered its charter, and together with four other lodges, formed the Grand Lodge of South Carolina. The subsisting lodge assumed the name of "St. Andrews Lodge No. 10," under the charter and jurisdiction of the new Grand Lodge of South Carolina. It continued to work until 1881 when its charter was surrendered and stricken from the rolls.

It is reported that on January 17, 1759, the Grand Lodge of England (Ancients) warranted a lodge to the 14th Regiment of Foot. The number of this lodge is reported to be 58b. This lodge, located in St. Augustine, became dormant. On March 6, 1776, a renewal of the warrant was authorized and on March 20, 1776, it was renewed. Then on January 3, 1778, the Grand Lodge of England (Ancients) granted a warrant

to No. 204, St. Augustine in East Florida. On January 17, 1780, this warrant was ordered returned to the Grand Secretary because the fee had not been recorded.

The Grand Lodge of South Carolina (Ancients) issued warrant No. 30 to a lodge at St. Augustine as well as a warrant to Lodge No. 56 located at Pensacola under the name of "Good Intention." Both lodges were short lived, and their exact fate is not known, but it is known that the Spanish Government suppressed all Masonic activities throughout its domain.

In 1806, St. Fernando Lodge in St. Augustine was chartered by the Grand Lodge of Georgia. This lodge was subsequently suppressed by a mandate of the Spanish Government.

Again in 1820 the Grand Lodge of South Carolina granted a charter to Floridian Virtue Lodge No. 28, but it could not survive the political and religious hostilities of that day. During 1824, the Grand Lodge of South Carolina granted another charter to Esperanza Lodge at St. Augustine. The failure of this lodge was attributed to the fact that practically all of its members moved to Havana, Cuba. There are reports of additional lodges in Florida, but no records from these lodges have been found. These are mentioned here only because some day documented evidence may be found to support their existence.

## CHAPTER VII – GRAND LODGE IN FLORIDA

Freemasonry entered Florida as a permanent institution when, on December 19, 1825, the Grand Lodge of Alabama issued a warrant to Jackson Lodge No. 23, to be located in Tallahassee, in the Territory of Florida.

A warrant was issued on December 2, 1826, to Washington Lodge No. 1 by the Grand Lodge of Georgia. This Lodge was to be located in Quincy, in the Territory of Florida. On December 8, 1829, the Grand Lodge of Georgia warranted Harmony Lodge No. 2. This lodge was to be located in Marianna, in the Territory of Florida.

The three lodges worked under their respective Grand Lodges until 1830. At the regular meeting of May 1830, Jackson Lodge No. 23 of Tallahassee adopted a resolution inviting Washington Lodge No. 1 and Harmony Lodge No. 2 to join together in the organization of a Grand Lodge for the Territory of Florida. The two lodges accepted the invitation and in due time named their delegates.

On Monday, July 5, 1830, the delegates from the three lodges met in the Masonic Temple of Jackson Lodge No. 23, Tallahassee, to decide the proper course to be taken. The meeting was called to order by Brother John P. Duval, of Jackson Lodge No. 23, the oldest Past Master in attendance. Brother Thomas Monroe, also of Jackson Lodge No. 23, was named secretary. It was the consensus of the group to organize a Grand Lodge for the Territory of Florida. The meeting was then organized into a permanent Convention. Brother John P. Duval was elected president and Brother Thomas Monroe was elected secretary.

The first order of business following the organization was the adoption of a resolution stating the right and the purpose of the body to organize a Grand Lodge of the Territory of Florida. The next order of business was the appointment of a Constitution and By-laws Committee. Named to the committee were Brothers: Thomas Brown, Robert Butler, Richard K. Call, John P. Duval, and Isham Green Searcy of Jackson Lodge No. 23; Henry Gee, John Lines and Isaac Nathans of Washington Lodge No. 1; James W. Exum, Jacob Robinson and William J. Watson of Harmony Lodge No. 2. Brother Jacob Robinson served as Chairman. The committee made its report to the Convention on Friday, July 9, 1830. The report was adopted as amended, enrolled, certified, and signed by the Honorable John P. Duval, President of the Convention. The Convention elected Grand Lodge officers, and the first Grand Master was R:W: John P. Duval. The officers, both elective and appointive, were duly installed. The Convention, having fulfilled its mission, was adjourned.

The Grand Lodge of the Territory of Florida was then, opened in Ample Form. The rules and by-laws of the Grand Lodge of Alabama were adopted so far as they were applicable to the proceedings of this Grand Lodge; however, a committee was appointed to make a study and prepare suitable rules and a code of by-laws for the new Grand Body. The study was made, and the report was submitted during the next annual session of Grand Lodge.

Warrants for the three subordinate lodges were approved and on July 10, 1830, were issued to Jackson Lodge No. 1, Washington Lodge No. 2, and Harmony Lodge No. 3. The new warrants were exchanged for the old charters. The Grand Secretary returned the three old documents to the appropriate Grand Lodges, and with these documents went a request for fraternal recognition and the exchange of fraternal correspondence.



The First Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of the Territory of Florida was closed in Ample Form to meet again on the second Monday after the annual session of the Legislative Council of the Territory of Florida.



Jackson Lodge No. 1 – Lodge Room 2019

## CHAPTER VIII – GRAND LODGE COMMUNICATIONS 1830-1832

Following the organizational convention and First Grand Lodge Communication, a Dispensation was granted in 1830 by the Grand Master to Farmers Lodge No. 4, Webbville, Jackson County, Territory of Florida. This Lodge was duly chartered by the next session of the Grand Lodge but was short lived as it went out of existence in 1837.

The Second Annual Grand Communication of the Grand Lodge of the Territory of Florida was opened in Ample Form. The three subordinate lodges, as well as Farmers Lodge No. 4, U.D., were properly represented.

The work during this Grand Communication was routine and uneventful with two exceptions. The first was a review of the records of a Masonic trial held by Harmony Lodge No. 3. After due consideration, the records were confirmed, and James S. Murphy was expelled from the Masonic Fraternity. The committee appointed to study and prepare a code of by-laws and rules for the government of the Grand Lodge presented their report, together with a draft of the proposed by-laws and rules, which was adopted. The Grand Lodge officials for the ensuing year were elected and properly installed. R:W: John P. Duval was re-elected Grand Master, and the Second Annual Grand Communication was closed in Ample Form.

The Third Annual Grand Communication of the Grand Lodge of the Territory of Florida was opened in Ample Form on January 9, 1832, by R:W: James W. Exum, Deputy Grand Master as Acting Grand Master, with the four subordinate lodges of the Grand Lodge duly represented. It is interesting to note that the officers of the respective lodges were required to wear their appropriate jewels while attending Grand Lodge sessions.

The report of the committee on Printing and Distribution of the proceedings of the Second Annual Grand Communication brought to light the exchange of correspondence and proceedings with the Grand Lodges of the District of Columbia, Georgia, Alabama, and Indiana. The first deaths of members of the Grand Lodge were mentioned in a report honoring the memory of R:W: Brother John Lines and W. Brother James A. Dunlap. The Grand Lodge proclaimed a thirty-day period of mourning during which all members of Grand Lodge were to wear the badge of Masonic mourning.

The Grand Lodge officers for the ensuing year were duly elected and installed. R:W: Robert Butler was elected Grand Master, and the Third Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of the Territory of Florida was closed in Ample Form.

R:W: John Pope Duval, who served as the first Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Florida from 1830 to 1832 and as the President of the Convention, was born June 3, 1790, in Richmond, Virginia. Brother Duval was of French Huguenot heritage and a relative of General George

Washington. His father was an intimate friend of General Washington, and his grandfather was active in the movement for independence.

Brother Duval attended Washington College and William and Mary, and in 1811, at the age of 21, was admitted to the Bar in Virginia. In 1812, upon the recommendation of Mr. Jefferson, he was commissioned as a First Lieutenant in the Army. As an infantry officer he distinguished himself in the war with Great Britain.

He was persuaded by his brother, William P. Duval, Territorial Governor of Florida, to seek his fortune in this territory. During the month of June 1827, he arrived in Florida and found several of his army friends. Among those were Richard K. Call who later became Territorial Governor and Robert Butler, the respected and confidential friend of General Jackson.

During 1831 Brother Duval and his entire family were stricken with a malady which was reaching plague proportions, so they moved to Bardstown, Kentucky, where he re-entered the Army and was promoted to Brigadier General during the war between Texas and Mexico.

In 1836 Brother Duval was appointed Secretary of the Territory of Florida. He resumed his law practice and in answer to the summons of Governor Call he accepted the monumental task of preparing a Digest of the Laws of Florida. During the Indian War, he engineered the capture of a large band of Indians for which he was highly commended by the War Department.

R.:W.: John Pope Duval, a soldier, a statesman, a gentleman, a servant of God and a Mason, gave much to his State and his Nation, and through his love for Freemasonry and his devotion to its principles he provided the leadership required to set an infant Grand Lodge on the road to Masonic victory.

Brother Duval departed this mortal life when summoned by the Supreme Architect during the regular Annual Grand Communication in 1855.

## CHAPTER IX – GRAND LODGE COMMUNICATIONS 1833-1834

The Fourth Annual Grand Communication of the Grand Lodge of the Territory of Florida was opened in Ample Form, on January 14, 1833, by R.:W.: James W. Exum, Deputy Grand Master acting as Grand Master on account of the serious illness of Grand Master Robert Butler. This Grand Communication is remembered as the session which elected R.:W.: Brother Andrew Jackson as an honorary member of the Grand Lodge of Florida. Brother Jackson was a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the State of Tennessee and the first Territorial Governor of Florida.

The Committee on Foreign Correspondence reported that Masonry was flourishing throughout the country in spite of the severe opposition in some areas. It further reported that in the United States opposition had arisen to the teachings of Almighty God, freedom and brotherly love. The Grand Lodge was appalled when informed that this sinister force had reared its ugly head in a new country which was founded on freedom of worship, freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, teachings of the Golden Rule and belief in equal justice for all.

R.:W.: James W. Exum was elected Grand Master. After the installation of officers and the handling of routine business, the Grand Lodge was closed in Ample Form.

R.:W.: Robert Butler was the second Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the Territory of Florida. He was a member of Jackson Lodge No. 23 of the Grand Lodge of Alabama, which later became Jackson Lodge No. 1. He was one of the outstanding leaders in the organization of the Grand Lodge of the Territory of Florida and served as Master during the year 1832.

R.:W.: Robert Butler distinguished himself as a soldier in the early Indian campaigns, fought in the war of 1812, and the battle of New Orleans. In 1818 he served in Florida and was present when St. Marks, Pensacola and Barrancas were captured.

After Brother Butler retired from the Army, he represented the government of the United States in the transfer of St. Augustine and all East Florida from Spain to the United States. In 1835 he named Surveyor General of Florida. Death came to this distinguished soldier, statesman and Mason on January 13, 1860.

The Fifth Annual Grand Communication of the Grand Lodge of the Territory of Florida was opened in Ample Form by R.:W.: James W. Exum, Grand Master, on January 13, 1834.

The business of this Grand Lodge was of a routine nature. It is noted that the Grand Secretary reported the failure of Farmer's Lodge No. 4 to file a report for the previous two years. The Committee on Returns also noted the absence of a representative from this lodge. The Committee on Foreign Correspondence reported that fraternal communication had been established with thirteen sister Grand Jurisdictions. The officers for the new Masonic year were duly elected and together with the appointive officers were properly installed. R.:W.: Jesse Coe was elected Grand Master, and the Fifth Grand Lodge Communication was closed in Ample Form.

R.:W.: James W. Exum of Harmony Lodge No. 3, who served as Grand Master in 1834, came to Florida from Alabama. He served as the arbitrator of property rights in Pensacola but found his work was extremely difficult because claimants either failed or refused to cooperate. On May 28, 1829, he was

appointed U. S. Marshal for the West Florida District and served in that capacity until his death February 16, 1838.



Jackson Lodge No. 1 – Centennial Anniversary Dedication Plaque

## CHAPTER X – GRAND LODGE COMMUNICATIONS 1835-1836

The Sixth Annual Grand Communication of the Grand Lodge of the Territory of Florida was opened in Ample Form January 12, 1835, by R.:W.: Jesse Coe, Grand Master. This session was highlighted by the attendance of His Excellency, Brother John H. Eaton, Governor of the Territory of Florida, who was elected an honorary member of the Grand Lodge.

A report by D.M. Sheffield, Chairman of the "Committee on the State of the Grand Lodge" was brief, but it pointed to the main obstacle hindering the growth of Masonry, in Florida. Due to the unsettled state of the country, caused by hostile Indian tribes, there were no new subordinate lodges formed, but a ray of hope which turned out to be a true prediction was brought out in his report as follows: "We have but few subordinate lodges, but they are located in the intelligent communities, are composed of valuable materials and are working well; and form a nucleus upon which we may hope in time to permanently establish our Masonic edifice."

The officers for the new Masonic year were elected and installed. R.:W.: Jesse Coe was re-elected Grand Master. R.:W.: Isham Green Searcy, Deputy Grand Master, acting as Grand Master, issued a Dispensation for the organization of Hiram Lodge No. 5, to be located in Monticello, Jefferson County, in the Territory of Florida. A second Dispensation was issued by R.:W.: Brother Searcy, Deputy Grand Master, for the organization of Franklin Lodge No. 6 to be located at Apalachicola, Franklin County, in the Territory of Florida. Hiram Lodge No. 5 is still in existence today. However, Franklin Lodge No. 6 went out of existence in 1881.

The Seventh Annual Grand Communication of the Grand Lodge of the Territory of Florida was opened in Ample Form by R.:W.: Jesse Coe, Grand Master January 11, 1836. Grand Secretary R.:W.: Thomas Brown was absent during the session due to Indian trouble within the Territory. His absence placed a hardship on the Grand Lodge and limited its activities as the records of previous communication were not available.

The Committee on By-Laws gave an unfavorable report on Hiram Lodge, (U.D.) , and W.M. Abraham Bellamy. A special committee was appointed to study the proceedings of this Lodge and make a report to the next Annual Grand Communication. The elected and the appointive officers were installed. R.:W.: Isham Green Searcy was installed as Grand Master. The Grand Lodge was closed in Ample Form until the next Annual Communication.

R.:W.: Jesse Coe, who served as Grand Master during the period from 1834-35 and again from 1840-47, and as Grand Chaplain from 1836 to 1839, was a member of Washington Lodge No. 2, Quincy.

On May 14, 1836, he was named chairman of the Citizens of Gadsden County Committee on Indian Problems. This appointment may have resulted from his friendly activities with Indians, for there is recorded on June 1, 1835, a sale of one and one-half sections of land by Yellow Hair to Coe. He was also a member of the Commission to select a site for the West Florida Seminary, which was located in Tallahassee.

Brother Coe was a lay representative at the Second Annual Convention of the Diocese of Florida. He was a member of the St. Paul's Episcopal Church of Quincy and was often referred to as Reverend Coe. However, there is no known record of his ordination.



R. W. Brother Coe served Grand Lodge well. His love for Masonry and his devotion to its principles are legendary within Masonic circles.



Jackson Lodge No. 1 – Tallahassee, FL 2019

## CHAPTER XI – GRAND LODGE COMMUNICATIONS 1837-1838

The Eighth Annual Grand Communication of the Grand Lodge of the Territory of Florida was opened in Ample Form January 9, 1837, by R.:W.: Isham Green Searcy, Grand Master.

The highlights of this Grand Communication were the granting of warrants to Hiram Lodge No. 5, (U.D.) , of Monticello and to Franklin Lodge No. 6 of Apalachicola and the trial of Brother Abraham Bellamy of Hiram Lodge No. 5.

The trial of Abraham Bellamy, Master of Hiram Lodge No. 5, was held after a special committee had filed charges and specifications. Brother Bellamy was charged with un-Masonic conduct in that he accepted a challenge to fight a duel with Captain Everett White, a Master Mason. They met on the combat grounds and fought a duel which resulted in Captain White's death. After careful examination of the charges and a full examination of the testimony the Grand Lodge acquitted Brother Abraham Bellamy.

Another action at this Grand Session was the declaration that Farmer's Lodge No. 4 was defunct. R.:W.: Henry Gee was elected Grand Master, and the Grand Lodge was closed in Ample Form until the next Annual Grand Communication.

R.:W.: Isham Green Searcy, a member of Jackson Lodge No. 1, served as Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the Territory of Florida during the year 1836. On October 19, 1824, he was appointed clerk to Robert Butler, the Surveyor General of Florida, and served in this capacity during the survey to ascertain the state boundary line. Brother Searcy was appointed Postmaster of Tallahassee on March 25, 1826,

and during February 1827, was named Adjutant General of the Seventh Regiment of the State Militia. He joined with Brother Robert Butler and Richard K. Call in promoting and developing St. Marks and Tallahassee, which included the Tallahassee-St. Marks Railroad. R.:W.: Brother Searcy was a dedicated Mason and served Jackson Lodge No. 1 and the Grand Lodge well. His efforts and devotion contributed to the great success of Masonry in Florida.

The Ninth Annual Grand Communication of the Grand Lodge of the Territory of Florida was opened in Ample Form January 8, 1838, by R.:W.: Henry Gee, Grand Master. This session was most harmonious, and the business was of a routine nature. R.:W.: Leslie A. Thompson was elected and installed Grand Master, and the Grand Lodge was closed in Ample Form on January 10, 1838.

R.:W.: Henry Gee, a member of Washington Lodge No. 2 of Quincy, served as Grand Master during 1837. He was born in Fayetteville, North Carolina, October 12, 1782, and moved from Georgetown, South Carolina, to Quincy, in 1827, where he became one of the leading citizens. He served as the Justice of the Peace and was a close personal friend of Richard K. Call. He was one of the original organizers of the Union Bank of Tallahassee which failed in 1840 and served as a Trustee of the Quincy Academy in 1840. He organized the movement to establish a female college in Quincy and was instrumental in numerous civic projects and improvements. It was in his Masonic activities that Henry Gee found a chief outlet for his benevolent impulses, and he served Masonry with distinction and honor. Gee Lodge No. 21 of Chattahoochee was named in his honor while he still lived.



R.W.: Brother Gee passed from this mortal life on February 4, 1851, and several articles were published in area newspapers lamenting the passing of this useful and dedicated man. He was buried in his family burial plot four miles southeast of Quincy.



Former Washington Lodge No. 2 – Quincy, FL

*Settlers in the new U.S. territory of Florida (created in 1821) who were members of the Masonic order soon established lodges in their new communities. Washington Lodge No. 2, Free and Accepted Masons, created in 1828 was among the first Florida lodges. A Masonic building constructed in 1832 served the lodge as well as the community as a meeting place until it was destroyed by a storm in 1851. Construction of a new brick building began the next year and was completed by 1854. It was erected by Charles Waller, a Gadsden County builder-designer who constructed several other brick buildings in the Quincy area. For over half a century, the Washington Lodge hall was the scene of community activities. Although the appearance of the building has been changed by alterations including the addition of an exterior coat of stucco, it retains much of its original character. In 1922, the Masons acquired new quarters and the old lodge building became the property of the Quincy Woman's Club. Under its auspices, the Old Washington Lodge has continued to serve the cultural needs of Quincy. In 1975, the structure was added to the National Register of Historic Places.*

## CHAPTER XII – GRAND LODGE COMMUNICATIONS 1839-1840

The Tenth Annual Grand Communication of the Grand Lodge of the Territory of Florida was opened in Ample Form by R.:W.: Leslie A. Thompson, Grand Master, January 14, 1839. This session is noted for its lack of harmonious relations with its sister jurisdictions. The Grand Master reported that during 1838 he had granted a Dispensation to form a lodge at Cuthbert, Georgia and upon receipt of a request from certain Masons, the Grand Lodge authorized a warrant to be issued in the name of Orion Lodge No. 8, to be located at Pleasant Grove, Georgia. These two acts were clear violations of the territorial rights of the Grand Lodge of Georgia.

The death of R.:W.: James W. Exum, P.G.M. was announced and a resolution was adopted. A state of mourning was declared for a period of thirty days, and all members of the Grand Lodge were requested to wear the usual badge of Masonic mourning as a testimonial to the respect and esteem in which R.:W.: Brother Exum was held.

The officers, both elected and appointive for the ensuing year, were duly installed. R.:W.: John B. Taylor was the new Grand Master. The Grand Lodge was closed in Ample Form until the next Annual Grand Communication.

R.:W.: Leslie A. Thompson, Grand Master in 1838, was a member of Jackson Lodge No. 1. Although active in Masonic circles, he was not a dedicated Mason. By his very acts while serving as Grand Master he showed utter disregard for the true principles of Freemasonry. In 1853 he moved to Galveston, Texas, renounced Masonry, and became a member of the Roman Catholic faith. He died January 23, 1874.

The actions of Grand Master Thompson and the 1839 Grand Lodge were a clear violation of the jurisdictional rights of the Grand Lodge of Georgia. The Dispensation authorizing a lodge in Cuthbert, Georgia, was never used and the 1841 Grand Lodge of Florida revoked the document. The Dispensation issued for Orion Lodge No. 8 at Pleasant Grove, Georgia was used, and at the 1841 session of the Grand Lodge of Florida, a charter was granted. The lodge moved from Pleasant Grove to Bainbridge, Georgia, where it has worked continuously to the present time.

The fact that the Grand Lodge of Florida had invaded the Grand jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Georgia created a furor in that Grand body. For several years this disturbance continued, but after much correspondence and negotiations a successful agreement was reached.

The final resolving of this disturbance can best be told by quoting a part of a report made to the Grand Lodge of Georgia by a special committee and approved during the 1843 Grand Communication of that State:

*"Your committee has had under consideration the subject of Orion Lodge No. 8, working under a charter from the Grand Lodge of Florida, and differing from the opinion expressed by this Grand Lodge at its last Annual Grand Communication, would recommend that this Grand Body at its present communication, do confirm the charter of Orion Lodge and receive said lodge under its jurisdiction, as soon as the charter of said lodge and petition thereupon be sent up to this lodge and endorsed, and that our Grand Secretary inform the Grand Lodge of Florida and Orion Lodge forthwith of the action of this Grand Body. Your committee takes great pleasure in acknowledging and reciprocating the true Masonic and liberal feeling manifested by the Grand Lodge of Florida in their action upon this subject"*

The Grand Lodge of Florida during the 1844 Annual Grand Communication adopted the following resolution:

*"Resolved, that this Grand Lodge, with great pleasure, commends the conduct of Orion Lodge which has ever been highly proper and Masonic, and although it is admitted that jurisdiction of said lodge, on Masonic principles properly attaches to the R.:W.: Grand Lodge of Georgia, within whose state limits it is located yet the members of this Grand Lodge cannot but regret the necessity which separates Orion Lodge from them and in taking leave, they unitedly and individually greet them as brothers, and will continue to cherish towards them the most kindly and fraternal feeling. Be it therefore further resolved, that the number eight shall not be appropriated to any other lodge under the jurisdiction of this Grand Lodge, shall ever be entitled to honorary membership in this Grand Lodge."*

The actions of the two Grand Lodges ended an unpleasant jurisdictional controversy and cemented the relations of the two Grand jurisdictions into a united bond of fellowship and understanding which has stood firm down through the years.

During his year as Grand Master, R.:W.: Brother Taylor issued two Dispensations: One to Clinton Lodge No. 7, (U.D.), located in St. Augustine, St. Johns County, in the Territory of Florida. This lodge was; never chartered and the Dispensation was revoked in 1841 by the action of the Grand Lodge. The second Dispensation was issued to St. Andrews Lodge No. 9, (U.D.), located at Newmansville, Alachua County, in the Territory of Florida. This lodge was never chartered and the 1845 session of the Grand Lodge revoked the Dispensation.

The Eleventh Annual Grand Lodge Communication of the Territory of Florida was opened in Ample Form January 14, 1840, by R.:W.: John B. Taylor, Grand Master.

There was alleged to be a disturbance in Jackson Lodge No. 1, and a committee was appointed to conduct an investigation. This committee recommended that the charter granted to Jackson Lodge be revoked, but after thorough examination of the evidence and a complete discussion, the recommendation of the investigating committee was tabled.

The Committee on By-Laws recommended, and the Grand Lodge concurred, in extending the Dispensation issued to Orion Lodge No. 8, for a period of one year. In addition, the Dispensations issued to Clinton Lodge No. 7, St. Andrews Lodge No. 9 and Planters Lodge No. 10, were extended until the next Annual Grand Communication.

This was the first session of Grand Lodge to report an interchange of representatives after an agreement between the Grand Lodge of New York and the Grand Lodge of Florida.

The officers for the new year were duly installed, with R.:W.: Jesse Coe as the new Grand Master. The Grand Lodge was closed in Ample Form.

R.:W.: John B. Taylor was Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Florida during 1839. He was a member of Jackson Lodge No. 1 and served Masonry with distinction and honor. He was Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Florida in 1845 and again in 1849 which office he held until 1863.

Brother Taylor was a prominent and respected physician of Tallahassee and lived a life of service to his fellowman. His death on January 4, 1865, saddened not only the members of Grand Lodge but the Craft throughout the Grand Jurisdiction of Florida.

## CHAPTER XIII – GRAND LODGE COMMUNICATIONS 1841-1843

During the Masonic year, 1841, R:W: Brother Coe issued a Dispensation to Madison Lodge No. 11, Madison County, in the Territory of Florida and a second Dispensation to St. Johns Lodge No. 12, St. Johns County, in the Territory of Florida.

The Twelfth Annual Grand Communication of the Grand Lodge of the Territory of Florida was opened by R:W: Jesse Coe, Grand Master, January 11, 1841, in Ample Form.

By action of this session of Grand Lodge, a charter was granted to Orion Lodge No. 8, located at Bainbridge, Georgia, and dispensations issued to Madison Lodge No. 11 and St. Johns Lodge No. 12 were continued for another year, but the dispensation that had been issued to Clinton Lodge No. 7 at St. Augustine was surrendered and appropriately voided.

The report of the Committee on Foreign Correspondence contained two items of extreme interest. After reviewing the proceedings of Southern Grand Lodges the committee reported in part: "From the tenor of these communications, the committee congratulates the fraternity on the advancement of Freemasonry throughout the union and are gratified to find that the institution sustains its high character for brotherly love, relief and truth."

The second item did not reflect the true principles of Freemasonry in that the Grand Lodge of Louisiana refused to admit the Grand Master of Mississippi to their Annual Grand Communication by stating that their by-laws prohibited all visitors.

The Grand Lodge of Alabama had adopted a resolution requesting that all Grand Lodges with which it carried on foreign correspondence elect a delegate to a meeting on the first Monday of March, 1842, in Washington, D. C., to establish a uniform mode of work throughout all lodges in the United States and to adopt lawful regulations that would insure the security of the Craft. Upon recommendation of the Committee on Foreign Correspondence a similar resolution was passed, and R:W: John P. Duval, P.G.M., was named to represent the Grand Lodge of the Territory of Florida. The R. R. J. Glancy Jones was elected as the alternate delegate.

The officers for the ensuing year were duly installed. R:W: Jesse Coe was re-elected Grand Master. After the completion of the regular business, the Grand Lodge was closed in Ample Form.

The Thirteenth Annual Grand Communication of the Grand Lodge of the Territory of Florida was opened in Ample Form by R:W: Jesse Coe, Grand Master, January 10, 1842.

The death of R:W: Isham Green Searcy, P.G.M., who was serving as Grand Secretary, was duly reported. The appropriate resolution of tribute was adopted, and the Grand Lodge went into mourning for a period of thirty days in respect to this outstanding Mason and Brother.

Upon the recommendation of the Committee of Dispensations a warrant was granted to St. Johns Lodge No. 12 (U.D.) of St. Augustine, East Florida.

By action of the Grand Lodge a public installation of the Grand Lodge officers was held in the Presbyterian church of Tallahassee. In addition to the installation the R.R. Grand Chaplain delivered a funeral oration in memory of R:W: Brother Isham G. Searcy, P.G.M. All Master Masons and the general public were

invited to this ceremony. Special guests were the members of the Legislative Council of the Territory of Florida, the Judges and officers of the Court of Appeals and the members of the Bar.

R:W: Jesse Coe was continued as Grand Master for the new year and the Grand Lodge was closed in Ample Form.

The Fourteenth Annual Grand Communication of the Grand Lodge of the Territory of Florida was opened January 9, 1843 by R:W: Jesse Coe, Grand Master.

A special committee was appointed to file articles of incorporation and obtain a charter of incorporation from the Legislative Council of Florida.

During the session of the Grand Lodge the precedent was set for handling all business matters of a lodge except the conferring of inferior degrees in a Blue Lodge.

A communication from the Grand Lodge of Georgia was received which requested a list of all lodges within the Grand Jurisdiction of Georgia that were working under a Charter or Dispensation issued by the Grand Lodge of Florida. The Grand Secretary was instructed to answer this communication, naming Orion Lodge No. 8 as the only lodge under its jurisdiction located in the Grand Jurisdiction of Georgia. A resolution was adopted which provided that all jurisdiction over this lodge would be relinquished as soon as Orion Lodge would be received under the fraternal jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Georgia.

R:W: Jesse Coe was again elected Grand Master. The officers were duly installed and after the final business had been completed the Grand Lodge was closed in Ample Form.



Harmony Lodge No. 3 – Marianna, FL

## CHAPTER XIV – GRAND LODGE COMMUNICATION 1844

During the Masonic year a dispensation was issued by Grand Master Coe in the name of Coe Lodge No. 13, to be located in Tallahassee, the County of Leon, in the Territory of Florida.

The Fifteenth Annual Grand Communication of the Grand Lodge of the Territory of Florida was opened in Ample Form January 18, 1844, by R.:W.: Jesse Coe, Grand Master.

A communication from the Grand Lodge of Georgia was read to the Grand Lodge. This communication stated that the Grand Lodge of Georgia had endorsed the Charter of Orion Lodge No. 8. The Worshipful Master of Orion Lodge extended fraternal greetings from the membership of his lodge. It was a sad occasion for this group of courageous Masons when they transferred their loyalty from the Grand Lodge of Florida to the Grand Lodge of Georgia. The Grand Lodge of Florida, by resolution, expressed its deep feeling, and further extended to the Worshipful Master, the Wardens and the Representatives of Orion Lodge the right of honorary membership in the Grand Lodge of Florida.

A petition to form a lodge in Key West was received. Upon the recommendation of the Committee on Dispensations, a dispensation was issued in the name of Dade Lodge No. 14, to be located in Key West, in the Territory of Florida. The dispensation issued to St. Johns Lodge No. 12 (U.D.), and the dispensation issued to Coe Lodge No. 13 (U.D.), were extended for a period of twelve months.

The first mention of the subject of schools is to be found in the minutes of this session of Grand Lodge. By resolution the Masters and Wardens of Jackson Lodge No. 1 and Coe Lodge No. 13, (U.D.), were named as a committee to arrange for the education of the children of Master Masons and other needy children. The resolution specified that the arrangements should be made with the male and female schools which were being held in the Masonic Temple in Tallahassee. The cost was to be paid out of the monies received from the rental of space in the Masonic Temple.

The officers for the ensuing year were duly elected. R.:W.: Jesse Coe was elected Grand Master. The officers were installed at a public meeting in the Grand Lodge Hall.

The Grand Lodge was closed in Ample Form.

During the session of the Fifteenth Annual Grand Communication a committee was named and authorized to circulate a letter to all lodges in Florida and to all Brethren residing within the Grand Jurisdiction of Florida. This letter stated that Masonry was flourishing throughout all Grand jurisdictions except Florida. The appeal was made to the Craft to awaken and bring to this Grand Jurisdiction a new and vigorous Masonic fraternity. The letter was closed with an appeal for a rededication of Masons to the true principles of Freemasonry. It did not stress numbers but emphasized strength in unity, support and attendance. Neither did it state the apparent reason for the plight of Masonry in Florida but the facts of history in the light of this letter present a vivid picture. The Territory of Florida had been in the midst of a great turmoil. For many years the settlers had been tormented, driven from their homes, murdered and sometimes taken as hostages by hostile Indians. The fear that existed was detrimental to Masonry in that lodges were abandoned; attendance was impossible and only the will for survival existed. This troubled era was drawing to a close when the call to renew the faith was made. Masonry had moved forward in certain areas of the Territory but only in thickly populated places where the danger of attack did not exist.

During 1844 the interest in Masonry was revived in Madison. The original dispensation issued to Madison Lodge No. 11, (U.D.), had been lying dormant during this troubled time. To facilitate the interest in this Lodge a new dispensation was issued by Grand Master Coe and the lodge renewed its work as Madison Lodge No. 11.

The Sixteenth Annual Grand Communication of the Grand Lodge of the Territory of Florida was opened in Ample Form Monday, January 13, 1845, by R.:W.: Jesse Coe, Grand Master.

Upon the recommendation of the Committee on By-Laws and Dispensations a Charter was granted to Madison Lodge No. 11, to be located in Madison in the Territory of Florida.

The committee report on the delinquent lodges was brief but reflects the hardships faced by Masonry during that period. The report states that the lodges were defunct "by causes beyond their control" but elsewhere we find mention of unstable conditions, trouble with the Indians and people moving away. Masonry, like all else that is good, had its pitfalls and troubles. The property of two defunct lodges, Farmers Lodge No. 4 and Hiram Lodge No. 5, was taken over by the Grand Lodge. The warrants which had been issued to St. Andrews Lodge No. 9 (U.D.), and Planters Lodge No. 10 (U.D.), were cancelled as they had not been used.

The members of Grand Lodge, joined by Master Masons, the officers and members of the executive, legislative and judicial branches of the Territorial government and by the citizenry of Tallahassee and the surrounding territory held a public installation of Grand Lodge officers. This meeting, held in the Presbyterian Church, was an outstanding occasion. Non-Masonic participants in the grand occasion were the choir of the Presbyterian Church and an amateur band of musicians of Tallahassee.

R.:W.: Jesse Coe was again installed as Grand Master.

After the completion of the routine business the Grand Lodge was closed in Ample Form.

## CHAPTER XV – GRAND COMMUNICATIONS 1845-1847

A special Grand Communication of the Grand Lodge of the Territory of Florida was opened in Ample Form on June 23, 1845, by R.:W.: Harry Taylor, Deputy Grand Master for the Grand Master.

Later in this special session of the Grand Lodge, R.:W.: Brother Jesse Coe, Grand Master, gave the first recorded Grand Master's address. He recommended therein three specific items which were considered and reported upon by a special committee. Brother Coe recommended the revision of the Constitution and By-Laws of the Grand Lodge. The committee suggested that this matter be left in the hands of the Constitution and By-Laws Committee and that they submit their proposals at the next Annual Grand Communication for appropriate action and for submission to the subordinate lodges. The second recommendation of the Grand Master was the construction of a Grand Masonic Temple in Tallahassee. The committee suggested that this be held in abeyance until the regular session of Grand Lodge. The third recommendation was a change in time for the Annual Grand Communication. The committee felt that this should be left up to the discretion of the Constitution and By-Laws Committee. The recommendations of this special committee were approved.

The delayed report of the death of R.:W.: Andrew Jackson, Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Tennessee and an honorary member of the Grand Lodge of Florida, was read. A special resolution, commemorating this distinguished patriot, statesman, soldier, Christian and Mason was adopted. A declaration, which was prepared by R.:W.: Brother Robert Butler, a close personal friend of General Jackson and one of his Adjutant-Generals, for Jackson Lodge No. 1, was also adopted as a fitting tribute to the first Territorial Governor of Florida and honorary member of the Grand Lodge of Florida.

On Wednesday, June 25, 1845, members of the Grand Lodge of Florida came to Tallahassee where they formed a procession to the state capitol to attend and participate in the inauguration of Honorable William Dunn Moseley, the first Governor of the State of Florida. This honor and recognition came to the Grand Lodge by virtue of the high regard and esteem of the public for this fraternity and for its service to God, country, state, and fellowman.

The Seventeenth Annual Grand Communication of the Grand Lodge of Florida was opened in Ample Form, Monday, December 5, 1845, by R.:W.: Richard A. Shine, Deputy Grand Master.

The Committee on the Constitution and By-Laws made their report. The proposed amendments were thoroughly discussed and, after some alterations, were approved. The Constitution, as amended, was then ordered to be published with the proceedings of Grand Lodge.

A representative of Coe Lodge No. 13, Tallahassee, presented a memorial which, when approved, voided the charter and abolished Coe Lodge. The membership of this body was transferred to Jackson Lodge No. 1. The warrant, books, papers, jewels, and furniture of the lodge were received by the Grand Secretary.

The minutes of this session of the Grand Lodge reflect an act by which a wrong was corrected. Benjamin G. Thornton, a Past Grand Warden of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia, and a member of Jackson Lodge No. 1 had been expelled by his lodge for a reason that did not implicate his character as a man or as a Mason. By action of this Grand Lodge, Brother Thornton's rights and benefits of Freemasonry were restored.



The proceedings of this session of Grand Lodge show the appointments of District Deputy Grand Masters. The four districts into which this Grand Jurisdiction was divided were the Southern District, the Eastern District, the Middle District and the Western District.

R:W: Jesse Coe was again elected Grand Master for the ensuing year and the session of the Grand Lodge was closed in Ample Form.

During the 1845 Masonic year the Grand Master, R:W: Brother Jesse Coe, issued two Dispensations, the first was to Hiram Lodge No. 5, located at Monticello, Florida, which was a revival of an old lodge. The second was issued to Santa Rosa Lodge No. 16, located at Milton, in Santa Rosa County, Florida.

The Eighteenth Annual Grand Communication of the Grand Lodge of Florida was opened in Ample Form December 7, 1846, by R:W: Richard Shine, Deputy Grand Master acting as Grand Master.

A new Charter was granted to Hiram Lodge No. 5, located in Monticello, Florida, and the jewels and property of the old lodge were given to the new body. A warrant was granted in the name of Escambia Lodge No. 15, to be located in Pensacola, Florida, and the Dispensation held by Santa Rosa Lodge No. 16, (U.D.), was continued for a period of one year.

The new Constitution of the Grand Lodge of Florida also was formally adopted. This document was printed in the proceedings of Grand Lodge and an additional 150 copies, in booklet form, were ordered.

A special committee for renting and repairing the Masonic Hall reported that the new roof on the building cost \$95.00. This committee further reported that the lower rooms of the building had been rented to the trustees of the male Academy for an annual sum of \$25.00. The rent was to be used to pay for the repairs of the building. When the cost of repairs had been paid, the income from the rent was to be used as tuition for orphaned children of Master Masons and others, subject, of course, to the will of Grand Lodge.

R:W: Brother Jesse Coe was again elected Grand Master. After the completion of the routine business the Grand Lodge was closed in Ample Form.

The Nineteenth Annual Grand Lodge Communication of the Grand Lodge of Florida was opened, in Ample Form, January 19, 1848, by R:W: John P. Duval, P.G.M., as Acting Grand Master.

A charter was granted to Santa Rosa Lodge No. 16, and the officers of the new lodge were installed.

The Committee on Foreign Correspondence recommended that the Grand Lodge of Florida officially endorse the constitution for a Supreme Grand Lodge of the United States. This was done by the adoption of an appropriate resolution. The matter was reopened when the Grand Representative of the Grand Lodge of Texas, R:W: John P. Duval, P.G.M., opposed the final approval of the resolution and objected to the principle of the Supreme Grand Lodge of the United States. R:W: Brother Duval expressed the objection of the Grand Lodge of Texas. The final action resulted in the disapproval of the idea of a Supreme Grand Lodge by the Grand Lodge of Florida.

R:W: Joseph B. Lancaster was elected Grand Master. The Grand Lodge was closed in Ample Form.

## CHAPTER XVI – GRAND LODGE COMMUNICATIONS 1848-1850

During his year as Grand Master, R.:W.: Brother Joseph B. Lancaster granted four Dispensations to Eucheeana Lodge No. 17, in Walton County; Centerville Lodge No. 18, in Leon County; Marion Lodge No. 19, in Marion County; and Solomon Lodge No. 20, Jacksonville, in Duval County.

The Twentieth Annual Grand Communication of the Grand Lodge of Florida was opened in Ample Form Tuesday, January 9, 1848, by R.:W.: Joseph B. Lancaster, Grand Master. The scheduled time for the opening of this Grand Lodge was Monday, January 8, but due to inclement weather a full representation was not present.

A complaint against Escambia Lodge No. 15, by Clement Brown was referred to the Committee on Propositions and Grievances. After making a study of the charges, the committee recommended placing a charge against Escambia Lodge which would allow all concerned to be heard. The Grand Lodge concurred.

It is noted also that this Grand Lodge received a report from the Committee on Education which was appointed by the 1844 session of Grand Lodge. The report stated that there were no funds available to promote and assist education; however, the following resolution was recommended and adopted:

*"Resolved that the subordinate lodges working under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge, be, and they are hereby required to take immediate measures to ascertain the number of children of Master Masons destitute of the means of education, who are residing within the limits of their respective jurisdictions; and to adopt such measures as may be in their power to cause them to be sent to school, or otherwise properly educated; and that they report to this Grand Lodge at its next Annual Grand Communication, the number of such children of each class, and what said lodges have done in compliance with the resolution."*

Another resolution adopted at this Grand Communication set in motion a plan which brought the Grand Lodges of Alabama, Georgia, and Florida into a close bond of fraternal understanding and cooperation. The resolution is worthy of reprinting:

*"Resolved, that whereas there exists great inconvenience to the Craft and lodges situated on the borders of the States of Alabama, Georgia, and Florida, in their fraternal intercourse the Grand Secretary of this Grand Lodge is hereby directed to open a correspondence with the Grand Secretaries of the Grand Lodge of Alabama and Georgia for the purpose of entering into such reciprocal arrangements as may be calculated to remove the inconvenience complained of, without an infringement of our respective jurisdictions, and report the results of his negotiations to the next Annual Communication of this Grand Lodge."*

A report was made that a contract had been signed with the principal of the Academy in Tallahassee whereby the room under the Masonic Hall was to be used as a school room. The sum of \$75.00 per annum was the rent and was to be applied to the education of children designated by a committee composed of the Grand Master, the Grand Secretary and certain appointed members of Jackson Lodge No. 1.

The Committee of Dispensation and By-Laws recommended and the Grand Lodge concurred that Charters be issued to Eucheeana Lodge No. 17, in Walton County; Centerville Lodge No. 18, in Leon County; Marion Lodge No. 19, Ocala, in Marion County; and Solomon's Lodge No. 20, Jacksonville, in Duval County.

R.:W.: Thomas Brown was elected Grand Master and the Grand Lodge was closed in Ample Form.

R.:W.: Joseph B. Lancaster served as Grand Master in 1848 and was active in Masonry and particularly in the affairs of Grand Lodge. Brother Lancaster was one of the early settlers in the Territory of Florida. On August 5, 1823, he was appointed as a deputy to the Secretary of the Board of Commissioners for Ascertaining Title to Land in East Florida, which he gave up to enter the practice of law. In 1825 he was appointed to the Legislative Council by the President and served as a Justice of the Peace in St. Johns County. In 1827, he was appointed Judge of the County Court in Alachua County, and in the fall of 1831, he was appointed Collector of Customs for the District of St. Johns and Inspector of Revenue for the Port of Jacksonville.

Brother Lancaster served as a Captain in the Volunteers during the Seminole War as Chief Clerk of the Legislative Council five different times in the period from 1833 to 1838 and as Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives in 1839. He represented Duval County in the legislative sessions of 1840, 1842, 1843, 1844 and 1847, serving as Speaker of the House in 1843, 1844, and 1847. On December 23, 1847, he resigned from the Legislature and accepted an appointment as Judge of the Southern Judicial Circuit where he served until 1853.

On February 16, 1856, R.:W.: Brother Lancaster was elected Mayor of the City of Tampa but was called to his Heavenly Lodge by the Supreme Grand Master only a few months later.

The Twenty-first Annual Grand Communication of the Grand Lodge of Florida was opened in Ample Form Monday, January 14, 1850, by R.:W.: Thomas Brown, Grand Master.

Grand Master Brown delivered the second recorded Grand Master's address, wherein he briefly traced the history of Masonry and set its origin at the beginning of the world as recorded in the first verse of Genesis.

The Grand Master reported that he had granted three Dispensations in the state and one out of the state since the last Grand Annual Communication. Dispensations were issued to Gee Lodge No. 21, Chattahoochee, in Gadsden County, to Hamilton Lodge No. 22, in Hamilton County, to Newport Lodge No. 23, in Newport, Wakulla County; and to W. Gregory Yale, the Master of Solomon's Lodge No. 20, of Jacksonville, East Florida, to establish a lodge in California.

R.:W.: Brother Brown reported that Madison Lodge No. 11 had submitted plans for the creation of a seminary in that city to be supervised and supported by the brethren of that lodge. The Grand Master praised the plan and encouraged other lodges to follow this example.

Of special interest was the mention of the Washington National Monument Society and a statement by the Grand Master: "I have the pleasure to inform you that, in compliance with an invitation to all the States of this Confederation 'to furnish a block of marble, or other stone, a production of its soil so that each State may be properly represented in the monument' I have succeeded as the Chief Executive of this state in procuring a very suitable native block of limestone from the quarries near St. Marks, which will be forwarded to Washington City as the representative of Florida in the monument now in progress of erection, to take its position with all the other states of the confederacy; and when they shall become cemented together in this great work, may they be symbolical of the bond which binds these states in a union which shall be as enduring as the memory of its great father and founder."

The Committee on Education reported that all children who had been reported lacking in means for an education had been provided for by the lodges in the areas. However, it was noted that all lodges had not filed a report.

R:W: Richard K. Call was elected Grand Master. The officers were installed in a public ceremony held at the Presbyterian Church and after the ceremony attended a banquet given by Jackson Lodge No. 1.

There was much business of a routine nature during this session of Grand Lodge, and one resolution which cemented a firm agreement between the Grand Lodges of Alabama, Georgia and Florida should be mentioned. This resolution provided for the waiver of jurisdiction over a Mason or a candidate whose residence was nearer a lodge in another Grand jurisdiction than one in that of his own.

The Grand Lodge was closed in Ample Form.

R:W: Thomas Brown served as Grand Master in 1849. During his administration Masonry in the Grand Jurisdiction of Florida thrived.

Born October 24, 1785, in West Moreland County, Virginia, he was educated at Charles Town Academy, now in West Virginia, and McLean's Private Academy in Alexandria.

During his employment as a post office clerk in the Richmond, Virginia Post Office, he invented the "Post Office Box." In 1817 he was elected to the Lower House of the General Assembly of Virginia.

In 1828, R:W: Brother Brown moved to Florida. He established a plantation, but that venture met with failure. He then became a hotel operator in Tallahassee. He also established and operated a brickyard and a racetrack as well as served as a teller in the Union Bank. Due to ill health he was forced to give up his activities and take a rest cure in Cuba.

Brother Thomas Brown served ably the Territory and later the State of Florida. He served as Trustee for the Commissioners of the City of Tallahassee. He was Auditor of the Territory of Florida in 1834 and President of the Territorial Council in 1838.

This distinguished Statesman was a member of the Constitutional Convention which framed the Constitution under which Florida was admitted to the Union.

In 1841 he served on the Legislative Council from Leon County, serving as Secretary of the Senate. During 1844, he became a member of the first Legislature of the State of Florida.

Honorable Thomas Brown served as Governor of the State of Florida from 1849 to 1853. His administration was most successful and is remembered for the establishment of many of the departments and agencies that exist today.

R:W: Thomas Brown was a Mason for more than 60 years, attaining the 33rd degree. He served as Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge in 1834, again in 1842-44 and the third time, 1846-48. In addition, he served his Blue Lodge, Jackson No. 1, for many years as secretary. He compiled a valuable and interesting book on Masonry.

On August 24, 1867 this statesman, Christian and beloved Mason, answered the summons of the Supreme Grand Master. From his memoirs, we find the creed by which he lived:

Sic Lux et Lux fuit.

THE MOST WORSHIPFUL *John P. Duval* GRAND MASTER,  
OF THE MOST WORSHIPFUL GRAND LODGE OF ANCIENT FREE MASONS OF FLORIDA.

To all the Enlightened, Passed and Raised, under the Canopy of  
**HEAVEN.**

**WHEREAS,** IT hath been duly represented to the GRAND LODGE of Florida, that in  
*Tallahassee Florida* there reside a number of Master Masons, who are desirous of  
associating together, agreeably to the Constitution of Ancient Masonry, and it appearing to the Grand Lodge to  
be, for the increase and promotion of the Craft, that the said brethren should be encouraged, and properly enabled  
to proceed and work as heretofore they have been accustomed: Now, therefore, **KNOW YE**, That **WE**, the  
*Most Worshipful John P. Duval* Grand Master. *Worshipful John Lines*  
*Senior Grand Warden*, and *Worshipful Henry Bee* Junior Grand Warden, of the *Grand*  
*Lodge of Florida*, by and with the consent of the Grand Lodge, do hereby constitute and appoint our worthy  
brethren *Spurin G. Searcy* Worshipful Master, *Daniel M. Sheffield* Senior Warden, and  
*John Landaman* Junior Warden, together with all other Master Masons as are now, or may at  
any time hereafter become Members, a just, true, regular, and warranted Lodge of Master Masons, according to  
the old Constitution, by the name and designation of *Jackson Lodge Number One*  
And further do hereby require and ordain, all regular Lodges to receive, and acknowledge them as such, hereby  
granting and committing to them and their successors in office, full power and authority, to open, and hold a  
Lodge of Master Masons, and by virtue of these presents to confer the *Entered Apprentice, Fellow-Craft*, and  
*Master Degrees of Masonry*, according to the known and established customs, and practices of Ancient Masonry,  
and no otherwise: and also to elect, and choose a Master, Senior, and Junior Wardens, and other officers, an-  
nually, or semi-annually, at such time or times as to them shall seem most proper: And also to exact from their  
Members such contributions as they shall judge necessary for the support of their Lodge, the relief of their  
Brethren in distress, and fees to the Grand Lodge fund; agreeably to the Constitution of Masonry, and the laws  
of the *Grand Lodge of Florida*. And further, that you do, from time to time, cause to be entered in a Book,  
to be kept for that purpose, an account of your proceedings in the Lodge, together with such regulations as shall  
be made for the good government thereof, a copy of which you are in nowise to omit laying before the Grand  
Lodge once in every year, together with a list of the Members of the Lodge.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, We have herewith subscribed our names and caused our Grand Secretary to subscribe his name and affix the Grand Seal of the Grand Lodge of Florida.

DONE at TALLAHASSEE, Florida, this *The Fifth* day of *July* Anno Lucis 1830

22nd Decemr 1830

*John P. Duval* GRAND MASTER.  
*John Lines* S. G. WARDEN.  
*Henry Bee* J. G. WARDEN.

GRAND SECRETARY

FACSIMILE OF ORIGINAL CHARTER WHICH IS IN THE SAFE

*History of Freemasonry in Florida*

## CHAPTER XVII – GRAND LODGE COMMUNICATIONS 1851-1852

The Twenty-second Annual Grand Communication of the Grand Lodge of Florida was opened on Monday, January 13, 1851, in Ample Form by R.:W.: Richard K. Call, Grand Master.

Upon the recommendation of the Dispensation and By-Laws Committee, charters were granted to Naval Lodge No. 24, at Warrenton, Hillsborough Lodge No. 25, at Tampa; and to Alachua Lodge No. 26, at Newmansville (two miles east of the present town of Alachua).

R.:W.: Thomas Douglas was elected Grand Master. The business and activities of the Annual Grand Communication was of a routine nature. After the installation of the officers, the Grand Lodge was closed in Ample Form.

R.:W.: Richard Keith Call, who served the Grand Lodge of Florida as Grand Master during 1850, was born at Pittsfield, Virginia, in 1791. He was educated at Old Fields School and Mt. Pleasant Academy and began his military career under General Andrew Jackson. He served in the Army, fighting side by side with General Jackson, until 1822 when he resigned and settled in Pensacola as a practicing lawyer.

Brother Call served as a member of the Legislative Council of Florida in 1822. From 1823 to 1825 he served as a delegate to Congress, and in 1825 he was named receiver of the West Florida Land Office. He also became a Brigadier General of the West Florida Militia in 1823. In 1835 he was appointed Territorial Governor of Florida and was Commander-in-Chief during the Indian Wars of 1835 and 1836.

The third railroad in the United States, from Tallahassee to St. Marks, was built by Brother Call. Later, he founded Port Leon, a city on the Gulf which was destroyed by a cyclone.

On September 14, 1862, he answered the summons of the Supreme Grand Master and departed this mortal life.

The Twenty-third Annual Grand Communication of the Grand Lodge of Florida was opened in Ample Form Monday, January 12, 1852, by R.:W.: Thomas Douglas, Grand Master.

R.:W.: Brother Douglas reported that he had issued a Dispensation to Alligator Lodge, located in East Florida. He reported that up to this session of Grand Lodge, there were twenty-three regular lodges in this Grand Jurisdiction and that several places were working toward the establishment of a lodge within their respective areas.

Reporting on the subject of education and schools, the Grand Master was most pleased to cite that Madison Lodge No. 11, had raised about \$5,000 for the establishment of a seminary of learning. The school was in operation at the time of his report. Alachua Lodge No. 26 had appropriated \$1,000 for the establishment of an academy at Newmansville. The brethren had, in addition to the \$1,000, subscribed more than \$2,500 to this project. Centerville Lodge No. 18 had established a school from the elementary grades through the high school grades, and other lodges were formulating plans for the establishment of schools. The Grand Master encouraged other lodges to follow these examples and urged the Grand Lodge, where possible, to assist in these worthy projects.

Upon recommendation of the Dispensation and By-Laws Committee a Charter was granted to Columbia Lodge No. 29.

R:W: Samuel B. Stevens was elected Grand Master. The installation of the Grand Officers was held in the Methodist Church. The minutes reflect that R:W: A. G. Mackey, Grand Lecturer of the Grand Lodge of South Carolina, gave a most appropriate and inspiring address.

A committee was appointed to study the present Grand Lodge Constitution and to recommend any changes at the next regular Grand Communication.

The date of November 4, 1852 was the Centennial anniversary of the initiation of R:W: Brother George Washington into the Masonic fraternity. In commemoration of the historic occasion the lodges in the Grand Jurisdiction of Florida were directed to join with other lodges throughout the United States in celebrating this memorable event.

The Grand Lodge was closed in Ample Form.

R:W: Thomas Douglas served as Grand Master in 1851. He was born April 27, 1790, at Wallingford, Connecticut but later moved to Madison, Indiana, where he operated a general store and established a tin and button factory. While studying law he was elected Associate Judge of the Circuit Court of Jefferson County, Indiana, later serving as the county solicitor.

On May 22, 1826, President John Quincy Adams appointed R:W: Brother Douglas as United States District Attorney for East Florida. He served in this capacity until Governor William D. Moseley appointed him Judge of the Circuit Court for the Eastern Circuit on September 27, 1845. Then, in 1853, he was elected as Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of Florida.

On September 11, 1855, he answered the summons of the Supreme Grand Master and departed this mortal life.

The Twenty-fourth Annual Grand Communication of the Grand Lodge of Florida was opened Monday, January 10, 1853, in Ample Form by R:W: Charles A. M. Mitchell, Deputy Grand Master.

The committee named during the 1852 Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge to revise or rewrite the Constitution, submitted their work. There were some amendments and the document as amended was adopted.

Upon the recommendation of the Dispensation and By-Laws Committee charters were granted to Centerville Lodge No. 18, located at Centerville; Suwannee Lodge No. 30, Suwannee Shoals; DeSoto Lodge, (U.D.); Micanopy Lodge No. 29, Micanopy; and Manatee Lodge No. 31, Manatee. R:W: Thomas Hayward was elected Grand Master.

A brief reference was made to a storm in October 1852, which did considerable damage and destruction to the Masonic building and to the records of Grand Lodge.

After completing all business, the Grand Lodge was closed in Ample Form.

R:W: Samuel B. Stephens served as Grand Master during 1852. His term of office was couched in harmony and progress. He was a dedicated Mason and his energies were exhausted in his Masonic activities.

Brother Stephens resided in Quincy and was a member of the St. Paul's Church of Quincy. He was also a member of the Secession Convention which was held in 1861 and was one of the signers of the Document of Secession.

The Twenty-fifth Annual Grand Communication of the Grand Lodge of Florida was opened in Ample Form, Monday, January 9, 1854, by R.:W.: Thomas Hayward, Grand Master.

The business and the activities of the Grand Lodge were of a routine nature. However, the Education Committee requested, and the Grand Lodge approved a donation to Alachua Lodge No. 26 which was the amount paid by that lodge as Grand Lodge dues. This donation was to be applied to the school fund.

R.:W.: Thomas Hayward was re-elected Grand Master. Upon completion of the final business session, the Grand Lodge was closed in Ample Form.

R.:W.: Thomas Hayward served as Grand Master in 1853 and 1854. Brother Hayward was active in Masonic Circles and served as Grand Treasurer of the Grand Lodge of Florida in 1843-44 and again during the years of 1857-58.

His tenure as Grand Master is marked by the steady growth within the Masonic Fraternity.